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THE LION HUNTER



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TORONTO

THE LION HUNTER

BY RONALEYN GORDON-CUMMING

In the Days when all South Africa
was Virgin Hunting Field

EDITED BY
HORACE KEPHART

AMERICAN SEAMEN'S FRIEND SOCIETY
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74 WALL ST., NEW YORK

New York
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1922

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FERRIS
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NEW YORK CITY

INTRODUCTION

It was in the second quarter of the nineteenth century that British sportsmen began to make those long and arduous journeys after noble game that ever since have been the aspiration of riflemen throughout the world. At that period, in both hemispheres, the herbivoræ swarmed over the plains in countless thousands, and beasts of prey had not yet learned to fear the flash of firearms:

South Africa especially was a paradise for hunters. The late William Cotton Oswell has given a vivid picture of the multitudes of wild animals that enjoyed undisturbed seclusion in South Africa when he and Gordon-Cumming hunted there, some several years ago.

“On the plains between the Orange and Molopo Rivers, springbucks were met with in vast herds. For an hour’s march with the wagons — say two miles and a quarter — I once saw them thicker than I ever saw sheep; they were to be counted only by tens of thousands. When we reached the Molopo seven different kinds of animals were within view — some, especially the quaggas and the buf-

faloes, in large herds — springbucks, hartebeests, etc., filling in the picture; together there could not have been fewer than three thousand. Fifteen miles beyond the Molopo to the north, in the well wooded and watered valley of the Ba-Katla, rhinoceros and giraffe were abundant. Indeed it was so full of game of all kinds that it put me in mind of the children's picture of Adam naming the beasts in the garden of Eden — more animals than bushes. Eight or ten days from Lake Kamadon I came upon a herd of at least four hundred elephants standing drowsily in the shade of detached clumps of mimosa trees. As far as the eye could reach in a fairly open country there was nothing but elephants. I do not mean in serried masses, but in small groups. I may put the abundance of game in some way intelligibly if I say that in most parts, with horses, one gun could easily have kept eight hundred men — six hundred we tried — fattened and supplied with a store sufficient to last for months."

(In the case here alluded to, Oswell set out to provision six hundred starving natives. In one day there fell to his gun fourteen hippopotami, two large bull elephants, a giraffe, and a quagga, from which were stripped and dried over 60,000 pounds of meat.)

Among the mighty hunters of this Arcadian

epoch none achieved greater celebrity than Ronaleyn Gordon-Cumming, subsequently known everywhere as "the lion hunter." After five years of continuous forays amongst the big game of South Africa, which led him into regions never before entered by white men, this intrepid and persistent Highlander freighted a ship with his trophies of the chase, made of them a museum that was famous throughout England, and became the social lion of the season. He published a narrative of his adventures that had an immense sale wherever English was read, and which was translated under the eye of Alexandre Dumas to form part of the composite *Œuvres complètes* of that distinguished writer.

Cumming's "Five Years' Hunting Adventures in South Africa" is little more than a diary, simple and straightforward, with no conscious attempt at picturesque description or charm of style. In the dedication to his kinsman, the Duke of Argyll, the author says: "My volumes lay claim to no other merit than that of faithful narration of facts as they occurred; and having been written far away from literary appliances, and often on occasions when the cravings of hunger were a more pressing consideration than the graces of composition, I trust to your indulgence to overlook in the success of my rifle the failure of my pen."

The original work is diffuse, and many of its pages are no more than a gruesome and tiresome catalogue of slaughter. I have here selected the best parts of the two volumes, without changing the text, and offer this abridgement under title of "The Lion Hunter," taken from the author's own soubriquet.

In reading this narrative, one should make allowance for the time and the environment in which Gordon-Cumming was trained. By his own naïve admission he often was guilty of conduct that we of today would deem unsportsmanlike and brutal. Galloping, after a herd of blesbucks, he fired shot after shot at random into their compact mass, wounding at least a dozen without bagging a single animal. The story, in chapter V, that he cynically called "Tête-à-tête with a wounded elephant," in which he tested the vulnerability of a great bull that was crippled and helpless, is outrageous. Yet we should bear in mind that the rifles of that time were of very inferior power, and that a hunter nearly always risked his own life in attacking one of the giant pachyderms: hence a knowledge of the beast's vulnerable points was essential. In those days of round bullets an elephant seldom fell dead until hit by from ten to twenty shots. Out of one hundred and five killed by Gordon-Cumming only one succumbed to a single shot.

One old bull withstood thirty-five rounds from a two-groove rifle (presumably of ten-bore), then five more from a ponderous Dutch gun of six balls to the pound, whereon it died slowly. Another did not fall until it had received twenty-nine bullets, "twenty-seven of these being in a very correct part." Cumming fought another "from half past eleven till the sun was under, when his tough old spirit fled, and the venerable monarch of the forest fell, pierced with fifty-seven balls."

Our author was a prototype of a bygone age, when game was so abundant that nobody dreamed it might be exterminated, and when the sufferings of wild beasts were commonly regarded with little more compassion than we bestow upon a worm trodden in the garden. Sporting ethics, as we understand the term, was a sentiment still unborn.

On the other hand, we fain must admire the pluck and perseverance of one who, without previous experience in trekking, bored his way coolly into unknown Africa with no companions but a few cowardly black drunkards; and it is "hats off" to the more than gladiatorial courage of the hunter who stripped and plunged into a river that was alive with crocodiles, seized a wounded and frantic hippopotamus by the tail, cut a hand-hold with his knife in the thick skin of its rump, and so, by great exertions, gradually steered it ashore.

Ronaleyn George Gordon-Cumming was born in the Highlands of Scotland, March 15, 1820. He was the second son of Sir William Gordon-Cumming, second baronet of Altyre and Gordonstown, Elginshire. His passion for the chase was inborn. Even before he went to Eton to complete his studies, the boy's room was filled with hunting trophies and objects of natural history. Afterwards his time was spent mostly in fishing and shooting, or in collecting birds' eggs, of which "I had," says he, "in my possession one of the finest collections in Great Britain, amassed with much toil and danger. I have descended most of the loftiest precipices in the central Highlands of Scotland, and along the seashore, with a rope around my waist, in quest of the eggs of the various eagles and falcons which have their eyries in those almost inaccessible situations." Again he admits that "salmon-fishing and deer-stalking were my favorite amusements; and during these early wanderings by wood and stream, the strong love of sport and admiration of nature in her wildest and most attractive forms became with me an all-absorbing feeling, and my greatest possible enjoyment was to pass whole days, and many a summer night, in solitude, where, undisturbed, I might contemplate the silent grandeur of the forest and the ever varying beauty of the scenes around."

In 1838 he entered the East India Company's service as a cornet in the Madras Light Cavalry. On the voyage out he touched at the Cape of Good Hope, and here had his first taste of South African sport. In India he hunted tigers, buffaloes, and elephants. As the climate of the East did not agree with him, he resigned his commission, in 1840, returned to his native Highlands, and resumed his old pastime of deer-stalking in the forests of Moray. But he who had experienced nobler sport found "the life of the wild hunter so far preferable to that of the mere sportsman" that he resolved to try America, and so obtained an ensigncy in the Royal Veteran Newfoundland Companies. He soon learned, however, that there were no opportunities to go after the moose and bison that he desired, and few even to hunt the caribou. Thereupon he exchanged, in 1843, into the Cape Mounted Rifles, and once more found himself in South Africa.

But a soldier's life was too tame for so ardent a spirit. He dreamed of the rich hunting-grounds of the far interior, and of following the chase northward into lands where no white man had ever been. Toward the close of the year he sold out his commission, freighted an enormous Cape wagon with three or four tons of trading goods and hunting equipment, hired a few blacks to man his cara-

van, and set forth from Grahamstown on the 23d of October, 1843, for his promised land.

Difficulties beset the expedition from the start. His wagon stuck so deeply in the mud that twenty-six oxen could not budge it an inch. He had to unload and dig it out. At times the ponderous vehicle was nearly wrecked. His knowledge of African game was so slight that once, when stalking at night what he supposed was a pair of quaggas, he shot them both and then found that he had killed the wagon-team of a neighboring Dutchman! Yet no blunder or misadventure could quench the Highlander's ardor. Pushing on past the Great Fish River, he soon arrived in the land of the exquisitely graceful little antelope called springbuck. On the flats near the Brak River he came up with herds of wildebeests, with which he had glorious sport. He chased the beautiful oryx, which was said never to drink water, and which could not be stalked or driven into ambush. Upon the plains of the Karroo he saw a migration of springbucks in which hundreds of thousands were at one time within the compass of his vision. Beyond the Great Orange River he hunted wildebeests, oryxes, and zebras. At the Vaal he came upon the koodoo and the roan antelope. In February he arrived at the Riet River, and here he

first heard the lion's roar. It is at this point that we take up his narrative in the following pages.

Like all other narrators of mighty adventures, Gordon-Cumming was accused of exaggeration by stay-at-home folk who suspect everything that is beyond the range of their favorite authors and their own narrow experiences. A museum naturalist, who never had seen a live hippopotamus, asked: "Who can believe what a man writes who makes the hippopotamus spout like a whale?" But the men who knew South Africa offered no criticisms. No less an authority than David Livingstone, who knew him well, declared that "I have no hesitation in saying that Mr. Cumming's book conveys a truthful idea of South African hunting."

The lion hunter was a man of unusual personality. He is described as "remarkable for his great height and massive symmetry of build. With handsome Highland features and the eye of an eagle, he was physically a king of men." Inured from childhood to the hardships of the hills, he disdained comfort in camp and field. On his first African expedition he astonished the Boers by hunting in the wild garb of a native Highlander, bare legged, and with sleeves rolled to the armpits, nor would he discard it until his kilt was torn to tatters by the wait-a-bit thorns. Even

when he donned leather breeches he had them shorn off at the knees, and at times he went almost naked. How such a costume served him may be judged from the following incident:

“Having explored the country to a considerable distance, in the course of which we fell in with four sassabines and a troop of hartebeests, I resolved to make for home, as the darkening sky and distant thunder to the southward threatened a heavy storm. I had not long, however, determined on returning, when the wind, which had been out of the north, suddenly veered round, and blew hard from the south. In less than half an hour the rain descended in torrents, the wind blew extremely cold, and the rain beat right in my face; the peals of thunder were most appalling, the most fearful, I think, I had ever heard, the forked lightning dancing above and around me with such vividness as to pain my eyes: I thought every moment would be my last. I shifted my saddle from ‘Sunday’ to ‘The Cow,’ and we pricked along at a smart pace. We were entering a thicket of thorny bushes, when a very large gray-looking antelope stood up under one of them. I could not see his head, but I at once knew that it was the long-sought-for roan antelope, or bastard gemsbok. Carollus quickly handed me my little Moore rifle, secure from the pelting storm in one of Mr. Hugh

Snowie's patent water-proof covers. The noble buck now bounded forth, a superb old male, carrying a pair of grand cimeter-shaped horns. He stood nearly five feet high at the shoulder. 'The Cow' knew well what he had to do, and set off after him with right good will over a most impracticable country. It was a succession of masses of adamantine rock and stone, and dense bushes with thorns on the boat-hook principle. In a few minutes my legs below the knee were a mass of blood, and my shirt, my only covering, was flying in streamers from my waist. The old buck at first got a little ahead, but presently, the ground improving, I gained upon him, and after a sharp burst of about two miles we commenced ascending a slight acclivity, when he suddenly faced about and stood at bay, eyeing me with glowing eyes and a look of defiance. This was to me a joyful moment. The buck I had for many years heard of and longed to meet now stood at bay within forty yards of me. I dismounted, and, drawing my rifle from its holster, sent a bullet through his shoulder, upon which he cantered a short distance and lay down beside a bush. On my approaching he endeavored to charge, but his strength failed him. I then gave him a second shot in the neck, just where I always cut off the head. On receiving it he rolled over, and, stretching his limbs, closed his

eyes upon the storm, which all this time raged with increasing severity.

“I felt extremely cold. I had lost my shirt in the chase, and all that was left me was my shoes and leather knee-breeches. I nevertheless took some time to inspect the beautiful and rare antelope which I had been fortunate enough to capture. He proved to be a first-rate specimen: his horns were extremely rough and finely knotted. I now proceeded to cut off his head and ‘gralloched’* him, all of which I accomplished before my followers came up. They stumbled on me by chance, having lost sight of me in the denseness of the storm.”

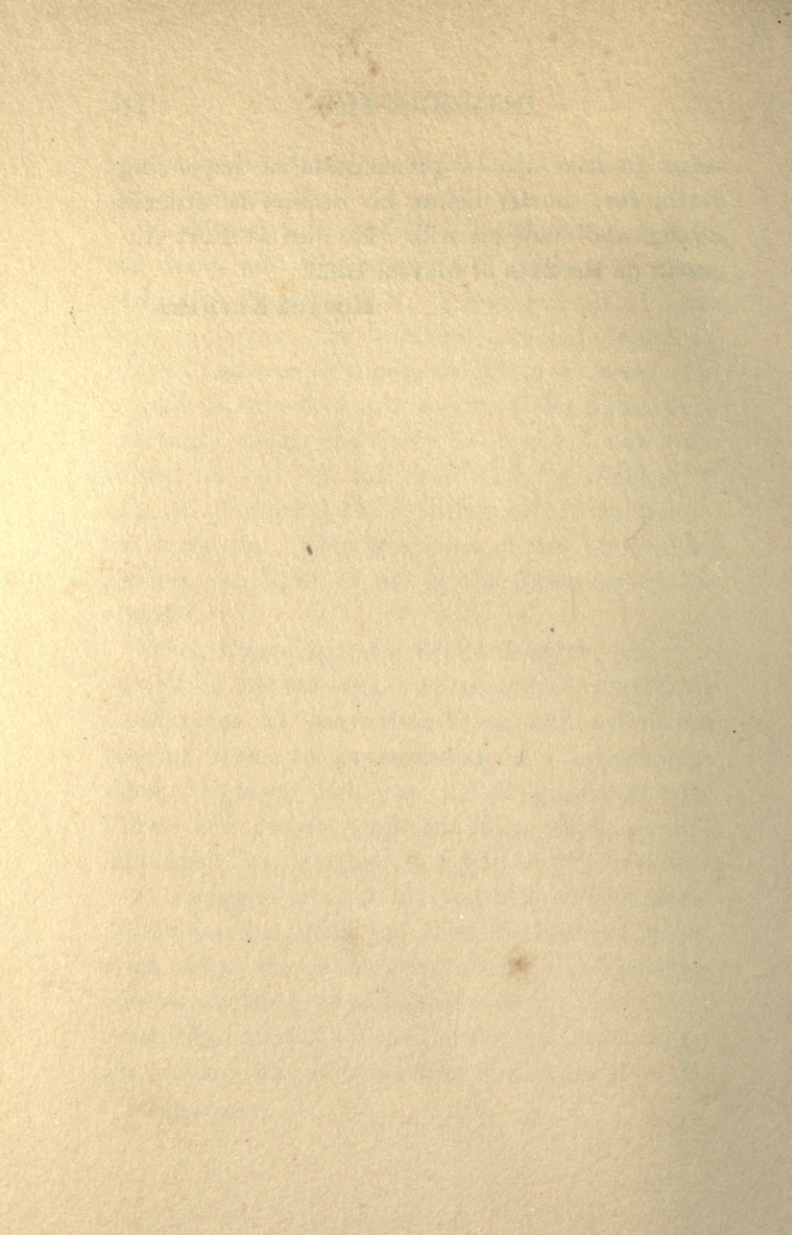
When Cumming returned to London, and was exhibiting his museum, “he preserved a barbaric indifference to conventionalities, and astonished Regent Street by promenading in a sailor’s blue shirt, Highland kilt, and a belt garnished with knives and pistols, while his hair, which rivalled Absalom’s, was confined in a bag of silk netting.”

Cumming displayed his trophies at the Great Exhibition in 1851, and then, for several years, went about the country exhibiting and lecturing, whereby he made considerable money. In 1858 he established himself on the Caledonian Canal, where his museum was an attraction to all tourists. He

* Butchered.

seems to have had a premonition of impending death, for, shortly before his demise, he ordered a coffin and made his will. He died at Fort Augustus on the 24th of March, 1866.

HORACE KEPHART.



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THE LION HUNTER

THE FIVE HUNDRED

THE LION HUNTER

CHAPTER I

BLESBOKS — LIONS

WE inspanned before the dawn of day on the 23d of February, 1844, and after steering east and by north for a distance of about twelve miles, we found ourselves on the southern bank of the Riet River, where we outspanned. Along the banks, both above and below me, several families of the nomade Boers were encamped with their tents and wagons. Their overgrown flocks and herds were grazing on the plains and grassy hill sides around. Five of these Boers presently came up to my wagons, and drank coffee with me. They seemed much amused with the details of my sporting adventures, which I was now able to give them in broken Dutch, in which language, from lately hearing no other spoken, I was daily becoming more proficient.

On learning that I had not as yet enjoyed any

blesbok shooting, they said they were certain I should be delighted with the sport. The borders of the country inhabited by the blesboks they stated to be about four days distant in a northeasterly direction, and that, on reaching it, I should fall in with those antelopes in countless herds, along with black wildebeest, springbok, and other game. The Boers supplied me liberally with milk. In the height of the day we all bathed in the Riet River, and in the afternoon I continued my journey eastward. The breadth of the Riet River here is about thirty yards. It rises about one hundred miles to the eastward, and, flowing westerly, joins the Vaal River opposite Campbellsdorp.

On the third day after making the Riet River we crossed below a very picturesque waterfall, and resumed our march along its northern bank. The day was cool and pleasant, the sky overcast; the hot days of summer were now past, and the weather was most enjoyable. Continuing my march in the afternoon, I left the Riet River on my right, and held on through an open, sandy country richly covered with abundance of sweet grass, and intersected by mountain ranges of very considerable extent. At sunset I encamped beside a Boer's farm, who received me hospitably, and asked me to dine with him.

During dinner, according to the custom of the

Boers, he pestered me with a thousand questions, such as, What was my nation? Where was I from? Where was I bound for? Why I traveled about alone in such manner? Where was my farm? Were my father and mother living? How many brothers and sisters I had? Was I married? And had I never been married in the whole course of my life? On my replying in the negative to this last question, the Boer seemed petrified with astonishment, and the family gazed at one another in utter amazement.

On the farm was a fine specimen of the African wild boar, which was perfectly tame, and took vegetables from the hands of the children. On the following day I performed two long marches, and again halted on the farm of a Boer, whose name was Potcheter. I found this man particularly bitter against the government. On my going up to him to inquire where I should outspan, he was very surly, and would scarcely deign to speak to me. Of this, however, I took no notice, but took the liberty of informing him that when I had outspanned I should come up to the house and make the acquaintance of Mrs. Potcheter. As I wheeled about and walked away from him, I overheard him remark to three other gruff-looking Boers who stood beside him that I was "a verdomd Englishman."

Notwithstanding this cold reception, on return-

ing to the house I soon managed to get into their good graces, and took dinner with them. During dinner the conversation turned on politics, when a keen discussion arose concerning the present administration of the government. This being at all times a disagreeable subject, I thought it time to change the conversation to sporting subjects, in which the Boers always take intense interest. I accordingly mentioned to one of the young ladies who sat next to me that I had in my wagon a large work containing engravings of all the most interesting animals in the world, on which she instantly expressed a strong desire to see it. I then produced my "Museum of Animated Nature," which never failed to enchant the Boers, and it put an end to all political discussions, shooting and wild animals engrossing the conversation during the rest of the evening.

These Boers informed me that I should see herds of blesboks on the following day. They also stated that lions frequented the bushy mountain ranges which look down upon the plains frequented by the blesboks, and they mentioned that a considerable party of Boers had mustered that day upon a farm a few miles in advance, to hunt a troop of lions which had killed some horses on the preceding day. From the conversation which I overheard among themselves, I learned that a war was brewing be-

tween the emigrant Boers on the northern bank of the Orange River, and the Bastard and Griqua tribes. The rumor of this war threw my followers, who also heard the news from the servants of the Boers, into a state of great alarm. I resolved, however, that my movements should not be influenced by these reports.

At an early hour on the following morning a young Boer rode up to the farm, and informed us that the party who had been lion-hunting on the preceding day had bagged two fine lions, a male and female. As the farm lay directly in my line of march, I mounted Colesberg, and, directing my followers to follow with the wagons, I rode hard for the farm, to inspect the noble game. On my way thither I met a horse-wagon, drawn by eight horses, containing some of the party who had gathered for the battue. Arriving on the farm, I found the lion and lioness laid out on the grass in front of the house, and the Boers' Hottentots busy skinning them. Both lions were riddled with balls, and their heads were shot all to pieces. This is generally the way in which the Boers serve their lions after they have killed them, fearing to approach, though dead, until they have expended a further supply of ammunition. A Hottentot is then ordered to approach and throw a stone at him; the Boers then ask if he is dead, and on the

Hottentot replying, "Like so, baas," he is ordered to pull him by the tail before the hunters will venture to approach.

My little Bushman informed me that he had often been out lion-hunting during his captivity with the Boers. On one of these occasions, a Boer who had dismounted from his horse to fire, was dashed to the ground by the lion before he could regain his saddle. The brute, however, did not injure him, but merely stood over him, lashing his tail, and growling at the rest of the party, who had galloped to a distance in the utmost consternation, and, instead of approaching within easy shot of the lion, to the rescue of their comrade, opened their fire upon him from a great distance, the consequence of which sportsman-like proceeding was, that they missed the lion, and shot their comrade dead on the spot. The lion presently retreated, and, none daring to follow him, he escaped.

The Boer on whose farm I had arrived was a tall, powerful, manly-looking fellow. He informed me that he was a Dane. He was in great distress about two favorite dogs which the lions had killed during the attack on the preceding day. Three more were badly wounded, and their recovery seemed doubtful. He confirmed the reports of an impending war between the Boers and Griquas, which I had previously heard, and he asked me if

I was not afraid, in times of war, to remain hunting, with only a few followers, in the wilderness.

Being anxious to commence my operations against the blesboks, I resumed my march shortly after mid-day. On taking leave, the Dane presented me with some meal and a couple of loaves of bread, a luxury to which I had been an utter stranger for many months, and which, together with vegetables, I may further add, I hardly ever tasted during the five hunting expeditions which I performed in South Africa. Another short march in a northeasterly direction brought me to the western borders of the boundless regions inhabited by the blesboks. I drew up my wagons beside a vley of rain water, in open country, the plains before me being adorned with herds of black wildebeest, springbok, and blesbok.

I had now reached the borders of a country differing entirely from any I had hitherto seen. The sweet grass, which had heretofore been so abundant, became very scarce, being succeeded by short, crisp, sour pasturage, which my cattle and horses refused to eat. A supply of forage for these, however, could generally be obtained by driving them to the stony hillocks and rocky mountain ranges which at various distances from one another intersected the champaign country. The plains were firm and hard, and admirably suited for riding;

they were pastured short and bare by the endless herds of game which from time immemorial had held possession of these extensive domains. Although intersected occasionally by mountain ranges, these plains often extend to amazing distances, without any landmark to break the monotony of their boundless and ocean-like expanse. At other times the eye is relieved by one or more abrupt pyramidal or cone-shaped hills, which serve as a landmark to the hunter, whereby to regain his encampment after the excitement of the chase.

When the sun is powerful, which it is during the greater part of the year, an enduring mirage dances on the plain wherever the hunter turns his bewildered eyes. This mirage restricts the range of vision to a very moderate distance, and is very prejudicial to correct rifle-shooting. The effect produced by this optical illusion is remarkable: hills and herds of game often appear as if suspended in mid air. Dry and sun-baked vleys, or pans covered with a crystallized efflorescence, constantly delude the thirsty traveler with the prospect of water; and more than once I have ridden toward a couple of springboks, magnified a hundred-fold, which I had mistaken for the white tilts of my wagons.

This vast tract of bare, sour pasturage, which is peculiarly the inheritance of the black wildebeest,

the springbok, and the blesbok, but more particularly of the latter, occupies a central position, as it were, in Southern Africa. On the west of my present encampment, as far as the shores of the South Atlantic Ocean, no blesboks are to be found. Neither do they extend to the northward of the latitude of the River Molopo, in $25^{\circ} 30'$, of which I shall at a future period make mention, although their herds frequent the plains along its southern bank. To the south a few small herds are still to be found within the colony, but their head-quarters are to the northward of the Orange River, whence they extend in an easterly direction throughout all the vast plains situated to the west of the Witbergen range.

The blesbok, in his manners and habits, very much resembles the springbok, which, however, it greatly exceeds in size, being as large as an English fallow-deer. It is one of the true antelopes, and all its movements and paces partake of the grace and elegance peculiar to that species. Its color is similar to that of the sassayby, its skin being beautifully painted with every shade of purple, violet, and brown. Its belly is of the purest white, and a broad white band, or "blaze," adorns the entire length of its face. Blesboks differ from springboks in the determined and invariable manner in which they scour the plains, right in the

wind's eye, and also in the manner in which they carry their noses close along the ground. Throughout the greater part of the year they are very wary and difficult of approach, but more especially when the does have young ones. At that season, when one herd is disturbed, and takes away up the wind, every other herd in view follows them; and the alarm extending for miles and miles down the wind, to endless herds beyond the vision of the hunter, a continued stream of blesboks may often be seen scouring up wind for upward of an hour, and covering the landscape as far as the eye can see. The springboks, which in equal numbers frequent the same ground, do not, in general, adopt the same decided course as the blesboks, but take away in every direction across the plains, sometimes with flying bounds, beautifully exhibiting the long, snowy-white hair with which their backs are adorned, and at others walking slowly and carelessly out of the hunter's way, scarcely deigning to look at him, with an air of perfect independence, as if aware of their own matchless speed.

The black wildebeests, which also thickly cover the entire length and breadth of the blesbok country, in herds averaging from twenty to fifty, have no regular course, like the blesboks. Unless driven by a large field of hunters, they do not leave their

ground, although disturbed. Wheeling about in endless circles, and performing the most extraordinary variety of intricate evolutions, the shaggy herds of these eccentric and fierce-looking animals are forever capering and gamboling round the hunter on every side. While he is riding hard to obtain a family shot of a herd in front of him, other herds are charging down wind on his right and left, and, having described a number of circular movements, they take up positions upon the very ground across which the hunter rode only a few minutes before.

Singly, and in small troops of four or five individuals, the old bull wildebeests may be seen stationed at intervals throughout the plains, standing motionless during a whole forenoon, coolly watching with a philosophic eye the movements of the other game, eternally uttering a loud snorting noise, and also a short, sharp cry which is peculiar to them. When the hunter approaches these old bulls, they commence whisking their long white tails in a most eccentric manner; then springing suddenly into the air, they begin prancing and capering, and pursue each other in circles at their utmost speed. Suddenly they all pull up together to overhaul the intruder, when two of the bulls will often commence fighting in the most violent manner, dropping on their knees at every shock; then

quickly wheeling about, they kick up their heels, whirl their tails with a fantastic flourish, and scour across the plain enveloped in a cloud of dust.

Throughout the greater part of the plains frequented by blesboks, numbers of the sun-baked hills or mounds of clay formed by the white ants occur. The average height of the ant-hills, in these districts, is from two to three feet. They are generally distant from one another from one to three hundred yards, being more or less thickly placed in different parts. These ant-hills are of the greatest service to the hunter, enabling him with facility to conceal himself on the otherwise open plain. By means of them I was enabled to hide, and select out of the herds the bucks and bulls carrying the finest heads, for my collection.

On the 28th, having breakfasted, I rode forth with two after-riders to try for blesboks, and took up positions on the plain, lying flat on my breast behind ant-hills, while my after-riders, one of whom led my horse, endeavored to move them toward me. We found the blesboks abundant, but extremely wary. I wounded several, but did not bag one. I, however, shot two springboks, which were fat, and whose flesh we stood much in need of. I had several chances of wildebeests, but I had resolved not to fire at them.

The following day was the 1st of March. After

an early breakfast I again took the field, with my after-riders and a spare horse. There was thunder and lightning on all sides, and I expected the day would set in wet: it all passed over, however, with a few showers, and the weather was delightfully cool. I lay behind ant-hills, while my men, extending to the right and left, endeavored to drive the game toward me. Late in the day I bagged a fine old blesbok: it was a family shot, running, at two hundred yards. I also shot a springbok, and mortally wounded another; both were very long shots.

The blesbok is one of the finest antelopes in the world, and is allowed to be the swiftest buck in Africa. He, nevertheless, attains very high condition, and at this period was exceedingly fat. I was surprised and delighted with the exquisite manner in which his beautiful colors are blended together. Nothing can exceed the beauty of this animal. Like most other African antelopes, his skin emitted a most delicious and powerful perfume of flowers and sweet-smelling herbs. A secretion issues from between his hoofs which has likewise a pleasing perfume.

The 3d was a charmingly cool day. At an early hour in the morning I was visited by a party of Boers, some of whom I had previously met. They were proceeding to hunt wildebeest and bles-

bok, and were mounted on mares, each of which was followed by a foal. They requested me to join them in their "jag," but I excused myself, preferring to hunt alone. Having partaken largely of my coffee, the Boers mounted their mares and departed, holding a southeasterly course. As soon as they were out of sight I saddled up and rode north, with two after-riders, to try for blesboks. I found the country extremely pleasant to ride on. It resembled a well-kept lawn. Troops of graceful springbok and blesbok were to be seen cantering right and left, and large herds of black wildebeests in every direction, now charging and capering, and now reconnoitering. I took up positions on the plain behind the ant-hills. In the forenoon I wounded one blesbok, and late in the day I made a fine double shot, knocking over two old blesboks right and left, at a hundred and a hundred and fifty yards. I also shot one springbok. While "gralloching" a buck, one of the Boers rode up to me to say that his brother had wounded a wildebeest which stood at bay on the plain, and his ammunition being expended, he would feel obliged by my coming to his assistance. I accordingly accompanied the Boer to where his brother stood sentry over the wounded bull, when I lent him my rifle, with which he finished his bull with a bullet in the forehead.

On the following day I hunted to the northeast of my camp, and made a fine shot at a blesbok, knocking him over at a hundred and fifty yards. Returning to camp in a low-lying grassy vley, I started a herd of "vlacke varcke," or wild hogs. The herd consisted of seven half-grown young ones and three old ones, one of which carried a pair of enormous tusks, projecting eight or nine inches beyond his lip. Being well mounted and the ground favorable, I at once gave chase, and was soon at their heels. My horse was "The Gray." I selected the old boar for my prey, and immediately separated him from his comrades. After two miles of sharp galloping, we commenced ascending a considerable acclivity, when I managed to close with him, and succeeding in turning his head toward my camp. He now reduced his pace to a trot, and regarded me with a most malicious eye, his mouth a mass of foam. He was entirely in my power, as I had only to spring from my horse and bowl him over. I felt certain of him, but resolved not to shoot as long as his course lay in the direction of the wagons. At length, surprised at the resolute manner in which he held for my camp, I headed him; when, to my astonishment, he did not in the slightest swerve from his course, but trotted along behind my horse like a dog following me. This at once roused my suspicions, and I felt certain that

the cunning old fellow was making for some retreat, so I resolved to dismount and finish him. Just, however, as I had come to this resolution, I suddenly found myself in a labyrinth of enormous holes, the burrows of the ant-bear. In front of one of these the wild boar pulled up, and, charging stern foremost into it, disappeared from my disappointed eyes, and I saw him no more. I rode home for my men; and returning, we collected grass and bushes, and endeavored to smoke him out, but without success.

On the 7th we inspanned at dawn of day, and trekked east about ten miles, encamping beside a small, isolated farm-house, which had been lately vacated by some Boer, owing to the impending war with the Griquas. Here we found plenty of old cow-dung for fuel; an article which, throughout the whole of the blesbok country, is very scarce, there often being great difficulty in obtaining sufficient fuel to boil the kettle for coffee. Beside the farm-house were two strong springs of excellent water, in which cresses flourished. Game was abundant on all sides, wildebeests and springboks pasturing within a few hundred yards of the door as we drove up. Below the fountains was a small garden, in which I found a welcome supply of onions and other vegetables.

On the 12th I bagged two bull wildebeests and

two springboks to the northward of my camp. In the evening I took my pillow and "komberse," or skin blanket, to the margin of a neighboring vley, where I had observed doe blesboks drink. Of these I had not yet secured a single specimen, which I was very anxious to do, as they likewise carry fine horns, which, though not so thick as those of the males, are more gracefully formed. Shortly after I had lain down, two porcupines came grunting up to me, and stood within six feet of where I lay. About midnight an old wildebeest came and stood within ten yards of me, but I was too lazy to fire at him. All night I heard some creature moving in the cracked earth beneath my pillow; but, believing it to be a mouse, I did not feel much concerned about the matter. I could not, however, divest myself of a painful feeling that it might be a snake, and wrapped my blanket tight round my body. Awaking at an early hour the following morning, I forgot to look for the tenant who had spent the night beneath my pillow. No blesbok appearing, I stalked an old springbok through the rushes and shot him. Having concealed him, I held for camp, and dispatched two men to bring home the venison and my bedding.

While taking my breakfast I observed my men returning, one of them carrying a very large and deadly serpent. I at once felt certain it was he

that I had heard the previous night beneath my pillow; and on asking them where they had killed it, they replied, "In your bed." On approaching the bedding, they had discovered the horrid reptile sunning itself on the edge of my blanket, until, on perceiving them, it glided in beneath it. It was a large specimen of the black variety of the puff adder, one of the most poisonous serpents of Africa, death ensuing within an hour after its bite.

On the 15th I had a very good day's sport. As the day dawned I peeped from my hole, and saw troops of blesboks feeding on every side of me, but none came within range. I shot one springbok, and, having concealed him in the rushes, walked to camp. After breakfast I took the field with Kleinboy and the Bushman, and rode north to try for blesboks. While lying behind an ant-hill on the bare plain, a herd of about thirty wildebeests came thundering down upon me, and the leading bull nearly jumped over me. Into one of these I fired; he got the ball too far back, however, and made off, but was found by one of my men the following day. Presently Kleinboy rode up, and stated that while he was driving the blesboks he had observed an old stag hartebeest standing in the shade of some tall green bushes in the adjacent range of hills.

I resolved to stalk him in the most approved Highland fashion; so, having made an accurate survey of the ground with my spy-glass, I rode within a quarter of a mile of him, and then proceeded to creep in upon him on my hands and knees. In this manner I got within sixty yards of him, where I lay flat on my breast for several minutes until he should give me his broadside. Presently he walked forth from the cover of the bush beneath which he had been standing, when I sent a ball in at his right shoulder, which rested on the skin in his left haunch. Wheeling about, he bounded over an adjacent ridge and was out of sight in a moment. On gaining this ridge, I was just in time to see the noble hartebeest stagger for a moment, and then subside into the long grass in a hollow below me. He was a princely old stag, carrying splendid horns and a beautiful coat of new hair. I thought I could never sufficiently admire him.

Having removed the head and skin, we made for the camp, and on my way thither I was tempted to try a long shot at one of the two old blesboks that kept capering to leeward of us. Sitting down on the grass, and resting both my elbows on my knees (a manner of firing much practiced by the Boers), I let fly at a blesbok, and made one of the finest shots I had even seen, sending the ball through the middle of his shoulder at upward of

two hundred and fifty yards. On receiving it, he cantered forward a short distance and fell dead.

The rifle I used in those days was a double-barreled two-grooved one, by Dixon of Edinburgh, with which I managed to make such superior shooting to that which I could perform with the old style of rifle, that I considered the latter as a mere "pop-gun" in comparison with the other.

In the evening I took up my position in my shooting-hole to the northward of camp. About an hour after the moon rose, a troop of wildebeests came and stood within thirty yards of me. I fired, and a very large bull with one horn fell to the shot. If I had allowed this bull to lie there, my chance of further sport was over for that night and the following morning. I therefore took the old fellow by his horn, and, exerting my utmost strength and taking time, I managed to drag him as he fell, and still living, to a hollow beside the water, in which I concealed him. In half an hour another troop of wildebeests came and stood snuffing on the spot where he had fallen. I fired, and a fine old bull received the ball in the shoulder, and, bounding forward one hundred yards, rolled over in the dust. In about an hour a third troop of wildebeests came and stood within thirty yards of me. At one of these I let fly, and heard the ball crack loudly on his shoulder.

On the 16th I hunted on the plains to the north-east, killing one springbok, and at night I watched the distant vley to the northward of my camp, and got a fright which I shall remember to my dying day. Soon after the moon rose, a troop of wildebeests came within range; at one of these I fired, and he dropped to the shot, the ball passing through the spine. A little after this I discharged my other barrel at a large spotted hyæna, and then I returned my rifle to its holster without loading either barrel, and presently I was asleep.

I had not slept long when my light dreams were influenced by strange sounds. I dreamed that lions were rushing about in quest of me, and, the sounds increasing, I awoke with a sudden start, uttering a loud shriek. I could not for several seconds remember in what part of the world I was, or any thing connected with my present position. I heard the rushing of light feet as of a pack of wolves close on every side of me, accompanied by the most unearthly sounds. On raising my head, to my utter horror I saw on every side nothing but savage wild dogs, chattering and growling. On my right and on my left, and within a few paces of me, stood two lines of these ferocious-looking animals, cocking their ears and stretching their necks to have a look at me; while two large troops, in which there were at least forty of them, kept dashing backward and

forward across my wind within a few yards of me, chattering and growling with the most extraordinary volubility.

Another troop of wild dogs was fighting over the wildebeests I had shot, which they had begun to devour. On beholding them, I expected no other fate than to be instantly torn to pieces and consumed. I felt my blood curdling along my cheeks and my hair bristling on my head. However, I had presence of mind to consider that the human voice and a determined bearing might overawe them, and accordingly, springing to my feet, I stepped on to the little ledge surrounding the hole, where, drawing myself up to my full height, I waved my large blanket with both hands, at the same time addressing my savage assembly in a loud and solemn manner. This had the desired effect: the wild dogs removed to a more respectful distance, barking at me something like collies. Upon this I snatched up my rifle and commenced loading, and before this was accomplished the entire pack had passed away and did not return.

These had not been gone many minutes when twelve or fifteen large hyænas were hard at work on the wildebeest. I fired two shots at them at different times during the night, but none fell to my shots. Heedless of me, they continued their banquet, and long before morning nothing was left

of the wildebeest save a few of the larger bones. On the two following mornings I was annoyed by a cunning old bull wildebeest, which, having discovered my retreat, kept sentry over me, and successively drove away every troop of his fellows that approached my vley to drink. He kept feeding just out of rifle-range, and not only warned his comrades of their danger by fixing his eye on my place of concealment and snorting loudly, but when this failed he drove the other wildebeests from me in the most determined manner, like a collie dog driving sheep.

Before leaving my hole, however, on the second morning, I had my revenge. A troop of cows, heedless of his warnings, approached the vley. In his anxiety for their safety he neglected his own; and coming for the first time within long rifle-range, I put up my after-sights and let drive at his ribs. The ball took effect, and, kicking up his heels and flourishing his long white tail, the old bull bounded forth, and, disappearing over a ridge, I saw him no more.

The night of the 19th was to me rather a memorable one, as being the first on which I had the satisfaction of hearing the deep-toned thunder of the lion's roar. Although there was no one near to inform me by what beast the haughty and impressive sounds which echoed through the wilderness were

produced, I had little difficulty in divining. There was no mistake about it; and on hearing it I at once knew, as well as if accustomed to the sound from my infancy, that the appalling roar which was uttered within half a mile of me was no other than that of the mighty and terrible king of beasts. Although the dignified and truly monarchical appearance of the lion has long rendered him famous among his fellow quadrupeds, and his appearance and habits have often been described by abler pens than mine, nevertheless I consider that a few remarks, resulting from my personal experience, formed by a tolerably long acquaintance with him both by day and by night, may not prove uninteresting to the reader.

There is something so noble and imposing in the presence of the lion, when seen walking with dignified self-possession, free and undaunted, on his native soil, that no description can convey an adequate idea of his striking appearance. The lion is exquisitely formed by nature for the predatory habits which he is destined to pursue. Combining in comparatively small compass the qualities of power and agility, he is enabled, by means of the tremendous machinery with which nature has gifted him, easily to overcome and destroy almost every beast of the forest, however superior to him in weight and stature.

Though considerably under four feet in height, he has little difficulty in dashing to the ground and overcoming the lofty and apparently powerful giraffe, whose head towers above the trees of the forest, and whose skin is nearly an inch in thickness. The lion is the constant attendant of the vast herds of buffaloes which frequent the interminable forests of the interior; and a full-grown one, so long as his teeth are unbroken, generally proves a match for an old bull buffalo, which in size and strength greatly surpasses the most powerful breed of English cattle: the lion also preys on all the larger varieties of the antelopes, and on both varieties of the gnou. The zebra, which is met with in large herds throughout the interior, is also a favorite object of his pursuit.

Lions do not refuse, as has been asserted, to feast upon the venison that they have not killed themselves. I have repeatedly discovered lions of all ages which had taken possession of, and were feasting upon, the carcasses of various game quadrupeds which had fallen before my rifle. The lion is very generally diffused throughout the secluded parts of Southern Africa. He is, however, nowhere met with in great abundance, it being very rare to find more than three, or even two, families of lions frequenting the same district and drinking at the same fountain. When a greater number were met with,

I remarked that it was owing to long-protracted droughts, which, by drying nearly all the fountains, had compelled the game of various districts to crowd the remaining springs, and the lions, according to their custom, followed in the wake.

It is a common thing to come upon a full-grown lion and lioness associating with three or four large ones nearly full grown; at other times, full-grown males will be found associating and hunting together in a happy state of friendship: two, three, and four full-grown male lions may thus be discovered consorting together.

The male lion is adorned with a long, rank, shaggy mane, which in some instances almost sweeps the ground. The color of these manes varies, some being very dark, and others of a golden yellow. This appearance has given rise to a prevailing opinion among the Boers that there are two distinct varieties of lions, which they distinguish by the respective names of "Schwart fore life" and "Chiel fore life:" this idea, however, is erroneous. The color of the lion's mane is generally influenced by his age. He attains his mane in the third year of his existence. I have remarked that at first it is of a yellowish color; in the prime of life it is blackest, and when he has numbered many years, but still is in the full enjoyment of his power, it assumes a yellowish-gray,

pepper-and-salt sort of color. These old fellows are cunning and dangerous, and most to be dreaded. The females are utterly destitute of a mane, being covered with a short, thick, glossy coat of tawny hair. The manes and coats of lions frequenting open-lying districts utterly destitute of trees, such as the borders of the great Kalahari desert, are more rank and handsome than those inhabiting forest districts.

One of the most striking things connected with the lion is his voice, which is extremely grand and peculiarly striking. It consists at times of a low, deep moaning, repeated five or six times, ending in faintly audible sighs; at other times he startles the forest with loud, deep-toned, solemn roars, repeated five or six times in quick succession, each increasing in loudness to the third or fourth, when his voice dies away in five or six low, muffled sounds, very much resembling distant thunder. At times, and not unfrequently, a troop may be heard roaring in concert, one assuming the lead, and two, three, or four more regularly taking up their parts, like persons singing a catch. Like our Scottish stags at the rutting season, they roar loudest in cold, frosty nights; but on no occasions are their voices to be heard in such perfection, or so intensely powerful, as when two or three strange troops of lions approach a fountain to drink at the same

time. When this occurs, every member of each troop sounds a bold roar of defiance at the opposite parties; and when one roars, all roar together, and each seems to vie with his comrades in the intensity and power of his voice.

The power and grandeur of these nocturnal forest concerts is inconceivably striking and pleasing to the hunter's ear. The effect, I may remark, is greatly enhanced when the hearer happens to be situated in the depths of the forest, at the dead hour of midnight, unaccompanied by any attendant, and ensconced within twenty yards of the fountain which the surrounding troops of lions are approaching. Such has been my situation many scores of times; and though I am allowed to have a tolerably good taste for music, I consider the catches with which I was then regaled as the sweetest and most natural I ever heard.

As a general rule, lions roar during the night; their sighing moans commencing as the shades of evening envelop the forest, and continuing at intervals throughout the night. In distant and secluded regions, however, I have constantly heard them roaring loudly as late as nine and ten o'clock on a bright sunny morning. In hazy and rainy weather they are to be heard at every hour in the day, but their roar is subdued. It often happens that when two strange male lions meet at a foun-

tain a terrific combat ensues, which not unfrequently ends in the death of one of them. The habits of the lion are strictly nocturnal; during the day he lies concealed beneath the shade of some low bushy tree or wide-spreading bush, either in the level forest or on the mountain side. He is also partial to lofty reeds, or fields of long, rank yellow grass, such as occur in low-lying vlees. From these haunts he sallies forth when the sun goes down, and commences his nightly prowling. When he is successful in his beat and has secured his prey, he does not roar much that night, only uttering occasionally a few low moans; that is, provided no intruders approach him, otherwise the case would be very different.

Lions are ever most active, daring, and presuming in dark and stormy nights, and consequently, on such occasions, the traveler ought more particularly to be on his guard. I remarked a fact connected with the lions' hour of drinking peculiar to themselves: they seemed unwilling to visit the fountains with good moonlight. Thus, when the moon rose early, the lions deferred their hour of watering until late in the morning; and when the moon rose late, they drank at a very early hour in the night. By this acute system many a grisly lion saved his bacon, and is now luxuriating in the forest of South Africa, which had otherwise fallen by the barrels

of my "Westley Richards." Owing to the tawny color of the coat with which nature has robed him, he is perfectly invisible in the dark; and although I have often heard them loudly lapping the water under my very nose, not twenty yards from me, I could not possibly make out so much as the outline of their forms. When a thirsty lion comes to water, he stretches out his massive arms, lies down on his breast to drink, and makes a loud lapping noise in drinking not to be mistaken. He continues lapping up the water for a long while, and four or five times during the proceeding he pauses for half a minute as if to take breath. One thing conspicuous about them is their eyes, which, in a dark night, glow like two balls of fire.

The female is more fierce and active than the male, as a general rule. Lionesses which have never had young are much more dangerous than those which have. At no time is the lion so much to be dreaded as when his partner has got small young ones. At that season he knows no fear, and, in the coolest and most intrepid manner, he will face a thousand men. A remarkable instance of this kind came under my own observation, which confirmed the reports I had before heard from the natives. One day, when out elephant-hunting in the territory of the "Baseleka," accompanied by two hundred and fifty men, I was astonished sud-

denly to behold a majestic lion slowly and steadily advancing toward us with a dignified step and undaunted bearing, the most noble and imposing that can be conceived. Lashing his tail from side to side, and growling haughtily, his terribly expressive eye resolutely fixed upon us, and displaying a show of ivory well calculated to inspire terror among the timid "Bechuanas," he approached. A headlong flight of the two hundred and fifty men was the immediate result; and, in the confusion of the moment, four couples of my dogs, which had been leading, were allowed to escape in their couples. These instantly faced the lion, who, finding that by his bold bearing he had succeeded in putting his enemies to flight, now became solicitous for the safety of his little family, with which the lioness was retreating in the back-ground. Facing about, he followed after them with a haughty and independent step, growling fiercely at the dogs which trotted along on either side of him.

Three troops of elephants having been discovered a few minutes previous to this, upon which I was marching for the attack, I, with the most heartfelt reluctance, reserved my fire. On running down the hill side to endeavor to recall my dogs, I observed, for the first time, the retreating lioness with four cubs. About twenty minutes afterward two noble elephants repaid my forbearance.

Among Indian Nimrods, a certain class of royal tigers is dignified with the appellation of "man-eaters." These are tigers which, having once tasted human flesh show a predilection for the same, and such characters are very naturally famed and dreaded among the natives. Elderly gentlemen of similar tastes and habits are occasionally met with among the lions in the interior of South Africa, and the danger of such neighbors may be easily imagined. I account for lions first acquiring this taste in the following manner: the Bechuana tribes of the far interior do not bury their dead, but unceremoniously carry them forth, and leave them lying exposed in the forest or on the plain, a prey to the lion and hyæna, or the jackal and vulture; and I can readily imagine that a lion, having thus once tasted human flesh, would have little hesitation, when opportunity presented itself, of springing upon and carrying off the unwary traveler or "Bechuana" inhabiting his country. Be this as it may, man-eaters occur; and on my fourth hunting expedition, a horrible tragedy was acted one dark night in my little lonely camp by one of these formidable characters, which deprived me, in the far wilderness, of my most valuable servant.

In winding up these few observations on the lion, which I trust will not have been tiresome to the reader, I may remark that lion-hunting, under any

circumstances, is decidedly a dangerous pursuit. It may nevertheless be followed, to a certain extent, with comparative safety by those who have naturally a turn for that sort of thing. A recklessness of death, perfect coolness and self-possession, an acquaintance with the disposition and manners of lions, and a tolerable knowledge of the use of the rifle, are indispensable to him who would shine in the overpoweringly exciting pastime of hunting this justly celebrated king of beasts.

CHAPTER II

LIONS — BUFFALOES — RHINOCEROS

ON the 22d of March I rode south to a distant farm, for the double purpose of obtaining some corn or meal, and of hearing the news of the impending war between the Boers and Griquas. On reaching the farm, I found that a large party of Boers were here encamped together: they had mustered for mutual protection. Their tents and wagons were drawn up on every side of the farm-house, forming a very lively appearance.

The Boers informed me that all their countrymen, and also the Griquas, were thus packed together in "lagers" or encampments, and that hostilities were about to commence. They remonstrated with me on what they were pleased to term my madness, in living alone in an isolated position in such sharp times, and invited me to place myself for protection under their banner. I endeavored to persuade them to get up a party to hunt the lion; but this they declined to do, remarking that

“ a lion (like Johnnie Gordon’s bagpipes) was not to be played with.”

Returning to my camp, I bowled over a springbok at one hundred and fifty yards. On the 23d, having breakfasted, I rode north, with after-riders, to try for blesboks. It was a cool day, with a strong easterly breeze, and we found the game extremely wild. As we proceeded, vast herds kept streaming up on the wind, darkening the plain before us in countless thousands. About two miles north of the bushy mountain where I had heard the lion roar, far in the vast level plain, were some bushy mimosa trees. Within a few hundred yards of these we discovered an old bull wildebeest, newly killed by a lion and half eaten. His large and striking foot-prints were deeply imbedded in the sand, and so fresh that they seemed to have been imprinted only a few minutes before. Moreover, there was not a single vulture near the carcass. We therefore felt convinced that the lion must be lying somewhere near us, having hidden himself on our approach. We searched for some time in the adjacent hollows, where the grass was very rank, but in vain. The game now became more and more wild, taking away into another district in long strings, like our island red-deer when hard driven; I accordingly gave it up, and turned my horse’s head for camp. On my way thither I bagged one

blesbok and two bull wildebeests: one of these got the bullet through his heart, but nevertheless stood at bay for some time after.

On reaching camp I suddenly resolved to take men and horses with me, and spend the night in the vicinity of the lion, and search early for him on the following morning. Accordingly, while dinner was preparing, I occupied myself in cleaning and loading my three double-barreled rifles; after which, having dined, I rode with Kleinboy and John Stofolus to my hole by the vley, where my bedding lay day and night. This spot was within a few miles of where we expected to fall in with the lion in the morning. We secured the three horses to one another, as there was no tree or bush within miles of us; but these I could dispense with, for I knew very well by the looks of the Hottentots that they would not sleep much, but would keep a vigilant eye over our destinies.

I spent a most miserable night. The wind, which had been blowing so fresh in the height of the day, had subsided to a calm when the sun went down, and was now succeeded by an almost death-like stillness, which I too well knew was the harbinger of a coming tempest. We had not lain down an hour when the sky to leeward became black as pitch. Presently the most vivid flashes of lightning followed one another in quick succes-

sion, accompanied by terrific peals of thunder. The wind, which, during the day, had been out of the northeast, now, as is usual on such occasions, veered right round, and came whistling up from the southwest, where the tempest was brewing; and in a few minutes more it was upon us in all its fury, the rain descending in torrents on our devoted heads, while vivid flashes of lightning momentarily illumined, with the brilliancy of day, the darkness that reigned around. In a very few minutes the whole plain was a sheet of water, and every atom of my clothes and bedding was thoroughly saturated. My three rifles had excellent holsters, and with the help of two sheep-skins, which I used instead of saddle-cloths, I kept them quite dry. In two hours the tempest had passed away, but light rain fell till morning, until which time I lay on the wet ground, soaked to the skin.

About midnight we heard the lion roar a mile or so to the northward, and a little before the day dawned I again heard him in the direction of the carcass which we had found on the preceding day. Soon after this I gave the word to march. We then arose and saddled our horses. I found my trousers lying in a pool of water, so I converted a blanket into a long kilt by strapping it round my waist with my shooting-belt. The costume of my followers was equally unique. We held for the

north end of the lion's mountain at a sharp pace, which we gained before it was clear enough to see surrounding objects. As the light broke in upon us we reduced our pace, and rode slowly up the middle of the vast level plain toward the carcass of the wildebeest, with large herds of wildebeests, springbok, blesbok, and quaggas on every side of us, which were this day as tame as they had been wild on the previous one. This is generally the case after a storm.

The morn was cloudy; misty vapors hung on the shoulders of the neighboring mountains, and the air was loaded with balmy perfume, emitted by the grateful plants and herbs. As we approached the carcass, I observed several jackals steal away, and some half-drowned-looking vultures were sitting round it. But there was no appearance of the lion. I spent the next half hour in riding across the plain looking for his spoor; but I sought in vain. Being cold and hungry, I turned my horse's head for camp, and rode slowly along through the middle of the game, which would scarcely move out of rifle-range on either side of me.

Suddenly I observed a number of vultures seated on the plain about a quarter of a mile ahead of us, and close beside them stood a huge lioness, consuming a blesbok which she had killed. She was as-

sisted in her repast by about a dozen jackals, which were feasting along with her in the most friendly and confidential manner. Directing my followers' attention to the spot, I remarked, "I see the lion;" to which they replied, "Whar? whar? Yah! Almagtig! dat is he;" and instantly reining in their steeds and wheeling about, they pressed their heels to their horses' sides, and were preparing to betake themselves to flight. I asked them what they were going to do. To which they answered, "We have not yet placed caps on our rifles." This was true; but while this short conversation was passing the lioness had observed us. Raising her full, round face, she overhauled us for a few seconds, and then set off at a smart canter toward a range of mountains some miles to the northward; the whole troop of jackals also started off in another direction; there was, therefore, no time to think of caps. The first move was to bring her to bay, and not a second was to be lost. Spurring my good and lively steed, and shouting to my men to follow, I flew across the plain, and, being fortunately mounted on Colesberg, the flower of my stud, I gained upon her at every stride. This was to me a joyful moment, and I at once made up my mind that she or I must die.

The lioness having had a long start of me, we

went over a considerable extent of ground before I came up with her. She was a large, full-grown beast, and the bare and level nature of the plain added to her imposing appearance. Finding that I gained upon her, she reduced her pace from a canter to a trot, carrying her tail stuck out behind her, and slewed a little to one side. I shouted loudly to her to halt, as I wished to speak with her, upon which she suddenly pulled up, and sat on her haunches like a dog, with her back toward me, not even deigning to look round. She then appeared to say to herself, "Does this fellow know who he is after?" Having thus sat for half a minute, as if involved in thought, she sprang to her feet, and, facing about, stood looking at me for a few seconds, moving her tail slowly from side to side, showing her teeth, and growling fiercely. She next made a short run forward, making a loud rumbling noise like thunder. This she did to intimidate me; but, finding that I did not flinch an inch nor seem to heed her hostile demonstrations, she quietly stretched out her massive arms, and lay down on the grass.

My Hottentots now coming up, we all three dismounted, and, drawing our rifles from their holsters, we looked to see if the powder was up in the nipples, and put on our caps. While this was doing the lioness sat up, and showed evident symp-

toms of uneasiness. She looked first at us, and then behind her, as if to see if the coast were clear, after which she made a short run toward us, uttering her deep-drawn, murderous growls. Having secured the three horses to one another by their rheims,* we led them on as if we intended to pass her, in the hope of obtaining a broadside. But this she carefully avoided to expose, presenting only her full front. I had given Stofolus my Moore rifle, with orders to shoot her if she should spring upon me, but on no account to fire before me. Kleinboy was to stand ready to hand me my Purdey rifle, in case the two-grooved Dixon should not prove sufficient. My men as yet had been steady, but they were in a precious stew, their faces having assumed a ghastly paleness, and I had a painful feeling that I could place no reliance on them.

Now, then, for it, neck or nothing! She is within sixty yards of us, and she keeps advancing. We turned the horses' tails to her. I knelt on one side, and, taking a steady aim at her breast, let fly. The ball cracked loudly on her tawny hide, and crippled her in the shoulder, upon which she charged with an appalling roar, and in the twinkling of an eye she was in the midst of us. At this moment Stofolus's rifle exploded in his hand, and

* A thong of rawhide seven or eight feet long, used as hitching strap, trace, etc. South African dialect.

Kleinboy, whom I had ordered to stand ready by me, danced about like a duck in a gale of wind. The lioness sprang upon Colesberg, and fearfully lacerated his ribs and haunches with her horrid teeth and claws; the worst wound was on his haunch, which exhibited a sickening, yawning gash, more than twelve inches long, almost laying bare the very bone. I was very cool and steady, and did not feel in the least degree nervous, having fortunately great confidence in my own shooting; but I must confess, when the whole affair was over, I felt that it was a very awful situation, and attended with extreme peril, as I had no friend with me on whom I could rely.

When the lioness sprang on Colesberg, I stood out from the horses, ready with my second barrel for the first chance she should give me of a clear shot. This she quickly did; for, seemingly satisfied with the revenge she had now taken, she quitted Colesberg, and, slewing her tail to one side, trotted sulkily past within a few paces of me, taking one step to the left. I pitched my rifle to my shoulder, and in another second the lioness was stretched on the plain a lifeless corpse. In the struggles of death she half turned on her back, and stretched her neck and fore arms convulsively, when she fell back to her former position; her mighty arms hung powerless by her side, her lower jaw fell, blood

streamed from her mouth, and she expired. At the moment I fired my second shot, Stofolus, who hardly knew whether he was alive or dead, allowed the three horses to escape. These galloped frantically across the plain, on which he and Kleinboy instantly started after them, leaving me standing alone and unarmed within a few paces of the lioness, which they, from their anxiety to be out of the way, evidently considered quite capable of doing further mischief.

Such is ever the case with these worthies, and with nearly all the natives of South Africa. No reliance can be placed on them. They will to a certainty forsake their master in the most dastardly manner in the hour of peril, and leave him in the lurch. A stranger, however, hearing these fellows recounting their own gallant adventures, when sitting in the evening along with their comrades round a blazing fire, or under the influence of their adored "Cape smoke" or native brandy, might fancy them to be the bravest of the brave. Having skinned the lioness and cut off her head, we placed her trophies upon Beauty and held for camp. Before we had proceeded a hundred yards from the carcass, upward of sixty vultures, whom the lioness had often fed, were feasting on her remains.

We led poor Colesberg slowly home, where, having washed his wounds and carefully stitched them

together, I ordered the cold water cure to be adopted. Under this treatment his wounds rapidly healed, and he eventually recovered. The sky remained overcast throughout the day. When the shades of evening set in, terror seemed to have taken possession of the minds of my followers, and they swore that the mate of the lioness, on finding her bones, would follow on our spoor and revenge her death. Under this impression, they refused to remain about the wagons or in the tent after the sun went down; and having cut down the rafters and cupboards of the Boer's house for fuel, they kindled a large fire in the kitchen, where they took up their quarters for the night. . . .

[Cumming then returned to Colesberg, where he packed and stored his trophies, increased his establishment, refitted the outfit, and thereupon set forth for the elephant country in the far forests of the interior. On this journey he met Dr. David Livingstone, the famous missionary, by whom he was pleasantly entertained, and from whom he received valuable advice as to means of reaching the unexplored territory that was his objective. On June 3d, Cumming started for Booby, to obtain guides.—*Ed.*]

Early on the 4th of June we inspanned and continued our march for Booby, a large party of savages still following the wagons. Before proceed-

ing far I was tempted by the beautiful appearance of the country to saddle horses to hunt in the mountains westward of my course. I directed the wagons to proceed a few miles under guidance of the natives, and there await my arrival. I was accompanied by Isaac, who was mounted on the Old Gray, and carried my clumsy Dutch rifle of six to the pound.* Two Bechuanas followed us, leading four of my dogs.

Having crossed a well-wooded strath, we reached a little crystal river, whose margin was trampled down with the spoor of a great variety of heavy game, but especially of buffalo and rhinoceros. We took up the spoor of a troop of buffaloes, which we followed along a path made by the heavy beasts of the forest through a neck in the hills; and, emerging from the thicket, we beheld, on the other side of a valley which had opened upon us, a herd of about ten huge bull buffaloes. These I attempted to stalk, but was defeated by a large herd of zebras, which, getting our wind, charged past and started the buffaloes. I ordered the Bechuanas to release the dogs; and spurring Colesberg, which I rode for the first time since the affair with the lioness, I gave chase. The buffaloes crossed the valley in front of me, and made for a succession

* Six balls to the pound. Smooth-bore, equal in caliber to a six-gauge shotgun.

of dense thickets in the hills to the northwest. As they crossed the valley, by riding hard I obtained a broad-side shot at the last bull, and fired both barrels into him. He, however, continued his course, but I presently separated him, along with two other bulls, from the troop. My rifle being a two-grooved, which is hard to load, I was unable to do so on horseback, and followed with it empty, in the hope of bringing them to bay.

In passing through a grove of thorny trees I lost sight of the wounded buffalo; he had turned short and doubled back, a common practice with them when wounded. After following the other two at a hard gallop for about two miles, I was riding within five yards of their huge broad sterns. They exhaled a strong bovine smell, which came hot in my face. I expected every minute that they would come to bay, and give me time to load; but this they did not seem disposed to do. At length, finding I had the speed of them, I increased my pace; and going ahead, I placed myself right before the finest bull, thus expecting to force him to stand at bay; upon which he instantly charged me with a low roar, very similar to the voice of a lion. Colesberg neatly avoided the charge, and the bull resumed his northward course.

We now entered on rocky ground, and the forest became more dense as we proceeded. The buffaloes

were evidently making for some strong retreat. I, however, managed with much difficulty to hold them in view, following as best I could through thorny thickets. Isaac rode some hundred yards behind, and kept shouting to me to drop the pursuit, or I should be killed. At last the buffaloes suddenly pulled up, and stood at bay in a thicket within twenty yards of me. Springing from my horse, I hastily loaded my two-grooved rifle, which I had scarcely completed when Isaac rode up and inquired what had become of the buffaloes, little dreaming that they were standing within twenty yards of him. I answered by pointing my rifle across his horse's nose, and letting fly sharp right and left at the two buffaloes. A headlong charge, accompanied by a muffled roar, was the result. In an instant I was round a clump of tangled thorn-trees; but Isaac, by the violence of his efforts to get his horse in motion, lost his balance, and at the same instant, his girths giving way, himself, his saddle, and big Dutch rifle, all came to the ground together, with a heavy crash, right in the path of the infuriated buffaloes.

Two of the dogs, which had fortunately that moment joined us, met them in their charge, and, by diverting their attention, probably saved Isaac from instant destruction. The buffaloes now took up another position in an adjoining thicket. They

were both badly wounded, blotches and pools of blood marking the ground where they had stood. The dogs rendered me assistance by taking up their attention, and in a few minutes these two noble bulls breathed their last beneath the shade of a mimosa grove. Each of them, in dying, repeatedly uttered a very striking low, deep moan. This I subsequently ascertained the buffalo invariably utters when in the act of expiring.

On going up to them, I was astonished to behold their size and powerful appearance. Their horns reminded me of the rugged trunk of an oak-tree. Each horn was upward of a foot in breadth at the base, and together they effectually protected the skull with a massive and impenetrable shield. The horns, descending, and spreading out horizontally, completely overshadowed the animal's eyes, imparting to him a look the most ferocious and sinister that can be imagined. On my way to the wagons I shot a stag sassayby, and while I was engaged in removing his head a troop of about thirty doe pallahs cantered past me, followed by one princely old buck. Snatching up my rifle, I made a fine shot, and rolled him over in the grass.

Early in the afternoon I dispatched men with a pack-horse to bring the finer of the two buffalo-heads. It was so ponderous that two powerful men could with difficulty raise it from the ground. The

Bechuanas who had accompanied me, on hearing of my success, snatched up their shields and asagais, and hastened to secure the flesh, nor did I see any more of them, with the exception of the two Baquaines, who remained with me, being engaged in a plot with my interpreter to prevent my penetrating to Bamangwato. Isaac did not soon forget his adventure with the buffaloes; and at night, over the fire, he informed my men that I was mad, and that any man who followed me was going headlong to his own destruction. At an early hour on the 5th I continued my march through a glorious country of hill and dale, throughout which water was abundant.

Beautifully wooded hills and mountains stretched away on every side; some of the mountains were particularly grand and majestic, their summits being surrounded by steep precipices and abrupt parapets of rock, the abodes of whole colonies of black-faced baboons, which, astonished to behold such novel intruders upon their domains, leisurely descended the craggy mountain sides for a nearer inspection of our caravan. Seating themselves together upon a broad ledge, they seemed to hold a council as to the propriety of permitting us to proceed further through their territories.

Having advanced about nine miles, I drew up my wagons on the bank of a rivulet, where the spoor

of large game was extremely abundant. In the bed of the stream I discovered the scaly skin of a manis, which had been newly eaten by some bird of prey. This extraordinary animal, which in its habits partakes of the nature of the hedgehog, is about three feet in length, and is covered all over with an impenetrable coat of mail, consisting of large rough scales about the size and shape of the husk of an artichoke; these overlap one another in an extraordinary and very beautiful manner. Its tail is broad, and likewise covered with scales; on being disturbed it rolls itself into a ball. The manis is met with throughout the interior of South Africa, but it is rare and very seldom seen.

It was on the 4th of June that I beheld for the first time the rhinoceros. Having taken some coffee, I rode out unattended, with my rifle, and before proceeding far I fell in with a huge white rhinoceros with a large calf, standing in a thorny grove. Getting my wind, she set off at top speed through thick thorny bushes, the calf, as is invariably the case, taking the lead, and the mother guiding its course by placing her horn, generally about three feet in length, against its ribs. My horse shied very much at first, alarmed at the strange appearance of "Chukuroo," but by a sharp application of spur and jambok I prevailed upon him to follow, and presently, the ground improving, I

got alongside, and, firing at the gallop, sent a bullet through her shoulder. She continued her pace with blood streaming from the wound, and very soon reached an impracticable thorny jungle, where I could not follow, and instantly lost her. In half an hour I fell in with a second rhinoceros, being an old bull of the white variety. Dismounting, I crept within twenty yards, and saluted him with both barrels in the shoulder, upon which he made off, uttering a loud blowing noise, and upsetting every thing that obstructed his progress.

Shortly after this I found myself on the banks of the stream beside which my wagons were outspanned. Following along its margin, I presently beheld a bull of the borèlé, or black rhinoceros, standing within a hundred yards of me. Dismounting from my horse, I secured him to a tree, and then stalked within twenty yards of the huge beast, under cover of a large, strong bush. Borèlé, hearing me advance, came on to see what it was, and suddenly protruded his horny nose within twenty yards of me. Knowing well that a front shot would not prove deadly, I sprang to my feet and ran behind the bush. Upon this the villain charged, blowing loudly, and chased me round the bush. Had his activity been equal to his ugliness, my wanderings would have terminated here, but by my superior agility I had the advantage

in the turn. After standing a short time eyeing me through the bush, he got a whiff of my wind, which at once alarmed him. Uttering a blowing noise, and erecting his insignificant yet saucy-looking tail, he wheeled about, leaving me master of the field, when I sent a bullet through his ribs to teach him manners.

Of the rhinoceros there are four varieties in South Africa distinguished by the Bechuanas by the names of the borèlé, or black rhinoceros, the keitloa, or two-horned black rhinoceros, the muchocho, or common white rhinoceros, and the kobaoba, or long-horned white rhinoceros. Both varieties of the black rhinoceros are extremely fierce and dangerous, and rush headlong and unprovoked at any object which attracts their attention. They never attain much fat, and their flesh is tough, and not much esteemed by the Bechuanas. Their food consists almost entirely of the thorny branches of the wait-a-bit thorns. Their horns are much shorter than those of the other varieties, seldom exceeding eighteen inches in length. They are finely polished with constant rubbing against the trees. The skull is remarkably formed, its most striking feature being the tremendous thick ossification in which it ends above the nostrils. It is on this mass that the horn is supported. The horns are not connected with the skull, being at-

tached merely by the skin, and they may thus be separated from the head by means of a sharp knife. They are hard and perfectly solid throughout, and are a fine material for various articles, such as drinking-cups, mallets for rifles, handles for turner's tools, &c., &c. The horn is capable of a very high polish. The eyes of the rhinoceros are small and sparkling, and do not readily observe the hunter, provided he keeps to leeward of them. The skin is extremely thick, and only to be penetrated by bullets hardened with solder. During the day the rhinoceros will be found lying asleep or standing indolently in some retired part of the forest, or under the base of the mountains, sheltered from the power of the sun by some friendly grove of umbrella-topped mimosas. In the evening they commence their nightly ramble, and wander over a great extent of country. They usually visit the fountains between the hours of nine and twelve o'clock at night, and it is on these occasions that they may be most successfully hunted, and with the least danger. The black rhinoceros is subject to paroxysms of unprovoked fury, often plowing up the ground for several yards with its horns, and assaulting large bushes in the most violent manner. On these bushes they work for hours with their horns, at the same time snorting and blowing loudly, nor do they leave them in general

until they have broken them into pieces. The rhinoceros is supposed by many, and by myself among the rest, to be the animal alluded to by Job, chap. xxxix, verses 10 and 11, where it is written, "Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee? Wilt thou trust him because his strength is great? or wilt thou leave thy labor to him?" evidently alluding to an animal possessed of great strength and of untamable disposition, for both of which the rhinoceros is remarkable. All the four varieties delight to roll and wallow in mud, with which their rugged hides are generally incrustated. Both varieties of the black rhinoceros are much smaller and more active than the white, and are so swift that a horse with a rider on his back can rarely overtake them. The two varieties of the white rhinoceros are so similar in habits, that the description of one will serve for both, the principal difference consisting in the length and set of the anterior horn; that of the muchocho averaging from two to three feet in length, and pointing backward, while the horn of the kobaoba often exceeds four feet in length, and inclines forward from the nose at an angle of forty-five degrees. The posterior horn of either species seldom exceeds six or seven inches in length.

The kobaoba is the rarer of the two, and it is

found very far in the interior, chiefly to the eastward of the Limpopo. Its horns are very valuable for loading rods, supplying a substance at once suitable for a sporting implement and excellent for the purpose. Both these varieties of rhinoceros attain an enormous size, being the animals next in magnitude to the elephant. They feed solely on grass, carry much fat, and their flesh is excellent, being preferable to beef. They are of a much milder and more inoffensive disposition than the black rhinoceros, rarely charging their pursuer. Their speed is very inferior to that of the other varieties, and a person well mounted can overtake and shoot them. The head of these is a foot longer than that of the borèlé. They generally carry their heads low, whereas the borèlé, when disturbed, carries his very high, which imparts to him a saucy and independent air. Unlike the elephants, they never associate in herds, but are met with singly or in pairs. In districts where they are abundant, from three to six may be found in company, and I once saw upward of a dozen congregated together on some young grass, but such an occurrence is rare.

Finding that rhinoceroses were abundant in the vicinity, I resolved to halt a day for the purpose of hunting, and after an early breakfast on the 6th I rode southeast with the two Baquaines.

They led me along the bases of the mountains, through woody dells and open glades, and we eventually reached a grand forest gray with age. Here we found abundance of spoor of a variety of game, and started several herds of the more common varieties.

At length I observed an old bull eland standing under a tree. He was the first that I had seen, and was a noble specimen, standing about six feet high at the shoulder. Observing us, he made off at a gallop, springing over the trunks of decayed trees which lay across his path; but very soon he reduced his pace to a trot. Spurring my horse, another moment saw me riding hard behind him. Twice in the thickets I lost sight of him, and he very nearly escaped me; but at length, the ground improving, I came up with him, and rode within a few yards behind him. Long streaks of foam now streamed from his mouth, and a profuse perspiration had changed his sleek gray coat to an ashy blue. Tears trickled from his large dark eye, and it was plain that the eland's hours were numbered. Pitching my rifle to my shoulder, I let fly at the gallop, and mortally wounded him behind; then spurring my horse, I shot past him on his right side, and discharged my other barrel behind his shoulder, when the eland staggered for a mo-

ment and subsided in the dust. This magnificent animal is by far the largest of all the antelope tribe, exceeding a large ox in size. It also attains an extraordinary condition, being often burdened with a very large amount of fat. Its flesh is most excellent, and is justly esteemed above all others. It has a peculiar sweetness, and is tender and fit for use the moment the animal is killed. Like the gemsbok, the eland is independent of water, and frequents the borders of the great Kalahari desert in herds varying from ten to a hundred. It is also generally diffused throughout all the wooded districts of the interior where I hunted. Like other varieties of deer and antelope, the old males may often be found consorting together apart from the females, and a troop of these, when in full condition, may be likened to a herd of stalled oxen. The eland has less speed than any other variety of antelope; and, by judicious riding, they may be driven to camp from a great distance. In this manner I have often ridden the best bull out of the herd, and brought him within gunshot of my wagons, where I could more conveniently cut up and preserve the flesh, without the trouble of sending men and pack-oxen to fetch it. I have repeatedly seen an eland drop down dead at the end of a severe chase, owing to his plethoric habit.

The skin of the eland I had just shot emitted, like most other antelopes, the most delicious perfume of trees and grass.

The two Baquaines soon made their appearance, and seemed delighted at my success. Having kindled a fire, they cut out steaks, which they roasted on the embers: I also cooked a steak for myself, spitting it upon a forked branch, the other end of which I sharpened with my knife and stuck into the ground.

Having eaten my steak, I rode to my wagons, where I partook of coffee, and, having mounted a fresh horse, again set forth, accompanied by Carolus leading a pack-horse, to bring home the head of the eland and a supply of the flesh: I took all my dogs along with me to share in the banquet. We had not proceeded far when the dogs went ahead on some scent. Spurring my horse, I followed through the thorny bushes as best I might, and, emerging on an open glade, beheld two huge white rhinoceroses trotting along before me. The dogs attacked them with fury, and a scene of intense excitement ensued. The Old Gray, on observing them, pricked up his ears and seemed only half inclined to follow, but a sharp application of the spur reminded him of his duty, and I was presently riding within ten yards of the stern of the largest, and sent a bullet through her back.

The Old Gray shied considerably and became very unmanageable, and on one occasion, in consequence, the rhinoceros, finding herself hemmed in by a bend in a water-course, turned round to charge: I had a very narrow escape. Presently, galloping up on one side, I gave her a bad wound in the shoulder, soon after which she came to bay in the dry bed of a river. Dismounting from the horse, I commenced loading, but before this was accomplished she was off once more. I followed her, putting on my caps as I rode, and coming up alongside, I made a fine shot from the saddle, firing at the gallop. The ball entered somewhere near the heart. On receiving this shot she reeled about, while torrents of blood streamed from her mouth and wounds, and presently she rolled over and expired, uttering a shrill screaming sound as she died, which rhinoceroses invariably do while in the agonies of death.

The chase had led me close in along the northern base of a lofty detached mountain, the highest in all that country. This mountain is called by the Bechuanas the Mountain of the Eagles. The eland which I had shot in the morning lay somewhere to the southward of this mountain, but far in the level forest. Having rounded the mountain, I began to recognize the ground, and presently I had the satisfaction to behold a few vul-

tures soaring over the forest in advance, and, on proceeding a short distance further, large groups of these birds were seated on the gray and weather-beaten branches of the loftiest old trees of the forest. This was a certain sign that the eland was not far distant; and on raising my voice and loudly calling on the name of Carollus, I was instantly answered by that individual, who, heedless of his master's fate, was actively employed in cooking for himself a choice steak from the dainty rump of the eland. That night I slept beneath the blue and starry canopy of heaven. My sleep was light and sweet, and no rude dreams or cankering cares disturbed the equanimity of my repose.

CHAPTER III

GIRAFFES — RHINOCEROS

ON the 11th of June we were in the yoke soon after daybreak. It was a bitter cold morning, ice a quarter of an inch in thickness covering the pools of water. We were now clear of the extensive mountain ranges through which our road had wound since leaving Bakatla, and were approaching toward the southeastern limits of the great Kalahari desert, on whose borders Booby is situated. We continued our march, steering northwest, in which direction the distant blue hills (pointed out to me as the position of Booby) shot abruptly above the unvaried sameness of the intervening forest scenery. To the west, one eternal ocean-like expanse of gray forest stretched away in a level and unbroken plain, terminated only by the far horizon. Having performed a march of three hours, we crossed a small stream, where I outspanned to breakfast.

This day was to me rather a memorable one, as the first on which I saw and slew the lofty, graceful-looking giraffe or camelopard, with which, dur-

ing many years of my life, I had longed to form an acquaintance.

These gigantic and exquisitely beautiful animals, which are admirably formed by nature to adorn the fair forests that clothe the boundless plains of the interior, are widely distributed throughout the interior of Southern Africa, but are nowhere to be met with in great numbers. In countries unmolested by the intrusive foot of man, the giraffe is found generally in herds varying from twelve to sixteen; but I have not unfrequently met with herds containing thirty individuals, and on one occasion I counted forty together; this, however, was owing to chance, and about sixteen may be reckoned as the average number of a herd. These herds are composed of giraffes of various sizes, from the young giraffe of nine or ten feet in height, to the dark chestnut-colored old bull of the herd, whose exalted head towers above his companions, generally attaining to a height of upward of eighteen feet.

The females are of lower stature and more delicately formed than the males, their height averaging from sixteen to seventeen feet. Some writers have discovered ugliness and a want of grace in the giraffe, but I consider that he is one of the most strikingly beautiful animals in the creation; and when a herd of them is seen scattered through

a grove of the picturesque parasol-topped acacias which adorn their native plains, and on whose uppermost shoots they are enabled to browse by the colossal height with which nature has so admirably endowed them, he must indeed be slow of conception who fails to discover both grace and dignity in all their movements. There can be no doubt that every animal is seen to the greatest advantage in the haunts which nature destined him to adorn, and among the various living creatures which beautify this fair creation I have often traced a remarkable resemblance between the animal and the general appearance of the locality in which it is found. This I first remarked at an early period of my life, when entomology occupied a part of my attention.

No person following this interesting pursuit can fail to observe the extraordinary likeness which insects bear to the various abodes in which they are met with. Thus, among the long green grass we find a variety of long green insects, whose legs and antennæ so resemble the shoots emanating from the stalks of the grass that it requires a practiced eye to distinguish them. Throughout sandy districts varieties of insects are met with of a color similar to the sand which they inhabit. Among the green leaves of the various trees of the forest innumerable leaf-colored insects are to be found;

while, closely adhering to the rough gray bark of these forest-trees, we observe beautifully-colored gray-looking moths of various patterns, yet altogether so resembling the bark as to be invisible to the passing observer.

In like manner, among quadrupeds I have traced a corresponding analogy, for, even in the case of the stupendous elephant, the ashy color of his hide so corresponds with the general appearance of the gray thorny jungles which he frequents throughout the day, that a person unaccustomed to hunting elephants, standing on a commanding situation, might look down upon a herd and fail to detect their presence. And further, in the case of the giraffe, which is invariably met with among venerable forests, where innumerable blasted and weather-beaten trunks and stems occur, I have repeatedly been in doubt as to the presence of a troop of them until I had recourse to my spy-glass; and on referring the case to my savage attendants, I have known even their optics to fail, at one time mistaking these dilapidated trunks for camelopards, and again confounding real camelopards with these aged veterans of the forest.

Although we had now been traveling many days through the country of the giraffe, and had marched through forests in which their spoor was abundant, our eyes had not yet been gifted with a

sight of "Tootla" himself; it was therefore with indescribable pleasure that, on the evening of the 11th, I beheld a troop of these interesting animals.

Our breakfast being finished, I resumed my journey through an endless gray forest of camel-dorn and other trees, the country slightly undulating and grass abundant. A little before the sun went down my driver remarked to me, "I was just going to say, sir, that that old tree was a camelopard." On looking where he pointed, I saw that the old tree was indeed a camelopard, and, on casting my eyes a little to the right, I beheld a troop of them standing looking at us, their heads actually towering above the trees of the forest. It was imprudent to commence a chase at such a late hour, especially in a country of so level a character, where the chances were against my being able to regain my wagons that night. I, however, resolved to chance every thing; and directing my men to catch and saddle Colesberg, I proceeded in haste to buckle on my shooting-belt and spurs, and in two minutes I was in the saddle.

The giraffes stood looking at the wagons until I was within sixty yards of them, when, galloping round a thick bushy tree, under cover of which I had ridden, I suddenly beheld a sight the most astounding that a sportsman's eye can encounter. Before me stood a troop of ten colossal giraffes,

the majority of which were from seventeen to eighteen feet high. On beholding me they at once made off, twisting their long tails over their backs, making a loud switching noise with them, and cantered along at an easy pace, which, however, obliged Colesberg to put his best foot foremost to keep up with them.

The sensations which I felt on this occasion were different from any thing that I had before experienced during a long sporting career. My senses were so absorbed by the wondrous and beautiful sight before me that I rode along like one entranced, and felt inclined to disbelieve that I was hunting living things of this world. The ground was firm and favorable for riding. At every stride I gained upon the giraffes, and after a short burst at a swinging gallop I was in the middle of them, and turned the finest cow out of the herd. On finding herself driven from her comrades and hotly pursued, she increased her pace, and cantered along with tremendous strides, clearing an amazing extent of ground at every bound; while her neck and breast, coming in contact with the dead old branches of the trees, were continually strewing them in my path.

In a few minutes I was riding within five yards of her stern, and, firing at the gallop, I sent a bullet into her back. Increasing my pace, I next

rode alongside, and, placing the muzzle of my rifle within a few feet of her, I fired my second shot behind the shoulder; the ball, however, seemed to have little effect. I then placed myself directly in front, when she came to a walk. Dismounting, I hastily loaded both barrels, putting in double charges of powder. Before this was accomplished she was off at a canter. In a short time I brought her to a stand in the dry bed of a water-course, where I fired at fifteen yards, aiming where I thought the heart lay, upon which she again made off. Having loaded, I followed, and had very nearly lost her; she had turned abruptly to the left, and was far out of sight among the trees. Once more I brought her to a stand, and dismounted from my horse. There we stood together alone in the wild wood.

I gazed in wonder at her extreme beauty, while her soft dark eye, with its silky fringe, looked down imploringly at me, and I really felt a pang of sorrow in this moment of triumph for the blood I was shedding. Pointing my rifle toward the skies, I sent a bullet through her neck. On receiving it, she reared high on her hind legs, and fell backward with a heavy crash, making the earth shake around her. A thick stream of dark blood spouted out from the wound, her colossal limbs quivered for a moment, and she expired

I had little time to contemplate the prize I had won. Night was fast setting in, and it was very questionable if I should succeed in regaining my wagons; so, having cut off the tail of the giraffe, which was adorned with a bushy tuft of flowing black hair, I took "one last fond look," and rode hard for the spoor of the wagons, which I succeeded in reaching just as it was dark.

No pen nor words can convey to a sportsman what it is to ride in the midst of a troop of gigantic giraffes: it must be experienced to be understood. They emitted a powerful perfume, which in the chase came hot in my face, reminding me of the smell of a hive of heather honey in September. The greater part of this chase led through bushes of the wait-a-bit thorn of the most virulent description, which covered my legs and arms with blood long before I had killed the giraffe. I rode as usual in the kilt, with my arms bare to my shoulder. It was Chapelpark of Badenoch's old gray kilt, but in this chase it received a death blow which it never afterward recovered. . . .

[On the 13th Cumming arrived at Booby, a village of Bechuanas, where, after various discouragements, he obtained "guides" for the interior. These men tried to lead him astray, but he determined to advance in spite of them, relying upon his compass and trusting to luck.—*Ed.*]

On the morning of the 16th a large party of Caachy's men were still encamped beside us, and were under the impression that they had succeeded in prevailing upon me to follow them. Having filled all my water-casks, I ordered my men to inspan, the Bechuanas cracking their jokes and fancying that I should ride east as they led; but, to their astonishment, having inspanned, I told them that they had better all return to their captains, as I would shoot no more game for them, and I then ordered my men to ride for a conspicuous tree in the distance, bearing N.N.E. The Bechuanas sat still for some time to see how I would steer, and presently they shouldered their assagais and followed in our wake. This was a bold step on my part: the country looked very unlikely for water, and the Bechuanas swore that there was none for seven days' journey in that direction.

Our march lay through a boundless forest, with no hill or landmark to give me an idea where to search for water. Fortune, however, followed me here as usual: if I had lived all my life in the country, I could not have taken a more direct course for the spot I wished to reach. After we had proceeded some miles, a rising ground arose in our path, from the summit of which I fancied that a view might be obtained of the country in advance.

This view only served to dampen my hopes, the prospect exhibiting one slightly undulating, ocean-like expanse of forest and dense thorny jungles.

We halted for a few minutes to breathe the oxen, when the Bechuanas all came up, and sat down on the ground beside us. I asked them why they had not gone home as I had told them. They replied that they followed me because they were afraid that I should lose myself and my oxen. We held on, steering by compass N.N.E. All the Bechuanas now forsook me except the four ill-favored men whom Caachy had pointed out to me as my guides. These four, contrary to my expectations, followed in our wake at some distance. I walked a hundred yards in advance of the wagons with my compass in my hand, having ordered the men to follow my footsteps.

After traveling for several hours the country became more open, and presently we entered upon a wide tract that had been recently burned by the Bakalahari, or wild inhabitants of the desert. Here the trees and bushes stood scorched and burned, and there was not a blade of grass to cheer the eye—blackness and ashes stretched away on every side wherever I turned my anxious glance. I felt my heart sink within me as I beheld in dim perspective my famished and thirsty

oxen returning some days hence over this hopeless desert, all my endeavors to find water having failed, and all my bright hopes of elephant-hunting dashed and crowned with bitter disappointment: it was, indeed, a cheerless prospect. I had no friend to comfort or advise me, and I could hear my men behind me grumbling, and swearing that they would return home, the guides, who had now come up, asking them why they followed me to destruction.

At length we reached the further side of this dreary waste of ashes, but now an equally cheerless prospect was before me. We entered a vast forest, gray with extreme age, and so thick that we could not see forty yards in advance. We were obliged occasionally to halt the wagons and cut down trees and branches to admit of their passing; and, to make matters still worse, the country had become extremely heavy, the wagons sinking deep in soft sand. My men began to show a mutinous spirit by expressing their opinions aloud in my presence. I remonstrated with them, and told them that, if I did not bring them to water next day before the sun was under, they might turn the oxen on their spoor. We continued our march through this dense forest until nightfall, when I halted for the night beside a wide-spreading-tree: here I cast my oxen loose for

an hour, and then secured them on the yokes by moonlight.

I felt very sad and unhappy in my mind, for I considered that the chances were against me, and I shuddered at the idea of returning to the colony, after coming so very far, without shooting or even seeing what my heart most ardently desired, viz., a wild bull elephant free in his native jungle. I took some wine, and, coming to the fire which the men had kindled for the night beneath a magnificent old camel-dorn tree, I affected great cheerfulness and contentment, and, laughing at the four Bechuanas, I told them that I was not a child that they should lead me astray, but that I was an old warrior and a cunning hunter, and could find my way in strange lands. I laughed, but it was the laugh of despair, for I expected that next evening they would be laughing at me, on seeing me compelled to retrace my steps. One of the greatest difficulties that presented itself was, that, if I rode in advance to search for water, it would be almost impossible to find my way back to the wagons through that vast and trackless forest.

I went to bed, but tried in vain to sleep. Care and anxiety kept me awake until a little before morning, when I fell asleep for a short time, and dreamed that I had ridden in advance and found water. Day dawned, and I awoke in sorrow. My

hopes were like a flickering flame; care sat upon my brow. I cast loose my horses and oxen, and prepared some breakfast; I then directed my men to catch "The Cow" and "Colesberg," and give them some corn. I asked the guides if they could lead to me to water in a northerly direction, when they replied that no man ever found water in the desert. I did not talk more with them, but ordered my men to remain quiet during the day and listen for shots, lest I should lose my way in returning; and having given them ammunition to reply, I saddled up and held N.N.E. through thick forests, accompanied by Kleinboy. The ground was heavy, being soft sand, and the grass grew at intervals in detached bunches. We rode on without a break or a change, and found no spoor of wild animals to give me hope. I saw one duiker, but these antelopes are met with in the desert, and are independent of water.

At last we reached a more open part of the forest, and, emerging from the thicket, I perceived a troop of six or eight beautiful giraffes standing looking at us about two hundred yards to my right; but this was no time to give them chase, which I felt very much inclined to do. I allowed them to depart in peace, and continued my search for water. In this open glade I found two or three vleys that had once contained a little

water, but they were now hard and dry. Re-entering the dense forest, we held one point more to the east, and rode on as before. For miles we continued our search, until my hopes sank to a very low ebb; and Kleinboy swore that we should never regain the wagons. At length I perceived a sassayby walking before me. This antelope drinks every day. "Fresh vigor with the hope returned."

I once more pressed forward and cantered along, heedless of the distance which already intervened between me and my camp and the remonstrances of my attendant, who at last reined up his jaded steed, and said that he would not follow me further to my own destruction. I then pointed to the top of a distant gray tree that stretched its bare and weather-beaten branches above the heads of its surrounding comrades, and said that, if we saw nothing to give us hope when we reached that tree, I would abandon the search, and hunt during that season in Sichely's mountains to the east of Booby.

But fate had ordained that I should penetrate further into the interior of Africa, and before I reached the old gray tree I observed a small flight of Namaqua partridges flying across my path in a westerly direction. It was impossible to tell, until I should see a second flock of these, flying

at a different angle, whether the first flock had come from or were going to water. For this I accordingly watched, nor watched long in vain. A considerable distance ahead of me I detected a second flight of these birds likewise flying westerly; and it was evident, from their inclination, that they held for the same point as the first had done. Shortly afterward the first flight returned, flying high above our heads, uttering their soft, melodious cry of "pretty dear, pretty dear." I then rode in the direction from which the birds had come, and before proceeding far we discovered a slight hollow running north and south. This I determined to follow, and presently I discovered fresh spoor of a rhinoceros: this was a certain sign that water was somewhere not very distant.

Once more my dying hopes revived. I looked north at the glorious sky, which on this particular day was quite different from any thing I had beheld for months. It was like one of those glorious days when the bright blue sky in my own dark land is seen through ten thousand joyous fleecy clouds, and all nature seems to strive in its sunny hour to make poor unhappy man forget his cares and sorrows. I took it as a favorable omen, and, stirring my good and lively steed, I cantered along the glade. The hollow took a turn, on rounding which I perceived that I was in an elevated part

of the forest; and I, for the first time, obtained a distant view of the surrounding scenery.

Far as the eye could strain, it was all forest without a break; but there was now an undulating country before me, instead of the hopeless level through which I had come. I felt certain of success. We soon discovered vleys that had recently contained water, and at last a large pool of excellent water, enough to supply my cattle for several days. This was to me a joyous moment; it was a grand step toward attaining my object, and, as my difficulties had seemed to increase, my wish and determination to overcome them had become stronger. I knew that, whether I reached Bamangwato or not, if I could now only manage to travel north about eight days' journey I should fall in with elephants.

I was extremely fortunate in regaining my wagons, which I did without a turn in my course. On reaching them I at first pretended not to have discovered water; and I said to the guides, "There is nothing but dense wood in this country; can you not show me water? my oxen will die." They replied that they knew the country from infancy, and that if I wanted water I must travel till sunset, steering south of east. I then surprised them by saying, "Now I see that you wish to lead me astray; for I have seen abundance of water, and

I will find my way to Bamangwato, though you do all in your power to prevent me.”

Having inspanned, we held for the water, which I succeeded in reaching at a late hour. I still felt very anxious and full of care; but this first bold and successful step seemed to have made a strong impression on the guides, who still followed in our wake. It appeared to me that the orders they had received from their chief were to endeavor to lead me astray, and bring me to Sichely; but that, in the event of my finding the way myself, they were to accompany me to Sicomy, to insure his friendship, and to convince him of their chief's sincerity.

On the morning of the 18th, shortly after the day dawned, I was lying awake, thinking whether I should hunt or explore the country in advance, my men having, as usual, wasted their food and already consumed the bull wildebeest which I had shot for them two days previously, when suddenly I heard the voices of men a little distance down the glade. Fortune seemed determined to favor me. The guides, who sat by our fire, had not heard the voices; if they had been aware of men being near us, they would have run to meet them, and warned them to lead me astray. Springing from my bed, I hastily donned my attire, and, proceeding in the direction of the voices, I discovered a

party of ten Bechuanas squatted round a fire which they had just kindled. These men belonged to Booby; they had been hunting jackals at a place called Boötlonamy, which is half way from Booby to Bamangwato, and they were now returning home with their spoils. They at once pointed out to me the correct line of march for Bamangwato, and advised me of a fine vley in the forest one march in advance.

Having breakfasted, I inspanned, and after trekking for about six hours through dense forest we reached the vley. On the march it was necessary to have constant recourse to our axes to clear a path for the wagons. I was much delighted with the little loch to which we then came: it covered about an acre, in shape a circle, and its margin was imprinted with the fresh spoor of a variety of wild animals, such as giraffe, rhinoceros, buffalo, sassayby, pallah, zebra, lion, &c. We encamped beneath two wide-spreading shady trees, and I at once saddled up, and rode forth with Kleinboy to hunt, our flesh being at an end.

I had ridden about half a mile in a northeasterly course, through shady groves of mokala-trees, when suddenly I observed a stately giraffe walk slowly across my path, and crop the leaves from the upper branches of a mokala-tree about a hundred yards in advance. This was a fine look-out:

with hasty hand I shifted my saddle from "Sunday" to the Old Gray, and ordering Kleinboy to set the pack-saddle on "Sunday" and listen for shots, I rode slowly toward the giraffe. As I advanced I perceived another giraffe standing looking at me a little to my left, which gave the alarm by starting off, when I stirred my steed, and on rounding an intervening clump of trees I came full in sight of a troop of eight giraffes cantering before me. In another minute I was in the middle of them, and selecting a fine fat cow, I rode hard at her, and fired my first shot at the gallop. She got it through her ribs, and the blood flowed freely. Again and again I broke her from the troop, and again she joined them. At length I fired my second shot at her stern; after which, by heading her, I brought her to a stand, when I sprang from the fidgety, snorting Old Gray, and, hastily loading both barrels, I fired right and left for her heart. Her colossal frame shook convulsively for a few seconds, when, tottering forward, she subsided in the dust with tremendous violence.

Four single-shots brought Kleinboy and the pack-horse, and also Isaac with the four guides. The chase was all in thick forest, and had led me to within a few hundred yards of the wagons. The hungry guides seemed enchanted at the prospect of

such a banquet. They at once kindled a fire, and slept that night beside the carcass. I returned to the wagons with my horses laden with flesh. My mind was now once more at rest. I went to my bed and slept soundly. During the night lions roared around us.

On the 19th I rose at dawn of day, and took a stroll through the forest. Here I found some old dung of elephants, and observed several full-grown trees torn up by the roots, and others that had been shivered by the gigantic strength of those animals. The guides, finding that they prevailed nothing, at length volunteered to lead me to Bamangwato by a northerly course, and promised that I should not lack for water. We inspanned, and held on till sundown, proceeding in a north-easterly course, when we halted in dense forest without water. Our march lay through an interesting country well adapted for hunting the eland and giraffe. The forest was in many places thin and open, with here and there gigantic old trees of picturesque appearance standing detached, some half dead, and others falling to pieces from age. The soil was soft yet firm, and admirably suited for riding. The spoor of eland and giraffe was abundant.

On the 20th we inspanned at dawn of day, and, having proceeded about five miles, reached a mis-

erable little kraal or village of Bakalahari. Here was a vley of water, beside which we outspanned. Starvation was written in the faces of these inhabitants of the forest. In their vicinity were a few small gardens, containing water-melons and a little corn. Occasionally they have the luck to capture some large animal in a pitfall, when for a season they live in plenty. But as they do not possess salt, the flesh soon spoils, when they are compelled once more to roam the forest in quest of fruits and roots, on which, along with locusts, they in a great measure subsist.

In districts where game is abundant, they often construct their pits on a large scale, and erect hedges in the form of a crescent, extending to nearly a mile on either side of the pit. By this means the game may easily be driven into the pitfalls, which are carefully covered over with thin sticks and dry grass, and thus whole herds of zebras and wildebeests are massacred at once, which capture is followed by the most disgusting banquets, the poor starving savages gorging and surfeiting in a manner worthy only of the vulture or hyæna. They possess no cattle, and if they did, the nearest chief would immediately rob them. All that part of the country abounded with the pitfalls made by these and others of the Bakalahari. Many of these had been dug expressly for

the giraffe, and were generally three feet wide and ten long; their depth was from nine to ten feet. They were placed in the path of the camelopard, and in the vicinity of several of these we detected the bones of giraffes, indicating the success that had attended their formation.

At mid-day we resumed our march, halting at sunset without water. The first part of this march lay through dense forest, where we were obliged to cut a pathway with our axes. Here the spoor of eland was abundant. In the evening we passed through an open tract very thinly wooded, where I saw abundance of springbok and blue wildebeest. At midnight, the dogs giving chase to some animal, I sprang out of bed, and, following them in my shirt, found them standing over a jackal. The guides skinned him, and, having baked him in the ashes, they consumed him.

On the 22d, ordering my men to move on toward a fountain in the center of the plain, I rode forth with Ruyter, and held east through a grove of lofty and wide-spreading mimosas, most of which were more or less damaged by the gigantic strength of a troop of elephants, which had passed there about twelve months before. Having proceeded about two miles with large herds of game on every side, I observed a crusty-looking old bull borèlé, or black rhinoceros, cocking his ears, one hundred

yards in advance. He had not observed us; and soon after he walked slowly toward us, and stood broadside to, eating some wait-a-bit thorns within fifty yards of me. I fired from my saddle, and sent a bullet in behind his shoulder, upon which he rushed forward about one hundred yards in tremendous consternation, blowing like a grampus, and then stood looking about him. Presently he made off. I followed, but found it hard to come up with him. When I overtook him I saw the blood running freely from his wound.

The chase led through a large herd of blue wildebeests, zebras, and springboks, which gazed at us in utter amazement. At length I fired my second barrel, but my horse was fidgety, and I missed. I continued riding alongside of him, expecting in my ignorance that at length he would come to bay, which rhinoceroses never do; when suddenly he fell flat on his broadside on the ground, but, recovering his feet, resumed his course as if nothing had happened. Becoming at last annoyed at the length of the chase, as I wished to keep my horses fresh for the elephants, and being indifferent whether I got the rhinoceros or not, as I observed that his horn was completely worn down with age and the violence of his disposition, I determined to bring matters to a crisis; so, spurring my horse, I dashed ahead, and rode right in his path. Upon

this the hideous monster instantly charged me in the most resolute manner, blowing loudly through his nostrils; and although I quickly wheeled about to my left, he followed me at such a furious pace for several hundred yards, with his horrid horny snout within a few yards of my horse's tail, that my little Bushman, who was looking on in great alarm, thought his master's destruction inevitable.

It was certainly a very near thing; my horse was extremely afraid, and exerted his utmost energies on the occasion. The rhinoceros, however, wheeled about, and continued his former course; and I, being perfectly satisfied with the interview which I had already enjoyed with him, had no desire to cultivate his acquaintance any further, and accordingly made for camp. We left the fountain of Boötlonamy the same day, and marched about six miles through an old gray forest of mimosas, when we halted for the night. Large flocks of guinea-fowls roosted in the trees around our encampment, several of which I shot for my supper.

On the 23d we inspanned by moonlight, and continued our march through a thinly-wooded, level country. It was a lovely morning; the sun rose in great splendor, and the sky was beautifully overcast with clouds. Having proceeded about ten miles, the country became thickly covered with detached forest-trees and groves of wait-a-bit

thorns. The guides now informed us that the water, which is called by the Bechuanas "Lepeby," was only a short distance in advance, upon which I saddled steeds, and rode ahead with the Bushman, intending to hunt for an hour before breakfast.

Presently we reached an open glade in the forest, where I observed a herd of zebras in advance; and on my left stood a troop of springboks, with two leopards watching them from behind a bush. I rode on, and soon fell in with a troop of hartebeests, and, a little after, with a large herd of blue wildebeests and pallahs. I followed these for some distance, when they were re-enforced by two other herds of pallahs and wildebeests. Three black rhinoceroses now trotted across my path. Presently I sprang from my horse, and fired right and left at a princely bull blue wildebeest. He got both balls, but did not fall; and I immediately lost sight of him in the dense ranks of his shaggy companions. The game increased as we proceeded, until the whole forest seemed alive with a variety of beautifully-colored animals. On this occasion I was very unfortunate; I might have killed any quantity of game if venison had been my object; but I was trying to get a few very superior heads of some of the master bucks of the pallahs. Of these I wounded four select old

bucks, but in the dust and confusion caused by the innumerable quantity of the game I managed to lose them all.

We had now ridden many miles from the wagons; and feeling faint from want of food, I dropped the chase in disgust, and, without looking at my compass, ordered the Bushman to go ahead. My attention had been so engrossed with the excitement of the pursuit, that I had not the remotest idea of the course I had taken, and the whole country exhibited such an aspect of sameness, that there was no landmark nor eminence of any description by which to steer.

Having ridden many miles through the forest, I at length asked the Bushman, in whom on such occasions I generally placed great confidence, if he was sure he was riding in the right direction, and, as he appeared quite confident, I allowed him to proceed. At length he said that we had gone a little too far to the left, and led me away several miles to the right, which was westerly; whereas the wagons eventually proved to be a long way to the east. I felt convinced that we were wrong, and, reining up, a discussion arose between us, the Bushman still maintaining that we must ride west, while I was certain that our course should be east.

I now adopted my own opinion, and, having rid-

den many miles in an easterly direction, we were at one time close upon the wagons, when the thick-headed Bushman declared that if I persevered we should never see the wagons again, and I with equal stupidity yielded to his advice, and a south-westerly course was once more adopted. Having ridden for many miles, I again reined up, and again told the Bushman we were wrong; upon which he for the first time acknowledged that he knew nothing at all about the matter, but stated it to be his impression that we ought to ride further to the west. My head was so confused that I lost all recollection of how we had ridden; and while I was deliberating what I should do, I observed a colume of smoke a long way to the north, which I at once imagined had been kindled by my followers to guide their lost master to the wagons.

With revived spirits, I stirred my jaded steed and made for the smoke; but, alas! this only served to lead me further astray. After riding many miles in that direction, I discovered that the fire was at an amazing distance, and could not have been kindled by my men; it was the wild Bakalahari of the desert burning the old dry grass. I was now like a seaman in a hurricane — at my wit's end — I knew not how to ride nor what to do. The sun, which had just risen when I left the wagons, was about to set. There was no land-

mark whatever by which to steer; I might wander for days, and not discover water.

To find the wagons was comparatively a trifle. I thought little of them; it was the thought of water that harrowed my mind. Already the pangs of thirst began to seize me. I had ridden all day, under the hot sun, and had neither eaten nor drunk since early the preceding evening. I felt faint and weary, and my heart sank as horrible visions of a lingering death by maddening thirst arose before me. Dismounting from my horse, I sat down to think what I should do. I knew exactly by my compass the course we had been steering since we left Booby. I accordingly resolved to ride southwest for many miles, the course of the wagons having been northeast, and then to send Ruyter across the country a little to the north of west, while I should hold a corresponding course in an easterly direction. By this means one of us could not fail to find the spoor, and I arranged that at nightfall we should meet at some conspicuous tree.

Having thus resolved, I mounted my horse, which was half dead with thirst and fatigue, and, having ridden southwest for several miles, I and Ruyter separated at a conspicuous tree, and rode in opposite directions. Before riding far I recognized the country as being the spot where I had

seen the leopards in the morning. I at once followed Ruyter, and fired several signal shots, which he fortunately heard, and soon joined me. We then rode due east, and eventually, to my inexpressible gratification, we discovered the spoor of the wagons, which we reached after following it for about four miles in a northeasterly direction.

Our poor horses were completely exhausted, and could barely walk to the camp. I found my wagons drawn up beside the strong fountain of Lepeby, which, issuing from beneath a stratum of white tufous rock, formed an extensive deep pool of pure water, adorned on one side with lofty green reeds. This fountain was situated at the northern extremity of a level bare vley, surrounded by dense covers of the wait-a-bit thorns. Such a peculiar sameness characterized the country, that a person wandering only a few hundred yards from the fountain would have considerable difficulty in regaining it. It was night when I reached the wagons, and two or three cups of coffee soon restored me to my wonted vigor.

On the following morning, from earliest dawn until we trekked, which we did about 10 A. M., large herds of game kept pouring in to drink from every side, completely covering the open space, and imparting to it the appearance of a cattle-fair; blue wildebeests, zebras, sassaybies, pallahs, springboks,

&c., capered fearlessly up to the water, troop after troop, within two hundred yards of us. In former years a tribe of Bechuanas had frequented this fountain, and I beheld the skeletons of many rhinoceroses and of one elephant bleaching in the sun; but the powerful and cruel Matabili had attacked the tribe, and driven them to seek a home elsewhere. I shot a pallah and a wildebeest, which we secured behind the wagons. About 10 A. M., we inspanned, and within a mile of Lepeby we passed through another similar open vley, containing a strong fountain of delicious water. We continued our march till sundown through an undulating open country, thinly covered with detached trees and thorny bushes, and encamped in a sandy desert without water.

CHAPTER IV

GIRAFFES — ELEPHANTS

ON the 25th, at dawn of day, we inspanned, and trekked about five hours in a north-easterly course, through a boundless open country sparingly adorned with dwarfish old trees. In the distance the long-sought mountains of Bamangwato at length loomed blue before me. We halted beside a glorious fountain, which at once made me forget all the cares and difficulties I had encountered in reaching it. The name of this fountain was Massouey, but I at once christened it "the Elephant's own Fountain." This was a very remarkable spot on the southern borders of endless elephant forests, at which I had at length arrived. The fountain was deep and strong, situated in a hollow at the eastern extremity of an extensive vley, and its margin was surrounded by a level stratum of solid old red sandstone. Here and there lay a thick layer of soil upon the rock, and this was packed flat with the fresh spoor of elephants. Around the water's

edge the very rock was worn down by the gigantic feet which for ages had trodden there.

The soil of the surrounding country was white and yellow sand, but grass, trees, and bushes were abundant. From the borders of the fountain a hundred well-trodden elephant foot-paths led away in every direction, like the radii of a circle. The breadth of these paths was about three feet; those leading to the northward and east were the most frequented, the country in those directions being well wooded. We drew up the wagons on a hillock on the eastern side of the water. This position commanded a good view of any game that might approach to drink.

I had just cooked my breakfast, and commenced to feed, when I heard my men exclaim, "Almagtig keek de ghroote clomp cameel;" and, raising my eyes from my sassayby stew, I beheld a truly beautiful and very unusual scene. From the margin of the fountain there extended an open level vley, without a tree or bush, that stretched away about a mile to the northward, where it was bounded by extensive groves of wide-spreading mimosas. Up the middle of this vley stalked a troop of ten colossal giraffes, flanked by two large herds of blue wildebeests and zebras, with an advanced guard of pallahs. They were all coming to the fountain to drink, and would be within rifle-shot of

the wagons before I could finish my breakfast. I, however, continued to swallow my food with the utmost expedition, having directed my men to catch and saddle Colesberg. In a few minutes the giraffes were slowly advancing within two hundred yards, stretching their graceful necks, and gazing in wonder at the unwonted wagons.

Grasping my rifle, I now mounted Colesberg, and rode slowly toward them. They continued gazing at the wagons until I was within one hundred yards of them, when, whisking their long tails over their rumps, they made off at an easy canter. As I pressed upon them they increased their pace; but Colesberg had much the speed of them, and before we had proceeded half a mile I was riding by the shoulder of the dark-chestnut old bull, whose head towered high above the rest. Letting fly at the gallop, I wounded him behind the shoulder; soon after which I broke him from the herd, and presently, going ahead of him, he came to a stand. I then gave him a second bullet, somewhere near the first. These two shots had taken effect, and he was now in my power, but I would not lay him low so far from camp; so, having waited until he had regained his breath, I drove him half way back toward the wagons. Here he became obstreperous; so, loading one barrel, and pointing my rifle toward the clouds, I shot him in

the throat, when, rearing high, he fell backward and expired. This was a magnificent specimen of the giraffe, measuring upward of eighteen feet in height. I stood for nearly half an hour engrossed in the contemplation of his extreme beauty and gigantic proportions; and, if there had been no elephants, I could have exclaimed, like Duke Alexander of Gordon when he killed the famous old stag with seventeen tine, "Now I can die happy." But I longed for an encounter with the noble elephants, and I thought little more of the giraffe than if I had killed a gemsbok or an eland.

In the afternoon I removed my wagons to a correct distance from the fountain, and drew them up among some bushes about four hundred yards to leeward of the water. In the evening I was employed in manufacturing hardened bullets for the elephants, using a composition of one of pewter to four of lead; and I had just completed my work, when we heard a troop of elephants splashing and trumpeting in the water. This was to me a joyful sound; I slept little that night.

On the 26th I arose at earliest dawn, and, having fed four of my horses, proceeded with Isaac to the fountain to examine the spoor of the elephants which had drunk there during the night. A number of the paths contained fresh spoor of elephants of all sizes, which had gone from the

fountain in different directions. We reckoned that at least thirty of these gigantic quadrupeds had visited the water during the night.

We hastily returned to camp, where, having breakfasted, I saddled up, and proceeded to take up the spoor of the largest bull elephant, accompanied by after-riders and three of the guides to assist in spooring. I was also accompanied by my dogs. Having selected the spoor of a mighty bull, the Bechuanas went ahead, and I followed them. It was extremely interesting and exciting work. The foot-print of this elephant was about two feet in diameter, and was beautifully visible in the soft sand. The spoor at first led us for about three miles in an easterly direction, along one of the sandy foot-paths, without check. We then entered a very thick forest, and the elephant had gone a little out of the path to smash some trees, and to plow up the earth with his tusks. He soon, however, again took the path, and held along it for several miles.

We were on rather elevated ground, with a fine view of a part of the Bamangwato chain of mountains before us. Here the trees were large and handsome, but not strong enough to resist the inconceivable strength of the mighty monarchs of these forests. Almost every tree had half its branches broken short by them, and at every

hundred yards I came upon entire trees, and these the largest in the forest, uprooted clean out of the ground, or broken short across their stems. I observed several large trees placed in an inverted position, having their roots uppermost in the air. Our friend had here halted, and fed for a long time upon a large, wide-spreading tree, which he had broken short across within a few feet of the ground. After following the spoor some distance further through the dense mazes of the forest, we got into ground so thickly trodden by elephants that we were baffled in our endeavors to trace the spoor any further; and after wasting several hours in attempting by casts to take up the proper spoor, we gave it up, and with a sorrowful heart I turned my horse's head toward camp.

Having reached the wagons, while drinking my coffee I reviewed the whole day's work, and felt much regret at my want of luck in my first day's elephant hunting, and I resolved that night to watch the water, and try what could be done with elephants by night shooting. I accordingly ordered the usual watching-hole to be constructed, and, having placed my bedding in it, repaired thither shortly after sundown. I had lain about two hours in the hole, when I heard a low rumbling noise like distant thunder, caused (as the Bechuanas affirmed) by the bowels of the elephants which

were approaching the fountain. I lay on my back, with my mouth open, attentively listening, and could hear them plowing up the earth with their tusks.

Presently they walked up to the water, and commenced drinking within fifty yards of me. They approached with so quiet a step that I fancied it was the footsteps of jackals which I heard, and I was not aware of their presence until I heard the water, which they had drawn up in their trunks and were pouring into their mouths, dropping into the fountain. I then peeped from my sconce with a beating heart, and beheld two enormous bull elephants, which looked like two great castles, standing before me. I could not see very distinctly, for there was only starlight. Having lain on my breast some time taking my aim, I let fly at one of the elephants, using the Dutch rifle carrying six to the pound. The ball told loudly on his shoulder, and, uttering a loud cry, he stumbled through the fountain, when both made off in different directions.

All night large herds of zebras and blue wildebeests capered around me, coming sometimes within a few yards. Several parties of rhinoceroses also made their appearance. I felt a little apprehensive that lions might visit the fountain, and every time that hyænas or jackals lapped the water I

looked forth, but no lions appeared. At length I fell into a sound sleep, nor did I again raise my head until the bright star of morn had shot far above the eastern horizon.

Before proceeding further with my narrative, it may here be interesting to make a few remarks on the African elephant and his habits. The elephant is widely diffused through the vast forests, and is met with in herds of various numbers. The male is very much larger than the female, consequently much more difficult to kill. He is provided with two enormous tusks. These are long, tapering, and beautifully arched; their length averages from six to eight feet, and they weigh from sixty to a hundred pounds each.

In the vicinity of the equator the elephants attain to a greater size than to the southward; and I am in the possession of a pair of tusks of the African bull elephant, the larger of which measures ten feet nine inches in length, and weighs one hundred and seventy-three pounds. The females, unlike Asiatic elephants in this respect, are likewise provided with tusks. The price which the largest ivory fetches in the English market is from £28 to £32 per hundred and twelve pounds.

Old bull elephants are found singly or in pairs, or consorting together in small herds, varying from six to twenty individuals. The younger bulls re-

main for many years in the company of their mothers, and these are met together in large herds of from twenty to a hundred individuals. The food of the elephant consists of the branches, leaves, and roots of trees, and also of a variety of bulbs, of the situation of which he is advised by his exquisite sense of smell. To obtain these he turns up the ground with his tusks, and whole acres may be seen thus plowed up.

Elephants consume an immense quantity of food, and pass the greater part of the day and night in feeding. Like the whale in the ocean, the elephant on land is acquainted with, and roams over, wide and extensive tracts. He is extremely particular in always frequenting the freshest and most verdant districts of the forest; and when one district is parched and barren, he will forsake it for years, and wander to great distances in quest of better pasture.

The elephant entertains an extraordinary horror of man, and a child can put a hundred of them to flight by passing at a quarter of a mile to windward; and when thus disturbed, they go a long way before they halt. It is surprising how soon these sagacious animals are aware of the presence of a hunter in their domains. When one troop has been attacked, all the other elephants frequenting the district are aware of the fact within two or

three days, when they all forsake it, and migrate to distant parts, leaving the hunter no alternative but to inspan his wagons, and remove to fresh ground. This constitutes one of the greatest difficulties which a skillful elephant-hunter encounters. Even in the most remote parts, which may be reckoned the head-quarters of the elephant, it is only occasionally, and with inconceivable toil and hardship, that the eye of the hunter is cheered by the sight of one.

Owing to habits peculiar to himself, the elephant is more inaccessible, and much more rarely seen, than any other game quadruped, excepting certain rare antelopes. They choose for their resort the most lonely and secluded depths of the forest, generally at a very great distance from the rivers and fountains at which they drink. In dry and warm weather they visit these waters nightly, but in cool and cloudy weather they drink only once every third or fourth day. About sundown the elephant leaves his distant mid-day haunt, and commences his march toward the fountain, which is probably from twelve to twenty miles distant. This he generally reaches between the hours of nine and midnight, when, having slaked his thirst and cooled his body by spouting large volumes of water over his back with his trunk, he resumes the path to his forest solitudes.

Having reached a secluded spot, I have remarked that full-grown bulls lie down on their broadsides, about the hour of midnight, and sleep for a few hours. The spot which they usually select is an ant-hill, and they lie around it with their backs resting against it; these hills, formed by the white ants, are from thirty to forty feet in diameter at their base. The mark of the under tusk is always deeply imprinted in the ground, proving that they lie upon their sides. I never remarked the females had thus lain down, and it is only in the more secluded districts that the bulls adopt this practice; for I observed that, in districts where the elephants were liable to frequent disturbance, they took repose standing on their legs beneath some shady tree. Having slept, they then proceed to feed extensively. Spreading out from one another, and proceeding in a zigzag course, they smash and destroy all the finest trees in the forest which happen to lie in their course.

The number of goodly trees which a herd of bull elephants will thus destroy is utterly incredible. They are extremely capricious, and on coming to a group of five or six trees, they break down not unfrequently the whole of them, when, having perhaps only tasted one or two small branches, they pass on and continue their wanton work of destruction. I have repeatedly ridden through for-

ests where the trees thus broken lay so thick across one another that it was almost impossible to ride through the district, and it is in situations such as these that attacking the elephant is attended with most danger. During the night they will feed in open plains and thinly-wooded districts, but as day dawns they retire to the densest covers within reach, which nine times in ten are composed of the impracticable wait-a-bit thorns, and here they remain drawn up in a compact herd during the heat of the day. In remote districts, however, and in cool weather, I have known herds to continue pasturing throughout the whole day.

The appearance of the wild elephant is inconceivably majestic and imposing. His gigantic height and colossal bulk, so greatly surpassing all other quadrupeds, combined with his sagacious disposition and peculiar habits, impart to him an interest in the eyes of the hunter which no other animal can call forth. The pace of the elephant, when undisturbed, is a bold, free sweeping step; and from the peculiar spongy formation of his foot, his tread is extremely light and inaudible, and all his movements are attended with a peculiar gentleness and grace. This, however, only applies to the elephant when roaming undisturbed in his jungle; for, when roused by the hunter, he proves

the most dangerous enemy, and far more difficult to conquer than any other beast of the chase.

On the 27th, as the day dawned, I left my shooting-hole, and proceeded to inspect the spoor of my wounded elephant. After following it for some distance I came to an abrupt hillock, and fancying that from the summit a good view might be obtained of the surrounding country, I left my followers to seek the spoor while I ascended. I did not raise my eyes from the ground until I had reached the highest pinnacle of rock. I then looked east, and, to my inexpressible gratification, beheld a troop of nine or ten elephants quietly browsing within a quarter of a mile of me. I allowed myself only one glance at them, and then rushed down to warn my followers to be silent.

A council of war was hastily held, the result of which was my ordering Isaac to ride hard to camp, with instructions to return as quickly as possible, accompanied by Kleinboy, and to bring me my dogs, the large Dutch rifle, and a fresh horse. I once more ascended the hillock to feast my eyes upon the enchanting sight before me, and, drawing out my spy-glass, narrowly watched the motions of the elephants. The herd consisted entirely of females, several of which were followed by small calves.

Presently, on reconnoitering the surrounding

country, I discovered a second herd, consisting of five bull elephants, which were quietly feeding about a mile to the northward. The cows were feeding toward a rocky ridge that stretched away from the base of the hillock on which I stood. Burning with impatience to commence the attack, I resolved to try the stalking system with these, and to hunt the troop of bulls with dogs and horses. Having thus decided, I directed the guides to watch the elephants from the summit of the hillock, and with beating heart I approached them. The ground and wind favoring me, I soon gained the rocky ridge toward which they were feeding. They were now within one hundred yards, and I resolved to enjoy the pleasure of watching their movements for a little before I fired. They continued to feed slowly toward me, breaking the branches from the trees with their trunks, and eating the leaves and tender shoots. I soon selected the finest in the herd, and kept my eye on her in particular. At length two of the troop had walked slowly past at about sixty yards, and the one which I had selected was feeding with two others, on a thorny tree before me.

My hand was now as steady as the rock on which it rested; so, taking a deliberate aim, I let fly at her head a little behind the eye. She got it hard and sharp, just where I aimed, but it did

not seem to affect her much. Uttering a loud cry, she wheeled about, when I gave her the second ball close behind the shoulder. All the elephants uttered a strange rumbling noise, and made off in a line to the northward at a brisk ambling pace, their huge, fan-like ears flapping in the ratio of their speed. I did not wait to load, but ran back to the hillock to obtain a view. On gaining its summit, the guides pointed out the elephants; they were standing in a grove of shady trees, but the wounded one was some distance behind with another elephant, doubtless its particular friend, who was endeavoring to assist it.

These elephants had probably never before heard the report of a gun, and, having neither seen nor smelt me, they were unaware of the presence of man, and did not seem inclined to go any further. Presently my men hove in sight, bringing the dogs; and when these came up, I waited some time before commencing the attack, that the dogs and horses might recover their wind. We then rode slowly toward the elephants, and had advanced within two hundred yards of them when, the ground being open, they observed us, and made off in an easterly direction; but the wounded one immediately dropped astern, and the next moment was surrounded by the dogs, which, barking angrily, seemed to engross her attention.

Having placed myself between her and the retreating troop, I dismounted to fire within forty yards of her, in open ground. Colesberg was extremely afraid of the elephants, and gave me much trouble, jerking my arm when I tried to fire. At length I let fly; but, on endeavoring to regain my saddle, Colesberg declined to allow me to mount; and when I tried to lead him, and run for it, he only backed toward the wounded elephant. At this moment I heard another elephant close behind; and on looking about, I beheld the "friend," with uplifted trunk, charging down upon me at top speed, shrilly trumpeting, and following an old black pointer named Schwart, that was perfectly deaf, and trotted along before the enraged elephant quite unaware of what was behind him.

I felt certain that she would have either me or my horse. I, however, determined not to relinquish my steed, but to hold on by the bridle. My men, who of course kept at a safe distance, stood aghast with their mouths open, and for a few seconds my position was certainly not an enviable one. Fortunately, however, the dogs took off the attention of the elephants; and just as they were upon me, I managed to spring into the saddle, where I was safe. As I turned my back to mount, the elephants were so very near that I really expected to feel one of their trunks lay hold of me. I

rode up to Kleinboy for my double-barreled two-grooved rifle: he and Isaac were pale and almost speechless with fright. Returning to the charge, I was soon once more alongside, and, firing from the saddle, I sent another brace of bullets into the wounded elephant. Colesberg was extremely unsteady, and destroyed the correctness of my aim.

The friend now seemed resolved to do some mischief, and charged me furiously, pursuing me to a distance of several hundred yards. I therefore deemed it proper to give her a gentle hint to act less officiously, and, accordingly, having loaded, I approached within thirty yards, and gave it her sharp, right and left, behind the shoulder, upon which she at once made off with drooping trunk, evidently with a mortal wound. I never recur to this my first day's elephant shooting without regretting my folly in contenting myself with securing only one elephant.

The first was now dying, and could not leave the ground, and the second was also mortally wounded, and I had only to follow and finish her; but I foolishly allowed her to escape, while I amused myself with the first, which kept walking backward, and standing by every tree she passed. Two more shots finished her: on receiving them, she tossed her trunk up and down two or three times, and, falling on her broadside against a

thorny tree, which yielded like grass before her enormous weight, she uttered a deep hoarse cry and expired.

This was a very handsome old cow elephant, and was decidedly the best in the troop. She was in excellent condition, and carried a pair of long and perfect tusks. I was in high spirits at my success, and felt so perfectly satisfied with having killed one, that, although it was still early in the day, and my horses were fresh, I allowed the troop of five bulls to remain unmolested, foolishly trusting to fall in with them next day. How little did I then know of the habits of elephants, or the rules to be adapted in hunting them, or deem it probable I should never see them more!

Having knee-haltered our horses, we set to work with our knives and assagais to prepare the skull for the hatchet, in order to cut out the tusks, nearly half the length of which, I may mention, is imbedded in bone sockets in the fore part of the skull. To cut out the tusks of a cow elephant requires barely one-fifth of the labor requisite to cut out those of a bull; and when the sun went down, we had managed by our combined efforts to cut out one of the tusks of my first elephant, with which we triumphantly returned to camp, having left the guides in charge of the carcass, where they volunteered to take up their quarters for the

night. On reaching my wagons I found Johannus and Carollus in a happy state of indifference to all passing events: they were both very drunk, having broken into my wine-cask and spirit-case.

On the 28th I arose at an early hour, and, burning with anxiety to look forth once more from the summit of the hillock which the day before brought me such luck, I made a hasty breakfast, and rode thither with after-riders and my dogs. But, alas! I had allowed the golden opportunity to slip. This day I sought in vain, and although I often again ascended to the summit of my favorite hillock on that and on the succeeding year, my eyes were destined never again to hail from it a troop of elephants. . . .

It was ever to me a source of great pleasure to reflect that, while enriching myself in following my favorite pursuit of elephant hunting I was feeding and making happy the starving families of hundreds of the Bechuana and Bakalahari tribes, who invariably followed my wagons, and assisted me in my hunting, in numbers varying from fifty to two hundred at a time. These men were often accompanied by their wives and families, and when an elephant, hippopotamus, or other large animal was slain, all hands repaired to the spot, when every inch of the animal was reduced to biltongue, viz., cut into long narrow

strips, and hung in festoons upon poles, and dried in the sun: even the entrails were not left for the vultures and hyænas, and the very bones were chopped to pieces with their hatchets to obtain the marrow, with which they enriched their soup.

[Cumming now advanced into the territory of the Bamangwato, whose king, Sicomy, met him in the ravine of Lesauau. The canny Scot traded with Sicomy at the rate of one cheap musket for two or three elephant tusks, a gross profit of about 3,000 per cent. Charging against this, however, the loss of horses and oxen, and other expenses of the caravan, it is doubtful if he came out even.

Thereafter, for several months, he continued hunting elephants in the great forest northward and eastward of the Bamangwato Mountains, where no white hunter had ever preceded him.—*Ed.*]

At an early hour on the 24th of July, upon the strength of the report brought to us on the preceding evening, I took the field with Isaac and Kleinboy as after-riders, accompanied by Mutchu-isho and a hundred and fifty of his tribe. We held a northeasterly course, and, having proceeded about five miles through the forest, reached a fountain, where I observed the spoor of a herd of cow elephants, two days old. Here we made a

short halt, and snuff was briskly circulated, while the leading men debated on the course we were to follow, and it was agreed that we should hold for the Bakalahari kraal. Having continued our course for several miles, we rounded the northern extremity of a range of rocky mountains which rose abruptly in the forest and stretched away to the south of east in a long-continued chain. Here we were met by men whom Mutchuisho had dispatched before daybreak, who said that the Bakalahari women had that morning seen elephants.

This was joyous news. My hopes were high, and I at once felt certain that the hour of triumph was at hand. But disappointment was still in store for me. We all sat down on the grass, while men were dispatched to bring the Bakalahari, and when these came we ascertained that it was only spoor and not elephants they had seen. We held on for an inspection of it; and here I was further to be disappointed, the spoor proving to be two days old.

The country now before me was a vast level forest, extending to the north and east for about twenty miles without a break. At that distance, however, the landscape was shut in by blue mountain ranges of considerable height, and two bold conical mountains standing close together rose conspicuous above the rest. These mountains the

Bamangwato men informed me were their ancient habitation, and that of their forefathers, but the cruel Matabili had driven them from thence to the rocky mountains which they now occupy. We continued our course in an easterly direction, and twice crossed the gravelly bed of a periodical river, in which were several small springs of excellent water. These springs had been exposed by elephants, which had cleared away the gravel with their trunks. Around these springs the spoor of rhinoceros was abundant.

After proceeding several miles through a dry and barren tract, where wait-a-bit thorns prevailed, we entered upon more interesting ground. The forest was adorned with very picturesque old trees of various sorts and sizes, which stood singly and in shady groups, while the main body of the forest consisted of a variety of trees of other sorts, averaging the height of a giraffe. The elephants had left abundant traces of their presence, but all the marks were old. Fresh spoor of giraffe was imprinted on the ground on every side, and we presently saw a large herd of these, standing scattered through the forest to our left. They were glorious fellows, but I was now in pursuit of nobler game: the natives were leading me to some distant fountain, where they expected we should discover spoor.

On we sped through the depths of the forest, our view being confined to about fifty yards on every side. Presently emerging upon a small open glade, I observed a herd of brindled gnoos and two or three troops of pallahs; and soon after, a second herd of about fifteen camelopards stood browsing before us, and, getting our wind, dashed away to our left. We had proceeded about two miles further, and it was now within two hours of sunset, when, lo! a thorny tree, newly smashed by an elephant. Some of the natives attentively examined the leaves of the broken branches to ascertain exactly when he had been there, while some for the same purpose overhauled the spoor. It was the spoor of a first-rate bull: he had fed there that morning at the dawn of day.

The ground was hard and bad for spooring, but the natives evinced great skill, and, following it for a short distance, we came to ground where a troop of bull elephants had pastured not many hours before. Here the thorny trees on every side were demolished by them, and huge branches and entire trees were rent and uprooted, and lay scattered across our path, having been carried several yards in the trunks of the elephants before they stood to eat the leaves: the ground also was here and there plowed up by their tusks in quest of roots; and in these places the enormous fresh spoor

— that thrilling sight to a hunter's eye — was beautifully visible.

All this was extremely interesting and gratifying, but I had been so often disappointed, and it was now so very near sunset, that I entertained but faint hopes of finding them that evening. Mutchuisho was very anxious that I should see the elephants; he had divested himself of his kaross, and, carrying one of the muskets which Sicomy had bought from me, he led the spooring party, consisting of about fifteen cunning old hands. The great body of the men he had ordered to sit down and remain quiet until the attack commenced.

Having followed the spoor for a short distance, old Mutchuisho became extremely excited, and told me that we were close to the elephants. A few minutes after several of the spoorers affirmed that they had heard the elephants break a tree in advance; they differed, however, about the direction, some saying it was in front, and others that it was away to our left. Two or three men quickly ascended the tallest trees that stood near us, but they could not see the elephants. Mutchuisho then extended men to the right and left, while we continued on the spoor.

In a few minutes one of those who had gone off to our left came running breathless to say that he had seen the mighty game. I halted for a min-

ute, and instructed Isaac, who carried the big Dutch rifle, to act independently of me, while Kleinboy was to assist me in the chase; but, as usual, when the row began, my followers thought only of number one. I bared my arms to the shoulder, and, having imbibed a draught of aqua pura from the calabash of one of the spoorers, I grasped my trusty two-grooved rifle, and told my guide to go ahead. We proceeded silently as might be for a few hundred yards, following the guide, when he suddenly pointed, exclaiming, "Klow!" and before us stood a herd of mighty bull elephants, packed together beneath a shady grove about a hundred and fifty yards in advance. I rode slowly toward them, and, as soon as they observed me, they made a loud rumbling noise, and, tossing their trunks, wheeled right about and made off in one direction, crashing through the forest and leaving a cloud of dust behind them. I was accompanied by a detachment of my dogs, who assisted me in the pursuit.

The distance I had come, and the difficulties I had undergone, to behold these elephants, rose fresh before me. I determined that on this occasion at least I would do my duty, and, dashing my spurs into "Sunday's" ribs, I was very soon much too close in their rear for safety. The elephants now made an inclination to my left, where-

by I obtained a good view of the ivory. The herd consisted of six bulls; four of them were full-grown, first-rate elephants; the other two were fine fellows, but not yet arrived at perfect stature. Of the four old fellows, two had much finer tusks than the rest, and for a few seconds I was undecided which of these two I would follow; when, suddenly, the one which I fancied had the stoutest tusks broke from his comrades, and I at once felt convinced that he was the patriarch of the herd, and followed him accordingly. Cantering alongside, I was about to fire, when he instantly turned, and, uttering a trumpet so strong and shrill that the earth seemed to vibrate beneath my feet, he charged furiously after me for several hundred yards in a direct line, not altering his course in the slightest degree for the trees of the forest, which he snapped and overthrew like reeds in his headlong career.

When he pulled up in his charge, I likewise halted; and as he slowly turned to retreat, I let fly at his shoulder, "Sunday" capering and prancing, and giving me much trouble. On receiving the ball the elephant shrugged his shoulder, and made off at a free majestic walk. This shot brought several of the dogs to my assistance which had been following the other elephants, and on their coming up and barking another headlong

charge was the result, accompanied by the never-failing trumpet as before. In his charge he passed close to me, when I saluted him with a second bullet in the shoulder, of which he did not take the slightest notice. I now determined not to fire again until I could make a steady shot; but, although the elephant turned repeatedly, "Sunday" invariably disappointed me, capering so that it was impossible to fire.

At length, exasperated, I became reckless of the danger, and, springing from the saddle, approached the elephant under cover of a tree, and gave him a bullet in the side of the head, when, trumpeting so shrilly that the forest trembled, he charged among the dogs, from whom he seemed to fancy that the blow had come; after which he took up a position in a grove of thorns, with his head toward me. I walked up very near, and, as he was in the act of charging (being in those days under wrong impressions as to the impracticability of bringing down an elephant with a shot in the forehead), stood coolly in his path until he was within fifteen paces of me, and let drive at the hollow of his forehead, in the vain expectation that by so doing I should end his career. The shot only served to increase his fury — an effect which, I had remarked, shots in the head invariably produced; and, continuing his charge with in-

credible quickness and impetuosity, he all but terminated my elephant-hunting forever.

A large party of the Bechuanas who had come up yelled out simultaneously, imagining I was killed, for the elephant was at one moment almost on the top of me: I, however, escaped by my activity, and by dodging round the bushy trees. As the elephant was charging, an enormous thorn ran deep into the sole of my foot, the old Badenoch brogues, which I that day sported, being worn through; and this caused me severe pain, laming me throughout the rest of the conflict.

The elephant held on through the forest as a sweeping pace; but he was hardly out of sight when I was loaded and in the saddle, and soon once more alongside. About this time I heard Isaac blazing away at another bull; but when the elephant charged, his cowardly heart failed him, and he very soon made his appearance at a safe distance in my rear. My elephant kept crashing along at a steady pace, with blood streaming from his wounds; the dogs, which were knocked up with fatigue and thirst, no longer barked around him, but had dropped astern. It was long before I again fired, for I was afraid to dismount, and "Sunday" was extremely troublesome. At length I fired sharp right and left from the saddle: he got both balls behind the shoulder, and made a

long charge after me, rumbling and trumpeting as before. The whole body of the Bamangwato men had now come up, and were following a short distance behind me. Among these was Mollyeon, who volunteered to help; and being a very swift and active fellow, he rendered me important service by holding my fidgety horse's head while I fired and loaded. I then fired six broadsides from the saddle, the elephant charging almost every time, and pursuing us back to the main body in our rear, who fled in all directions as he approached.

The sun had now sunk behind the tops of the trees, it would very soon be dark, and the elephant did not seem much distressed, notwithstanding all he had received. I recollected that my time was short, and therefore at once resolved to fire no more from the saddle, but to go close up to him and fire on foot. Riding up to him, I dismounted and, approaching very near, I gave it him right and left in the side of the head, upon which he made a long and determined charge after me; but I was now very reckless of his charges, for I saw that he could not overtake me, and in a twinkling I was loaded, and, again approaching, fired sharp right and left behind his shoulder. Again he charged with a terrific trumpet, which sent "Sunday" flying through the forest. This was his last charge. The wounds which he had received began to tell

on his constitution, and he now stood at bay beside a thorny tree, with the dogs barking around him. These, refreshed by the evening breeze, and perceiving that it was nearly over with the elephant, had once more come to my assistance.

Having loaded, I drew near and fired right and left at his forehead. On receiving these shots, instead of charging, he tossed his trunk up and down, and by various sounds and motions, most gratifying to the hungry natives, evinced that his demise was near. Again I loaded, and fired my last shot behind his shoulder: on receiving it, he turned round the bushy tree beside which he stood, and I ran round to give him the other barrel, but the mighty old monarch of the forest needed no more: before I could clear the bushy tree he fell heavily on his side, and his spirit had fled. My feeling at this moment can only be understood by a few brother Nimrods who have had the good fortune to enjoy a similar encounter. I never felt so gratified on any former occasion as I did then.

By this time all the natives had come up; they were in the highest spirits, and flocked around the elephant, laughing and talking at a rapid pace. I climbed on to him, and sat enthroned upon his side, which was as high as my eyes when standing on the ground. In a few minutes night set in, when the natives, having illuminated the jungle

with a score of fires, and formed a semicircle of bushes to windward, lay down to rest without partaking of a morsel of food. Mutchuisho would not allow a man to put an assagai into the elephant until the morrow, and placed two relays of sentries to keep watch on either side of him. My dinner consisted of a piece of flesh from the temple of the elephant, which I broiled on the hot embers. In the conflict I had lost my shirt, which was reduced to streamers by the wait-a-bit thorns, and all the clothing that remained was a pair of buckskin knee-breeches.

The night was very cold, it being now the dead of the African winter. Having collected dry grass, I spread it beside my fire, and laid down for the night with no other covering than an old sheepskin which I had used for a saddle-cloth. Shortly after I had dropped asleep, Mutchuisho, commiserating my bare condition, spread an old jackal kaross over me. This kaross, as all Bechuana garments are, was thickly tenanted by small transparent insects, usually denominated lice. These virulent creatures, probably finding my skin more tender than that of the owner of the kaross, seemed resolved to enjoy a banquet while they could; and presently I awoke with my whole body so poisoned and inflamed that I felt as if attacked with a severe fever. All further rest that night was at an end.

I returned the kaross to Mutchuisho, with grateful acknowledgments for his polite intentions; and piling dry wood on the fire, which emitted a light as bright as day, I aroused the slumbering Kleinboy to assist me in turning my buckskins outside in, when an animating "chasse" commenced, which terminated in the capture of about fourscore of my white-currant colored visitors. I then lit another fire opposite to the first, and spent the remainder of the night squatted between the two, thus imbibing caloric before and behind.

As the sun rose on the morning of the 25th, Mutchuisho gave the word to cut up the elephant, when a scene of blood, noise, and turmoil ensued which baffles all description. Every native there, divested of his kaross and armed with an assagai, rushed to the onslaught; and in less than two hours every inch of the elephant was gone, and carried by the different parties to their respective temporary locations, which they had chosen beneath each convenient tree that grew around.

The manner in which the elephant is cut up is as follows: The rough outer skin is first removed, in large sheets, from the side which lies uppermost. Several coats of an under skin are then met with. This skin is of a tough and pliant nature, and is used by the natives for making water-bags, in which they convey supplies of water from the nearest vley

or fountain (which is often ten miles distant) to the elephant. They remove this inner skin with caution, taking care not to cut it with the assagai; and it is formed into water-bags by gathering the corners and edges, and transfixing the whole on a pointed wand. The flesh is then removed in enormous sheets from the ribs, when the hatchets come into play, with which they chop through, and remove individually, each colossal rib. The bowels are thus laid bare; and in the removal of these the leading men take a lively interest and active part, for it is throughout and around the bowels that the fat of the elephant is mainly found.

There are few things which a Bechuana prizes so highly as fat of any description; they will go an amazing distance for a small portion of it. They use it principally in cooking their sun-dried biltongue, and they also eat it with their corn. The fat of the elephant lies in extensive layers and sheets in his inside, and the quantity which is obtained from a full-grown bull, in high condition, is very great. Before it can be obtained, the greater part of the bowels must be removed. To accomplish this, several men eventually enter the immense cavity of his inside, where they continue mining away with their assagais, and handing the fat to their comrades outside until all is bare. While this is transpiring with the sides and bowels, other

parties are equally active in removing the skin and flesh from the remaining parts of the carcass.

The natives have a horrid practice on these occasions of besmearing their bodies, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, with the black and clotted gore; and in this anointing they assist one another, each man taking up the fill in both his hands, and spreading it over the back and shoulders of his friend. Throughout the entire proceeding an incessant and deafening clamor of many voices and confused sounds is maintained, and violent jostling and wrestling are practiced by every man, elbowing the breasts and countenances of his fellows, all slippery with gore, as he endeavors to force his way to the venison through the dense intervening ranks, while the sharp and ready assagai gleams in every hand. The angry voices and gory appearances of these naked savages, combined with their excited and frantic gestures and glistening arms, presented an effect so wild and striking, that when I first beheld the scene I contemplated it in the momentary expectation of beholding one half of the gathering turn their weapons against the other.

The trunk and feet are considered a delicacy, and a detachment are employed on these. The four feet are amputated at the fetlock joint, and the trunk, which at the base is about two feet in

thickness, is cut into convenient lengths. Trunk and feet are then baked, preparatory to their removal to head-quarters. The manner in which this is done is as follows: a party, provided with sharp-pointed sticks digs a hole in the ground for each foot and a portion of the trunk. These holes are about two feet deep, and a yard in width; the excavated earth is embanked around the margin of the hole. This work being completed, they next collect an immense quantity of dry branches and trunks of trees, of which there is always a profusion scattered around, having been broken by the elephants in former years. These they pile above the holes to the height of eight or nine feet, and then set fire to the heap. When these strong fires have burned down, and the whole of the wood is reduced to ashes, the holes and the surrounding earth are heated in a high degree. Ten or twelve men then stand round the pit, and rake out the ashes with a pole about sixteen feet in length, having a hook at the end.

They relieve one another in quick succession, each man running in and raking the ashes for a few seconds, and then pitching the pole to his comrade and retreating, since the heat is so intense that it is scarcely to be endured. When all the ashes are thus raked out beyond the surrounding bank of earth, each elephant's foot and portion of

the trunk is lifted by two athletic men, standing side by side, who place it on their shoulders, and, approaching the pit together, they heave it into it. The long pole is now again resumed, and with it they shove in the heated bank of earth upon the foot, shoving and raking until it is completely buried in the earth. The hot embers, of which there is always a great supply, are then raked into a heap above the foot, and another bonfire is kindled over each, which is allowed to burn down and die a natural death, by which time the enormous foot or trunk will be found to be equally baked throughout its inmost parts. When the foot is supposed to be ready, it is taken out of the ground with pointed sticks, and is first well beaten, and then scraped with an assagai, whereby adhering particles of sand are got rid of. The outside is then pared off, and it is transfixed with a sharp stake for facility of carriage.

The feet, thus cooked, are excellent, as is also the trunk, which very much resembles buffalo's tongue. The reason why such large fires are requisite is owing to the mass of the flesh that must be baked. In raking the sand on the foot, the natives are careful not to rake the red-hot embers in with it, which would burn and destroy the meat; whereas the sand or earth protects it, imparting an even

and steady heat. When the natives have cut up the elephant, and removed the large masses of flesh, etc., to their respective temporary kraals around, they sit down for a little to rest and draw their breath, and for a short time smoking and snuffing are indulged in. . . .

The natives, having drawn their breath, once more devote their attention to the flesh, which they next reduce to biltongue, cutting every morsel into thin strips from six to twenty feet in length. These strips are of the breadth and thickness of a man's two fingers. When all is reduced to biltongue, they sally forth with their tomahawks, and cut down a number of poles of two sorts, for uprights and cross-poles. The uprights are eight feet long, and forked at one end. They place them upright in the ground around their respective trees, laying the cross-poles resting on the forks, and these are adorned with endless garlands of the raw meat, which is permitted to hang in the sun for two or three days, when it will have lost much of its weight, and be stiff and easy to be carried. They then remove the biltongue from the poles, and, folding it together, they form it into bundles, which are strongly lashed and secured with long strips of the tough inner bark of thorny mimosas. Their work in the forest is now completed, and, each man

placing one bundle on his head, and slinging several others across his shoulders, returns to his wife and family at head-quarters.

The appearance which the flesh of a single elephant exhibits when reduced to strips and suspended from the poles is truly surprising, the forest far around displaying a succession of ruby festoons, and reminding one of a vineyard laden with its clustering fruits. When the skull of my elephant was ready for the ax, Mutchuicho caused a party to hew out for me the tusks — a work of great labor, and needing considerable skill. In the present instance the work was clumsily executed, the natives hacking and injuring the ivory in removing the bone with their little tomahawks. In consequence of this, I invariably afterward performed the task myself, using superior American hatchets, which I had provided expressly for the purpose. When the tusks had been extracted, I saddled up and started for the camp, accompanied by my after-riders and a party of the natives bearing the ivory, with a supply of baked foot and trunk and a portion of the flesh. The natives had appropriated all the rest, and when I left them they were quarreling over the remnant of the skull, whose marrowy bones were in high demand. They fought for every chip as it flew from the ax, and chewed it raw. On our way to camp we passed

through the kraal of the Bakalahari, situated in the mountain range. In the valleys they had formed considerable gardens, in which corn and water-melons were extensively grown. I was right glad to reach my comfortable camp, and get a bowl of coffee.

On the evening of the 26th men kept pouring into camp heavily laden with the flesh of the elephant, a large part of which was for Sicomy: they halted with me for the night, and resumed their march in the morning.

CHAPTER V

ELEPHANTS

ON the 27th of July I resolved to move my wagons further to the east, and informed the wagon-drivers of my intentions: they, however, raised many objections, and all but gave me a direct refusal. As I was not aware of the position of the waters, and knew well that Isaac would not assist me in discovering them, I deemed it prudent first to make an excursion to the east on horseback. I accordingly stowed some ammunition and a washing-rod in my old game-bag (to the inside of which, by-the-by, adhered a goodly coating of the scales of grilse and salmon, along with sundry speckled and blood-stained feathers of the grouse and partridge), and having made bread and ground coffee sufficient for three days' consumption, I ordered two of my men to be ready to accompany me next morning.

My interpreter's countenance never lacked a scowl; and, instead of forwarding my interests, he actively employed his energies in sowing dissension between me and the natives, and disseminating

mutiny among my Hottentots. I discovered that all along he had deceived me, and carefully concealed the direction where elephants most abounded, and I began to think that, in justice to myself, it was high time that he should be ignominiously dismissed the service.

On the 28th, as I was breakfasting, natives arrived and reported fresh spoor within a mile of camp. I therefore resolved to defer for the present the trip to the eastward on which I had determined; but it so happened that the spoor which was reported led me in that direction, and was the means of introducing me to a succession of fine hunting districts, throughout which elephant and rhinoceros were abundant. Everything being ready, I proceeded to take up the spoor, accompanied by after-riders and about a hundred of the Bamangwato men, fresh parties having joined me: it was the spoor of a small troop of cow elephants. Mutchuisho and the spooring party took it up in a masterly manner, and went along at a quick pace all day, with scarcely a check, until we found the elephants. The spoor led us first through a gorge in the mountains, which I mentioned as having rounded on the 24th; after which we followed it in an easterly course, skirting the base of the mountain chain.

The country increased in beauty as we ad-

vanced; and, having followed the spoor some hours, it led us into a new variety of country, and, as I fancied, into a new climate. Here large trees were abundant, and the grass and leaves were much greener than in the country we had left behind. We crossed the gravelly beds of two periodical rivers. In one of these I observed the recent spoor of a herd of bull elephants deeply imprinted in the sand. This day the wind, which had for weeks been cold and blighting, blowing off the icebergs of the Southern Ocean, shifted to northeast, and breathed warm and balmy upon us.

As we advanced the work of elephants became more and more apparent on the trees and in the earth, and late in the afternoon we reached ground where a large herd of cows had fed that morning. Here we had a short check, when Mutchuisho rated the trackers for their negligence; and, having dispatched parties to try back upon the spoor, and extended others to make casts on our right and left, he leisurely ensconced himself beneath a shady tree, and proceeded, along with several of his cronies, to enjoy the luxury of taking snuff, which important ceremony having been duly performed, they began with the utmost gravity to smooth a portion of the ground before them, preparatory to casting the mystic dice which most of the Bechuanas carry strung around their necks.

These dice, which are of sundry indescribable shapes, are formed of ivory, and the Bechuanas invariably appeal to them before entering upon any project of importance, to ascertain the probability of its ultimate success. Having unstrung the dice, which are four in number, they rattle them between their hands, and drop them on the ground, when the long-headed old men carefully study the directions of the points, and decide the merits of the case accordingly.

In the present instance the dice spoke favorably, auguring the speedy capture of an elephant; and one of the trackers at this moment coming up, and stating that his comrades had regained the spoor, we sprang to our feet and again held on. We had proceeded about half a mile when we suddenly beheld a herd of about twelve old cow elephants, some of which were accompanied by little calves, feeding high on the side of the rocky mountain, about five hundred yards to our right. The intervening ground was a dense and almost impenetrable mass of wait-a-bit thorny bushes, averaging twenty feet in height, every inch of which was to be dreaded as the hooks upon a "kill-devil."

On perceiving the elephants, we halted, and Mutchuisho dispatched two men to windward, in the hope of driving them from the impracticable ground they occupied into the level forest where

we stood. The elephants, however, were much too wide awake to leave their strong-hold of wait-a-bit bushes. On getting the wind of the men they tossed their trunks, and, wheeling about, held along the mountain side at a rapid pace, until they reached an impenetrable jungle of thorns, from which all our efforts proved unavailing to dislodge them.

This jungle densely covered the sides and bottom of a wide semicircular basin or hollow in the mountains; it was throughout so dense that a man on foot could scarcely penetrate it. When the elephants started I rode hard after them, followed by my after-riders, and, not understanding the intentions of the elephants, we followed on through the mazes of the jungle in an elephant path until we reached the center of the thicket, when we suddenly found ourselves upon them. The dogs then ran in barking, when a general trumpeting took place, and a charging and crashing in all directions, and, owing to the extremely dangerous nature of the ground, I was glad to beat a precipitate retreat.

Once more all was quiet; my dogs were jaded with the sun, and would not fight. Fancying that the elephants had gone ahead, and fearing to lose them, I again pushed on, holding the foot-path as before, when crash came a second charge of ele-

phants at our very elbows, accompanied by a trumpeting which caused our ears to tingle. They charged upon us from opposite directions, and we were actually in the very middle of them. They were extremely fierce, and, but for the dogs, not a man of us had escaped to tell the tale.

Fortunately, the dogs, which they seemed to think designed the capture of their calves, engrossed their whole attention; whereas, by reason of the color of the horses on which we rode, they took us for gregarious creatures like themselves, and actually grazing our animals' haunches with their legs, they left us scatheless and pursued the dogs. I seldom remember a more startling or dangerous position; it was a decided case of "De'il tak the hin'most." Spurs and jamboks were energetically plied; there was no time to select a path. Placing my head below my horse's neck and trusting to Providence, I charged through the thickest of the thorns, and presently found myself out of the way of the elephants. I know nothing which so effectually teaches a hunter the art of riding through "Vacht um bigé," or "wait-a-bit" jungle, in an artistical manner, as hearing the trumpet of an enraged elephant, which is following about a spear's length in his wake. After a few such lessons he will have learned to bring his breast in contact with the side of his horse's neck, his head

being well under it, whereby his prominent feature will be secured, and, agitating his persuaders, he will dive through the most impracticable "wait-a-bits" with apparently the facility with which an Eton boy takes a header into the Thames at the Lion's Leap.

With very great difficulty, we got clear of the cover and gained the level forest on the lower side. By this time the natives had lined the side of the mountain above the cover, and were shouting and yelling in the hope of driving out the elephants; but not a man would venture in. Presently some of them came round to me, and I proposed to go in on foot, but they would not hear of it, saying that the elephants were extremely fierce and would kill me to a certainty. I then proposed that all the natives should enter the jungle in a line, and try to drive them out; but they said that no power could force the elephants from their strong-hold until night set in.

The elephants now shifted their ground a little, forcing their way through the jungle to the higher side of the basin. Leaving the horses in charge of a native, I went round to the line of men above. Here I commanded a fine view of the exasperated elephants, being high above them, and distant about two hundred and fifty yards, and I observed that they displayed considerable cunning in their

movements. Placing my rifle on a forked branch, and giving it the proper elevation, I let drive at the nearest cow, and wounded her severely. The shot reverberated through the dale, and the dogs once more ran into the midst of them, when a general charge and trumpeting ensued, which was truly terrific. They rushed after the dogs, following them up to a great distance, crashing through and upsetting the high, bushy wait-a-bits and other trees like grass. They then turned and formed in two separate detachments, standing thick together; but two wicked old cows that had calves stood far out from the others, with their heads turned to us, ready to charge whatever might approach too near their young.

I saw that it was extremely dangerous to attack them; but the sun was now fast sinking behind a shoulder of the mountains, so I resolved to defy all chances and enter the cover. I first, however, fired two shots at the elephants that formed the advanced pickets; both cows got it in the ribs, and, finding themselves wounded, retreated to the main body, where they stood smashing the trees with rage, and, catching up volumes of the red dust with their trunks, threw it in clouds above their backs. Mutchuisho and I now descended into the jungle, and crept stealthily along, listening for the breathing of the elephants. They had moved

to the lower side, and were standing thick together within one hundred yards of the outside.

On ascertaining their position, we emerged from the cover, and followed along the outside until we were opposite them. I then stalked in within twenty yards, and fired at the side of the head of the elephant that stood next to me; and before the smoke had cleared, my back was to them, and I was running for the outside of the cover at my utmost speed. The elephants held their ground; so, having loaded, I again drew near, and fired sharp right and left into another, and, turning my back, ran for it once more. Re-entering the cover a third time, I was listening which way they had gone, when, casting my eyes to the left, a noble elephant lay dead before me. The ball had penetrated to her brain, and she had dropped dead upon the spot.

A little after this an old cow came charging after the dogs, and took up a position in the jungle close beside us. We heard her preparing for a second charge, when the natives beat a precipitate retreat; but I very rashly waited to receive her, and just as she cleared the cover I let fly at her forehead. Regardless of my shot, she came down upon me at a tremendous pace, shrilly trumpeting. It was rather a near thing, for I was burdened with my rifle and rhinoceros-horn loading-rod, and my

shooting-belt containing about forty rounds of ammunition. I escaped her by my speed, and the instant she halted I faced about, and gave her the other barrel behind the shoulder.

Night now set in, and I saw no more of the elephants. A number of them were wounded and must have died; I, however, felt satisfied with the one I had secured. The natives made me more cautious than I should otherwise have been, and, had we found them at an earlier hour, I should probably have killed one half the troop. Weary and hungry, we formed our kraals and kindled fires; after which, having partaken of the elephant, I lay down to sleep beside my fire.

On the 29th I sent Carollus to the wagons with instructions to bring all the horses and the Bushman, with bread, coffee, and ammunition. In the forenoon I ascended the neighboring mountain range to obtain a view of the surrounding country. On clearing the first ridge I looked down upon a bold and romantic gorge, which here intersected the mountain chain, connecting the forests on either side. Far below me, through the bottom of the ravine, twined the gravelly bed of a periodical river, which in the rainy season flows in an easterly direction. Though in all other parts this gravelly channel was now dry, yet just at this spot, deep in the bosom of the mountains, its bed was covered

with delicious spring water to a depth of several inches; and here the elephants had excavated sundry holes, about two feet deep, for the purpose of drinking. I descended to the water by an elephant path, and stood long contemplating the interesting spot. The bed of the river was deeply imprinted with the spoor of elephants, buffaloes, and rhinoceros, of various dates. The gorge was wide and open by the water, and its abrupt and rocky sides were adorned with a profusion of trees and shrubs. A little further down the gorge was more confined, the river winding through huge perpendicular walls of rock, that raised their giant forms on both sides to a height of several hundred feet.

From the basis of these stupendous ramparts to the margin of the river on either side was a sloping bank along which grew an avenue of picturesque acacias of enormous bulk and lofty stature; beneath these were well-beaten paths of elephants, and the sides of the trees were well polished to the usual distance from the ground. Leaving the river, I ascended to the summits of loftier hills beyond, where I commanded a glorious prospect of the endless gray forests which stretched away as far as I could see over slightly undulating country, the faint blue outline of extensive mountain ranges bounding the landscape to the east. Descending from my lofty station, I discovered four bull buffa-

loes feeding in the valley far beneath me; I left them undisturbed, and bent my steps toward the carcass of the elephant.

In the evening Carollus arrived, bringing the horses and ammunition, and accompanied by a numerous body of the natives. At an early hour on the 30th I started with Mutchuisho and a numerous retinue to search for elephants in an easterly direction, and we crossed the gravelly bed of the River Mahalapia, about a mile below the gorge I had visited on the preceding day. In after years I renewed my acquaintance with the Mahalapia, on the banks of the fair Limpopo, into which it empties itself several days' journey to the east.

This was one of the loveliest spots I had seen in Southern Africa: a bold bend of the river was adorned with groves of remarkably lofty and picturesque acacias. Three trees in particular, of the same description, graced the spot, which in size and beauty surpassed any I had hitherto met with, carrying their thickness to an immense height from the ground, when they divided into goodly branches, which stretched away in beauty to the skies.

Here, in the bed of the river, we took up the spoor of a huge bull elephant, and, having followed it a short distance through the verdant forest, we started the old fellow, but no man saw him. The

great body of the natives never would be quiet, and ever pressed upon the spooring party, notwithstanding my remonstrances. One native heard him, but said he thought it was a rhinoceros. In half a minute, however, we discovered our mistake, and there ensued a general rush upon the spoor, at a pace which must shortly have overtaken him, for he had not started in great alarm. Whistling to my dogs, they took up the scent and went ahead; but as I galloped after them, expecting every instant to behold the elephant, whose spoor I now saw beneath my horse's feet, an unlucky troop of camelopards dashed across our path, and away went all the dogs, leaving me in the lurch just as I was upon the elephant. The trackers, however, soon came up, and we again held briskly on, but had not proceeded far when we entered upon ground so covered with fresh footmarks that the trackers in their haste overran the spoor we followed, and a long check was the result. Here, to add to my annoyance, another large herd of camelopards came cantering up the wind, and dashed away before us, to spread further alarm.

Old Mutchuisho now came up in a state of intense excitement, his watery eyes fixed upon the ground, and his tongue going like perpetual motion. He blew up the trackers right and left, who seemed to quail before his menacing aspect, and

redoubled their energies in the doubtful pursuit. Presently one of these, loudly smacking his "nether end," intimated that he had hit off the proper spoor. This peculiar signal, I remarked, was used by the Bechuanas to warn one another on various occasions. In spooring game it was invariably practiced; and when a line of men were thridding the mazes of the forest, each warned the man behind him of any rough sticks, stones, or thorns which lay across the path, by the same elegant and friendly gesture.

We resumed the spoor at a rapid pace, with a widely-extended front, and presently on my left I heard the joyous signal of the presence, "Klow"; and, cantering in that direction, I came full in sight of an enormous bull elephant, marching along at a free majestic pace, and in another minute I was riding by his side. The horse which I bestrode on this occasion was "The Cow," one of my best and steadiest shooting-horses; and the forest being tolerably suited for the sport, I was not long in finishing the elephant. I fired thirteen bullets at his head and shoulder; on receiving the last two shots sharp right and left behind the shoulder, he made a rapid charge, and disappeared among the trees. Cautiously following, I discovered him lying in an upright position, with his two fore legs stretched out before him. Fancying he was still

alive, I fired both barrels at his ear; but, though the balls rang loudly on his venerable head, the noble elephant heeded not their force; his ancient spirit had departed.

This was a very large old elephant; but his tusks were much destroyed, being worn down, and having been broken (probably in rocky ground) in former years. Mutchuisho appeared in the highest glee, and dispatched messengers through the gorge in the mountains, the name of which is Sabié, to advise Sicomy of the death of the elephant. The chase had led me to within rifle-range of the three veteran acacias I admired in the morning. I made my bower and a couch of grass beneath a shady wait-a-bit thorn-tree, and encircled my fire with a hedge of the same description. . . .

I had at length got into the way of making myself tolerably comfortable in the field, and from this date I seldom went in quest of elephants without the following impedimenta, viz., a large blanket, which I folded and secured before my saddle, as a dragoon does his cloak; and two leather sacks, containing a flannel shirt, warm trousers, and a woollen night-cap, spare ammunition, washing-rod, coffee, bread, sugar, pepper and salt, dried meat, a wooden bowl, and a tea-spoon. These sacks were carried on the shoulders of the natives, for which service I remunerated them with beads. They also

carried my coffee-kettle, two calabashes of water, two American axes, and two sickles, which I used every evening to cut grass for my bed, and likewise for my horses to eat throughout the night.

My after-rider carried extra ammunition and a spare rifle, and my own personal appointments consisted of a wide-awake hat, secured under my chin by "rheimpies," or strips of dressed skin, a coarse linenby shirt, sometimes a kilt, and sometimes a pair of buckskin knee-breeches, and a pair of "veldt-schoens," or home-made shoes. I entirely discarded coat, waistcoat, and neck-cloth, and I always hunted with my arms bare. My heels were armed with a pair of powerful persuaders, and from my left wrist depended by a double rheimpy an equally persuasive sea-cow jambok.

Around my waist I wore two leathern belts or girdles. The smaller of these discharged the duty of suspenders, and from it on my left side depended a plaited rheimpy, eight inches in length, forming a loop, in which dangled my powerful loading-rod, formed of a solid piece of horn of the rhinoceros. The larger girdle was my shooting-belt: this was a broad leather belt, on which were fastened four separate compartments made of otter-skin, with flaps to button over of the same material. The first of these held my percussion caps, the second a large powder-flask, the third and fourth, which

had divisions in them, contained balls and patches, two sharp clasp-knives, a compass, flint and steel.

In this belt I also carried a loading mallet, formed from the horn of the rhinoceros; this and the powder-flask were each secured to the belt by long rheimpies, to prevent my losing them. Last, but not least, in my right hand I usually carried my double-barreled two-grooved rifle, which was my favorite weapon. This, however, I subsequently made up my mind, is not the proper tool for a mounted man, especially when quick loading is necessary.

I remember having a discussion with the commanding officer of a regiment of heavy dragoons on this subject, and he and I agreed that nothing can surpass a double-barreled smooth bore for practical utility. When a two-grooved rifle has been once or twice discharged, the bullet requires considerable power to drive it home; and to a mounted man this is extremely inconvenient. I consider that no regiment in the service was more effectually armed than my own old corps, the Cape Mounted Rifles, who were furnished with short double-barreled smooth-bored pieces, carrying a ball of twelve to the pound, and having stout percussion locks. Give me a weapon of this description to war against the larger game of Africa. To accelerate loading, the hunter ought to have his

balls stitched up in their patches, and well greased before taking the field. This was my invariable custom: I found it a great convenience, and after a little practice I could load and fire in the saddle, although riding in rough ground at a swinging gallop. . . .

I remained at Sabié, hunting elephant and rhinoceros with various success, till the morning of the 22d of August, when I inspanned, and marched for Mangmaluky, which we reached at sundown, and I drew up my wagons in an open grassy glade on a rather elevated position, commanding a fine view of the bold outline of the surrounding mountains. On the march I shot a white rhinoceros in the act of charging down a rock face, with all the dogs in full pursuit of him. The ball disabled him in the shoulder, when, pitching upon his head, he described the most tremendous somersault, coming down among the stones and bushes with the overwhelming violence of an avalanche.

On the 27th I cast loose my horses at earliest dawn of day, and then lay half asleep for two hours, when I arose to consume coffee and rhinoceros. Having breakfasted, I started with a party of the natives to search for elephants in a southerly direction. We held along the gravelly bed of a periodical river, in which were abundance of holes excavated by the elephants in quest of

water. Here the spoor of rhinceros was extremely plentiful, and in every hole where they had drunk the print of the horn was visible. We soon found the spoor of an old bull elephant, which led us into a dense forest, where the ground was particularly unfavorable for sporing; we, however, thriddled it out for a considerable distance, when it joined the spoor of other bulls. The natives now requested me to halt, while men went off in different directions to reconnoiter.

In the mean time a tremendous conflagration was roaring and crackling close to windward of us. It was caused by the Bakalahari burning the old dry grass to enable the young to spring up with greater facility, whereby they retained the game in their dominions. The fire stretched away for many miles on either side of us, darkening the forests far to leeward with a dense and impenetrable canopy of smoke. Here we remained for about half an hour, when one of the men returned, reporting that he had discovered elephants. This I could scarcely credit, for I fancied that the extensive fire which raged so fearfully must have driven, not only elephants, but every living creature out of the district. The native, however, pointed to his eye, repeating the word "Klow," and signed to me to follow him.

My guide led me about a mile through dense

forest, when we reached a little well-wooded hill, to whose summit we ascended, whence a view might have been obtained of the surrounding country, had not volumes of smoke obscured the scenery far and wide, as though issuing from the funnels of a thousand steam-boats. Here, to my astonishment, my guide halted, and pointed to the thicket close beneath me, when I instantly perceived the colossal backs of a herd of bull elephants. There they stood, quietly browsing on the lee side of the hill, while the fire in its might was raging to windward within two hundred yards of them.

I directed Johannus to choose an elephant, and promised to reward him should he prove successful. Galloping furiously down the hill, I started the elephants with an unearthly yell, and instantly selected the finest bull in the herd. Placing myself alongside, I fired both barrels behind his shoulder, when he instantly turned upon me, and in his impetuous career charged head foremost into a large bushy tree, which he sent flying before him high in the air with tremendous force, coming down at the same moment violently on his knees. He then met the raging fire, when, altering his course, he wheeled to the right-about. As I galloped after him I perceived another noble elephant meeting us in an opposite direction, and presently the gallant Johannus hove in sight, following his quarry at a

respectful distance. Both elephants held on together; so I shouted to Johannus, "I will give your elephant a shot in the shoulder, and you must try to finish him." Spurring my horse, I rode close alongside, and gave the fresh elephant two balls immediately behind the shoulder, when he parted from mine, Johannus following; but before many minutes had elapsed that mighty Nimrod reappeared, having fired one shot and lost his prey.

In the mean time I was loading and firing as fast as could be, sometimes at the head, and sometimes behind the shoulder, until my elephant's fore quarters were a mass of gore, notwithstanding which he continued to hold stoutly on, leaving the grass and branches of the forest scarlet in his wake.

On one occasion he endeavored to escape by charging desperately amid the thickest of the flames; but this did not avail, and I was soon once more alongside. I blazed away at this elephant until I began to think that he was proof against my weapons. Having fired thirty-five rounds with my two-grooved rifle, I opened fire upon him with the Dutch six-pounder; and when forty bullets had perforated his hide, he began for the first time to evince signs of a dilapidated constitution. He took up a position in a grove; and as the dogs kept barking round him, he backed stern foremost among the trees, which yielded before his gigantic

strength. Poor old fellow! he had long braved my deadly shafts, but I plainly saw that it was now all over with him; so I resolved to expend no further ammunition, but hold him in view until he died. Throughout the chase this elephant repeatedly cooled his person with large quantities of water, which he ejected from his trunk over his back and sides; and just as the pangs of death came over him, he stood trembling violently beside a thorny tree, and kept pouring water into his bloody mouth until he died, when he pitched heavily forward, with the whole weight of his fore quarters resting on the points of his tusks.

A most singular occurrence now took place. He lay in this posture for several seconds; but the amazing pressure of the carcass was more than the head was able to support. He had fallen with his head so short under him that the tusks received little assistance from his legs. Something must give way. The strain on the mighty tusks was fair; they did not, therefore, yield; but the portion of his head in which the tusk was imbedded, extending a long way above the eye, yielded and burst with a muffled crash. The tusk was thus free, and turned right round in his head, so that a man could draw it out, and the carcass fell over and rested on its side. This was a very first-rate elephant, and the tusks he carried were long and perfect. . . .

On the 31st I held southeast in quest of elephants, with a large party of the natives. Our course lay through an open part of the forest, where I beheld a troop of springboks and two ostriches, the first I had seen for a long time. We held for Towannie, a strong fountain in the gravelly bed of a periodical river: here two herds of cow elephants had drunk on the preceding evening, but I declined to follow them; and presently, at a muddy fountain a little in advance, we took up the spoor of an enormous bull, which had wallowed in the mud, and then plastered the sides of several of the adjacent veteran-looking trees. We followed the spoor through level forest in an easterly direction, when the leading party overran the spoor, and casts were made for its recovery.

Presently I detected an excited native beckoning violently a little to my left, and, cantering up to him, he said that he had seen the elephant. He led me through the forest a few hundred yards, when, clearing a wait-a-bit, I came full in view of the tallest and largest bull elephant I had ever seen. He stood broadside to me, at upward of one hundred yards, and his attention at the moment was occupied with the dogs, which, unaware of his proximity, were rushing past him, while the old fellow seemed to gaze at their unwonted appearance with surprise.

Halting my horse, I fired at his shoulder, and secured him with a single shot. The ball caught him high upon the shoulder-blade, rendering him instantly dead lame; and before the echo of the bullet could reach my ear, I plainly saw that the elephant was mine. The dogs now came up and barked around him, but, finding himself incapacitated, the old fellow seemed determined to take it easy, and, limping slowly to a neighboring tree, he remained stationary, eyeing his pursuers with a resigned and philosophic air.

I resolved to devote a short time to the contemplation of this noble elephant before I should lay him low; accordingly, having off-saddled the horses beneath a shady tree which was to be my quarters for the night and ensuing day, I quickly kindled a fire and put on the kettle, and in a very few minutes my coffee was prepared. There I sat in my forest home, coolly sipping my coffee, with one of the finest elephants in Africa awaiting my pleasure beside a neighboring tree.

It was, indeed, a striking scene; and as I gazed upon the stupendous veteran of the forest, I thought of the red deer which I loved to follow in my native land, and felt that, though the Fates had driven me to follow a more daring and arduous avocation in a distant land, it was a good exchange which I had made, for I was now a chief over bound-

less forests, which yielded unspeakably more noble and exciting sport.

Having admired the elephant for a considerable time, I resolved to make experiments for vulnerable points, and, approaching very near, I fired several bullets at different parts of his enormous skull. These did not seem to affect him in the slightest; he only acknowledged the shots by a "salaam-like" movement of his trunk, with the point of which he gently touched the wound with a striking and peculiar action. Surprised and shocked to find that I was only tormenting and prolonging the sufferings of the noble beast, which bore his trials with such dignified composure, I resolved to finish the proceeding with all possible dispatch; accordingly, I opened fire upon him from the left side, aiming behind the shoulder; but even there it was long before my bullets seemed to take effect. I first fired six shots with the two-grooved, which must have eventually proved mortal, but as yet he evinced no visible distress; after which I fired three shots at the same part with the Dutch six-pounder. Large tears now trickled from his eyes, which he slowly shut and opened; his colossal frame quivered convulsively, and, falling on his side, he expired. The tusks of this elephant were beautifully arched, and were the heaviest I had yet met with, averaging ninety pounds weight apiece.

On the 1st of September — so full of interest to the British Nimrod — we saddled our steeds and steered our course for Mangmaluky. . . .

CHAPTER VI

ELEPHANTS

IN the afternoon of the 4th I was engaged for many hours combating with a vicious elephant, which I finished with thirty-five bullets in the shoulder, in an impracticable jungle of wait-a-bit thorns. The conflict was greatly prolonged by "The Immense Brute," which capered continually, and constantly destroyed the correctness of my aim. While I was fighting with this elephant, my dogs were combating with a younger bull, which they hunted backward and forward in the same thicket with myself. This elephant took up a position beside the one which had fallen, and the dogs continued barking around him.

My rifle being now extremely dirty, I experienced considerable difficulty in ramming home the balls, notwithstanding the power of my rhinoceros-horn loading-rod. This being accomplished, I ran cautiously within twenty yards of this second elephant, and, resting my rifle on a branch, aimed for his heart and pressed the trigger. Alas! it was for the last time. The barrel burst with a terrific

explosion, sending the locks and half the stock flying right and left, and very nearly sending me to "the land of the leal." I, however, received no further damage than a slight burn on my left arm, and the loss for many days of the use of my left ear, a fragment of the barrel having whizzed close past it. At first I was so stunned that I knew not if I were wounded or not, and on recovering from the shock my person underwent a strict scrutiny. Before I discovered these elephants I was faint from thirst, and quite done up with the power of the sun, owing to which I considered that I did not attack the elephant so bravely as I might otherwise have done.

The loss of my trusty two-grooved rifle, in such a remote corner of the world, was irreparable, and cut me to the heart. It was my main stay; and as I thought of the many services it had performed for me in the hour of need, I mourned over it as David mourned for Absalom.

On the evening of the 7th I returned to Mangmaluky under a burning sun, which continued oppressive throughout the day. Having lost my two-grooved rifle, I resolved to try what could be done with the double-barreled Moore and Purdey rifles, carrying sixteen to the pound, and I accordingly set about casting hardened bullets to suit them. For this purpose I had brought in with me a quan-

tity of solder, but I now had the mortification to discover that all that I had possessed of this important article had mysteriously vanished by some underhand transaction between my followers and Sicomy. I was thus reduced to the extremity of melting the contents of my old military canteen to harden the bullets; and upon overhauling it, I ascertained that the tray of the snuffers, the spoons, candlesticks, tea-pots, and two drinking-cups, were admirably suited for this purpose, and I accordingly sentenced them to undergo the fiery ordeal of the ladle.

In the evening I had much pleasure to behold my old friend Mutchuisho walk into my camp, followed by a numerous party of the natives. He seemed glad to see me, and we at once arranged to make an expedition to the eastward on the following day. Accordingly, on the morning of the 9th I took the field with Johannus and Mutchuisho, and about eighty men, and proceeded in a southeasterly direction. We continued our course till the sun went down without finding fresh spoor, when we halted for the night to leeward of a fountain, where we hoped that elephants would come to drink. The heat throughout the day had been most oppressive, the dense level forest rendering it still more insupportable.

On the morrow we cast loose the horses to graze

long before the dawn of day. No elephants had visited the fountain; so, after an early breakfast, we saddled up, and again held on in an easterly direction through boundless forests, till I found myself in a country which I had not hitherto visited. Passing along beneath a rocky hillock, we started a detachment of hideous hyænas, which sought shelter from the sun beneath the shadow of the rocks. We passed several large herds of lovely camelpards, and I also obtained two very deadly chances of rhinoceros, both fine old bulls; but knowing well from past experience that my policy was to keep my followers hungry, I refrained from firing a single shot.

In the afternoon we reached a small vley, where five first-rate bull elephants had drunk on the preceding evening. Here my followers all sat down and rested for a quarter of an hour, a wild duck swimming fearlessly beside us. We then took up the spoor, but, as it was late in the day, I had not the slightest expectation of success, and was so done up with the power of the sun that I felt it irksome to sit in the saddle. The spoor led east, right away from camp, but the elephants seemed to have proceeded slowly, having extended widely from one another, and rent and uprooted an amazing number of goodly trees. Presently the spoor took a turn to our left, when I grieved to remark

that we were following it down the wind; thus we eventually started the elephants, which were feeding in the forest at no great distance, but, owing to a check among the trackers, we were not aware of this until the elephants had gained a considerable start.

On finding that they were gone, Johannus and I went off on the spoor at a rapid pace, but I had not the slightest expectation of overtaking them; for it was so late that, even if I had already commenced the attack, the chances were that before I could finish one the night would have set in. It is much easier to hold the spoor of a herd of elephants that have been alarmed than to follow those which have been undisturbed, since the former adopt a decided course, and follow one another in a direct line. Thus we were enabled to hold the spoor at a gallop without a check until our horses began to evince distress; and, despairing of success, I was just going to pull up, when I heard Johannus exclaim, "Sir, sir, dar stand illa," and, looking before me, I beheld five enormous old bull elephants walking slowly along. They seemed heated by the pace at which they had retreated, and were now refreshing themselves with large volumes of water, which nature enables them to discharge from their capacious stomachs, and shower back upon their bodies with their extraordinary trunks.

I overtook these elephants in open ground, which enabled me at once to make a fine selection. I had never before obtained so satisfactory a view of a herd of bulls: they really looked wondrous vast. It is a heart-stirring sight to behold one bull elephant; but when five gigantic old fellows are walking slowly along before you, and you feel that you can ride up and vanquish whichever one you fancy, it is so overpoweringly exciting that it almost takes a man's breath away; but it was now too late in the day to part with my breath for a single moment. Johannus whispered to me to wait a little, to allow the horses to recover their wind; but Wolf dashing in upon them, I was obliged to follow to obtain an accurate selection of the tusks. Spurring my horse, in another moment I was in the middle of them, closely followed by Johannus; and in a twinkling the finest bull had received the contents of the Moore and Purdey behind the shoulder.

I was now joined by Wolf, who rendered me important service by considerably engrossing the attention of the elephant, running barking before him as he charged. I was in a precious hurry, as the sun was setting, and I kept loading and firing at dueling distance. On receiving the twenty-fourth shot he stood trembling violently for several seconds, and then fell heavily forward on his tusks, after which he rolled over and rested on his side.

I reckoned this to be a fortunate conclusion after the hard and toilsome day I had spent under the power of a scorching sun. Mutchuicho and the natives soon made their appearance, all in wondrous good humor at our success.

The nearest water to this elephant was in a vley situated several miles to the eastward; and when the natives had constructed a number of water-bags of the under skin of the elephant, a watering party was dispatched with these and a number of calabashes which they always carried along with them. This party rejoined us at the hour of midnight, and reported that while they were filling their water-bags at one side of the vley, a troop of bull elephants were drinking at the other. Accordingly, on the morrow I went in quest of these, accompanied by Mutchuicho and a small party, and on the second day came up with them and bagged an old bull, whose tusks were the stoutest I had ever seen.

On the morrow I cast loose the steeds at earliest dawn, and soon after we heard the hoarse cry of an elephant within half a mile of us. I permitted my horses to graze while the dew was on the grass, after which, along with the dogs, I sent them to water with a party of Bakalahari at a fountain reported three miles distant, and in the mean time I regaled myself with coffee and rhinoceros.

It is extraordinary how soon the mind accustoms itself to everything, good or bad. There I sat taking my breakfast, with a troop of princely elephants feeding within a few minutes' ride of me, with as much indifference as if I were going woodcock shooting. I certainly did not feel half so anxious about the matter as I usually did when taking my breakfast on a fine May morning, with a southerly wind, before starting to fish my native river. This indifference was probably owing to the reduced state of my system from improper diet and constant toil. . . .

Having so far succeeded in the object of my expedition, and both my wagons being now heavily laden with the tusks of elephants and a large collection of the spoils of the chase, with a number of other interesting curiosities, I at length resolved once more to turn my face toward the distant dwellings of my countrymen. On the 23d of September, however, although harassed in my mind, and fearing to lose all my horses if I did not speedily forsake the country, I yielded to my inclination, and the persuasions of Mutchuisho, once more to take the field, and follow the spoor of two bull elephants, reported to have visited a distant fountain. Before starting I gave Johannus my phlegme, and a hasty lesson in the art of bleeding, with instructions to bleed copiously any of my stud

evincing the slightest symptoms of distemper. We held an easterly course, and at sundown on the second day I bagged a white rhinoceros and a fine old bull elephant, beside whose carcass I bivouacked as usual. On the forenoon of the 25th I saddled up and held for camp, accompanied by only one attendant.

It was a glorious day, with a cloudy sky, and the wind blew fresh off the Southern Ocean. Having ridden some miles in a northerly direction, we crossed the broad and gravelly bed of a periodical river, in which were abundance of holes excavated by the elephants, containing delicious water. Having passed the river, we entered an extensive grove of picturesque cameeldorn trees, clad in young foliage of the most delicious green. On gaining a gentle eminence about a mile beyond this grove, I looked forth upon an extensive hollow, where I beheld for the first time for many days a fine old cock ostrich, which quickly observed us and flashed away to our left.

I had ceased to devote my attention to the ostrich, and was straining my eyes in an opposite direction, when Kleinboy called out to me, "Dar loup de ould carle"; and turning my eyes to the retreating ostrich, I beheld two first-rate old bull elephants, charging along at their utmost speed within a hundred yards of it. They seemed at first

to be in great alarm, but, quickly discovering what it was that had caused their confusion, they at once reduced their pace to a slow and stately walk. This was a fine look-out; the country appeared to be favorable for an attack, and I was followed by Wolf and Bonteberg, both tried and serviceable dogs with elephants. Owing to the pace at which I had been riding, both dogs and horses were out of breath, so I resolved not to attack the elephants immediately, but to follow slowly, holding them in view.

The elephants were proceeding right up the wind, and the distance between us was about five hundred yards. I advanced quietly toward them, and had proceeded about half way, when, casting my eyes to my right, I beheld a whole herd of tearing bull elephants standing thick together on a wooded eminence within three hundred yards of me. These elephants were almost to leeward. Now the correct thing to do was to slay the best in each troop, which I accomplished in the following manner: I gave the large herd my wind, upon which they instantly tossed their trunks aloft, "a moment snuffed the tainted gale," and, wheeling about, charged right down wind, crashing through the jungle in dire alarm. My object now was to endeavor to select the finest bull, and hunt him to a distance from the other troop, before I should com-

mence to play upon his hide. Stirring my steed, I galloped forward. Right in my path stood two rhinoceroses of the white variety, and to these the dogs instantly gave chase. I followed in the wake of the retreating elephants, tracing their course by the red dust which they raised and left in clouds behind them.

Presently emerging into an open glade, I came full in sight of the mighty game; it was a truly glorious sight; there were nine or ten of them, which were, with one exception, full-grown, first-rate bulls, and all of them carried very long, heavy, and perfect tusks. Their first panic being over, they had reduced their pace to a free, majestic walk, and they followed one leader in a long line, exhibiting an appearance so grand and striking that any description, however brilliant, must fail to convey to the mind of the reader an adequate idea of the reality. Increasing my pace, I shot alongside, at the same time riding well out from the elephants, the better to obtain an inspection of their tusks. It was a difficult matter to decide which of them I should select, for every elephant seemed better than his neighbor; but, on account of the extraordinary size and beauty of his tusks, I eventually pitched upon a patriarchal bull, which, as is usual with the heaviest, brought up the rear. I presently separated him from his com-

rades, and endeavored to drive him in a northerly direction.

There is a peculiar art in driving an elephant in the particular course which you may fancy, and, simple as it may seem, it nevertheless requires the hunter to have a tolerable idea of what he is about. It is widely different from driving in an eland, which also requires judicious riding: if you approach too near your elephant or shout to him, a furious charge will certainly ensue, while, on the other hand, if you give him too wide a berth, the chances are that you will lose him in the jungle, which, notwithstanding his size, is a very simple matter, and, if once lost sight of, it is more than an even bet that the hunter will never again obtain a glimpse of him. The ground being favorable, Kleinboy called to me to commence firing, remarking very prudently that he was probably making for some jungle of wait-a-bits, where we might eventually lose him. I continued, however, to reserve my fire until I had hunted him to what I considered to be a safe distance from the two old fellows which we had first discovered.

At length closing with him, I dared him to charge, which he instantly did in fine style, and as he pulled up in his career I yelled to him a note of bold defiance, and, cantering alongside, again defied him to the combat. It was thus the fight

began, and, the ground being still favorable, I opened a sharp fire upon him, and in about a quarter of an hour twelve of my bullets were lodged in his fore quarters. He now evinced strong symptoms of approaching dissolution, and stood catching up the dust with the point of his trunk and throwing it in clouds above and around him. At such a moment it is extremely dangerous to approach an elephant on foot, for I have remarked that, although nearly dead, he can muster strength to make a charge with great impetuosity.

Being anxious to finish him, I dismounted from my steed, and, availing myself of the cover of a gigantic nwana-tree, whose diameter was not less than ten feet, I ran up within twenty yards, and gave it him sharp right and left behind the shoulder. These two shots wound up the proceeding; on receiving them, he backed stern foremost into the cover, and then walked slowly away. I had loaded my rifle, and was putting on the caps, when I heard him fall over heavily; but, alas! the sound was accompanied by a sharp crack, which I too well knew denoted the destruction of one of his lovely tusks; and, on running forward, I found him lying dead, with the tusk, which lay under, snapped through the middle.

I did not tarry long for an inspection of the elephant, but, mounting my horse, at once set off to

follow on the spoor of the two old fellows which the ostrich had alarmed. Fortunately, I fell in with a party of natives, who were on their way to the wagons with the impedimenta, and, assisted by these, I had sanguine hopes of shortly overtaking the noble quarry. We had not gone far when two wild boars, with enormous tusks, stood within thirty yards of me, but this was no time to fire, and a little after a pair of white rhinoceroses stood directly in our path. Casting my eyes to the right, I beheld within a quarter of a mile of me a herd of eight or ten cow elephants, with calves, peacefully browsing on a sparely-wooded knoll.

The spoor we followed led due south, and the wind was as fair as it could blow. We passed between the twin-looking, abrupt, pyramidal hills, composed of huge disjoined blocks of granite, which lay piled above each other in grand confusion. To the summit of one of these I ascended with a native, but the forest in advance was so impenetrable that we could see nothing of the game we sought. Descending from the hillock, we resumed the spoor, and were enabled to follow at a rapid pace, the native who led the spooring party being the best tracker in Bamangwato. I had presently very great satisfaction to perceive that the elephants had not been alarmed, their course

being strewed with branches which they had chewed as they slowly fed along.

The trackers now became extremely excited, and strained their eyes on every side in the momentary expectation of beholding the elephants. At length we emerged into an open glade, and, clearing a grove of thorny mimosas, we came full in sight of one of them. Cautiously advancing, and looking to my right, I next discovered his comrade, standing in a thicket of low wait-a-bits, within a hundred and fifty yards of me; they were both first-rate old bulls, with enormous tusks of great length. I dismounted, and warily approached the second elephant for a closer inspection of his tusks. As I drew near he slightly turned his head, and I then perceived that his further one was damaged toward the point, while at the same instant his comrade, raising his head clear of the bush on which he browsed, displayed to my delighted eyes a pair of the most beautiful and perfect tusks I had ever seen.

Regaining my horse, I advanced toward this elephant, and when within forty yards of him he walked slowly on before me in an open space, his huge ears gently flapping, and entirely concealing me from his view. Inclining to the left, I slightly increased my pace, and walked past him within sixty yards, upon which he observed me for the

first time; but probably mistaking "Sunday" for a hartebeest, he continued his course with his eye upon me, but showed no symptoms of alarm. The natives had requested me to endeavor, if possible, to hunt him toward the water, which lay in a northerly direction, and this I resolved to do. Having advanced a little, I gave him my wind, when he was instantly alarmed and backed into the bushes, holding his head high and right to me. Thus he stood motionless as a statue, under the impression, probably, that, owing to his Lilliputian dimensions, I had failed to observe him, and fancying that I would pass on without detecting him.

I rode slowly on, and described a semicircle to obtain a shot at his shoulder, and, halting my horse, fired from the saddle; he got it in the shoulder-blade, and, as slowly and silently I continued my course, he still stood gazing at me in utter astonishment. Bill and Flam were now slipped by the natives, and in another moment they were barking around him. I shouted loudly to encourage the dogs and perplex the elephant, who seemed puzzled to know what to think of us, and, shrilly trumpeting, charged headlong after the dogs. Retreating, he backed into the thicket, then charged once more, and made clean away, holding the course I wanted.

When I tried to fire, "Sunday" was very fidgety, and destroyed the correctness of my aim.

Approaching the elephant, I presently dismounted, and, running in, gave him two fine shots behind the shoulder; then the dogs, which were both indifferent ones, ran barking at him. The consequence was a terrific charge, the dogs at once making for their master, and bringing the elephant right upon me. I had no time to gain my saddle, but ran for my life. The dogs, fortunately, took after "Sunday," who, alarmed by the trumpeting, dashed frantically away, though in the heat of the affray I could not help laughing to remark horse, dogs, and elephant all charging along in a direct line.

The dogs, having missed their master, held away for Kleinboy, who had long disappeared I knew not whither. "Sunday" stood still, and commenced to graze, while the elephant, slowly passing within a few yards of him, assumed a position under a tree beside him. Kleinboy presently making his appearance, I called to him to ride in and bring me my steed; but he refused, and asked me if I wished him to go headlong to destruction. "Sunday" having fed slowly away from the elephant, I went up and he allowed me to recapture him.

I now plainly saw that the elephant was dying, but I continued firing to hasten his demise. Toward the end he took up a position in a dense thorny thicket, where for a long time he remained. Approaching within twelve paces, I fired my last

two shots, aiming at his left side, close behind the shoulder. On receiving these he backed slowly through the thicket, and, clearing it, walked gently forward about twenty yards, when he suddenly came down with tremendous violence right on his broadside. To my intense mortification, the heavy fall was accompanied by a loud, sharp crack, and on going up I found one of his matchless tusks broken short off by the lip. This was a glorious day's sport: I had bagged in one afternoon probably the two finest bull elephants in Bamangwato, and, had it not been for the destruction of their noble trophies, which were the two finest pair of tusks I had obtained that season, my triumph on the occasion had been great and unalloyed. . . .

[The rainy season now set in. On the 12th of October, Cumming bade farewell to the land of elephants and started on his return trip. Ten days later he was deserted by all of his colonial servants except Ruyter, the little Bushman. He had four savages from Bamangwato, but they knew nothing of driving and handling draught animals. There were twenty-four oxen to the two wagons, and nine saddle horses, to manage. The wagons stuck and broke down. After a fruitless search for the runaway Hottentots, Cumming patched up his caravan as best he could, and trekked onward.

A dense forest was encountered, through which

the hunter had to hew a way for his wagons. Proceeding at a snail's pace southward with his precious cargo, he reached Dr. Livingstone's missionary station on the 20th of November, and finished his journey at Colesberg on the 26th of January, 1845, after an absence of eleven months.

"My costume," he says, "consisted of a dilapidated wide-awake hat, which had run the gauntlet with many a grove of wait-a-bits, a dusty-looking ragged shirt, and a pair of still more ragged-looking canvas trousers, which were, moreover, amputated above the knee, while my face was adorned with a shaggy red beard, which *tout ensemble* imparted to me the appearance of one escaped from Bedlam. As I drew near a farm, its inmates took fright at my wild appearance, and two of the Boers, timidly projecting their heads from the half-closed door, loudly shouted to me to lay down my gun. I, however, pretended not to understand, and, advancing boldly, I wished them good morning.

"One of these was the owner of the farm, and the man from whom I had bought the dogs, yet nevertheless he failed to recognize me. He still appeared to be much alarmed, and evidently looked upon me as a dangerous character; but, commiserating the transparent texture of my continuations, he offered to lend me a pair of leather

‘crackers.’ Declining the proffered apparel, I entered the house without ceremony, and having come to an anchor I requested some milk. Here I was immediately recognized by the children as ‘de carle wha heb vor Bonteberg ha-quoeh,’ viz., the man that bought Bonteberg.”— *Ed.*]

CHAPTER VII

ELEPHANTS — LIONS — RHINOCEROS — BUFFALOES

I CONTINUED in Grahamstown until the 7th day of March, when I set out once more on my weary journey for the distant forests of the far interior. Before leaving the town I settled my accounts with the merchants from whom I had obtained supplies, and who evidently seemed to consider my returning to the colony as a very doubtful event.

I engaged a discharged soldier of the 91st, named George Martin, in the capacity of head servant. This man hailed from Haddington, and bore an excellent character on leaving the regiment. He was accustomed to the charge of horses, in which he took a great interest.

My most important purchases in the sporting department consisted of a valuable double-barreled rifle, with spare shot-barrels by Westley Richards, which I obtained from Captain Hogg, and two right good steeds, one of which was a very superior coal-black gelding, which I purchased of Captain Walpole, of the Engineers, for £20, which was considerably below its value. I named this horse

Black Jack; in paces and disposition he very much resembled my lamented Colesberg, and he was altogether one of the finest horses I ever mounted. His end was sudden and severe; for on a subsequent expedition, along with another of my favorite horses, he was torn to pieces and consumed by a troop of ruthless lions. The other horse which I purchased was a gray; and as it is probable that this horse may be introduced in future pages, under the designation of the "Old Gray," I trust the reader will not be confounded with the idea of the resurrection of the original "Old Gray."

On the morning of the 9th I reached Fort Beaufort, when I encamped at the mess-house of the 7th. I continued there until the morning of the 15th, when I resumed my march for the interior. In Fort Beaufort I purchased four right good horses from the officers of the garrison: one of these was a jet black steed, and was named by his late master Schwartland. This horse was one of the finest shooting-horses in Southern Africa, and understood his work so well that he seemed to follow the game with all the eagerness of a greyhound, and yet he would suddenly halt in full career when I wished to fire, if I merely placed my hand upon his neck. From his back I subsequently shot many elephants and other game, and his name will often appear in after pages. At the farm of Messrs.

Nelson and Blane I purchased two more horses, which I called Brown Jock and Mazeppa, and also a span of oxen and some milch cows.

On the 2d of April I entered the village of Colesberg, where I was actively employed in making final preparations for my distant campaign until the 9th. I engaged two Hottentot servants named Booi and Kleinfeldt, the latter individual being one of those who had forsaken my banner at Boötlo-namy, and I purchased two more valuable steeds, which increased my stud to ten very superior young horses. I also purchased a number of rough, long-legged serviceable dogs, of a variety of breeds, which, with several other ragged-looking tykes that I subsequently purchased from Boers along the line of march, increased my kennel to about twenty business-like dogs.

At sunrise on the 9th we marched out of the village and held on until we reached the Orange River at Boata's Drift, where we outspanned beneath the shade of a grove of willows. Having crossed the river on horseback, it proved too deep to take the wagons over, but I had the consolation to remark that the waters were on the ebb, and by the forenoon of the following day they had so far subsided that I was enabled to cross the great river without wetting my cargo. The ascension of the opposite side proved extremely severe, being an al-

most perpendicular bank of soft sand, and I was obliged to relieve the wagon of half its load before the oxen could drag it to the more practicable road beyond.

I was now all anxiety to reach my Fountain of Elephants, and pushed on with all speed for Mas-souey. On the 15th, just as I had reached the Bastard kraal of Rhama, I fell in with my old servant Carollus, who had absconded from me at Boötlonamy. He was in company with the wagons belonging to Mr. David Hume, the trader, on their return to the colony, but, meeting with his old companions Kleinfeldt and Kleinboy, he resolved to turn about and re-enter my service, which I was not sorry for, as I was short of hands for the distant expedition I was about to make. I also fell in with Captain Arkwright and Mr. Christie, who were proceeding up the country on a similar expedition to my own.

On the 16th of May I halted at Chouaney, at the residence of Dr. Livingstone, who told me that one or two troops of elephants had been frequenting the district. With one of these I fell in on the 20th, when I had an opportunity of testing the sportsmanlike qualities of my new servant Martin. The troop consisted of nine bull elephants, the finest of which I shot, but Martin, after selecting the poorest of the lot, ultimately lost him. We

now pressed on as rapidly as possible for my favorite fountain Massouey, which we at length reached on the 29th.

I felt sincere pleasure in revisiting this very interesting spot. I found it well frequented by the elephants. Two troops of cows and three old bulls had drunk there on the preceding night. When the wagons came up to my old halting-place, I took a hasty breakfast, and then started on the spoor of an enormous old bull. After following him north for about six miles, we lost him in the spoor of a troop of cows; I accordingly followed the spoor of the cows, and soon came up with them. The troop consisted in all of about ten, but there were only three full-grown cows in the troop; each of these three, unluckily, went off in different directions. I rode within twenty yards of the best, and, halting, put two balls close behind her shoulder, and, calling to Martin to finish her, galloped after the second best. I soon got a view of her, and in three minutes had turned her head toward camp, and presently rolled her over with about six shots. Martin and the Bushman not appearing when two hours had elapsed, I rode to camp, where, to my astonishment, I found my servant, who had actually lost my elephant through the most inexcusable want of pluck. I was very much annoyed, and regretted having attacked the troop at all.

At dawn of day Mollyeon and I walked to the fountain to seek for elephants' spoor. A troop of cows, several small bulls, and two well-grown bulls, had drunk during the night, besides an immense number of rhinoceroses, perhaps twenty. I made a hasty breakfast, and then took up the spoor of the two best bulls, with one after-rider. The spoor led nearly southeast. After following it for about six miles, we found ourselves in an elevated part of the forest, which commanded a fine view of the mountains to the east, and here Mollyeon climbed to the summit of a sandal-wood tree to try if he could see the elephants. He could not see those we were spooring; but he saw three other bull elephants, about three parts grown, feeding slowly along, steering about north; after a short and dangerous conflict, I slew the best with five bullets.

We then followed up the spoor of one of our first elephants, which had now taken a northerly course. After following it up very sharply for about five miles through very open country, we reached some dense wait-a-bit cover, where we discovered our friend hiding himself within twenty yards of us. He took away at once through the thickest of the cover, and on my approaching for a shot he made the most terrific charge after me, sending large thorny trees flying like grass before him. When he halted after this charge, I sent a ball through

his ribs, and he then made clean away, and got into better country. Here I fought with him for about an hour, and gave him sixteen shots from the saddle. My horse was extremely troublesome, and invariably destroyed the correctness of my aim; the elephant was fierce and active, and made repeated charges with very destructive intentions; at length he turned and regained the dense thorny cover, in which I lost him.

On the morning of June 1st, before the sun rose, Mollyeon and I walked to the fountain to see if elephants had drunk. Ten bull elephants had been there, and had all gone off together, holding a southeasterly course; this was glorious. I started on the spoor with five natives, and Kleinfeldt as after-rider on Dreadnaught. I took eight of my dogs, all led in strings, and rode Schwartland, my best shooting-horse. After following the spoor for about five miles, we found ourselves to leeward of the elephant I had shot on Saturday, and here the elephants had smelled the blood, and started off in great fear, going clean away through open country, steering one point west of south. They got into an old elephant foot-path, and held steadily on for many miles, not halting to break one branch or to plow the ground. The leading native said he did not expect to see them, and I was certainly of the same opinion. At length they got into a

thickly-wooded part of the country, and although they were still holding clean away up wind, they had occasionally halted to feed. Here I started an oryx. We presently reached the border of a very wide open country, where the spoor took a turn to the east. We proceeded a few hundred yards further, when we had the unexpected satisfaction to behold the mighty squadron drawn up in the open cover, in open order, two hundred yards ahead. Some of them stood motionless as statues, others moved slowly here and there, and browsed upon the trees.

The troop consisted of ten bull elephants: eight of them were about three parts grown; the other two were enormous old elephants, in magnificent condition. We halted and gave the dogs water, and I then rode slowly round the elephants to ascertain which was the best. After riding twice along their front, they all, as if by one accord, turned their faces to me, and advanced leisurely within forty yards, giving me an excellent opportunity of making my choice. At length they saw me, and, sounding the alarm, all made off together in great consternation. I galloped alongside of them to make my final choice, and selected the largest elephant. I had some difficulty in getting him clear of his comrades, some of which were extremely fierce, and were trumpeting along, with

their tails and trunks aloft. At length I got him clear; all my dogs had gone off to the right and left after other elephants, and Dreadnaught came galloping up to me, having thrown my after-rider, who did not succeed in recapturing him.

My elephant now, hearing the barking and trumpeting on every side, halted beside a bushy tree, with his head high, and right to me; but, presently turning his broadside, I gave it him sharp right and left after the shoulder; and the dogs, hearing the shots, came up to my assistance. The conflict now became fast and furious; I had very pleasant work with this fine old elephant. My horse behaved very well, and the elephant's fury and attention were chiefly directed toward the dogs, who stuck well to him; but he was by far the toughest elephant to finish that I have ever engaged with. I gave him thirty-five balls, all about and behind his shoulder, and discharged at distances varying from fifteen to thirty-five yards, before he would halt and die. At length he reduced his pace to a very slow walk; blood flowed from his trunk and all his wounds, leaving the ground behind him a mass of gore; his frame shuddered violently, his mouth opened and shut, his lips quivered, his eyes were filled with tears; he halted beside a thorny tree, and, having turned right about, he rocked forward and backward for a few sec-

onds, and, falling heavily over, his ancient spirit fled. The natives now came up, and, having promised to go on the spoor of my horse Dreadnaught, I returned to Massouey, having off-saddled for an hour. . . .

On the afternoon of the 3d of September I watched the fountain. Toward sunset one blue wildebeest, six zebras, and a large herd of pallahs were all drinking before me. I lay enjoying contemplation for at least fifteen minutes, and, most of them having then slaked their thirst, I sent a ball through the heart of the best headed pallah. I then took a long shot at the blue wildebeest bull, and sent the other ball into his shoulder.

I now came to the camp, and ordered the pallah to be placed in front of my hole beside the water, to attract the lions. Having taken my coffee, I returned to the water with Kleinboy and Mollyeon. It was bright moonlight. We had scarcely lain down when the terrible voice of a lion was heard a little to the east; the jackals were feasting over the remains of the white rhinoceros of yesterday, and only one or two occasionally came and snuffed at the pallah. Presently a herd of zebras, accompanied by elands, approached the water, but were too timid to come in and drink: a troop of wild dogs now came boldly up, and were walking off with the pallah, when I fired into them. They

made off, but immediately returning and again seizing my pallah, I fired again, and wounded one of them.

Soon after we had lain down a thundering clattering of hoofs was heard coming up the vley, and on came an immense herd of blue wildebeest. They were very thirsty, and the leading cow very soon came boldly up and drank before me. I sent a ball through her; she ran sixty yards up the slope behind me, and fell dead. Her comrades then thundered across the vley, and took up a position on the opposite rising ground. In two minutes the hyænas and jackals had attacked the carcass of this wildebeest. Soon after this a lion gave a most appalling roar on the bushy height close opposite to us, which was succeeded by a death-like stillness which lasted for nearly a minute. I had then only one shot in my four barrels, and I hastily loaded the other barrel of my Westley Richards, and with breathless attention kept the strictest watch in front, expecting every moment to see the mighty and terrible king of beasts approaching; but he was too cunning. He saw all the other game fight shy of the water, so he made a circuit to leeward to get the wind off the fountain. Soon after he roared I heard a number of jackals bothering him, as if telling him to come across the vley to the wildebeest: he growled

from side to side, as if playing with them, and after this all was still.

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

I had not an instant to lose; he stood with his right side exposed to me in a very slanting position; I stretched my left arm across the grass, and, taking him rather low, fired: the ball took effect, and the lion sank to the shot. All was still as death for many seconds, when he uttered a deep growl, and, slowly gaining his feet, limped toward the cover, roaring mournfully as he went. When he got into the thorny bushes he stumbled through them as he moved along, and in half a minute I heard him halt and growl fearfully, as if dying.

I had now every reason to believe that he was either dead or would die immediately, and if I did not seek him till the morning I knew very well that the hyænas and jackals would destroy him. I accordingly went up to camp, and, having saddled two horses, I and Martin rode to seek him, taking all the dogs, led in strings by the natives. On reaching the carcass of the wildebeest we slipped the dogs, and they went off after the hyænas and jackals: we listened in vain for the deep growl of the lion, but I was persuaded that he was dead, and rode forward to the spot where I had last heard him growl. Lassie, now coming up, commenced barking at a bush in front of me, and, riding round, I had the immense satisfaction to behold the most magnificent old black-maned lion stretched out before me.

The ball had entered his belly a little before the flank, and traversed the length and breadth of his body, crippling him in the opposite shoulder. No description could give a correct idea of the surpassing beauty of this most majestic animal, as he lay still warm before me. I lighted a fire and gazed with delight upon his lovely mane, his massive arms, his sharp yellow nails, his hard and terrible head, his immense and powerful teeth, his perfect beauty and symmetry throughout; and I felt that I had won the noblest prize that this wide

world could yield to a sportsman. Having about fifteen natives with me, I sent for rheims and the lechter-uit, and we bore the lion to camp.

On my way from the water to get the horses and dogs, I shot an extremely old bull black rhinoceros with a single ball: he dropped to the shot. His horns were quite worn down and amalgamated, resembling the stump of an old oak-tree.

On the afternoon of the 4th I deepened my hole and watched the water. As the sun went down two graceful springboks and a herd of pallahs came and drank, when I shot the best pallah in the troop. At night I watched the water with Kleinboy: very soon a black cow rhinoceros came and drank, and got off for the present with two balls in her. A little afterward two black rhinoceroses and two white ones came to the water side. We both fired together at the finest of the two black rhinoceroses; she ran three hundred yards and fell dead. Soon after this the other black rhinoceros came up again and stood at the water side; I gave her one ball after the shoulder; she ran a hundred yards and fell dead. In half an hour a third old borèlé appeared, and, having inspected the two dead ones, came up to the water side. We fired together: he ran two hundred yards and fell dead. I felt satisfied with our success, and gave it up for the night.

By the following evening the natives had cleared away the greater part of two of the rhinoceroses, which lay right in the way of the game approaching the water; I, however, enforced their leaving the third rhinoceros, which had fallen on the bare rising ground, almost opposite to my hiding-place, in the hope of attracting a lion, as I intended to watch the water at night. Soon after the twilight had died away, I went down to my hole with Kleinboy and two natives, who lay concealed in another hole, with Wolf and Boxer ready to slip in the event of wounding a lion.

On reaching the water I looked toward the carcass of the rhinoceros, and, to my astonishment, beheld the ground alive with large creatures, as though a troop of zebras were approaching the fountain to drink. Kleinboy remarked to me that a troop of zebras were standing on the height. I answered "Yes;" but I knew very well that zebras would not be capering around the carcass of a rhinoceros. I quickly arranged my blankets, pillow, and guns in the hole, and then lay down to feast my eyes on the interesting sight before me. It was bright moonlight, as clear as I need wish, and within one night of being full moon.

There were six large lions, about twelve or fifteen hyænas, and from twenty to thirty jackals, feasting on and around the carcasses of the three

rhinoceroses. The lions feasted peacefully, but the hyænas and jackals fought over every mouthful, and chased one another round and round the carcasses, growling, laughing, screeching, chattering, and howling without any intermission. The hyænas did not seem afraid of the lions, although they always gave way before them; for I observed that they followed them in the most disrespectful manner, and stood laughing, one or two on either side, when any lions came after their comrades to examine pieces of skin or bones which they were dragging away. I had lain watching this banquet for about three hours, in the strong hope that, when the lions had feasted, they would come and drink. Two black and two white rhinoceroses had made their appearance, but, scared by the smell of the blood, they had made off.

At length the lions seemed satisfied. They all walked about with their heads up, and seemed to be thinking about the water; and in two minutes one of them turned his face toward me, and came on. He was immediately followed by a second lion, and in half a minute by the remaining four. It was a decided and general move; they were all coming to drink right bang in my face, within fifteen yards of me.

I charged the unfortunate, pale, and panting Kleinboy to convert himself into a stone, and know-

ing, from old spoor, exactly where they would drink, I cocked my left barrel, and placed myself and gun in position. The six lions came steadily on along the stony ridge until within sixty yards of me, when they halted for a minute to reconnoiter. One of them stretched out his massive arms on the rock and lay down: the others then came on, and he rose and brought up the rear. They walked, as I had anticipated, to the old drinking-place, and three of them had put down their heads and were lapping the water loudly, when Kleinboy thought it necessary to shove up his ugly head. I turned my head slowly to rebuke him, and, again turning to the lions, found myself discovered.

An old lioness, who seemed to take the lead, had detected me, and, with her head high and her eyes fixed full upon me, was coming slowly round the corner of the little vley to cultivate further my acquaintance! This unfortunate coincidence put a stop at once to all further contemplation. I thought, in my haste, that it was perhaps most prudent to shoot this lioness, especially as none of the others had noticed me. I accordingly moved my arm and covered her: she saw me move and halted, exposing a full broadside. I fired; the ball entered one shoulder and passed out behind the other. She bounded forward with repeated

growls, and was followed by her five comrades, all enveloped in a cloud of dust; nor did they stop until they had reached the cover behind me, except one old gentleman, who halted and looked back for a few seconds, when I fired, but the ball went high.

I listened anxiously for some sound to denote the approaching end of the lioness, nor listened in vain. I heard her growling and stationary, as if dying. In one minute her comrades crossed the vley a little below me, and made toward the rhinoceros. I then slipped Wolf and Boxer on her scent, and, following them into the cover, found her lying dead within twenty yards of where the old lion had lain two nights before. This was a fine old lioness, with perfect teeth, and was certainly a noble prize; but I felt dissatisfied at not having rather shot a lion, which I had most certainly done if my Hottentot had not destroyed my contemplation.

On the 8th, as I and Kleinboy watched the under water about midnight, we heard a black rhinoceros blowing beside the upper water. We very rashly walked up within about eighteen yards of him, with no other shelter than a small bush. On perceiving us, the borèlé at once turned his head to me and advanced slowly: Kleinboy, who was on my right and had a good chance, fortunately fired without orders, and the ball entered the shoulder with a

fine direction. Borèlé then charged madly and furiously through the trees and bushes, right toward camp, making the most tremendous blowing noise, and halting in a stony open flat close to the wagons: he stood, and staggered about for a minute or two, and then fell. On coming up to him, I found him a magnificent specimen, carrying three distinct horns.

After breakfast on the 10th, the oxen having drunk, we inspanned and marched to Boötlonamy, which we reached at sunset.

After a march of three days, during which the cattle and horses nearly died of thirst, we reached Moselakose, a retired fountain in a bold glen or gorge in the first mountain chain before us. As we approached this fine fountain, the poor, thirsty, loose cattle rushed ahead to the water, not a little gratified by the sight.

I found the spoor of game abundant at the water; accordingly, I outspanned at a considerable distance from it, and at once set about making a hole from which to shoot the game as they came up to drink.

After breakfast on the 16th I rode to the water and again lay in my hole. There were large herds of game standing within a few hundred yards of me when I lay down, and soon after the horses had disappeared they came on from all sides and com-

pletely surrounded me. It was of no consequence that they got my wind, and frequent alarms were sounded — the thirsty game to windward would not heed the alarm, and, standing their ground fearlessly, they gave the others confidence. There were standing within shot of me at once about three hundred pallahs, about twelve sassaybies, and twenty zebras.

I could only make out two very fair heads in all that vast herd of pallahs, and these were not to be compared with my best Soobie heads; I therefore amused myself by watching the game, and did not fire, having resolved to wait quietly, in the hope of some rarer game appearing, such as koodoo, sable antelope, or wild boar, &c. At length I observed three shy, strange-looking antelopes approach the water, with large bushy tails, and furry-looking reddish-gray hair. They were three rhooze-rheeboks, a buck and two does. I had never before heard that either of the rheeboks frequented these parts; being anxious to certify that this antelope did so, I shot the buck through the heart.

The next day I again rode to the water and lay down, with large herds of pallahs, &c., in view: soon after the horses were gone, they came in and surrounded me, the same as the day before. It was a fine show of game: there were about two

hundred pallahs, about fifty blue wildebeests, thirty zebras, and thirty sassaybies, all at once drinking and standing within easy shot of me. After watching them for a short time, I selected a fine old cow blue wildebeest, and fired, when this vast body of game thundered, panic stricken, away on every side. As the dust cleared away the gnoo was to be seen standing alone, and in about ten minutes she staggered, fell, and died. Fifteen minutes afterward two herds of pallahs approached from different directions. I was overhauling them, when up came two tearing wild boars and stood broadside before me, with their long tails stuck right up. I took the best behind the shoulder: he ran off with his comrade up a very rocky hill above the fountain, leaving the stones red in his wake, and feeling himself unable to proceed further, charged and staggered violently about the stones, and at last gave in, having broken both his under teeth; he also squealed violently when the struggles of death came over him.

A singular circumstance occurred as I watched the waters on the 20th. Having shot a sassayby, he immediately commenced choking from the blood, and his body began to swell in a most extraordinary manner; it continued swelling, with the animal still alive, until it literally resembled a fisherman's float, when the sassayby died of suffocation. It

was not only his body that swelled in this extraordinary manner, but even his head and legs, down to his knees.

The 21st was a bitter cold morning, with a strong wind from the southwest. I rode to my hole at the fountain before the morning star appeared. Shortly, becoming impatient of lying still, I rose from my hole to examine what game had drunk during the night, and, to my astonishment, at once discovered the spoor of a mighty bull elephant, which must have drunk there not many hours before. I went in haste to camp, and, having made all ready for a three-days' trip, took up the spoor with two after-riders and six natives. It led us in an easterly course, first through a neck in the mountains, and then skirting them for about five miles through thick cover and over hard adamantine rocks and sharp stones. The elephant had fed as he went along, and we soon came up with him standing in a thicket. When we first caught sight of him he was within twenty yards of us, a bushy tree nearly concealing him from our view. I first observed one of his tusks, and then I had to dispatch Kleinboy to catch the cowardly natives, who were making off at top speed with my dogs on strings. The dogs fought well with him: it was very rocky ground, and I gave him one deadly shot before he was aware of our

presence. I then hunted him into softer ground, and slew him with the tenth shot.

This fellow made up my fiftieth elephant bagged in Africa, not to mention numbers lost.

On our way to camp, while following an old established elephant and rhinoceros foot-path, I observed a gray mass beneath a bush, with something which looked like a shining black horn stuck out on one side: it was within about eight yards of our path. When I got alongside of it I saw that it was a princely old bull buffalo, with a very remarkably fine head. He had lain his head flat on the ground, and was crouching, in the hope that we should ride past without observing him, just as an old stag or a roebuck does in Scotland. I gave the dogs the signal of the presence of game, when, as dogs invariably will do, they dashed off in the wrong direction. The buffalo sprang to his feet, and in one instant he was lost in the thicket.

From the quantity of buffalo's spoor on the north side of this mountain range, I made up my mind that there must be some strong water on that side of the hills, as only one or two buffaloes occasionally came to drink at the fountain where I was encamped; the natives all declared that there was none. I, however, on the 22d, determined to ride thither to explore, and accordingly started

with Kleinboy and the Bushman. We held first about west, and then crossed the mountains by a succession of very rocky valleys and ravines. When we had gained the highest part of the rock, which opened to us the forests of the north, a troop of seven doe koodoos and three rhooze-rheboks started on the opposite side of the ravine. The dogs, observing the koodoos, gave immediate chase: and after a very fine and bold course, they brought one to bay far in the valley below, which Kleinboy shot.

I had, in the mean time, ridden ahead, following an old-established game foot-path, and after proceeding two or three miles I had the satisfaction to discover a beautiful fountain in a deep rocky ravine on the north side of the mountains. Here was fresh spoor of black and white rhinoceros, buffalo, wildebeest, sassayby, koodoo, klip-springer, &c. A little after this I was met by my after-riders, who had likewise discovered a ravine containing water a little to the east. There they had started two bull buffaloes, three buck koodoos, and a troop of rhebok. I then rode to inspect this water, and took up the spoor of the buffaloes, in the hope of bringing them to bay with the dogs. I held up the hollow on their spoor, and presently observed one of them standing among some trees to my left. The dogs were snuffing about close

under his nose; nevertheless, they failed to observe him, but set off at top speed on some other scent; nor did they return for about ten minutes.

The buffalo did not seem startled by the dogs, but walked slowly over the rocky ridge. I was following briskly after him, when I observed his comrade lying right in our path; we squatted instantly, but he got our wind and was off. I followed, and got a shot across the ravine, wounding him behind the shoulder. When the dogs came up I tried to put them on this spoor, but they dashed up the ravine and started three other buffaloes, which they failed in bringing to bay, nor did I again see the dogs till I had been two hours in camp. I nearly killed myself by running after them, for I was on foot, the ground being too bad for the horses.

On reaching the steeds I rode hard for camp, as the day was far spent. Passing the mouth of another bold ravine, we crossed very well-beaten paths, which led me to suspect that this ravine also contained a fountain. We had ridden about half way to camp when a fine old bull eland came charging up to leeward, having got our wind. I sprang from the back of Mazeppa, and gave him both barrels as he passed me. We then gave him chase through very thick cover, and after a sharp burst of about a mile I shot him from the

saddle: he carried a very fine head, and was, notwithstanding the lateness of the season, in very good condition.

On the 23d, in the forenoon, I rode to explore the suspected ravine of the day before, and, having crossed the mountain chain, came upon the fresh spoor of a very large troop of cow elephants leading toward the spot. I at once determined to follow it, and dispatched the Bushman to camp for the dogs and Kleinboy's gun, &c. I rode slowly ahead on the spoor, imagining the elephants at a great distance, when, on gaining a ridge, I came full upon the troop, drawn up within twenty-five yards of me. There were perhaps from twenty-five to thirty of them. The instant I came upon them they got my wind, and, rumbling, away they went in three divisions into the impenetrable cover.

The ground that I had now reached was one solid mass of sharp adamantine blocks of rock, so that a horse could with difficulty walk on it. I held along the ridge above the cover, and in half a minute I heard one division of the elephants crashing through the cover after me. They came on a little above me, and another troop held the same course a little before me, so that I had considerable difficulty in getting clear of them, and when I did I held for the level ground beneath

the dense cover. Here I fell in with one elephant with a calf: she had only one tooth. I gave her a shot after the shoulder; and next minute, while trying to head her in the dense cover, she very nearly ran me down in her charge. I, of course, lost her immediately, being without dogs.

I then gave up the elephants in vexation with the ground, and rode to explore the ravine. My wounded elephant, however, happened to take the same course above me in the cover, and I once more fell in with her. She was going slowly along the hill sides, keeping in the thickest cover, with a rocky ground, where my horse would be of no service to me. I might now have got her, but as she had only one tooth I was not anxious about her, so I held up the bold ravine.

Here, as I expected, I found a strong fountain in a solid rocky basin not more than ten feet wide: it was a very interesting spot, approachable by three different rugged passes, the sides of which were furrowed by broad foot-paths established there through ages. The large stones and masses of rock were either kicked to the side or packed into a level "like a pavement"; even the solid adamantine rock was worn hollow by the feet of the mighty game which most probably for a thousand years had passed over it. Here I found fresh spoor of most of the larger game, and,

resolving to play havoc by light of the coming moon, I left the glen and rode for camp.

On the 25th, after breakfast, I started with bedding and provisions to hunt for a few days on the other side of the hills. We visited the first water, and established a place of concealment with rocks and green boughs on the rock. While we were making this bothy a wild boar hove in view, but, observing us, he escaped. We then held on to the further ravine, and on my way thither I nearly rode down a fine old bastard gemsbok, which got away among the rocks. I repaired an old hiding-hole at this water, building it up with fragments of rock. I then sent the steeds to a proper distance, put out my fire, and lay down to watch for the night.

First came a pallah, closely followed by a wild dog. The pallah escaped; the wild dog presently returned, and, observing my retreating men, barked loudly; ten minutes after, about eight wild dogs came up the glen and drank. Night now set in, and the moonlight very faint. Presently an occasional loud displacement of rock and stone announced the approach of large game: it was two old bull buffaloes; they came and drank, and went away without approaching within shot. Soon after, fourteen buffaloes came; but before these had finished drinking, they got an alarm,

and charged panic-stricken up the rugged mountain side. They had winded two lions, which came up to the fountain head, and drank within eighteen yards of me, where they lay lapping loudly, and occasionally halting for four or five minutes, but, from their light color and the masses of rock that surrounded them, I could not see to fire. About ten minutes after they had drunk I fancied that they were still lingering, and on throwing a stone their step was heard retreating among the dry leaves and stones.

Soon after this six old bull buffaloes approached from a glen behind us: they walked very slowly, standing long to listen. When the leader came up to within twenty yards of us, Kleinboy and I fired together; it ran thirty yards, and in two minutes fell. His comrades, after considering the matter for five minutes, came on once more: we again took the leader, and he also dropped. His comrades, as before, retreated, but, soon returning, we wounded a third, which we did not get. The moon was now under, and it was very dark; the buffaloes, however, were determined to try it on once more, and coming up a fourth and last time, we shot another old bull. In about ten minutes lions were very busy on the carcass of the first buffalo, where they feasted till morning, taking another drink before they went away. Toward

daybreak we wounded a white rhinoceros, and soon after two black rhinoceroses fought beside us, but I was too sleepy to rise.

On the 26th I rose at earliest dawn to inspect the heads of the three old buffaloes; they were all enormous old bulls, and one of them carried a most splendid head. The lions had cleaned out all his entrails: their spoor was immense. Having taken some buffalo breast and liver for breakfast, I dispatched Ruyter to the wagons to call the natives to remove the carcasses, while I and Kleinboy held through the hills to see what game might be in the next glen which contained water. On our way thither we started a fine old buck koodoo, which I shot, putting both barrels into him at one hundred yards. As I was examining the spoor of the game by the fountain, I suddenly detected an enormous old rock-snake stealing in beneath a mass of rock beside me.

He was truly an enormous snake, and, having never before dealt with this species of game, I did not exactly know how to set about capturing him. Being very anxious to preserve his skin entire, and not wishing to have recourse to my rifle, I cut a stout and tough stick about eight feet long, and having lightened myself of my shooting-belt, I commenced the attack. Seizing him by the tail, I tried to get him out of his place of refuge; but

I hauled in vain; he only drew his large folds firmer together; I could not move him. At length I got a rheim round one of his folds about the middle of his body, and Kleinboy and I commenced hauling away in good earnest.

The snake, finding the ground too hot for him, relaxed his coils, and, suddenly bringing round his head to the front, he sprang out at us like an arrow, with his immense and hideous mouth opened to its largest dimensions, and before I could get out of his way he was clean out of his hole, and made a second spring, throwing himself forward about eight or ten feet, and snapping his horrid fangs within a foot of my naked legs. I sprang out of his way, and, getting a hold of the green bough I had cut, returned to the charge. The snake now glided along at top speed: he knew the ground well, and was making for a mass of broken rocks, where he would have been beyond my reach, but before he could gain this place of refuge I caught him two or three tremendous whacks on the head. He, however, held on, and gained a pool of muddy water, which he was rapidly crossing, when I again belabored him, and at length reduced his pace to a stand. We then hanged him by the neck to a bough of a tree, and in about fifteen minutes he seemed dead, but he again became very troublesome during the operation of skinning, twisting

his body in all manner of ways. This serpent measured fourteen feet.

At night no game visited the water, being scared by the strong smell of the carrion. Lions, however, were so numerous that we deemed it safe to shift a position we had taken down the glen, for they trotted past within twenty yards of us, growling fearfully. We fired off the big gun to scare them for the moment while we shifted to our baggage at the fountain head, where we instantly lighted a large fire. The lions, for a short time after this, kept quiet, when they again returned, and the fire being low, they soon commenced upon the buffalo the natives had left within fifty yards of us, and before morning two of them came up and looked into our bothy, when Boxer giving a sharp bark, and I suddenly awaking and popping up my head, they bounded off.

In the evening of the 28th I shot an old bull koodoo. At night I watched the water near my camp with Kleinboy. After a long time had elapsed, an enormous old bull muchocho or white rhinoceros came slowly on, and commenced drinking within fifteen yards of us, and next minute a large herd of zebras and blue wildebeest. It was long before the muchocho would turn his side; when he did, we fired together, and away he went with zebras and wildebeests concealed in a cloud

of dust. Next came an old bull borèlé; we fired together, and he made off, blowing loudly, after charging round and round, seeking some object on which to wreak his vengeance. Next came another borèlé, and he got two bullets into his person. The fourth that came was another old bull muchocho; he ran forty yards and fell. And fifth came a cow borèlé; she fell dead to the shots. Three other rhinoceroses came about me, but I was too drowsy to watch any longer, and fell asleep.

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

CHAPTER VIII

BUFFALOES — LIONS — HIPPOPOTAMI

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

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

give any account of them, further than that they imagined that they were with us: I accordingly dispatched two of my men on horseback to take up their spoor.

On the 18th I arose before it was clear, and rode up the banks of the river with my dogs to seek for water-buck, and presently arrived where another considerable river's bed joins the Ngot-wáni. Near this spot I came upon an old water-buck, the first I had ever seen. He was standing among some young thorn-trees, within sixty yards, and had his eye full upon me. Before I could pull up my horse he was off at a rapid pace, and crossed the river's bed above me. I shouted to the dogs, and fired a shot to encourage them; they had a pretty fair start, and in half a minute the buck disappeared over a rocky ridge, with three or four of my best dogs within thirty yards of his stern. I knew that he would make for the nearest water; accordingly, I kept my eye down the river, and listened with an attentive ear for the baying of the dogs. Presently the noble buck appeared ascending a rocky pyramidal hill down the river side, with the agility of a chamois, and only one dog, Boxer, my best, at his heels. I then galloped down the river side at top speed to meet him, but was too late: I, however, fired a long shot to encourage Boxer. Next moment, in

ascending the opposite bank of the Ngotwani, my horse fell and rolled down the bank very nearly on the top of me. One of the barrels of my favorite ball gun was thereby stove, by coming in violent contact with a piece of rock.

Jock, on gaining his legs, declined being caught, and made off for camp, followed by my after-rider. Alert at this moment came up to me, having eight or ten inches of the skin of his breast and fore-arm ripped clean up by the water-buck. I now fancied that I had lost him, but a little after I heard Boxer's voice coming down the river side with the buck, having once more turned him. I ran up the bank of the Ngotwani at my best pace to meet them, and found the water-buck at bay in a deep pool of water, surrounded by high banks of granite rock. He would not stand at bay, but swam through the deep water and broke bay on the opposite side. Boxer, however, held on, and followed him up the river, and once more turned him to this pool. I met them coming down the water-course, and sent a ball into the buck's throat, which made blood flow freely from his mouth. He held stoutly on, however, and plunged into the deep pool, there standing at bay under a granite rock. I then headed him, and from above put a bullet between his two shoulder blades, which dropped him dead on the spot. He died as a

water-buck ought, in the deep water. My success with this noble and very beautiful antelope gave me most sincere pleasure.

I had now shot noble specimens of every sort of game in South Africa, excepting a few small bucks common in the colony, and the hippopotamus. Having contemplated the water-buck for some time, I cut off his handsome head, which I bore to camp in triumph. The next day I succeeded in bringing down another fine water-buck after a hot chase.

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

On the morning of the 22d I rode into camp, after unsuccessfully following the spoor of a herd of elephants for two days in a westerly course. Having partaken of some refreshment, I saddled up two steeds and rode down the bank of Ngotwani with the Bushman, to seek for any game I might find. After riding about a mile along the river's green bank, I came suddenly upon an old male leopard, lying under the shade of a thorn grove, and panting from the great heat. Although I was within sixty yards of him, he had

not heard the horses' tread. I thought he was a lioness, and, dismounting, took a rest in my saddle on the Old Gray, and sent a bullet into him. He sprang to his feet, and ran half way down the river's bank, and stood to look about him, when I sent a second bullet into his person, and he disappeared over the bank.

The ground being very dangerous, I did not disturb him by following then, but I at once sent Ruyter back to camp for the dogs. Presently he returned with Wolf and Boxer, very much done up with the sun. I rode forward, and on looking over the bank the leopard started up and sneaked off alongside of the tall reeds, and was instantly out of sight. I fired a random shot from the saddle to encourage the dogs, and shouted to them; they, however, stood looking stupidly round, and would not take up his scent at all. I led them over his spoor again and again, but to no purpose; the dogs seemed quite stupid, and yet they were Wolf and Boxer, my two best.

At length I gave it up as a lost affair, and was riding down the river's bank, when I heard Wolf give tongue behind me, and, galloping back, found him at bay with the leopard, immediately beneath where I had fired at him: he was very severely wounded, and had slipped down into the river's bed and doubled back, whereby he had thrown out

both the dogs and myself. As I approached he flew out upon Wolf and knocked him over, and then, running up the bed of the river, took shelter in a thick bush: Wolf, however, followed him, and at this moment my other dogs came up, having heard the shot, and bayed him fiercely. He sprang out upon them, and then crossed the river's bed, taking shelter beneath some large tangled roots on the opposite bank. As he crossed the river I put a third bullet into him, firing from the saddle, and as soon as he came to bay, I gave him a fourth, which finished him. This leopard was a very fine old male: in the conflict the unfortunate Alert was wounded, as usual, getting his face torn open; he was still going on three legs, with all his breast laid bare by the first water-buck.

In the evening I directed my Hottentots to watch a fine pool in the river, and do their best while I rode to a distant pool several miles up the Ngotwani, reported as very good for game, to lie all night and watch: my Totties, however, fearing "Tao," disobeyed me. On reaching the water I was bound for, I found it very promising, and, having fastened my two horses to a tree beneath the river's bank, I prepared a place of concealment close by, and lay down for the night.

The river's banks on each side were clad with groves of shady thorn-trees. After I had lain

some time, squadrons of buffaloes were heard coming on, until the shady grove on the east bank of the water immediately above me was alive with them. After some time the leaders ventured down the river's bank to drink, and this was the signal for a general rush into the large pool of water: they came on like a regiment of cavalry at a gallop, making a mighty din, and obscuring the air with a dense cloud of dust. At length I sent a ball into one of them, when the most tremendous rush followed up the bank, where they all stood still, listening attentively. I knew that the buffalo was severely wounded, but did not hear him fall.

Some time after I fired at a second, as they stood on the bank above me; this buffalo was also hard hit, but did not then fall. A little after I fired at a third on the same spot; he ran forty yards, and, falling, groaned fearfully: this at once brought on a number of the others to butt their dying comrade, according to their benevolent custom. I then crept in toward them, and, firing my fourth shot, a second buffalo ran forward a few yards, and, falling, groaned as the last; her comrades, coming up, served her in the same manner. A second time I crept in, and, firing a fifth shot, a third buffalo ran forward, and fell close to her dying comrades: in a few minutes all

the other buffaloes made off, and the sound of teeth tearing at the flesh was heard immediately.

I fancied it was the hyænas, and fired a shot to scare them from the flesh. All was still; and, being anxious to inspect the heads of the buffaloes, I went boldly forward, taking the native who accompanied me along with me. We were within about five yards of the nearest buffalo, when I observed a yellow mass lying alongside of him, and at the same instant a lion gave a deep growl. I thought it was all over with me. The native shouted "Tao," and, springing away, instantly commenced blowing shrilly through a charmed piece of bone which he wore on his necklace. I retreated to the native, and we then knelt down.

The lion continued his meal, tearing away at the buffalo, and growling at his wife and family, who, I found next day by the spoor, had accompanied him. Knowing that he would not molest me if I left him alone, I proposed to the native to go to our hole and lie down, but he would not hear of it, and entreated me to fire at the lion. I fired three different shots where I thought I saw him, but without any effect; he would not so much as for a moment cease munching my buffalo. I then proceeded to lie down, and was soon asleep, the native keeping watch over our destinies. Some time after midnight other lions were heard

coming on from other airts, and my old friend commenced roaring so loudly that the native thought it proper to wake me.

The first old lion now wanted to drink, and held right away for the two unfortunate steeds, roaring terribly. I felt rather alarmed for their safety; but, trusting that the lion had had flesh enough for one night, I lay still, and listened with an attentive ear. In a few minutes, to my utter horror, I heard him spring upon one of the steeds with an angry growl, and dash him to the earth; the steed gave a slight groan, and all was still. I listened to hear the sound of teeth, but all continued still. Soon after this "Tao" was once more to be heard munching the buffalo. In a few minutes he came forward, and stood on the bank close above us, and roared most terribly, walking up and down, as if meditating some mischief. I now thought it high time to make a fire, and, quickly collecting some dry reeds and little sticks, in half a minute we had a cheerful blaze. The lion, which had not yet got our wind, came forward at once to find out what the deuce was up; but, not seeing to his entire satisfaction from the top of the bank, he was proceeding to descend by a game-path into the river-bed within a few yards of us. I happened at the very moment to go to this spot to fetch more wood, and, being entirely

concealed from the lion's view above by the intervening high reeds, we actually met face to face!

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

[After some further hunting, Cumming returned to Grahamstown, where he sold his ivory and ostrich feathers for somewhere about £1,000. On the 11th of March, 1846, he started on a third expedition into the far interior.—*Ed.*]

On the 23d, when within two miles of the Molopo, the dogs took up the scent of lions. I then halted my wagons, and, having saddled up two horses, rode with Ruyter in quest of them, accompanied by ten of my dogs, who kept the scent for a short distance, and at last lost it altogether, and went off on the scent of some hartebeests.

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

They were both very large; the first, a "schwart fore-life," or black-maned lion; the last, which was the finest and the oldest, a "chiell fore-life," or yellow-maned lion. The black-maned lion, after looking at me for half a minute, walked slowly forward and bounded into the reeds; the dark-brown lion would fain have done the same, but I was now right between him and his retreat. He seemed not at all to like my appearance, but

did not yet feel certain what I was, and, fancying that I had not observed him, he lay down in the long grass. Ruyter now came up with my rifle. Having loaded in the saddle, I waited a minute for all my dogs to come up, they having gone off after the reitbok, and then rode slowly forward toward the lion, as if to pass within twenty-five yards of him. Not one of the dogs was yet aware of the lion, and they came on behind my horse.

This move on my part lost me the lion, for by so doing I laid open the ground of retreat between him and the reeds; and on coming within twenty or twenty-five yards of him, and while in the act of reining in my horse to fire, he took his eye off me, examined the ground between him and the reeds, and, seeing the coast clear, suddenly bounded forward, and, before I could even dismount from my panic-stricken steed, was at the edge of the reeds, which he entered with a lofty spring, making the water fly as he pitched into it. Several of the dogs entered after him, but immediately retreated, barking over their shoulders in great fear. Thus I lost this most noble lion, which, with better management, I might easily have slain. I ought to have approached him on foot, leading my steed, and I ought not to have laid open the ground of retreat.

On the 27th we trekked to Chouaney, which we

reached at sundown, and remained there to trade next day. I obtained from Sichely two natives to accompany me to the Limpopo, their pay being a musket each. I got also from the chief twelve elephants' teeth, several very fine karosses, native arms, and other curiosities.

About mid-day we marched, and slept near the Ngotwani, along whose banks my course lay for the Limpopo. The country through which the Ngotwani twines is soft and sandy, and in general covered with dense thorny jungle, which greatly impeded our progress, having constantly to cut a passage before the wagons could advance. Several lions commenced roaring around us soon after the sun went down.

On the evening of the next day I had a glorious row with an old bull buffalo: he was the only large bull in a fine herd of cows. I found their spoor while walking ahead of the wagons, and, following it up, came upon a part of the herd feeding quietly in a dense part of the forest. I fired my first shot at a cow, which I wounded. The other half of the herd then came up right in my face, within six yards of me. They would have trampled on me if I had not sung out in their faces and turned them. I selected the old bull, and sent a bullet into his shoulder. The herd then crashed along through the jungle to my right, but he at once

broke away from them and took to my left. On examining his spoor, I found it bloody. I then went to meet my wagons, which I heard coming on, and, ordering the men to out-span, took all my dogs to the spoor. They ran it up in fine style, and in a few minutes the silence of the forest was disturbed by a tremendous bay. On running toward the sound, I met the old fellow coming on toward the wagons, with all my dogs after him. I saluted him with a second ball in the shoulder; he held on and took up a position in the thicket within forty yards of the wagons, where I finished him. He carried a most splendid head.

On the 8th of June we made the long-wished-for fair Limpopo an hour before sunset. I was at once struck with this most interesting river: the trees along its banks were of prodigious size and very great beauty. At the very spot where I made the water, a huge crocodile lay upon the sand on the opposite side; on observing me he dashed into the stream.

The next day I rode ahead of the wagons with Ruyter, and hunted along the bank of the river. I immediately shot a water-buck. This animal and pallah were very abundant. As I advanced I found large vleys along the river side, a favorite haunt of the water-buck. After breakfast I again rode forth with fresh horses with my Bushman.

We still found water-buck and pallah very abundant. I presently gave chase to a herd of the former to try their speed; but as they led me into the midst of a labyrinth of marshy vleys, I gave it up.

At that instant the Bushman whispered, "Sir, sir;" and looking to my right, two princely old buffaloes stood in the jungle within forty yards of me. They got my wind, and started before I could get ready to fire. They held along the river bank ahead of me, but not requiring them I did not give chase. After this I came upon a huge crocodile basking on the sand, which instantly dashed into the stream. I now got into a vast labyrinth of marshes of great extent. Several species of wild duck and a variety of waterfowl were extremely abundant and very tame, hundreds passing before my eyes at once; guinea-fowl, three sorts of large partridge, and two kinds of quail being likewise numerous.

I presently wounded a noble old water-buck as he dashed past me in marshy ground. In following him up I met an old buck pallah, which I shot dead on the spot with a ball in the middle of the breast. Following on after the wounded water-buck, along the high bank of the river, which was, however, concealed from my view by the dense cover, I suddenly heard a loud splash, and, com-

ing suddenly clear of the cover, beheld the lovely water-buck standing broadside on an island in the middle of the river. Before I could dismount to fire, he dashed into the water and swam to the opposite bank. I grasped my trusty little Moore and waited till he won the *terra firma*, when with one well-directed shot I dropped him on the spot.

A very strange thing then occurred; the buck, in his death-pangs, slid down into the river, and, continuing his struggles, swam half way across the river back to the island, where he lay upon a sand-bank. I then divested myself of my leathers, spurs, and veldt-schoens, and was wading in to fetch him, when the river carried him off, and, fearing the horrible crocodiles, I did not attempt to follow. It was now late, and I rode for my wagon-spoor, which I failed to find until I had returned to where we had that morning breakfasted. I had been following the turns of the river, and the wagons had taken a short cut across the country. I reached them in the dark by great good luck.

On the 10th I rode ahead of my wagons at day-dawn: thick mist was rolling along the Limpopo. Presently I saw two crocodiles in the stream below me. A little after I had the pleasure to find, for the first time, the spoor of sea-cows or hippopotami. I had never before seen it, but I knew it

must be theirs; it was very similar to the spoor of borèlé, or black rhinoceros, but larger, and had four toes instead of three. Before returning to my wagons I tried to ride down a water-buck, which I turned off from the river, but in this I failed, though I managed to keep close to him in the chase, and eventually to knock him up along with my horse.

I again sallied forth with the Bushman and fresh steeds, and, directing the wagons to take the straight course, followed the windings of the river. Presently, looking over the bank, I beheld three enormous crocodiles basking on the sand on the opposite side. I was astonished at their awful appearance and size, one of them appearing to me to be sixteen or eighteen feet in length, with a body as thick as that of an ox. On observing us they plunged into the dead water by the side of the stream. The next minute, one of them popping up his terrible head in the middle of the stream, I made a beautiful shot, and sent a ball through the middle of his brains. The convulsions of death which followed were truly awful. At first he sank for an instant to the shot, but, instantly striking the bottom with his tail, he shot up above the water, when he struggled violently, sometimes on his back and then again on his belly, with at one time his head and fore feet above the

water, and immediately after his tail and hind legs, the former lashing the water with a force truly astounding. Clouds of sand accompanied him in all his movements, the strong stream carrying him along with it, till at length the struggle of death was over, and he sank to rise no more.

Following the windings of the river, I detected a small crocodile basking on the sand, when I gave him a shot, and he instantly plunged into the river. A little further on I wounded a third as he lay on a promontory of sand, and he likewise made the water. A little further down the stream, yet another crocodile, a huge old sinner, lay basking on the sand. I determined to make a very correct shot in this case, and set about stalking him. Creeping up behind the trunk of a prostrate old tree, I took a rest and sent the ball into his nostril, when he plunged into the river, coloring the water with his blood.

We now got into a fine green turn of the river, where I saw a great many water-bucks. I shot one buck pallah, and immediately after I came suddenly upon a troop of five or six beautiful leopards. At the next bend of the river three huge crocodiles lay on the sand on the opposite side. Stalking within easy range, I shot one of them in the head: his comrades instantly dashed into the water, but he lay as if dead high on the

sand. A second shot, however, through the ribs brought him back to life. On receiving it, he kept running round and round, snapping his horrid jaws fearfully at his own wounded side. In the convulsions of death he made one run clean away from the water, but another unlucky turn brought his head toward the river, into which he eventually rolled. Galloping along from this place to my wagons, I came suddenly upon a lion and lioness lying in the grass below a gigantic old mimosa. Dismounting from my horse, I took a couple of shots at the lion, missing him with my first, but wounding him with my second shot, when he rose with several angry short growls and bounded off. A few hundred yards further on I found my wagons drawn up, and on reaching them my men informed me that they had just seen two huge hippopotami in the river beneath. Proceeding to the spot, we found them still swimming there. I shot one, putting three balls into his head, when he sank, but night setting in we lost him.

At dawn of day on the 12th a noise was heard for about twenty minutes up the river, like the sound of the sea, accompanied by the lowing of buffaloes. It was a herd crossing the river. I rode thither to look at them, and was retracing my steps to camp, when, within three hundred yards of my wagons, I beheld an old bull buffalo

standing contemplating my camp, with my followers looking at him in great consternation. They set the dogs after him, when he took away up the river. As the ground was extremely bad for riding, being full of deep holes, and all concealed with long grass, it was some time before I could get away after the dogs; and when I had ridden a short distance, I met them all returning, their feet being completely done up with the long march from the colony.

I now turned my face once more for camp, when I heard one of my dogs at bay behind me. Galloping up to the spot, I found my dog "Lion" standing barking at an old water-buck in an open flat. The buck, on observing me, made away for the river, and, joining a herd of does, they dashed into the stream, and were immediately upon the opposite bank. I was in a sequestered bend of the river, where the banks for several acres were densely clad with lofty reeds and grass, which towered above my head as I sat on my horse's back. Beyond the reeds and grass were trees of all sizes, forming a dense shade: this is the general character of the banks of the Limpopo, as far as I have yet seen.

I was slowly returning to my camp, in anything but good humor at my want of success with the game I had just been after, when, behold, an

antelope of the most exquisite beauty, and utterly unknown to sportsmen or naturalists, stood broadside in my path, looking me full in the face. It was a princely old buck of the serolomootlooque of the Bakalahari, or bush-buck of the Limpopo. He carried a very fine, wide-set pair of horns. On beholding him I was struck with wonder and delight. My heart beat with excitement. I sprang from my saddle, but before I could fire a shot this gem of beauty bounded into the reeds and was lost to my sight. At that moment I would have given half what I possessed in this world for a broadside at that lovely antelope, and I at once resolved not to proceed further on my expedition until I had captured him, although it should cost me the labor of a month.

The antelope having entered the reeds, I gave my horse to my after-rider, and with my rifle on full cock and at the ready, proceeded to stalk with extreme caution throughout the length and breadth of the cover; but I stalked in vain; the antelope had vanished, and was nowhere to be found. I then returned to my steed, and rode slowly up the river's bank toward my camp. I had ridden to within a few hundred yards of the wagons, and was meditating how I should best circumvent the serolomootlooque, when once more this lovely antelope crossed my path. I had been

unwittingly driving him before me along the bank of the river. He trotted like a roebuck into the thick cover, and then stood broadside among the thorn bushes. I sprang from my saddle, and guessing about his position, I fired and missed him; he then trotted along a rhinoceros's foot-path, and gave me a second chance. Again I fired, and before my rifle was down from my shoulder the serolomootlooque lay prostrate in the dust. The ball had cut the skin open along his ribs, and, entering his body, had passed along his neck, and had lodged in his brains, where we found it on preparing the head for stuffing.

I was not a little gratified at my good fortune in securing this novel and valuable trophy; he was one of the most perfect antelopes I had ever beheld, both in symmetry and color. I had him immediately conveyed to camp, where I took his measurement, and wrote out a correct description of him for the benefit of naturalists. I christened him the "Antelopus Ronaleynei," or "bush-buck of the Limpopo."

The next day I breakfasted before the sun rose, and then rode down the river's bank with Ruyter. I first shot an old buck pallah, and, having ridden a few miles further, came upon two fine old water-bucks fighting, when I stalked in within a hundred yards, and shot them both right

and left. The heads were fair specimens, but, having many better, I reluctantly left them to perish in the veldt. Hereabouts I found fresh spoor of hippopotami of the preceding night. I followed this spoor to a considerable distance along the margin of the river, and at last came upon the troop. They were lying in a shady, sequestered bend of the river, beneath some gigantic shady trees. In this place the water in heavy floods had thrown up large banks of sand, in which they had hollowed out their beds. The spot was surrounded with dense underwood and reeds, and was adjacent to a very deep and broad stream, into which their foot-paths led in every direction.

I was first apprised of my proximity to them by a loud cry from one old bull, who took alarm at the sudden flight of a species of heron; his cry was not unlike that of an elephant. He stood in water which reached half way up his side, shaking his short ears in the sun; every half minute he disappeared beneath the water, when, again parading half of his body, he uttered a loud snorting, blowing noise. On observing him, I dismounted, and every time he disappeared I ran in, until I stood behind the tall reeds within twenty yards of him. Here I might have dropped him with a single ball, but I unfortunately made up my mind not to molest them until next day,

when I should have men to assist me to get them out. Presently he observed me, when he dived, and swam round a shady promontory into the deep stream, where he and his comrades kept up a continual loud blowing noise. I returned to camp, and, having ordered my men to inspan, I tried a drift on horseback, and crossed the Limpopo, but, the water coming over my saddle, I did not attempt to bring through my wagons. We accordingly held on our course on the north-western bank of the river, and outspanned about a mile above the place where I had found the hippopotami.

When the sun went down the sea-cows commenced a march up the river. They passed along opposite to my camp, making the most extraordinary sounds of blowing, snorting, and roaring, sometimes crashing through the reeds, and sometimes swimming gently, and splashing and sporting through the water. There being a little moonlight, I went down with my man Carey, and sat some time on the river's bank contemplating these wonderful monsters of the river. It was a truly grand and very extraordinary scene; the opposite bank of the stream was clad with trees of gigantic size and great beauty, which added greatly to the interest of the picture.

On the 14th, after a very early breakfast, I

proceeded with three after-riders, two double-barreled rifles, and about a hundred rounds of ammunition, to the spot where I had yesterday found the hippopotami; but they had taken alarm, and were all gone. The spoor leading up the river, I rode along the banks, examining every pool until my steed was quite knocked up, but found not a single sea-cow. The spoor still led up the river; they had made short cuts at every bend, sometimes taking the direct line on my side, and sometimes on the other. Finding that I must sleep in the veldt if I followed on, I dispatched Ruyter to camp for my blankets, coffee-kettle, biscuit, &c., and fresh steeds. I searched on foot, and penetrated every thicket and every dense jungle of reeds that overhung the river, until at last, faint with hunger and fatigue, I sought some game on which to make a luncheon, and had the good fortune to fall in with a young doe of the "Antelopus Ronaleynei," which I shot, and in a few minutes she was roasting on a mighty fire.

Ruyter, at this moment coming up, brought a welcome supply of biscuit and coffee, and reported my yellow horse "Flux," about my very best, to have died of horse-sickness. After luncheon I continued my search for hippopotami, and just as the sun went down I started an old fellow from beneath some tall reeds, which hung over a deep

broad pool. On hearing me approach he dived with a loud splash, and immediately reappeared with a blowing noise a little further up the river and within twenty yards of the bank. Having looked about him, he again dived, and continued his course up the river, which could be traced from the wave above. I ran in front of him, and when he came up the third time I was standing opposite to him, ready with my rifle at my shoulder. I sent the bullet into his brain, when he floundered for one moment at the surface, and then sank to the bottom. There he most probably only remained for half an hour; but in a few minutes night set in, and I had thus the extreme mortification to lose my hippopotamus, the second one which I had shot.

We slept beneath a shady tree; at midnight a few drops of rain fell, and I feared a drenching; it, however, passed away. In the course of the day we saw several very large crocodiles, three of which I shot. One of these lay upon an island; I shot him dead on the spot; he did not gain the water.

On the 17th of June, having found a good drift, I crossed the Limpopo with my wagons, and drew them up in a green and shady spot. I then rode a long way down the eastern bank in quest of hippopotami, and late in the evening I found

one, which I did not molest, trusting to find him next day.

On the 18th a dense mist hung over the river all the morning. Ordering the wagons to follow in an hour, I rode ahead to seek the sea-cow of the previous night, but after a long search I gave it up as a bad job, and, kindling a fire to warm myself, awaited the wagons, which presently came up. Here I halted for two hours, and then once more rode ahead to seek hippopotami. The river became more promising for sea-cow. At every turn there occurred deep, still pools, with occasional sandy islands densely clad with lofty reeds, and with banks covered with reeds to a breadth of thirty yards. Above and beyond these reeds stood trees of immense age and gigantic size, beneath which grew a long and very rank description of grass, on which the sea-cow delights to pasture.

I soon found fresh spoor, and after holding on for several miles, just as the sun was going down, and as I entered a dense reed cover, I came upon the fresh lairs of four hippopotami. They had been lying sleeping on the margin of the river, and, on hearing me come crackling through the reeds, had plunged into the deep water. I at once ascertained that they were newly started, for the froth and bubbles were still on the spot where they had plunged in. Next moment I heard

them blowing a little way down the river. I then headed them, and, with considerable difficulty, owing to the cover and the reeds, at length came right down above where they were standing. It was a broad part of the river, with a sandy bottom, and the water came half way up their sides. There were four of them, three cows and an old bull; they stood in the middle of the river, and, though alarmed, did not appear aware of the extent of the impending danger.

I took the sea-cow next me, and with my first ball I gave her a mortal wound, knocking loose a great plate on the top of her skull. She at once commenced plunging round and round, and then occasionally remained quiet, sitting for a few minutes on the same spot. On hearing the report of my rifle two of the others took up stream, and the fourth dashed down the river; they trotted along, like oxen, at a smart pace as long as the water was shallow.

I was now in a state of very great anxiety about my wounded sea-cow, for I feared that she would get down into deep water, and be lost like the last one; her struggles were still carrying her down stream, and the water was becoming deeper. To settle the matter, I accordingly fired a second shot from the bank, which, entering the roof of her skull, passed out through her eye; she then kept

continually splashing round and round in a circle in the middle of the river. I had great fears of the crocodiles, and did not know that the sea-cow might not attack me. My anxiety to secure her, however, overcame all hesitation; so, divesting myself of my leathers, and armed with a sharp knife, I dashed into the water, which at first took me up to my arm-pits, but in the middle was shallower.

As I approached Behemoth her eye looked very wicked. I halted for a moment, ready to dive under the water if she attacked me; but she was stunned, and did not know what she was doing; so, running in upon her, and seizing her short tail, I attempted to incline her course to land. It was extraordinary what enormous strength she still had in the water. I could not guide her in the slightest, and she continued to splash, and plunge, and blow, and make her circular course, carrying me along with her as if I was a fly on her tail. Finding her tail gave me but a poor hold, as the only means of securing my prey, I took out my knife and cut two deep parallel incisions through the skin on her rump. Lifting this skin from the flesh so that I could get in my two hands, I made use of this as a handle; and after some desperate hard work, sometimes pushing and sometimes pulling, the sea-cow continuing her circular course

all the time, and I holding on at her rump like grim Death, eventually I succeeded in bringing this gigantic and most powerful animal to the bank. Here the Bushman quickly brought me a stout buffalo rheim from my horse's neck, which I passed through the opening in the thick skin, and moored Behemoth to a tree. I then took my rifle and sent a ball through the center of her head, and she was numbered with the dead.

At this moment my wagons came up within a few hundred yards of the spot, where I outspanned, and by moonlight we took down a span of select oxen and a pair of rheim chains, and succeeded in dragging the sea-cow high and dry. We were all astonished at her enormous size; she appeared to be about five feet broad across the belly. I could see much beauty in the animal, which Nature has admirably formed for the amphibious life it was destined to pursue. . . .

CHAPTER IX

HIPPOPOTAMI — ELEPHANTS — LIONS

I RODE forth at sunrise on the 28th, ordering my wagons to follow in two hours. Seleka had sent men down the river, before it was clear, to seek sea-cows; and they soon came running after me to say that they had found some. I accordingly followed them to the river, where, in a long, broad, and deep bend, were four hippopotami, two full-grown cows, a small cow, 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.

On coming to the shady bank, I could at first only see one old cow and calf. When they dived I ran into the reeds, and as the cow came up I shot her in the head; she, however, got away down the river, and I lost her. The other three took away up the river, and became very shy, remaining under the water for five minutes at a time, and then only popping their heads up for a few seconds. I accordingly remained quiet behind the reeds, in hope of their dismissing their alarms. Presently

the two smaller ones seemed to be no longer alarmed, popping up their entire heads, and remaining above water for a minute at a time; but the third, which was by far the largest, and which I thought must be a bull, continued extremely shy, remaining under the water for ten minutes at a time, and then just showing her face for a second, making a blowing like a whale, and 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 fire at one of the smaller ones, when she shoved up half her head and looked about her. I made a correct shot; the ball cracked loudly below her ear, and the huge body of the sea-cow came floundering to the top. I was enchanted; she could not escape. 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.

Hearing my wagons coming on, I sent a message to my followers to outspan, and to come and behold Behemoth floundering in her native element. When they came up I finished her with a shot in the neck, upon which she instantly sank to the bottom, and disappeared in the strong rapid

torrent at the tail of the sea-cow hole. There she remained for a long time, and I thought that I had lost her, but the natives said that she would soon reappear. Being in want of refreshment, I left my people to watch for the resurrection of Behemoth, and I held to the wagons to feed. While taking my breakfast, there was a loud hue and cry among the natives that the kooboo 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 rode down the river accompanied by Ruyter, and shot one very splendid old water-buck, with a princely head, which I kept.

The next day, after proceeding a few miles, I killed a very fine buck of the serolomootlooque. I again rode down the river's bank, with two after-riders, to seek hippopotami, the natives reporting that they were to 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 very much frequented by the sea-cow; and presently, in a broad, deep, and long still bend of the river, I disturbed the game I sought.

They were lying in their sandy beds among the rank reeds at the river's margin, and on hearing me galloping over the gravelly shingle between the

bank and the reeds, the deposit of some great flood, they plunged into their native strong-hold 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 utterly silent, and then crept cautiously forward, determined not to fire a shot until I had thoroughly overhauled the herd to see if it did not contain a bull, and at all events to secure, if possible, the very finest head among them.

The herd consisted of about fourteen hippopotami; ten of these were a little further down the stream than the other four. Having carefully examined these ten, I made out two particular hippopotami decidedly larger than all the others. I then crept a little distance up the river behind the reeds, to obtain a view of the others. 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 accordingly chose what I thought the best of these two, and, making a fine shot at the side of her head, at once disabled her. She disappeared for a few seconds, and then came floundering to the surface, and continued swimming round and round, sometimes diving, and then reappearing with a loud

splash and a blowing noise, always getting slowly down the river, until I reattacked and finished her a quarter of a mile further down, about an hour after. The other sea-cows were now greatly alarmed, and only occasionally put up their heads, showing but a small part, remaining but a few seconds at a time. I, however, managed to select one of the three remaining ones, and, making a most 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 sand-bank in the Limpopo, at the mouth of the other river Lepalala, which was broad, clear, and rapid. From this resting-place I started her with one shot in the shoulder and another in the side of the head; this last shot set her in motion once more, and 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 an uproar. Presently she took away down the stream, holding to the other side; but, again returning, I finished her with a shot in the middle of the forehead. This proved

a most magnificent specimen of the female of the wondrous hippopotamus, an animal with which I was extremely surprised and delighted. She far surpassed the brightest conceptions I had formed of her, being a larger, a more lively, and in every way a more 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: this was a work of considerable difficulty for four men. We left her body in the water, being, of course, unable to do any thing with it there. It was well I secured the head when I did, for next morning the crocodiles had dragged her away.

I held up the river to see what the other sea-cows were doing, when, to my particular satisfaction, I beheld the body of the other huge sea-cow which I had shot in the brain floating in the pool where I had shot her, and stationary within about twenty yards of the other side. I then held down the river to the tail of the pool, where the stream was broad and rapid, and less likely to hold crocodiles, and here, although cold and worn out, I swam across to secure my game. The wagons now came up, and two of my Hottentots swam over to my assistance; but, just as we were going in to secure the sea-cow, she became disengaged from the invisible fetters that had held her, and which turned

out to be the branch of a gigantic old tree that some flood had lodged in the bottom of the pool. The sea-cow now floated down the middle of the river; when she neared the tail of the pool, we swam in and inclined her course to shore, and stranded her on a fine gravel bank.

This truly magnificent specimen was just 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 deposited safely on the bank along with that of her comrade, I held for my wagons, having to cross the Lepalala to reach them. I was very cold and worn out, but most highly gratified at my good fortune in first killing, and then in securing, two out of the four best sea-cows in a herd of fourteen.

On the 1st of July I inspanned at sunrise and marched to the town of the Baseleka, which I reached in about four hours, having crossed the Lepalala on the way. I outspanned on the bank of the river. 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 which surrounds it. In the evening Seleka brought down four fairish bull elephant's teeth, which I bought for four muskets.

On the morrow I took an early breakfast, and then held east with Seleka and about a hundred and fifty of his men to seek elephants, they having heard from the Bakalahari of the position of a troop of bulls. This day I might reckon as the beginning of my elephant hunting this season. 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 wagons while they might be bringing me in fifty pounds once or twice a week, I armed and mounted John Stofolus and Carey, both of whom vaunted much of their courage and skill. I instructed them, in the event of our finding, 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 we very soon came upon the fresh spoor of a troop of about ten fine bulls. The spooring was conducted very properly, the old chief taking the greatest care of the wind, keeping his followers far back, and maintaining silence, extending pickets 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 detected. Old Schwartland was led alongside of me, and my dogs were all in couples, eight in number. I quickly mounted, and, riding slowly forward, obtained a blink of one of the elephants. I called to the natives to slip the dogs, and then dashed forward for a selection.

I chose the last, and gave him a shot as he passed me; and then, riding hard under his stern, I yelled like a demon to clear him from his comrades and to bring the dogs to my assistance. The dogs came as I expected to my elephant, and I shot 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. The former did not even consider himself safe in the same forest with the elephants, and had slunk away from Carey while in sight of a splendid bull; nor did we hear more 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: hearing them, I rode in their direction, and came upon Carey stationary in the forest. Here the dogs took up the scent of an elephant, and I followed them, but they eventually dropped it. I then tried to retrace my steps to the dead

elephant, which I did by chance, having lost my way in the level boundless jungle and wandered far. I found a few natives, who reported their captain and most of his men to be still engaged with the elephant, and they said that Carey had joined them in the chase. I off-saddled for a little, but, hearing the cries of the natives in the distance, I saddled old Schwartland, and rode onward till I found the natives and Carey quite done up, and on the point of dropping the game. The elephant, although red with blood, and resembling a porcupine by the number of the assagais, was little the worse for all that he had received. I then attacked him, and, with eight or ten shots, ended his career.

Next morning, Bakalahari coming up and reporting to have heard elephants during the night, old Seleka and I went in quest of them. We were joined by the gallant and vaunting John Stofolus, who had slept at the wagons, and swore that he had lost his way in a long chase after an elephant. Both he and Carey expressing regret for their previous mismanagement, and vowing to prove themselves men this day, I allowed them to accompany me. We soon took up the spoor of one old bull, which led us into a forest thoroughly plowed up and broken with bull elephants. Here this fine fellow joined a glorious squadron of from

twenty to thirty mighty bulls. When we discovered their position I dashed forward, shouting to the dogs, and was instantly in the middle of them. Then followed a wondrous scene. The elephants, panic-stricken, charged forward, leveling the forest before them, trumpeting, with trunks and tails aloft, as the dogs mingled with them.

Looking back over my shoulder, I beheld elephants come crashing on behind and within a few yards of me. I then pressed forward, overtook about ten bulls that were inclining to the west, rode under their sterns, 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. Not hearing my trusty John and Carey fire, and the elephant's course being right toward camp, I ceased firing and drove him on before me. Presently these worthies came up to me, having been after a most splendid bull — the cock of the troop — which I, in my haste, had ridden by. They had fired two or three shots, and then left him. I now saw that all my hunting this season must depend on my own single hand, as my followers, instead of a help, were a very great hindrance and annoyance to me. If I had been alone that day I should most certainly have taken more time, and have selected the elephant they had lost, which

the natives said carried extremely large and long teeth. Presently, my elephant declining to proceed further, and becoming extremely wicked, I recommenced firing, and at last he fell, having received twenty-nine balls, twenty-seven of these being in a very correct part. This was an enormous, first-rate bull; but his teeth, though large, being not the best in the troop, I felt very much dissatisfied.

On the afternoon of the 5th I traded with Seleka for karosses of pallah's skin and tusks of elephants, and in the evening I walked up to inspect the town, and climbed to the summit of the quartz rock on which the citadel of Seleka is situated. Here I viewed 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, after breakfast, I saddled up steeds and took the field for elephants, accompanied by two after-riders. We were soon joined by the greater part of the Seleka tribe, and held about south, following the bank of the River Lepalala, which we eventually crossed. Having proceeded some distance through a tract but little frequented by elephants, men who had been sent to seek in a southwesterly direction came and reported that they had found some. We then held

at once for a steep and very rocky hill which rose abruptly in the forest, and on the west side of which the elephants had been seen.

We had ascended about half way up this hill, the natives following on in a long string and detached parties, when we discovered that we had nearly hemmed in 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. He gave us notice of his proximity by loud and continued growling, advancing boldly with open jaws toward the natives. These fled before him; and the lioness having now shrunk 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 startled the elephants: when, however, we had gained a commanding point on the shoulder of the hill, we could see them standing in a thick low forest a short distance from the base of the hill: it was a troop of very middling cow elephants, with a number of calves of all sizes. About half a mile to the north we could see another troop of cows. I wished to attack these, but the natives prevailed upon me to attack the nearest troop. Leaving the greater part of the natives to watch our move-

ments from this elevated position, I descended the hill and held for the mighty game.

I felt rather nervous on this occasion. I was not in good health, and the forest here was not well adapted for the sport, the cover being thick, with a great deal of bad wait-a-bit thorns. When we came upon the troop they were considerably scattered, and we first approached two very indifferent cows, which, hearing us, instantly retreated into the thick cover. I would not follow these, but at once slipped my dogs in the hope that they would find me better elephants. The dogs then ran forward in different directions, and immediately a loud trumpeting followed from three detachments of cows. Galloping forward, I obtained a view of them all. There was but one right good cow in the troop: she brought up the rear of a detachment which came crashing past on my right, making for the densest cover round the base of the hill. This cow carried two fine long white tusks, one of them with a very fine sharp point. On attacking her she at once separated from her comrades, and every one of my dogs took, as is usual, away after the calves. I galloped up alongside and very near this cow, and, firing from the saddle, bowled her over with a single ball behind the shoulder.

On the 11th we marched at dawn of day, hold-

ing northeast, and halted on the bank of the Limpopo. There the wagons remained, while I hunted the banks of the river, bagging two first-rate bull elephants and one hippopotamus. One of these elephants I shot across the Limpopo, under the mountains of Guapa. I fought him in dense wait-a-bit jungle from half past eleven till the sun was under, when his tough old spirit fled, and the venerable monarch of the forest fell, pierced with fifty-seven balls. On the 17th I inspanned and trekked about five miles down the stream, when I halted beside a long, deep hippopotamus hole, in which were two bulls and one cow, but it being late I did not trouble them.

The next day I rode down the river to seek sea-cows, accompanied by my two after-riders, taking, as usual, my double-barreled rifles. We had proceeded about two miles when we came upon some most thoroughly-beaten, old-established hippopotamus paths, and presently, in a broad, long, deep, and shaded pool of the river, we heard the sea-cows bellowing. There I beheld one of the most wondrous and interesting sights that a sportsman can be blessed with. I at once knew that there must be an immense herd of them, for the voices came from different parts of the pool; so, creeping in through the bushes to obtain an inspection, a large sandy island appeared at the neck of

the pool, on which stood several large shady trees.

The neck of the pool was very wide and shallow, with rocks and large stones; below it was deep and still. On a sandy promontory of this island stood about thirty cows and calves, while 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 further down the river again, showing out their heads, 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: a favorite position was to rest their heads on their comrades' sterns and sides.

The herds were attended by an immense number of the invariable rhinoceros birds, which, on observing me, did their best to spread alarm throughout the hippopotami. I was resolved to select, if possible, a first-rate old bull out of this vast herd, and I accordingly delayed firing for nearly two hours, continually running up and down behind the thick thorny cover, and attentively studying the heads. At length I determined to go close in and select the best head out of the eight or ten bulls which lay below the cows. I accordingly left

the cover and walked slowly forward in full view of the whole herd to the water's edge, where I lay down on my belly and studied the heads of these bulls. The cows, on seeing me, splashed into the water, and kept up a continual snorting and blowing till night set in.

After selecting for a few minutes, I fired my first shot at a splendid bull, and sent the ball in a little behind the eye. He was at once incapacitated, 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 the 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 shy, producing the whole head; 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 not fired a great many shots, but had bagged five first-rate hippopotami, four cows and one bull, and besides these there were three or four more very severely wounded which were spouting blood throughout the pool.

The next day I removed my wagons to the bank

where I had waged successful war with the hippopotami. Here we halted beneath a shady tree with a very dark green leaf, and having drawn up the wagons, we cast loose the trek-tows, and, marching the two spans of oxen down the edge of the river, dragged out one of the sea-cows high and dry. After breakfast I rode down the river with Carey to seek those I had wounded. Having ridden about three miles down the river, we heard sea-cows snorting; and on dismounting from my horse and creeping in through very dense thorny cover which here clothed the banks, I found a very fine herd of about thirty hippopotami basking in the sun; they lay upon a sand-bank in the middle of the river, in about three feet of water. After taking a long time to make a selection, I opened my fire and discharged my four barrels: one sea-cow lay dead, and two others were stunned and took to the other side, but eventually recovered and were not numbered with the slain. I continued with them till sundown and fired a good many shots, but only bagged one other cow: they were very shy and cunning.

On the 20th I again rode down the river to the pool, and found a herd of sea-cows still there; so I remained with them till sundown, and bagged two very first-rate old sea-cows, which were forthcoming next day. This day I detected a most

dangerous trap constructed by the Bakalahari for slaying sea-cows. It consisted of a sharp little assagai or spike most 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 center 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 here evinced the success of this dangerous invention. I remained in the neighborhood of the pool for several days, during which time I bagged no less than fifteen first-rate hippopotami, the greater portion of them being bulls.

At dawn of day on the 28th we inspanned and marched up the river to the drift. All hands worked hard in cutting the bank on the opposite side, the Pakalahari assisting us; and in the after-

noon we got the cap-tent wagon, which was very lightly laden, through the river with twelve oxen. The baggage-wagon stuck fast in the mud, and remained there all night, with the fore-wheels half way up the bank, and the after-chest under the water; and although we put twenty oxen to it, we could not get it out.

The next day our first work was to reduce the bank on which the wagon stood, after which, with considerable difficulty, we got it out with twenty of my best oxen. The whole day we were busy drying the innumerable contents of the fore and after chests of each wagon, almost everything being thoroughly saturated, and I sustained considerable loss in fine powder, percussion caps, biscuit, tea, coffee, sugar, and a number of other articles, some of which were damaged and some entirely destroyed.

I marched at dawn of day on the 30th. Seleka and his men and my hired Baquaines had done all in their power to prevent my proceeding further; but as they could not conceal the waters from me, my course being to follow the Limpopo, I was perfectly independent of them. They remained by me until I crossed the Limpopo, and then all turned home. I was now once more without natives, and held down the northwestern bank of the river, but very soon Bakalahari 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, after assisting my men to get out some of the sea-cows, I rode down the river with two after-riders to explore. Having ridden a few miles, I came upon a troop of twelve, the best of which I disabled and killed the next day. This was a most splendid old cow, and carried tusks far superior to any we had yet seen; in the afternoon I bagged six more.

From a continued run of good luck in all my hunting expeditions with my horses and oxen, in regard to lions and Bakalahari pitfalls, I had become foolishly careless of them, and I had got into a most dangerous custom of allowing the cattle to feed about the wagons long after the sun was under. I was always boasting of my good luck, and used to say that the lions knew they were my cattle, and feared to molest them. This night, however, a bitter lesson was in store for me. The sun, as usual, had been under an hour before I ordered my men to make fast my horses: the oxen had of their own accord come to the wagons and lain down; the horses, however, were not forthcoming.

My hired natives, who were now anxious to prevent my proceeding further from their country,

were willingly neglecting their charge, and, instead of looking after my cattle, were exchanging the flesh and fat of my sea-cows for assagais, &c., with the Bakalahari. The night was very dark, and the horses were sought for in vain. I remarked to Carey that it was some time since we had heard the voice of a lion; but a few minutes after we heard the low moan of the king of beasts repeated several times at no great distance, and in the very direction in which my horses were supposed to be.

The next day the sun had been up two hours, and my horses could not yet be found. I entertained no apprehensions, however, from the lion, but rather suspected some plot between Seleka and my natives to drive my cattle back, and so force me to retrace my steps. I therefore ordered John Stofolus and Hendric to take bridles and a supply of meat, and to follow up the spoor wherever it might lead; and being anxious to see which way it went, I took my rifle and followed in quest of it myself.

Observing a number of vultures to the west, and hearing the voices of natives in that direction, I proceeded thither at top speed. To my utter horror, I found my two most valuable and especially favorite veteran shooting-horses lying fearfully mangled and half consumed by a troop of ruthless lions. They were "Black Jock" and

“Schwartland,” the former a first-rate young horse, worth £24, the latter aged, but by far my most valuable steed, being 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 was I of this horse, that I never rode or even saddled him until we had found elephants, when I used him in the fight, and then immediately off-saddled.

With a sickening heart I turned from this most painful scene, and, utterly dejected, I returned to camp. As there was much to do about the wagons, and as two of my men were absent seeking the lost horses, I did not immediately go in quest of the lions; this I, however, did in the afternoon, taking all my dogs, but I failed to find them. A large party of the natives from the southwest, the Bamalette, reached me late in the day: their object was flesh, and to endeavor 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. I formed a very strong kraal for my cattle, and made all fast at sundown. Very soon after, the troop of lions came up to my camp on the spoor of the horses, fancying that they could repeat the

tragedy of last night; they fought with my dogs in the most daring manner, off and on, until near dawn of day, driving them in to the fireside.

In the morning, ordering my wagons to follow, I rode down the river followed by at least two hundred natives, to secure the hippopotami shot two days previous. Six of these were forthcoming, and we set about getting them to the side: they lay upon the rocks in the middle of the river. One of these proved to be an out-and-outer, a tearing old bull, with tusks which far surpassed anything I had yet seen, and quite perfect; I was very much gratified with this fine trophy. There were also two of the cows which carried immense and perfect tusks. When the wagons came up, I found myself minus another steed: a fine young mare had fallen into a Bakalahari pitfall, and had been suffocated.

On the 5th I rode down the river and fell in with a large herd of about thirty hippopotami: they lay upon some rocks in the middle of a very long and broad pool. I wounded seven or eight of these in the head, and killed two, a bull and a cow, both of which we found next day. At night the lions prowled around our camp, and fought with the dogs until the morning: they came boldly in between the fires of the natives, who lay around my camp.

CHAPTER X

LIONS—HIPPOPOTAMI—ELEPHANTS

ON the 10th of August, at dawn of day, I rode down the river, and ordered my wagons to follow. I found sea-cows more and more abundant; every pool had its herd: the margin of the river 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. I off-saddled, and in an hour the wagons came up, when I took up the spoor, accompanied by Carey, Hendric, and Ruyter. After following the spoor for some miles, the natives lost it. A little distance ahead of us was a rocky hill, to the summit of which I ascended. This spot commanded a good view of the adjacent forest. I at once detected an immense herd of elephants. They were drinking in a wide open spot on a gravelly-bedded river which falls into the Limpopo, called by the natives Sukung.

We then made a turn to leeward and came in upon this fine herd; it was the largest I had ever seen; there must have been upward of one hundred

elephants before my eye at once. The troop consisted chiefly of cows and calves; I, however, detected one fine, well-grown bull, carrying very fair tusks. I rode slowly toward him, followed by my men, and the natives leading the dogs. We advanced unobserved until we were within twenty yards of some of the outside cows. Here I enjoyed a fine view of the herd: they stood drinking on a vast surface of granite rock, 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 rock, but, recovering his feet, went off at a pace which I could hardly equal on the dangerous rock. By good luck, most of my dogs came to my assistance, and I slew him in a few minutes with eight or ten shots. I had directed Hendric and Carey to try to hold some of the cows for me until I was ready with the bull; accordingly, these doughty Nimrods followed and turned four cows for a short time, and then left them, without even firing a shot to advise me of their course; the consequence of which was, that I knocked up myself, my dogs, and horses, in chasing the retreating herd to a great distance, to no purpose.

On the following day I shot another bull ele-

phant and a white rhinoceros ; and on the afternoon of the 12th, returning to camp weary and worn, I came unexpectedly upon a bull elephant of unusual size, standing in the shade on the margin of the Limpopo. He took refuge in an extensive jungle of impracticable wait-a-bits, where it was impossible to do anything on horseback, and I was therefore obliged to hunt him on foot. I slew him with thirty bullets after an extremely severe and dangerous combat of about two hours. I afterward felt much the worse for this severe exertion.

On the 14th I dispatched Hendric to bring on the wagons, which came up in the afternoon. Night set in warm, calm, and still, with a good moonlight. Elephants, sea-cows, and panthers kept up a continued music above and below us along the river until I fell asleep.

On the 15th I felt very ill, but in the forenoon I 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 gravelly-bedded periodical river, where elephants occasionally drank.

On the 18th, at dawn of day, I took leave of Mollyeon and Kapain of Bamangwato, as they would not follow me further. We then inspanned,

and held down the Limpopo. I regretted to observe that the spoor of elephants did not seem to increase in the same ratio as I had allowed myself to imagine. We were in an extremely remote and secluded corner of the world, quite uninhabited; yet the elephants, though frequenting it, were decidedly scarce. I felt extremely weak and nervous from the fever and the quantity of blood which I had lost, in so much that I started at my own shadow, and several times sprang to one side when the leaves rustled in the bushes. I walked along the bank of the river with my gun loaded with small shot, intending to shoot a partridge for my breakfast. Presently I came upon the fresh dung of bull elephants, and at the same moment my people at the wagons saw two old bull elephants within two hundred yards of them; and the wind being favorable, they walked unsuspectingly. After a very short chase I succeeded in killing both.

My fever still continuing on me, and the natives having deserted, I determined upon turning my face homeward. Accordingly, on the 21st, I ordered my men to inspan and retrace their spoor. A troop of lions had killed some game within a few hundred yards of us, and had been roaring very loudly all morning: these gave us a parting salute as we were inspanning. Their voices

sounded to me ominous, perhaps from the nervous state of my health. 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 further on several accounts. First, the natives had spoken of Moselekatze, now resident not very far in advance, as one who would most unquestionably murder me, and seize all my property. They also told me that I should lose all my cattle by the fly called "tsetse;" and I had also reason to believe the country in advance not very healthy for man.

My followers received my orders to turn homeward with sincere gratification: we trekked till sundown, halting on the march for a sick ox, which we eventually left behind a prey to the lions, and slept on the Mokojay, where the Bamangwato men had left me.

On the 29th we arrived at a small village of Bakalahari. These natives told me that elephants were abundant on the opposite side of the river. I accordingly resolved to halt here and hunt, and drew my wagons up on the river's bank, within thirty yards of the water, and about one hundred yards from the native village. Having outspanned, we at once set about making for the cattle a kraal of the worst description of thorn-

trees. Of this I had now become very particular, since my severe loss by lions on the first of this month; and my cattle were, at night, secured by a strong kraal, which inclosed my two wagons, the horses being made fast to a trek-tow stretched between the hind wheels of the wagons.

I had yet, however, a fearful lesson to learn as to the nature and character of the lion, of which I had at one time entertained so little fear; and on this night a horrible tragedy was to be 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 at one side of the kraal with Hendric, my first wagon-driver — I cutting down the trees with my ax, and he dragging them to the kraal. When the kraal for the cattle was finished, I turned my attention to making a pot of barley-broth, and lighted a fire between the wagons and the water, close on 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, without any reason, made their fire about fifty yards from mine; they, according to their usual custom, being satisfied with the shelter of a large dense bush. The evening passed away cheerfully. Soon after it was dark we heard elephants 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 stand and listen to them. I little, at that moment, deemed of the imminent peril to which I was exposing my life, nor thought that a blood-thirsty man-eater lion was crouching near, and only watching his opportunity to spring into the kraal, and consign one of us to a most horrible death.

About three hours after the sun went down I called to my men to come and take their coffee and supper, which was ready for them at my fire; and after supper three of them returned before their comrades to their own fireside, and lay down; these were John Stofolus, Hendric, and Ruyter. In a few minutes an ox came out by the gate of the kraal and walked round the back of it. Hendric got up and drove him in again, and then went back to his fireside and lay down. Hendric and Ruyter lay on one side of the fire under one blanket, and John Stofolus lay on the other. At this moment I was sitting taking some barley-broth; our fire was very small, and the night was pitch-dark and windy. Owing to our proximity to the native village the wood was very scarce, the Bakalahari having burned it all in their fires.

Suddenly the appalling and murderous voice

of an angry, blood-thirsty lion 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, "The lion! the lion!" still, for a few moments, we thought he was but chasing one of the dogs round the kraal; but, next instant, John 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 Hendric; 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. Hendric is dead! Oh God! Hendric is dead! Let us take fire and seek him!"

The rest of my people rushed about, shrieking and yelling as if they were mad. I was at once angry with them for their folly, and told them that if they did not stand still and keep quiet the lion would have another of us; and that very likely there was a troop of them. I ordered the dogs, which were nearly all fast, to be made loose, and the fire to be increased as far as could be. I then shouted Hendric's name, but all was still. I told my men that Hendric was dead, and that a regiment of soldiers could not now help him, and, hunting my dogs forward, I had everything

brought within the cattle-kraal, when we lighted our fire and closed the entrance as well as we could.

My terrified people sat round the fire with guns in their hands till the day broke, still fancying that every moment 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, disclosed to us his position; they kept up a continual barking until the day dawned, the lion occasionally springing after them and driving them in upon the kraal. The horrible monster lay all night within forty yards of us, consuming the wretched man whom he had chosen for his prey. He had dragged him into a little hollow at the back of the thick bush beside which the fire was kindled, and there he remained till the day dawned, careless of our proximity.

It appeared that when the unfortunate Hendric rose to drive in the ox, the lion had watched him to his fireside, and he had scarcely lain down when the brute sprang upon him and Ruyter (for both lay under one blanket), with his appalling, murderous roar, and, roaring as he lay, grappled him

with his fearful claws, and kept 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 backward round the bush into the dense shade.

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

The next morning, just as the day began to dawn, we heard the lion dragging something up the river side under cover of the bank. We drove the cattle out of the kraal, and then proceeded to inspect the scene of the night's awful tragedy. In the hollow, where the lion had lain consuming his prey, we found one leg of the unfortunate Hendric, bitten off below the knee, the shoe still on his foot; the grass and bushes were all stained

with his blood, and fragments of his pea-coat lay around. Poor Hendric! I knew the fragments of that old coat, and had often marked them hanging in the dense covers where the elephant had charged after my unfortunate after-rider.

Hendric was by far the best man I had about my wagons, of a most cheerful disposition, a first-rate wagon-driver, fearless in the field, ever active, willing, and obliging: his loss to us all was very serious. I felt confounded and utterly sick in my heart; I could not remain at the wagons, so I resolved to go after elephants to divert my mind. I had that morning heard them breaking the trees on the opposite side of the river. I accordingly told the natives of the village of my intentions, and having ordered my people to devote the day to fortifying the kraal, started with Piet and Ruyter as my after-riders.

It was a very cool day. We crossed the river, and at once took up the fresh spoor of a troop of bull elephants. These bulls unfortunately joined a troop of cows, and when we came on them 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. I hunted this cow, and 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. My followers were not a little gratified to see me returning, for terror had taken hold of their minds, and they expected that the lion would return, and, emboldened by the success of the preceding night, would prove still more daring in his attack. The lion would most certainly have returned, but fate had otherwise ordained. My health had been better in the last three days: my fever was leaving me, but I was, of course, still very weak. It would still be two hours before the sun would set, and, feeling refreshed by a little rest, and able for further work, I ordered the steeds to be saddled, and went in search of the lion.

I took John and Carey as after-riders, armed, and a party of the natives followed up the spoor and led the dogs. The lion had dragged the remains of poor Hendric along a native foot-path 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 a dry river's course joined the Limpopo. At this spot was much shade, cover, and heaps of dry reeds and trees deposited by the Limpopo in some great flood. The lion had left the foot-path and entered this secluded spot. I at once felt convinced that we were upon him, and ordered the natives to make loose the dogs. These 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 were extremely afraid of him, and kept rushing continually backward and springing aloft to obtain a view. I now pressed forward and urged them on; old Argyll and Bles took up his spoor in gallant style, and led on the other dogs. Then commenced a short but lively and glorious chase, whose conclusion was the only small satisfaction that I could obtain to answer 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, he stood, his horrid head right to me, with open jaws growling fiercely, his tail waving from side to side.

On beholding him my blood boiled with rage. I wished that I could take him alive and torture him, and, setting my teeth, I dashed my steed forward within thirty yards of him and shouted, "*Your* time is up, old fellow." I halted my horse, and, placing my rifle to my shoulder, waited for a broadside. This the next moment he ex-

posed, when I sent a bullet through his shoulder and dropped him on the spot. He rose, however, again, when I finished him with a second in the breast.

The Bakalahari now came up in wonder and delight. I ordered John to cut off his head and forepaws and bring them to the wagons, and, mounting my horse, galloped home, having been absent about fifteen minutes. When the Bakalahari women heard that the man-eater was dead, they all commenced dancing about with 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: I had ridden past them and not observed them. With these I was unlucky: I wounded six or seven, but did not bag one; they became very shy and cunning after the first shot, only protruding their noses. At mid-day I returned to camp and drank tea, after which I galloped down the river to a favorite sea-cow pool about a mile below my wagons. I was accompanied by natives carrying my rifles. I found an immense 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, and wounded a fourth. The bull and the two cows soon floated,

and all three rested together on a ledge of rocks in the middle of the river. I then sent for John and Adonis, and with the assistance of the Bakalahari we got them into shallow water, where we could work upon them.

I was occupied most of the next day in superintending the cutting up of the flesh of the sea-cows, and reducing the same to biltongue, which we hung in garlands upon ox-rheims stretched between the trees, surrounding them by a strong kraal of thorn-trees.

In the evening a large party of Seleka's Bechuanas arrived at my camp. On the 8th one of my horses died of horse-sickness; it was, of course, my favorite, being my best shooting-horse. On reaching camp after my last hunting excursion, "Lion," my very best dog, was reported consumed by a huge crocodile, who frequented the spot where we drew water. For such little pleasing varieties the African hunter must make up his mind; they are mere occurrences of every day.

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. I was unlucky here, however, as I also was next day, although we hunted by a splendid fountain in a more southerly direction. When under the moun-

tains I met with the famous fly called "tsetse," whose bite is certain death to oxen and horses. This "hunter's scourge" is similar to a fly in Scotland called "kleg," but a little smaller; they 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 been bitten.

On the 10th the chief Pocolway arrived with a large retinue: he was a short, stout man, of a prepossessing expression, and both in appearance and manner much reminded me of a certain Scottish earl.

After three or four days' 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 I determined to make Carey shoot with me, he using the big rifle of six to the pound, and I my single-barreled two-grooved of eight to the pound. In the forenoon we were occupied making very hard bullets and sorting our ammunition &c., &c., for a week's expedition, and at mid-day we started, followed by about sixty natives.

We crossed the Limpopo, and held about east, right away through the forest, for the fountain

which I had visited on the 8th. On our line of march we found no fresh spoor: the day was extremely hot, and the shuffling Bechuanas chose to lag behind in the forest until they lost me entirely, with the exception of three or four, who kept up with Piet, my after-rider, carrying my gun, and leading "Filbert" and "Frochum," two of my best dogs. Not one of these men knew the country, and they had no Bakalahari with them to act as guides.

When I reached the small fountain which lies west of the famous fountain for which I was steering, I told Piet to come on with the natives, and that I would ride ahead to the large fountain. I then galloped ahead, and made the fountain on its lee side. On slowly emerging from the thorny thicket through which I rode, I was astonished to behold two superb old bull elephants standing before me in the open space between the cover and the fountain. Both of them carried enormous tusks; one bull, however, was much taller and stouter than his comrade; I had very rarely seen his match, and his tusks at once took my eye as being perhaps the finest I had ever beheld. Here, then, was I standing, without gun or dogs, and with a very jaded steed, beside, as I afterward had good reason to believe, the very best elephant in all that district, and in perhaps many of the sur-

rounding parts. I would have given anything at that moment for my gun and dogs.

I felt much perplexed what to do, but at length resolved that it was best to hold the elephants in my view, and in the event of their being started to endeavor to hold the larger bull in play, and hunt him always back toward the fountain, until assistance should arrive. It was well that I came to so shrewd a resolution, for I had not stood sentry over them for many minutes, when, some straggling party having missed the fountain, and passing to windward, they suddenly tossed up their trunks, and, snuffing the tainted gale, crashed past me down the wind at top speed.

Now came the tug of war. I had no child's play before me: alone and unassisted, and on a very jaded steed, I had resolved to endeavor what no two of my men had ever accomplished for me. I had not only to stick by the elephant wherever he chose to go, which was all I required of my people when endeavoring to assist me in my hunting, but I must also drive him back and keep him by the fountain, or else all my exertions would be fruitless.

I had very slight hope of success; but he was well worthy of a tough struggle, and I determined that he should have it. I thought what my feelings would be that night by my fireside if I let him escape, and, on the other hand, how highly I should

prize his noble trophies if I succeeded. I at once dashed after him and separated him from his comrades. When he found that I had the speed of him, he turned at once upon me and charged furiously back toward the fountain, after which he tried to conceal himself among the trees, and, having stood motionless for some time with his head toward me, crashed away through the forest to the southward. I soon headed him again, yelling with all my might. Of course another charge followed: I eventually managed, however, to drive him back close to the fountain; still, no assistance hove in sight. My after-rider, though he had been there before, had missed the fountain. It was he and the natives with him who had started the elephants: they had crossed the fountain to windward, and were wandering about with my gun and dogs some miles beyond me.

It were long to describe all the turns and twists I had with this princely old bull. I certainly did my duty, and stuck by him like a good old deer-hound by his stag. At length the elephant became extremely fierce, following up his charges with most determined intent to crush me and my steed, which, at first very much jaded, was now so completely done up that he could barely hold his own. I myself felt much exhausted, and my throat was becoming so sore and hoarse that my shouting was

for the present nearing to a close. In this state of things I could not have held 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 where I had first ridden ahead to the fountain, and were passing a considerable distance to leeward of where I was at bay, or rather, I should say, baying, when my hoarse voice fell on Carey's ear, and he instantly called silence among the natives, and sat listening in his saddle. A second time my voice fell on his ear, and he at once held forward right for me, contrary to the opinion of the thick-headed natives, who swore that the voice came from behind.

Fortunately, at this very moment the elephant made a furious charge after me, accompanied by a tremendous trumpet, which at once sealed his fate. They all heard it, and "Cooley" and "Affriar," two right good dogs, were instantly released from the couples and flew to my assistance, followed by Carey and the natives. Right glad was I when I saw black Cooley come up to help me. I at once felt that the elephant was mine, being certain that further assistance was at hand, and, with revived spirits, I yelled with all my might. In two minutes up came Carey on horseback, but without a gun. I called out to him, "For God's sake, Carey,

bring me a gun! here is the finest elephant in Africa. I have held him at bay and fought with him for nearly two hours.”

Carey rode back and brought me his single-barreled smooth bore, carrying twelve to the pound, and gave me eight bullets out of his belt, expressing immense regret that my gun was not forthcoming. Carey had always an absurd idea that his gun could not kill an elephant: to-day, however, it was in other hands. “My good fellow,” I said, “it is all right; the elephant is ours.”

I then opened my fire on him from the saddle. I put my seventh bullet through his heart: on receiving it, he made a short charge, and stood trembling for a few seconds, when he fell forward on his breast and so lay; but evincing a desire to alter his position, which was a very good one for cutting out the teeth, I dismounted, and, going close up to him, I put two bullets into his ear, when he expired. The tusks of this elephant equaled my expectations; one of them, as usual, was more perfect than its fellow. I had never seen their match but once. On reviewing the whole afternoon's work, I considered myself extremely fortunate in capturing this noble prize, and felt most gratified with the satisfactory termination of my exertions. Piet and his party heard my shots, and they presently came up to us; coffee and other

good things were soon spread out on a sheep-skin, and a comfortable sofa being quickly constructed of soft grass, covered with a kaross, I lay down to rest, the happiest of the happy.

The 15th was an extremely hot day. Carey and I were occupied all the morning cutting out the tusks of the big bull elephant; we took particular care not to let the blood fall upon them. In the evening we made hiding-places beside the fountain from which to shoot elephants, and when the sun went down we returned thither and took up our positions for the night. Unfortunately, the dead elephant lay directly to windward of the southern margin of the fountain, on which side were all the best elephant foot-paths. The consequence was, that every elephant as he came up got the wind of the natives, and turned right about.

Late in the night a troop of eight or ten bull elephants walked slowly across the vley with their heads to the north. I rushed forward to get before them in the wind, and running down the edge of the thorn cover, I got within thirty yards of the last bull, which was the best in the troop. Observing me move, he stood with his tusks up and his head directed toward me in a very suspicious manner for two minutes, when his fears died away, and he turned to me his left side. I then gave him a deadly shot, which brought blood from his

trunk, as I ascertained next day. Returning from firing at him, I met Carey; his 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 the mud! as we had to cross a bog below the fountain in running for the shot. I thought this was good, and I said to myself, "I have got a name for you at last." But Carey was a good servant, and very attentive to me throughout my expedition.

The next morning I and Mutchuisho took up the spoor of my wounded elephant. He had gone off very slowly, with blood running from his trunk. After following the spoor some distance, we lost it among others, and we then gave it up. I sent Carey to the wagons with the teeth, to act as escort, they being well worthy of an escort, and at night I watched the fountain along with three Bakalahari. We had not been long on the watch before three enormous old bull elephants came; and, after much hesitation, and walking once or twice round the water, they came in and commenced drinking. I lay close to the edge of the fountain in a little hollow. The elephants came in to drink on the north side of a run which led away from the fountain, and I lay on the south side of it. Suddenly the finest bull of the three walked boldly through the run and came straight

forward to where I lay. If I had remained still he would have walked upon me; but when he came within six or eight yards I gave a loud cough, upon which he tossed his head aloft and gave me a broadside, exposing his left side. I then 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 "tsetse." 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 in darkness he neighed for his comrades who stood feeding beside him.

CHAPTER XI

ELEPHANTS

ON the 17th of September I resolved to leave the fountain of Seboono, as it was much disturbed, and to proceed with a few Bakalahari to a small yet famous water about six miles to the southeast. We accordingly saddled up and held thither. On reaching this fountain, which is called by the natives "Paapaa," I found the numerous foot-paths leading to it covered, as I had anticipated, with fresh spoor of elephant and rhinoceros. I then at once 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 foot-paths led to it from every side. The prevailing wind was from the east, so I pitched upon the southwest corner of the fountain. The water was not more than twenty yards long and ten broad. The west side was bounded by tufous rock, which rose abruptly from the water 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. I made our shooting-box within six or eight yards of the water, constructing it in a circular form, of bushes packed together so as to form a hedge about three feet high. On the top of the hedge I placed heavy dead old branches of trees, so as to form a fine clear rest for our rifles; these clean old branches were all lashed firmly together with strips of thorn bark.

All being completed, I took the Bakalahari and our steeds to a shady tree, about a quarter of a mile to leeward of the fountain, where we formed a kraal and off-saddled. This day was particularly adapted to bring 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 night's sport and the most wonderful that was ever enjoyed by man.

A little before the sun went down, leaving our kraal, we held to the fountain, having with us our heavy-metaled rifles, karosses, and two Bakalahari. We also had two small guns, my double-barreled Westley Richards, and Carey's single-barreled gun. As we approached the fountain, a stately bull

giraffe stood before us; the heat of the day had brought him thither, but he feared to go in and drink; on observing us, he walked slowly away. Two jackals were next detected. Guinea-fowl, partridges, two or three sorts of pigeon and turtle-dove, and small birds in countless thousands, 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. He 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 then shouted to him; but this he did not heed in the slightest. I then sprang up and waved my large kaross, shouting at the same time. This, however, only seemed to amuse Borèlé, for he stood within four yards of us, with his horn threatening our momentary 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 to do so is to hit them with a stone — that is, in the event of the sportsman not wishing to fire off his gun.

Soon after Borèlé departed four old bull elephants drew near from the south. They were coming right on for the spot where we lay, and they seemed very likely to walk over the top of us. We therefore placed our two big rifles in position, and awaited their forward movement with intense interest. On they came, 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. We let him come on until he got our wind; he was then within ten yards of the muzzles of our heavy-metaleed rifles; on winding us, he tossed his trunk aloft, and we instantly fired together. I caught him somewhere about the heart, and my big six-to-the-pound rifle burst in Carey's hands, very nearly killing us both.

The elephant, on being fired at, wheeled about, and retreated to the forest at top speed. I now directed "Stick-in-the-mud" to make use of his single-barreled twelve-to-the-pound in the event of more elephants coming up; and thanking my stars that the old Dutch rifle had not sent us both to the land of the leal, I sat down and watched the dark masses of trees that cut the sky on every side, in the hope of seeing a mass as high and wide come towering forward into the open space that surrounded the fountain.

Nor did I watch long in vain, for very soon

three princely bull elephants appeared exactly where the first came on, and holding exactly the same course. They approached just as the first had done. When the leading elephant came within ten yards of us, he got our wind and tossed up his trunk, and was wheeling round to retreat, when we fired together, and sent our bullets somewhere about his heart. He ran two hundred yards and then stood, evidently dying. His comrades halted likewise, but one of them, the finest of the three, almost immediately turned his head once more to the fountain, and very slowly and warily came on. We now heard the wounded elephant utter the cry of death, and fall heavily on the earth. Carey, whose ears were damaged by the bursting of the big rifle, did not catch this sound, but swore that the elephant which now so stealthily approached the water was the one at which we had fired.

It was interesting to observe this grand old bull 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, and sometimes stood 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 forward 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 into the water, drew up a volume of water, which he threw over his back and shoulders to cool his person. This operation he repeated two or three times, after which he commenced drinking, by 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; and as the elephant turned and attempted to make away, his leg broke with a loud crack, and he stood upon his three sound ones. At once disabled and utterly incapable of escaping, he stood statue-like beside the fountain, within a few yards of where he had got the shot, and only occasionally made an attempt at locomotion.

The patch of my rifle fired at this elephant's comrade had ignited a large ball of dry old dung, about eight yards to leeward of our kraal, and, fanned by the breeze, it was now burning away very brightly, the sparks flying in the wind. Presently, on looking about me, I beheld two bull elephants approaching by the self-same foot-path which the others had held. The first of these was a half-grown bull, the last was an out-and-out old fellow with enormous tusks. They came on as the first had done, but seemed inclined to pass to wind-

ward of us. The young bull, however, observed the fire; he at once walked up to it, and, smelling at it with his trunk, seemed extremely amused, and in a gamboling humor threw his trunk about, as if not knowing what to think of it. The larger bull now came up, and exposed a fine broadside: we took him behind the shoulder and fired together: on receiving the shots, he wheeled about and held west with drooping ears, evidently mortally wounded.

Some time after this I detected an enormous old bull elephant approaching from the west. If we lay still where we were, he must in a few minutes get our wind, so we jumped up and ran forward out of his line of march. Here a borèlé opposed our further progress, and we had to stone him out of our way. The elephant came on, and presently got the wind of where we had been lying. This at once seemed to awake his suspicions, for he stood still among the trees, stretching his trunk from side to side to catch the scent, and doubtful whether he should advance or retreat. We then ran toward him, and stalked in within forty yards of where he stood, and, taking up a position behind a bush, awaited his forward movement. The elephant came slowly forward, and I thought would pass to windward of us, when he suddenly altered his course, and walked boldly forward right for where

we stood. He came on until within seven or eight yards, when I coughed loudly to turn him. He tossed up his trunk and turned quickly round to fly; as he turned, however, we fired together, when the elephant uttered a shrill cry of distress, and crashed away, evidently hard hit. When this bull was standing before us, we both remarked that he was the finest we had seen that night: his tusks were extremely long, thick, and very unusually wide set.

We now returned to the fountain, and once more lay down to watch. Rhinoceroses, both black and white, were parading around us all night in every direction. We had lain but a short time when I detected a single old bull elephant approaching from the south by the same path which all the others had held. This elephant must have been very thirsty, for he came boldly on without any hesitation, and, keeping to windward, walked past within about eight yards of us. We fired at the same moment; the elephant wheeled about, and, after running a hundred yards, reduced his pace to a slow walk. I clapped Carey on the shoulder, and said, "We have him." I had hardly uttered the words when he fell over on his side; he rose, however, again to his feet. At this moment the same presuming borèlé who had troubled us in the early part of the night came up to us again, and,

declining as before to depart by gentle hints, I thought it a fitting moment to put an end to his intrusion, and accordingly gave him a ball behind the shoulder. On receiving it, he galloped off in tremendous consternation, and passed close under the dying elephant, who at the moment fell dead with a heavy crash, and broke one of his hind legs under him in the fall.

About an hour after, two more elephants came towering on from the east. When they came up they stood for a long time motionless within forty yards of the water; and at length the finer of the two, which was a very first-rate old bull, and carrying immense tusks, walked boldly forward, and, passing round the north side of the fountain, commenced drinking on the rock just as the crippled bull had done. We both fired together, holding for his heart; the bullets must have gone nearly through him, for we had double charges of powder in our weapons. On receiving the shots he dropped a volume of water from his trunk, and, tossing it aloft, uttered a loud cry and made off, steering north; but before he was out of our sight he reduced his pace to a slow walk, and I could quite plainly hear, by the loud, painful breathing through his trunk, that he was mortally wounded; but whether the natives were too lazy to seek him, or having found him would not tell me, I know

not, but I never got him. We shot another bull elephant shortly after this; he too uttered a shrill cry, and went off holding the same course the last one did; that was, however, all that I ever saw of him.

It was now wearing on toward morning: the moon was low and the sky was cloudy; and feeling very sleepy, I set the two Bakalahari to watch while I lay down to rest. Carey was already enjoying a sound sleep, and snoring loudly. I had lain nearly an hour, and was neither waking nor sleeping, when the Bakalahari whispered, "Clou toona, macoa," which signifies "Bull elephants, white man." I sat up on my kaross, and beheld three old bulls approaching from the west. At this moment there was a death-like calm in the atmosphere, and the sky looked very threatening all along the mountain range which bounds this favorite elephant district on the southwest. I greatly feared a thunder-storm. Suddenly a breeze came whistling from the mountains, and gave these three elephants our wind. We then left the fountain and held to our wagons, where we slept till the sun rose.

When the sun rose I proceeded with the Bakalahari to inspect the spoors of the wounded elephants. I was struck with astonishment when I thought over our night's sport: 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 escape; and the only one which we imagined had escaped was the bull with the wide-set tusks, which we both felt certain was wounded too far back in the body. 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, as 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, wishing to put an end to his existence, I gave him four shots behind the shoulder,

when he at once exhibited signs of distress; water ran from his eyes, and he could barely keep them open; presently his gigantic form quivered, and, falling over, he expired. At night we again watched the fountain. Only one elephant appeared; late in the night he came up to leeward, and got our wind. I, however, shot two fine old muchocho, or white rhinoceroses, and wounded two or three borèlé, which were found by the natives.

On the 19th I proceeded with Carey and Piet, and a few Bakalahari, to a small fountain lying one mile to the south: here we made two shooting-boxes of boughs of trees. There were three pools at which the game drank, the largest not being more than twelve feet in breadth. I and Carey at night 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 I put in practice a novel experiment I had long entertained — that of hunting elephants by moonlight with dogs and horses, as in the day, being very much annoyed at wounding and losing in the last week no less than ten first-rate old bull elephants. I communicated my idea to “Stick-in-the-mud,” and we hastily proceeded to saddle my steed. I led my dogs, eight in number, through the forest to leeward of where

a bull who had come to the fountain to drink had gone in, and when I saw that they had got his wind I slipped them. They dashed forward, and next minute I followed the baying of the dogs and the crash and the trumpet of the elephant. He rushed away at first without halting, and held right for the mountains to the southwest. When, however, he 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 after the dogs. I followed on as best I could, shouting with all my might to encourage my good hounds. These, hearing their master's voice beside them, stuck well by the elephant, 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.

The elephant very soon evinced signs of distress, and ceased to make away from us. Taking up positions in the densest parts of the cover, he caught up the red dust with his trunk, and, throwing it over his head and back, endeavored to conceal himself in a cloud. This was a fine opportunity to pour in my deadly shafts, and I took care to avail myself of it. When he had received about twelve shots, he walked slowly forward in

a dying state, the blood streaming from his trunk. I rode close up to him, and gave him a sharp right and left from the saddle: he turned and walked a few yards, then suddenly 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. This was an extremely large and handsome elephant, decidedly the finest bull I had shot this year. Afraid of taking cold or rheumatism, for I was in a most profuse perspiration, I hastened back to my fire-side, having first secured all the dogs in their couples. Here I divested myself of my leather trousers, shooting-belt, and veldt-schoens, and, stretched on my kaross, I took tea, and wondered at the facility with which I had captured this mighty elephant.

Feeling fatigued, I intended to lie down and rest till morning. Just, however, as I was arranging my saddles for a pillow, I beheld another first-rate old bull elephant advancing up the vley from the south. I at once resolved that he, too, should run the gauntlet with the dogs. In immense haste, therefore, I once more pulled on my old leathers, and buckled on my shooting-belt, and ran down into the rank long grass beside the fountain to meet him, armed with the large two-grooved rifle, having directed Carey and Piet to come slowly up with

the dogs and my horse and gun as soon as they were ready. The elephant came on, and stood drinking within thirty yards of me. When I saw Carey coming on with the dogs and steed, I fired, but my rifle hung fire. The shot, however, gave the dogs good courage, and they fought well. The elephant took away at a rapid pace toward the other fountain where the Bechuanas lay, and at first led me through very bad wait-a-bit thorn cover, which once or twice nearly swept me out of the saddle. Presently he inclined to the west, and got into better country; I then rode close to him, and bowled him over with four shots.

The next morning, my ammunition being expended or very nearly so, I dispatched Carey to camp for fresh supplies. After he had gone I walked through the forests, when I observed "Frochum" snuff up the wind and go ahead. I soon saw him 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 further the dogs ran forward, and next moment a rush of many feet was heard charging toward 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, shot by me two nights previously, which I found lying a little in advance.

Beside the carcass stood a fine fat calf — the poor thing, no doubt, fancying that its mother slept; heedless of lions, and all the other creatures that had trodden there, it had remained beside its dead mother for a day and two nights. Rhinoceros' calves 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. This wound up my elephant night-shooting for that moon, for next day there was a most awful thunder-storm, which filled the forest with large pools of water.

While reviewing my extraordinary good fortune during the last week's hunting, I could not help deeply regretting that I had not earlier thought of pursuing the elephants at night with dogs and horses: if I had commenced with the dogs 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 upward of £200; 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 above and around the Bechuanas, where the butchering was

going briskly forward. They perched in groups upon the old branches of the larger trees, or darkened the sky in hundreds with their broad and shadowy wings.

While, however, I mourned the loss of these wounded elephants, I reckoned that I had been favored with immense good fortune in many instances during the past week. Ever intent upon embellishing and increasing my princely collection of African hunting trophies, I placed great value upon any specimen I happened to shoot which I thought worth 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; 4*s.* 6*d.* a pound; bring me in £22 10*s.* Capital day's work; help me 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, perfection, or beauty, I at once devoted them to my collection, and valued them at a ten-fold price. This, then, was one thing in which I reckoned. I had been

extremely fortunate — I had secured the finest tusks in all that nest 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 in peaceful security.

The night-shooting being at an end, on the 23d 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 wagons. Early in the afternoon we had got all ready for a start. The Bechuana captains who were there, and had appropriated my elephants and rhinoceroses, and nearly all the fat, then brought up about fifty men, who shouldered my impedimenta, 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 thridding 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, the elephants' teeth, and an immense supply of flesh and fat, &c., &c. We made the Limpopo as the sun went down, which

we 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. There were several of these terrible animals frequenting the still deep stream beside which we lay. They seemed ever to be on the lookout for prey, and I have not the slightest doubt they would have taken one of us if we had ventured in.

On the 2d of October, in the morning, we packed the cap-tent wagon, and stowed carefully away in grass my favorite tusks, which I intended to keep as specimens.

The next afternoon, while making for the fountain called Setoque, accompanied by Kapain and a party from Bamangwato, I observed a number of crows and vultures, and came across the spoor of a party of Bakalahari. I at once felt convinced that one of my wounded elephants lay

rotting near me, but, the sun being nearly under, I did not then wait, resolving to seek it at another time; Kapain promised to send two of his companions early next morning to see if I had not surmised correctly. These men next day arrived, bearing some putrid fat which they had got from the Bakalahari; and I at once said, "Oh, you have found my dead elephant?" They answered, "Yes, but the tusks are stolen." They also said that they had not seen any others of their tribe, but that they had cut that fat out of the elephant. Kapain then promised me to do his best to recover the ivory for me; but I found out, very soon afterward, that he was playing me false. Next day I shot an old bull elephant.

On the 5th I began to think of hunting no more across the Limpopo, as the season of rain was up; and any day I might come to the river, returning from hunting, and find myself cut off from camp by a mighty stream, which would probably remain impassable for months. I also wished to save, if possible, one or two of my horses from the "tsetse," as my stud was now reduced to five. I therefore resolved to return at once to camp, and cross the Limpopo no more. After an early breakfast I marched thither, with thirteen Bechuanas bearing the tusks, flesh, &c.

On my way I visited the remains of the elephant

which Kapain's men had found; it was the carcass of an enormous old bull, no doubt the elephant which I had first 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 were stolen as reported; they had not been cut out, but drawn. The skull remained perfect, and was finely cleaned by hyænas, vultures, and insects. On beholding the carcass, I at once knew that Kapain had lied in saying that his men had cut the fat I saw with them out of the elephant, for it was evident that all the flesh and fat had been at an end many days previously; the tusks, however, had quite lately been drawn, perhaps on the preceding day. I felt quite certain that Kapain was deceiving me, so I at once charged him with falsehood, and resolved in my own mind to take some very strong measures for the recovery of the tusks. 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 morn, and threaten to shoot the chief if the teeth did not quickly appear.

Accordingly, on the morning of 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-barreled

guns, and held down the river side for the Bakalahari village, which we made in about an hour. As soon as I observed the houses, 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 sat in the forum with most of his men; so, dismounting from my horse, I walked up to them, and sat down on the ground in 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 then at once dispatched five or six active men to bring the teeth; and Bechuana beer and porridge were placed before me. In an hour the men returned, bearing the tusks of my lost elephant. I was right glad to see them; they were immense teeth, and very finely arched, and almost perfect. I then chose some skins of koodoo and blue wildebeests out of their kraals for packing my ivory in the wagons, for which I promised them beads; after which I returned to camp, the natives going before me, bearing the teeth and skins.

These men had drawn the tusks, and concealed them somewhere close to the carcass of the elephant. Here they would most probably have been concealed until I had left the country, when they would have forwarded them to their chief. Just as we reached the drift we met a string of natives returning from my last elephant, bearing flesh and fat. This was a fine opportunity for a seizure. I selected several large bundles of the flesh and some fat, and marched the same to camp on the shoulders of the Bakalahari, along with the ivory.

When Kapain saw us arrive at camp, he was ut-

terly confounded, and began to abuse the Bakalahari; thereupon I bundled him out of the kraal. In the afternoon we packed the ivory in the baggage-wagon; it had hitherto lain loose in the kraal. There were fifty-three tusks of bull, and seventeen tusks of cow elephants. Three pairs of these bulls' teeth I intended to keep in my collection; in the cap-tent wagon were seven pairs of picked bulls' tusks, and two pairs of cow elephants' tusks, all of which I likewise devoted to my collection.

[Cumming then left the Limpopo, proceeding in a northwesterly direction. In the mountains of Linguapa he enjoyed fine sport with sable antelopes. His collection of South African trophies being now almost perfect, on November 15th he inspanned for the return trip. Nearly all of his oxen died, and again he received assistance from Dr. Livingstone. On the 20th of February, 1848, he arrived at Colesberg. Here he stored his "curiosities," and outfitted for his fifth, and last, expedition into the interior.—*Ed.*]

CHAPTER XII

LIONS — BUFFALOES

ON the 19th of March, 1848, I left Colesberg with three wagons "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 the blackest colors, kindly agreed to favor me with his help and company on my lonely trip. My sojourn in Colesberg reduced me considerably, and I was glad once more to breathe the fresh air of the country.

We got clear of Colesberg at about 9 A. M., and commenced our march over the country I have so often marked with my wheel-tracks, and which my reader must now be fully acquainted with. On my way I completely recruited my oxen and stud, and prepared myself to take the field with an immense pack of stout, serviceable dogs. I also engaged as after-rider a Bushman named Booi.

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. On pressing upon them, they cantered along before me, not exhibiting much alarm, taking care, however, not to allow me to ride within at least four hundred yards of them. On, on I rode, intensely excited with the wondrous scene before me, and hoped at length to get to windward of at least some portion of the endless living mass which darkened the plain, but in vain. Like squadrons of dragoons, the entire breadth of this countless herd held on their forward course as if aware of my intention, and resolved not to allow me to weather them.

At length I determined to play upon their ranks, and, pressing my horse to his utmost speed, dashed forward, and, suddenly halting, sprang from the saddle, and, giving my rifle at least two feet of elevation, fired right and left into one of their darkest masses. A noble buck dropped to the right barrel, and the second shot told loudly; no buck, however, fell, and after lying for half a minute

the prostrate blesbok rose, and was quickly lost sight of among his retreating comrades. In half a minute I was again loaded, and, after galloping a few hundred yards, let drive into them, but was still 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 high time to retrace my steps and seek my wagons. I accordingly took a point, and rode across the trackless country in the direction for which they were steering.

I very soon once more fell in with fresh herds of thousands of blesboks. As it was late in the day, and I being on the right side for the wind, the blesboks were very tame, and allowed me to ride along within rifle-shot of them, and those which ran charged resolutely past me up the wind in long-continued streams. I took a lucky course for the wagons, and came right upon them, having just 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, and being extremely anxious to push on, I

inspanned, and continued my march by moonlight.

Before proceeding far we discovered the deeply-imprinted spoor of an enormous lion, which had walked along the wagon-track for several hundred yards. We continued our march till after midnight, vast herds of blesbok charging from us on every side. Lions were heard roaring for the first time during this night. . . .

On the 3d of May we again inspanned, and held on beyond the Hart River. The country to the west was not frequented by the game, and here the grass was tall and rank, and covers of considerable size of thorn-trees and gray-leaved bushes were scattered over the landscape: it was a still and secluded spot. I observed several vultures soaring over one of these covers within a quarter of a mile of the wagons, 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 toward 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 along parallel to me, and within a hundred yards. He had not yet observed me: 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, im-

posing face to me, and I knew that it was he. Shouting to the dogs with all my might, I at once dashed toward him, followed by my after-rider at a respectful distance carrying my rifle.

The lion, as I expected, was panic-stricken, and 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, and the dogs now came up and followed, 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, I 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 favorite dogs, he 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 over another dog, called Vixen, which escaped with a slight scratch.

The lion had now gained the edge of a small cover, and Booie, coming up at a very easy pace, handed me my rifle. In another minute the noble beast came to bay in a thick bush, and, facing round, 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, he 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.

After breakfast a party went to inspect the lion and bring home his trophies. On proceeding to seek for Shepherd, the dog which the lion had knocked over in the chase, I found him with his back broken and his bowels protruding from a gash in the stomach; I was, therefore, obliged to end his misery with a ball.

We marched again at sunrise, and at about 10 A. M. I drew up my wagons beside the large pan where I had been storm-stayed for a week last season. On the march I shot a springbok; and observing vultures, Mr. O. and I rode toward them with a troop of the dogs, in the hope of falling in with a lion, but were disappointed. In the afternoon, directing the wagons to follow, I rode ahead with Booi, and on reaching the next large pan drew the cover lying to the south of it, expecting to find a lion. When the wagons came up I formed my camp beside the thorn-grove, and, observing a

herd of blue wildebeests making for my cattle, I proceeded to waylay them, and fired two long shots. 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. I sent him back, however, with instructions to bring eight dogs; but Booi 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. Booi was correct; 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 the lionesses, and on perceiving their danger they at once dashed into this cover: then followed the most woeful cutting up and destruction among my best and most valuable dogs. The lionesses had it all their own way. In vain I rode round and round the small cover, endeavoring to obtain a peep of them, 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 outside the cover on the opposite side, when I fired a shot from the saddle. My horse was unsteady; never-

theless I wounded her, and, acknowledging the shot 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 down through the long grass, started a third lioness, which came growling down into the cover and joined her comrades. This was the signal for my united pack to make a bold sally into the center of the lions' den, when they were savagely met by the three lionesses, who rushed furiously up and down, knocking the dogs about with just as much facility as three cats would have disposed of the same number of mice. For several minutes nothing was to be heard but the crashing of the reeds, the growling of the lions, and the barking and shrieking of the mangled pack: it was truly a most painful moment to my feelings.

Carey, who had come up to assist, remarked to me that "there was an awful *massacree* going on among the dogs;" and he was right. 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 my best hounds 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. While I was occupied with the lions my followers were forming a kraal for the cattle.

Before the day began to break next morning lions were heard roaring to the west: accordingly, I rode in that direction with Booi and a detachment of dogs, still resolved to follow the king of beasts, notwithstanding the disasters of the former day. Having ridden about a mile, we reached the end of a long piece of cover, averaging a hundred yards in breadth, where I at once discovered the fresh spoor of a troop of lions. The dogs took it up and followed on at a wary pace, the hair bristling on their backs. On reaching the end of this cover a second one appeared several hundred yards to my right, while a little to my left was a small vley, and here I observed a jackal steal away, while a crow sounded his ominous voice in advance.

These signs bid fair for the proximity of lions, and I remarked to Booi that we must be upon them; it was so. Next morning I observed a yellowish form on a barish spot two hundred yards ahead, which we knew must be the lion, and thither we rode at top speed. On observing us he raised his noble head, but quickly again laid it flat on the ground, intending to crouch in the hope that we should pass him by unnoticed. Within twenty yards of him lay a noble lioness, with two half-

grown young lions. On seeing that our course was direct for where they lay, 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 lions, and taking the lead at the best pace that he could muster. I did not wait for my rifle, but shouting to my dogs I pressed forward and tried to cut off his retreat. I was even with him and the lioness, and within twenty yards, when they reached the cover, which they sullenly entered. The dogs seemingly were apprehensive of following too near such dangerous game, probably warned by the fate of their comrades on the preceding day.

The noble game having thus retreated, I placed Booi at one end of the cover to keep watch, while I rode to the other end to beat up through the center with the dogs. Twice I drew the cover successfully, but the third time the dogs found the lioness lying under a bushy tree. Then followed a bay, when I rode up and gave her both barrels behind the shoulder, which partially disabled her. My third shot entered beside her eye and blew away the entire half of her brain-pan. When riding up I had heard a dog shriek, and on looking round me I beheld poor Vitberg, a valuable dog, and one that was extremely attached to me, lying on the ground utterly disabled, with his hip so

fearfully mangled that I was obliged to blow his brains out.

A fourth time we drew the cover for the old lion, but were still unsuccessful. Booi and I then skinned the lioness, cut off her head, and returned to camp. Shortly after reaching the wagons I observed a blue wildebeest approaching my cattle, which I stalked and shot. The afternoon set in with a most terrific hail-storm, such as I had never before witnessed; many of the stones were from two to three inches in diameter. The storm came on with a sound resembling the roaring of the sea: a dense intervening fall of rain obscuring our view, we were at a loss to think what it could be. The storm sent our cattle and horses flying before it for miles across the plain, and they were hardly recovered before the sun was under. It blew a gale of wind throughout the first half of the night, tremendous showers of hail and rain succeeding one another in quick succession, accompanied by appalling thunder and lightning.

As the day broke we heard lions moaning to the west and I rode in quest of them, accompanied by Mr. O. and Carey, with a detachment of dogs. In drawing the cover beside which I had found the lions yesterday, 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 shot in the skull.

The next morning, which was the 9th, for several hours before the day dawned, a lion stood roaring terribly on a bushy eminence within two hundred yards of the wagons, and held west just as it became light, roaring occasionally as he went. We determined to give him battle if we could only find him, and before it was clear we were in our saddles pricking along the edge of the vley, accompanied by about a dozen of the dogs, who started the noble beast, but he got away unseen by any of us.

Our dogs kept up an incessant barking during the night, and we imagined that lions were prowling around our camp. In the morning, however, we discovered that we had been favored with the presence of far less illustrious, yet more presuming visitors. A pack of audacious hyænas had visited our fireside, and, not content with cracking and swallowing the bones which they found there, they had eaten our table-cloth, which consisted of the skin of a sable antelope, and carried off the lid of our canteen and two large camp-stools, which I lately had made to order in Colesberg. One of these we had the good fortune to recover, minus the rheimpies; 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. Here I had the pleasure to find that, owing to a large tract of the country having been burned by the Bakalahari some months previously, and favored 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.

Having breakfasted, I saddled up three of my fleetest steeds, and, accompanied by two after-riders, rode forth in a northerly direction, and carefully sought for eland's spoor. Presently I crossed the old Kuruman road, and immediately discovered fresh spoor, similar to that of elands, but, in my opinion, a little too large. In a buffalo country I should have at once pronounced it to be the spoor of buffaloes, but these for many years had not frequented the Meritsane, and were not to be expected nearer than the Molopo. Even in the days of Harris, twelve years ago or upward, buffaloes

had forsaken the Meritsane. As I rode on, the spoor became more abundant, and very soon fresh dung disclosed to me that a very large herd of buffaloes had lately pastured there.

The spoor of zebras, blue wildebeests, hartebeests, and sassabyies was extremely abundant, and of all these I fell in with 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, and resolved to fire into whatever game I might fall in with. I yached * a large herd of blue wildebeests and a herd of hartebeests, and was very unfortunate, wounding several, but failing to secure one. This was to me most particularly annoying, our flesh in camp being completely exhausted, and my large pack of dogs famishing. I resolved, therefore, to march next morning for Lotlokane, and hunt in advance of the wagons.

The next day I rode forth with one after-rider, resolved to do my best to supply the deficiency in camp. I directed the wagons to follow, and out-

* South African dialect, meaning to fall in with, encounter, or surprise.—*Ed.*

span at the Flat Rocks, half way to Lotlokane. I 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 a first-rate look-out, and exactly what I stood in need of, considering the present low state of my commissariat. I returned to meet the wagons, where I saddled another steed, named Brown, which was steady under fire, and once more rode forth, accompanied by Mr. O., with two after-riders, and a large detachment of the dogs, resolved to deal death among the buffaloes. We rode to leeward of the herd to give the dogs their wind, and then galloped in upon them. At first, bewildered, they stood gazing at us until we were within thirty yards of them, when, seeing their danger, a panic spread throughout the whole herd, and, wheeling about, they crashed along through the underwood in a dense mass, impeding one another's progress.

In two minutes I was alongside of the herd, and, dismounting, fired right and left into two old cows; one of these immediately dropped to the rear of the troop, and, staggering for a few seconds, fell over and expired. The herd now left the river and doubled back, passing through a belt of low cover. I halted a moment to load. Following on, I came right upon the other buffalo that I had

wounded, standing with a comrade in a dense bush. I observed her before she could charge me, and three more shots laid her low. The reports of Mr. O.'s gun now sounded ahead, and, galloping forward, I observed him to my right actively engaged with four old buffaloes, which stood at bay in a large bush in the open country: the herd had vanished. A single buffalo, however, was at this moment making off between me and Mr. O., to which I gave chase. My after-rider was up first, and headed it, when the buffalo charged him furiously, and next moment she charged me, but my trusty steed was too active for her, and I bowled her over with two good shots in the shoulder. I then rode up to assist Mr. O. Two of the four buffaloes were lying wounded in the bush. Riding up within forty yards of them, I fired into a fine old cow, when she and her comrade broke bay, and took down to the river. Some of my dogs now came up to my assistance, and brought the wounded buffalo to bay in the stream, and two more shots laid her low.

I then rode to meet my wagons, which were standing on the rising ground above; and as I was directing my men where to draw up, I observed two more buffaloes coming down the river's side, which, observing us, took shelter in a belt of lofty reeds. Most of my dogs having come up, I re-

solved to have another chase, and rode straight for the reeds where the buffaloes had disappeared. I came right upon a noble bull, within four yards of him. Fortunately for me, he did not charge, but broke away up the river side, followed by the dogs. He led me a sharp chase, and came to bay at last, when he fell with two shots within thirty yards of the second cow I had shot in the commencement of the chase. This made five old buffaloes I had bagged out of the herd; Mr. O. bagged his two, making in all seven.

After breakfast I dispatched men with two spans of oxen, directing them to select four of the fattest buffaloes and drag them to the wagons. 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 savage young buffalo, to my utter astonishment, turned upon me, and charged down in the most determined manner. I stood his charge, with my rifle at my shoulder, and, covering his forehead until he was within four yards of me, arrested him in full career with a ball in the forehead.

Three of the buffaloes which 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,

having substituted a bowl of warm milk for coffee, I rode forth with an after-rider and a troop of my dogs to seek the king of beasts. On gaining the first buffalo, I found that my natives had left a flag of peace flying over him, which had guarded him from the attacks of the beasts of prey. Upon the second buffalo, however, a hundred vultures were feasting merrily; but, as I approached the third, the sudden rush of a flight of vultures over my head toward the buffalo told me that some occupant which had hitherto kept them aloof had that moment quitted the carcass, and on galloping forward and clearing an intervening rising ground, I had the satisfaction to behold a huge and shaggy lion trotting slowly off toward the cover along the banks of the river, within two hundred yards of me.

I instantly rode for him at top speed to get my dogs clear of the carrion, and, if possible, to 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 on the river's bank. The lion 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, springing from my horse, which was unsteady, went up to within twelve yards on foot, and finished him with my second shot, which he got behind the shoulder. This was a

fine old lion, with perfect tusks and a very beautiful coat of hair. Leaving Booi to protect him from the vultures, I rode to camp, and dispatched men with instructions to flay him with the utmost care. In the afternoon I inspanned, intending to march, but continued showers of rain prevented me. Next day, however, we reached Lotlokane. . . .

On the 25th of July, at sunrise, we inspanned and held down the river, leaving three more of my stud behind me, two dead and the other dying of tsetse. At sundown we halted about twenty miles down the river. While on our march next morning we came across the fresh spoor of a troop of bull elephants, when I immediately outspanned. I was proceeding to follow up the elephants' spoor, when I was met by a party of Bakalahari, who informed me that other elephants had drunk on the opposite side, and some miles higher up the river, during the night. I resolved to go there in quest of them.

We crossed the Limpopo at a most rocky drift, where the horses were in danger of breaking their legs, and, holding up the river, took up the spoor of three old bulls. Having followed it for five miles, we 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, however, been there feast-

ing upon these insects. After a little while we made a cast in advance, and 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, and, the wind being favorable, they were not aware of our approach.

While riding slowly round them on the lee side, endeavoring to select the best bull, a splendid 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. I received no assistance from my dogs, as is often the case, having packed upon the worst elephant in the troop. The tusks of this huge elephant being unusually perfect, I resolved to preserve the entire skull. I accordingly sent a messenger to camp to instruct my people to bring a wagon for the head, while I stood sentry over it. Three days passed before the wagon appeared, having had to cross the Limpopo at a ford many miles above my camp. I occupied myself in the meantime in preparing the feet of the elephant, which I preserved.

In a few days we reached the fountain of Seboono, at which I watched for several nights, and slew some fine old elephants with splendid tusks. I hunted, as during last season, by moonlight with

dogs, and by the 24th of August had the satisfaction of making up my bag to a hundred and five select elephants killed in South Africa. We now found the district to be much deserted by the elephants, and accordingly inspanned the wagons on the 3d of September, and marched down the Limpopo toward the district frequented by hippopotami.

On the 4th I rode up the river to shoot hippopotami. Of these I found three troops, and bagged one first-rate bull and wounded others. I saw several crocodiles of unusual vastness. Some of them must have been sixteen feet in length, with bodies as large as that of an ox. Returning to the wagons in the evening, I heard Mr. O. engaged with a huge, invincible old bull hippopotamus. On going to his assistance, and finding that he had expended his ammunition, I attacked the hippopotamus, which I barely finished with six or eight more shots.

We rode down the river for several mornings hunting after hippopotami, a great number of which we killed. As the tusks of some of these were very fine, we chopped them out of the jawbones, 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. While I lay in this helpless state, Mr. Orpen and Present, who had gone up the river to shoot

sea-cows, fell in with an immense male leopard, which the latter wounded very badly. They then sent natives to camp to ask me for dogs, of which I sent them a pair.

In about an hour the natives came running to camp and said that Orpen was killed by the leopard. On further 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 leopard before they were aware of him, 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. Presently the leopard permitted Orpen to rise and come away. Where were the gallant Present and all 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 he discharged his piece in the air, and then, dashing it to the ground, rushed down the bank and sprang into the river, along which he swam some hundred yards before he would venture on terra firma. The natives, though numerous and armed, had fled in another direction.

CHAPTER XIII

LIONS — BUFFALOES — GIRAFFES

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 the fever, though I was slowly recovering. It was of no use, therefore, to remain longer in the low-lying district about the Limpopo, so I resolved to march on steadily to Sichely's country. We accordingly marched on the 27th of September, and on the 2d 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. . . .

On the 13th we made the bank of the Ngotwani, up which we proceeded for several days; but, finding that there was scarcely any water in it, 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, which I fell in with once more on the 23d, having killed a noble old lion on my way.

We trekked up along the banks of the river for

the Mariqua, and a little before sundown fell in with two enormous herds of buffaloes, one of which, consisting chiefly of bulls, stood under the shady trees on one side of the bank, while the other, composed chiefly of cows and calves, stood on the opposite side, a little higher up the river. In all there were at least three hundred.

Thinking it probable that if I hunted them I might kill some old bull with a head perhaps worthy of my collection, I ordered my men to outspan, and, having saddled steeds, gave chase to the herd of bulls, accompanied by Booi and my dogs. After a short burst they took through the river, whereby I lost sight of an old bull which carried the finest head in the herd. My dogs, however, brought a cow to bay as they crossed the river, which I shot standing in the water, but not before she had killed a particularly favorite bull-dog named Pompey. I then continued the chase, and again came up with the herd, which was now considerably scattered; and after a sharp chase, part of which was through thick wait-a-bit thorn cover, I brought eight or nine fine bulls to bay in lofty reeds at the river's margin, exactly opposite to my camp: of these I singled out the two best heads, one of which I shot with five balls, and wounded the other badly, but he made off while I was engaged with his comrade.

In the morning I instructed four of my people to cross the river and bring over a supply of buffalo beef. These men were very reluctant to go, fearing a lion might have taken possession of the carcass. On proceeding to reconnoiter from our side, they beheld the majestic beast they dreaded walking slowly up the opposite bank from the dead buffalo, and taking up a position on the top of the bank under some shady thorn-trees. I resolved to give him battle, and rode forth with my double-barreled Westley Richards rifle, followed by men leading the dogs. Present, who was one of the party, carried his *roer*, no doubt to perform wonders.

The wind blew up the river; I held up to seek a drift, and crossed a short distance above where the buffalo lay. As we drew near the spot, I observed the lion sitting on the top of the bank, exactly where he had been seen by my people. On my right, and within two hundred yards of me, was a very extensive troop of pallahs, which antelopes invariably manage to be in the way when they are not at all wanted. On this occasion, however, I succeeded in preventing my dogs from observing them. When the lion saw us coming, he overhauled us for a moment, and then slunk down the bank for concealment. Being well to leeward of him, I ordered the dogs to be slipped, and galloped forward.

On finding that he was attacked, the lion at first made a most determined bolt for it, followed by all the dogs at a racing pace; and when they came up with him he would not bay, but continued his course down the bank of the river, keeping close in beside the reeds, growling terribly at the dogs, which kept up an incessant angry barking. The bank of the river was intersected by deep water-courses, and, the ground being extremely slippery from the rain which had fallen during the night, I was unable to overtake him until he came to bay in a patch of lofty dense reeds which grew on the lower bank, immediately adjacent to the river's margin. I had brought out eleven of my dogs, and before I could come up three of them were killed.

On reaching the spot I found it impossible to obtain the smallest glimpse of the lion, although the ground favored me, I having the upper bank to stand upon; so, dismounting from my horse, I tried to guess, from his horrid growling, his exact position, and fired several shots on chance, but none of these hit him. I then commenced pelting him with lumps of earth and sticks, there being no stones at hand. This had the effect of making him shift his position, but he still kept in the densest part of the reeds, where I could do nothing with him.

Presently my followers came up, who, as a matter of course, at once established themselves safely in the tops of thorn-trees. After about ten minutes' bullying, the lion seemed to consider his quarters too hot for him, and suddenly made a rush to escape from his persecutors, continuing his course down along the edge of the river. The dogs, however, again gave him chase, and soon brought him to bay in another dense patch of reeds, just as bad as the last. Out of this in a few minutes I managed to start him, when he bolted up the river, and came to bay in a narrow strip of reeds. Here he lay so close that for a long time I could not ascertain his whereabouts; at length, however, he made a charge among the dogs, and, coming forward, took up a position near the outside of the reeds, 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 further 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, and, facing about, 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 I made a fine shot at his neck, and turned him over dead on the spot.

Present, Carollus, and Adonis then swam in and brought him through. We landed him by an old hippopotamus foot-path, and, the day being damp and cold, we kindled a fire, beside which we skinned him. While this was going forward I had a painful duty to perform, viz., to load one barrel, and blow out Rascality's brains, whom the lion had utterly disabled in his after-quarters. Thus ended this protracted and all but unsuccessful hunt; for when I at length managed to shoot him, the dogs were quite tired of it, and, the reeds being green, I could not have set them on fire to force him out.

The 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 in a lion. In the chase my after-rider,

who fortunately did not carry my rifle, got a tremendous capsizе from bad riding, a common occurrence with most after-riders who have been employed in my service. The afternoon was spent in drying the wet mane of the lion, skinning out the feet, and preserving the skin with alum and arsenical soap. . . .

A few days after this, just as Swint had milked the cows, and was driving them from the wooded peninsula in which we lay, athwart the open ground, to graze with my other cattle in the forest beyond, he beheld four majestic lions walk slowly across the vley, a few hundred yards below my camp, and disappear over the river's bank at a favorite drinking-place. These mighty monarchs of the waste had been holding a prolonged repast over the carcass of some zebras killed by Present, and had now come down to the river to slake their thirst.

This being reported, I instantly saddled up two horses, and, directing my boys to lead after me as quickly as possible my small remaining pack of sore-footed dogs, I rode forth, accompanied by Carey carrying a spare gun, to give battle to the four grim lions. As I rode out of the peninsula, they showed themselves on the bank of the river, and, guessing that their first move would be a disgraceful retreat, I determined to ride so as to

make them think I had not observed them, until I should be able to cut off their retreat from the river, across the open vley, to the endless forest beyond. That point being gained, I knew that they, still doubtful of my having observed them, would hold their ground on the river's bank until my dogs came up, when I could more advantageously make the attack.

I cantered along, holding as if I meant to pass the lions at a distance of a quarter of a mile, until I was opposite to them, when I altered my course, and inclined a little nearer. The lions then showed symptoms of uneasiness: they rose to their feet, and, overhauling us for a half a minute, disappeared over the bank. They reappeared, however, directly, a little further down; and, finding that their present position was bare, they walked majestically along the top of the bank to a spot a few hundred yards lower, where the bank was well wooded. Here they seemed half inclined to await my attack; two stretched out their massive arms, and lay down in the grass, and the other two sat up like dogs upon their haunches.

Deeming it probable that when my dogs came up and I approached they would still retreat and make a bolt across the open vley, I directed Carey to canter forward and take up the ground in the center of the vley about four hundred yards in

advance, whereby the lions would be compelled either to give us battle or swim the river, which, although narrow, I knew they would be very reluctant to do.

I now sat in my saddle, anxiously awaiting the arrival of the dogs, and, while thus momentarily disengaged, was much struck with the majestic and truly appalling appearance which these four lions 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 I rode right in toward the lions. They sprang to their feet and trotted slowly down along the bank of the river, once or twice halting and facing about for half a minute. Immediately below them there was a small determined bend in the stream, forming a sort of peninsula. Into this bend they disappeared, and next moment I was upon them with my dogs. They had taken shelter in a dense angle of the peninsula, 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 voices of the lions, which turned about and charged to the edge of the cover. Next moment, however, I heard them plunge into the river, when I sprang from my horse, and, run-

ning to the top of the bank, saw three of them ascending the opposite bank, the dogs following. One of them bounded away across the open plain at top 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 that moment had ridden up to my assistance, I finished the first lion with a shot about the heart, and brought the second to a standstill by disabling him in his hind quarters. 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 near his hiding-place, he made a move which disclosed to me his position, when I finished him with three more shots, all along the middle of his back.

Carey swam across the river to flog off the dogs; and when these came through to me, I beat up the peninsula in quest of the fourth lion, which had, however, 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 very much to have affected his general condition. . . .

On the forenoon of the 26th I rode forth to hunt, accompanied by Ruyter; 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. Presently I came across two sassaybies, one of which I knocked over; but while I was loading he regained his legs and made off. We crossed a level stretch of forest, holding a northerly course for an opposite range of green, well-wooded hills and valleys. Here I came upon a troop of six fine old bull buffaloes, into which I stalked, and wounded one princely fellow very severely behind the shoulder, bringing blood from his mouth; he, however, made off with his comrades, and, the ground being very rough, we failed to overtake him. They held for the Ngotwani. After following the spoor for a couple of miles, we dropped it, as it led right away from camp.

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, and, his course inclining for camp, I gave him chase. He crossed the level broad strath and made for the opposite densely-wooded range of mountains. Along the base of these 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 obscured him from our view, he found himself beside a small pool of rainwater, 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 gray face and massive horns above the water, and these concealed from view by rank overhanging herbage.

Our attention was entirely engrossed with the spoor, and thus we rode boldly on until within a few feet of him, when, springing to his feet, he made a desperate charge after Ruyter, uttering a low, stifled roar peculiar to buffaloes (somewhat similar to the growl of a lion), and hurled horse and rider to the earth with fearful violence. His horn laid the poor horse's haunch open to the bone, making the most fearful ragged wound. In an instant Ruyter regained his feet and ran for his life, while the buffalo observing, gave chase, but most fortunately came down with a tremen-

dous somersault in the mud, his feet slipping from under him: thus the Bushman escaped certain destruction. The buffalo rose much discomfited, and, the wounded horse first catching his eye, he went a second time after him, but he got out of the way. 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 side, whither I deemed it imprudent to follow him.

On the 28th we marched at sunrise, when one of my wagon-drivers chose to turn his wagon too short, in opposition to my orders, whereby it was very nearly upset, for which I flogged him with a sjambok, and then knocked him down. This man's name was Adonis; he was a determined old sinner, on whom words had no effect.

Our course lay through a wide, well-wooded strath, beautifully varied with open glades. As we proceeded, fresh spoor of buffalo and camelopard became abundant, and about breakfast-time, as we were crossing an elevated slope in the vicinity of the Ngotwani, I had the felicity to detect a magnificent herd of the latter browsing in the middle of the strath about half a mile to our left.

As I had enjoyed very little sport with camelopard either in this or the last expedition, my time and attention having always been engrossed with

elephants, I resolved to avail myself of this opportunity, and accordingly, having caught a couple of my mares, I rode for them, accompanied by Booi as after-rider. I had directed my men to out-span, and my intention was, if possible, to hunt one of the camelopards to my camp; but in this I failed. On disturbing the herd they separated into two divisions, one of which took right away down the wind, being a tail-on-end chase from my camp; the finest bull went with this division, and him I followed. After a sharp burst of about a mile, I headed and laid him low with two shots behind the shoulder.

Having cut off his tail, we were returning to camp, and had proceeded about half way, when we came upon the other division of the herd. They were browsing quietly in company with a large herd of zebras; and observing among them another princely old bull, nothing short of the one I had already killed, I was tempted once more to give chase, and, directing Booi to go home with the tail, I spurred my little mare, and dashed after the lofty giraffe. In vain he sought the thickest depths of cover which the strath afforded, and put out the very utmost speed which he could muster. I followed close in his wake, and, after a hard chase of about a mile over very rough ground, we gained a piece of hard level. Here I pressed my

mare, and, getting close in under his stern, fired at the gallop, and sent a bullet into him, and then passed; in doing which I tried to fire a second shot, but my gun snapped.

I had now headed the camelopard, so he altered his course and held away at a right angle across the level strath. A fresh cap was soon placed upon the nipple, when, pressing my mare, I once more rode past him. In passing, I held my stock in my waist and fired: the ball entered behind the shoulder, and ended the career of this gigantic and exquisitely beautiful habitant of the forest. Having run a few yards further, his lofty frame tottered for a moment, when he came down with a crash which made the earth tremble.

On the 4th of December we inspanned at sunrise and marched to the Ngotwani, which we crossed after an hour of hard work in making a road, having to remove some immense masses of rock, to cut down the banks with spades, and to throw some thorn-trees. 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. As the wagons were drawing up for the night a borèlé was detected, which Present and Carey stalked, and got within thirty yards, and then both fired and returned, stating that they had broken his shoulder.

Accordingly, on the following morning, I proceeded to take up the spoor of the wounded borèlé of the preceding evening, accompanied by Ruyter, and very soon found that he was very little the worse for his wound. The spoor led me for several miles close along under the 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 spooring up the borèlé; they had followed him up and driven him away from his lair, and had then lain down for the day.

When I came up I was within twenty yards of the lions before I was aware of their proximity. Observing me, they sprang to their feet, and, growling sulkily, trotted up the mountain side. I only saw one of them at first, and ran forward for a shot. Having ascended the steep a short distance, the lion halted to have a look, giving me a fine broadside, when I shot him through the heart. On receiving the ball he bounded forward, and was instantly obscured by the trees. I advanced cautiously, and next moment the other lion sprang up with a growl, and marched with an air of most consummate independence up the mountain side.

I imagined that this lion was the one I had fired

at, and sent two more shots at him, both of which were too high; after which he disappeared over a ridge immediately 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 wagons, 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 proceeded to skin him, and returned to the wagons with the spoils. The other decamped; the dogs could not find him. Both of these were first-rate old lions, but the one that escaped was the larger of the two. In the afternoon I rode on to Sichely's kraal on the Kouloubeng, having directed my men to follow with the wagons.

On arriving at the station, I found that Mr. Livingstone had left that morning to visit a tribe to the east of the Limpopo. I waited upon Mrs. Livingstone, who regaled me with tea and bread and butter, and gave me all the news. I remained a week in the station, and on the 12th I inspanned. At sundown we halted near the Pass of God, intending to hunt sable antelope, having

seen a small troop of them in the month of May on a steep mountain side, beneath which I formed my camp.

Next morning I rode through the Pass of God and held west, accompanied by my two after-riders. I rode to within a couple of miles of the Kouloubeng, and returned close in under the mountain chain to the south of the pass. I went forth on foot, accompanied by Ruyter, and ascended the mountain immediately above my camp to seek for sable antelope. I had the satisfaction to discover the spoor of three bucks on a piece of rocky table-ground on the highest summit of the range, and soon after I started a princely old buck from his lair. He was lying in long grass in a sandy spot behind a bush, within eighty yards of me. Starting from his mountain bed, this gem of beauty rattled up a rocky slope beside which he had been lying, and, halting for a moment, looked back to see what had disturbed him, when I sent a bullet through his ribs, and, as he disappeared over the ridge, lodged another in his vitals.

Having loaded, I followed on the spoor, and soon observed him within a hundred and fifty yards of me, standing in a green hollow far below, whisking his tail, and evidently severely wounded. A strong breeze which was then blowing was against me, as it shook a young tree of which I wished to

avail myself for a rest. I nevertheless managed to make a fine shot, and sent a bullet through the center of his shoulder, bringing him down on his face, and laming him. The potaquaine disappeared down the wooded mountain side over a rocky ridge, but no rude fears agitated my breast; I had lamed him, and that was enough: if stalking should fail, there were dogs at my wagons that could very soon bring him to bay. I did not, however, wish to be put to the trouble of sending for the dogs, and continued to follow on his spoor with extreme caution.

He had only gone a short distance down the hill when I found him without his seeing me, and, after a successful stalk, I finished him with three more shots, two of which were in his stern. This was a most splendid specimen of this very rare and most lovely antelope; his horns were enormous, very long, rough, and perfect. Having cut off the head for stuffing, and gralloched him, we covered him with many green boughs and returned to camp, whence I dispatched a party for the venison and the skin, which I preserved. . . .

My losses in cattle this year were very considerable. Up to this time fourteen horses and fifteen head of cattle had died, making my losses in all four expeditions into the far interior amount to forty-five horses and seventy head of cattle, the

value of these being at least £600. I also lost about seventy of my dogs. . . .

[On the return of this expedition, Bloem Vonteyn — Bloem-Fontein — was reached February 1st. At the Great Orange River the Dutch had contracted a float for ferrying. The stream was high and swift.—*Ed.*]

On the 14th of March with much difficulty, we got over the cable by which the raft was worked, and the Boers, by way of experiment, loaded her up with a party of Bechuana Caffres, and endeavored to cross the river. There was a small boat attached to the float. When they had got about half way across, the water rose partially over the float, when a panic came over both the Boers and Bechuanas, and a rush was made into the little boat. A capsizing 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 of the punt, four only escaped. Two of those who were drowned were Boers.

After this accident I directed my men, who were in an isolated position 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 wagon; and at sundown next day we had safely ferried over the other two wagons, and encamped once more on British territory.

The ferrying was a very laborious proceeding, each wagon 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 wagons were now all safely across; so, after loading them, we marched on the 18th, about 10 A. M. At sundown we entered the town of Colesberg, and drew up opposite to the old barracks, having been absent exactly twelve months.

As my wagons 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 of 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. His father, the Rev. Dr. Orpen, of Colesberg, informed me that he had

great hope of restoring his arms to their former state, even at that late period, but of this I could not help being very doubtful.

During my stay in Colesberg I had much pleasure in meeting my friend Mr. Oswell,* of the Honorable East India Company's Service. He was then *en route* for the far interior, intending to penetrate the Kalihara in a northwesterly 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 deemed 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 a Mrs. Van Blerk, which I reached in about three hours; the country all karroo, herds of springboks feeding in sight of the house. Here I found nine heavily-laden wagons drawn up, which I

* William Cotton Oswell, a famous hunter of big game.
—Ed.

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 at length to leave Africa for a season, and revisit 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.

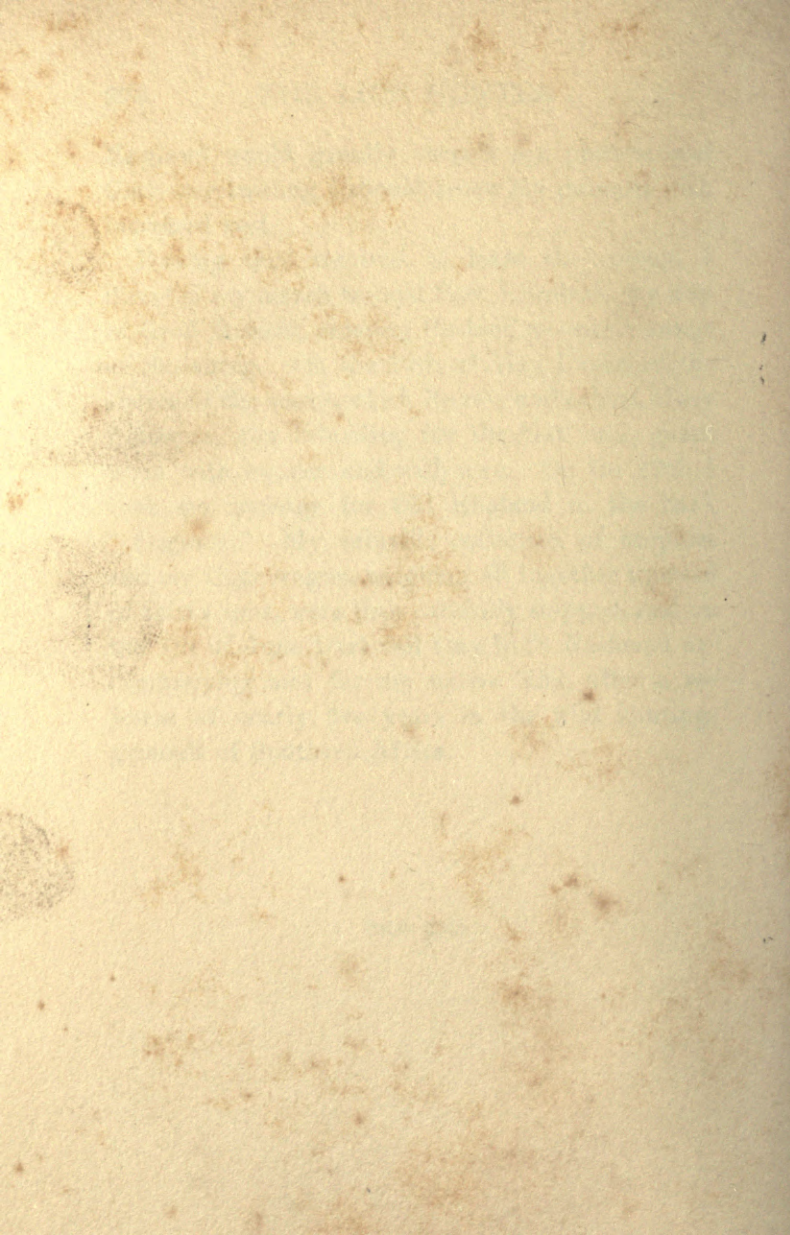
I could not help confessing to myself, however, that in the most laborious yet noble pursuit of elephant hunting I was over-taxing my frame and too rapidly wearing down my constitution. Moreover, the time required to reach those extremely distant lands frequented by the elephant was so great that it 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 and constitution were considerably shaken by the power of a scorching African sun, and I considered that a voyage to

England would greatly recruit my powers, and that on returning I should renew my pursuits with increased zest.

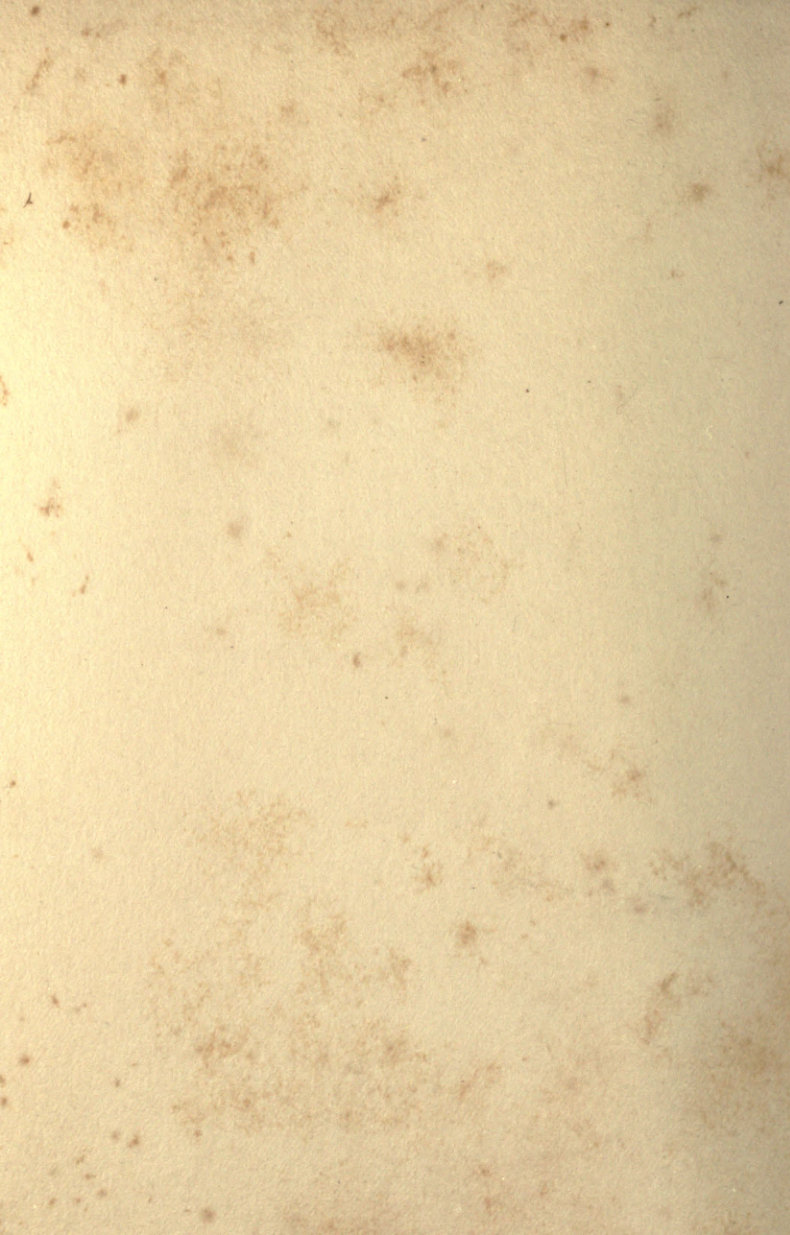
Having thus resolved to leave the colony, I directed my march toward Port Elizabeth, by way of Graff Reinett, crossing the bold mountain range of Snewberg. On the 10th of May I reached the shores of the ocean, which Ruyter and others of my followers, now beholding for the first time, gazed upon with wonder and with awe. On the 19th I took my passage for Old England in the bark "Augusta." My valuable collection of trophies and my Cape wagon, weighing all together upward 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









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