

Wm. M. Darlington

THE
WILD SPORTS
OF
SOUTHERN AFRICA;
BEING THE
Narrative of an Expedition
FROM
THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE,
THROUGH THE TERRITORIES OF THE CHIEF MOSELEKATSE,
TO THE
TROPIC OF CAPRICORN,
BY
CAPTAIN WILLIAM CORNWALLIS HARRIS,
Of the H. E. I. Company's Engineers on the Bombay Establishment.

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CHAPTER X.

FROM MERITSANE TO MIMORI, AND HUNTING ON
THE MOLOPO.

CONTINUING our journey on the 14th October, twenty-eight miles, through a beautiful country abounding with trees and grass, we reached the Lotlokane, the shallow channel of a periodical river, said in the rainy season to contribute its mite to the Molopo, which it joins at some distance to the westward. At this season it was perfectly dry; but we had fortunately found a small pool of water on the road, at which we breakfasted, after killing several hartebeests and sassaybys. The skins of both these animals, and especially of the latter, are in great demand amongst the savages, for *kobos*, or fur cloaks—both on account of their brilliant colour and their supple nature. They are cured by means of continual rubbing, stretching, and scraping; and for this purpose are constantly carried about, and referred to as an amusement in moments of leisure. The operation is rendered less tedious by the constant addition of grease: and less irksome, by savage howlings and gruntings, intended to pass current for singing.

The sassayby, or crescent-horned antelope, and the caama, or hartebeest, are both members of the

Acronotine group, and are alike remarkable for their elevated withers, drooping hind quarters, and triangular form. The colour of the former is purple violet, and of the latter bright orange; their legs and faces being eccentrically marked, as if with the brush of a sign painter; and their horns placed on the very summit of the head, upon a prolongation of the frontal bone, instead of above the eyes as in most other antelopes. Their brain, as well as that of the gnou, is filled with large white maggots—a phenomenon, of which, until I had received ocular evidence, I could not help being sceptical.

Rations of flour were here first served out to the followers, in the measure of three-quarters of a pound of meal to each man, and were continued daily during the rest of the journey. In the morning four savages volunteered to show us a rhinoceros. We accompanied them amongst ruined stone kraals of great extent, situated to the left of the road, and so overgrown with thorn-bushes, that we were not unfrequently obliged to exchange an erect for a stooping posture, and at times even to travel on our hands and knees. We found nothing, however, but a pack of wild dogs* that had just hunted down a hartebeest. Like the wild dogs of India, these animals take the field in organized packs, and by their perseverance seldom fail to weary out the swiftest antelope. Of a slender form, the general colour is ochreous yellow, blotched and brindled with dingy black. The ears are large and semi-

* *Hyæna venatica*.

circular: the muzzle and face black, and the tail bushy like that of a fox.

During the day we passed another extensive stone town, which once contained its "busy thousands," but now presents a heap of ruins. The walls extend more than a mile on each side of the road; and the plain on which it is constructed, is thickly covered with a species of wild basil, yielding an aromatic scent when crushed under the foot. We had scarcely passed this, when the lightning began to flash, and tremendous peals of thunder burst over our heads. A black cloud that had suddenly formed, then emptied its contents upon us; the rain pouring down like a sluice for five minutes, and obliging us to seek shelter in the waggons. Ceasing as abruptly as it commenced, we passed on at once to parched and dusty land, from a tract which had in an instant become covered with pools of water.

It was nearly dark when we reached the Molopo, a few miles below its source. This river, which forms the western boundary of Moselekatse's territory, exhibits a broad shallow bed, covered with turf, traversed by a deep stream about ten yards wide, completely overgrown with high reeds. The soil on both sides is black, spread with luxuriant grass, and detached clumps of acacia. We crossed, and encamped on the northern bank, under a solitary tree, around which was a ready-made fence for the cattle. During the night, the obtrusive visit of a hippopotamus—of which amphibious animals

there are abundance in the river—caused great consternation: Richard screaming, and the Hottentots expending their ball-cartridge as usual.

The two following days were spent in hunting the eland and gemsbok.* The latter, which is doubtless the animal from which the delineations of the fabulous unicorn have descended, is one of the most magnificent antelopes in the universe. Although common in Namaqua-land, it is rare in this part of the country, and we were fortunate in finding three, one of which I succeeded in riding down: nearly, however, sacrificing my best horse in the arduous achievement. The oryx is about the size of an ass, and nearly of the same ground colour, with a black list stripe down the back and on each flank; white legs, variegated with black bands; and a white face, marked with the figure of a black nose-band and head-stall. Its copious black tail literally sweeps the ground: a mane reversed, and a tuft of flowing black hair on the breast, with a pair of straight slender horns (common to both sexes), three feet in length, and ringed at the base, completing the portrait. During the chase, I passed under the noses of three rhinoceroses, which, on my return, I was unable to find. Richardson had fallen in with a troop of five lions, one of which he wounded, but being deserted by the Hottentots, was unable to follow among the brushwood; and my horse was so completely exhausted, that I was obliged to drag him home, carrying the saddle myself.

* *Oryx Capensis*. Delineated in the African Views.

Prodigious swarms of locusts passed overhead to the eastward during the greater part of the day, and were followed by such dense flights of birds as almost to darken the air. The *springhaan-vogel*,* as the latter is called by the colonists, is about the size of a swallow, with numerous speckles like the starling, and is said to subsist almost exclusively upon the destructive insects with which it literally vies in point of numbers. The ravages committed by the locust, whose desolating visits have been the theme of naturalists and historians in all ages, have too probably been witnessed by the majority of my Indian readers; but Africa, more especially the northern parts of it, would appear to be a quarter of the globe even more frequently and more severely subjected to the scourge of their inroads than Asia. Often have the lands on the frontier of the colony been totally laid waste by their migratory swarms, which, as usual, have been followed by all the horrors of famine; whilst to the wandering Bushman, who has neither flocks nor herds to perish for lack of nourishment—no garden nor corn-fields of which to lament the devastation, the intrusion, so appalling to the grazier and agriculturist, proves a source of joy rather than of sorrow. Following up their devouring hosts, he feeds upon them as they advance, and preserving also a large quantity for future emergencies, finds in the insect army a ready and ample compensation for the wild game which has been compelled to abandon the ravaged pastures of the wilderness. Their hereditary enemies are also numerous; almost every animal,

* *Anglicè*, Locust-bird.

domestic as well as wild, contributes to their destruction—fowls, horses, oxen, sheep, and antelopes, alike swallowing them with the greatest avidity.

The night of the 17th was rainy and tempestuous; and the lions, never failing to take advantage of such an opportunity, prowled round the camp, roaring in concert with the sighing of the reeds, which so alarmed the cattle that they thrice broke loose, and were recovered with difficulty. There was nothing, however, to prevent our resuming our journey in the morning, the thirsty earth having completely absorbed the deluge that had fallen. Our road lay across a plain, with isolated groves of acacia, and we frequently passed over a solid pavement of granite. Visiting the scene of the occurrence detailed above, and searching amongst a low belt of wooded hillocks, which skirted a part of the road, I found a fine fat eland, which I drove into the plain, and, assisted by Richardson, brought up to the waggons, and then despatched, the caravan being immediately halted. We frequently afterwards adopted this plan, which saved the trouble of carrying the meat from a distance; and the unfortunate animal once blown, was much more manageable than a Smithfield ox.

Andries having donned his best apparel, here proposed to proceed on horseback to Mosega, in order to apprise the king of our approach—an offer which we gladly accepted. From this point, the summits of distant ranges of hills could be distinguished, across extensive plains covered with grass waving to the breeze, which stretched away to the northward and eastward, far as the eye could

passage in various places, we found that we had ridden completely round the enclosure, to the point at which we had first entered.

In the course of two hours the waggons had reached the termination of the plain, and were beginning to ascend the ridge which bounds the valley of Mosega. We shortly afterwards entered a pass, or gap, which conducted us between two ranges of the Kurricane hills; the slopes on either side were covered with stately trees, from which depended clusters of moss and festoons of various parasitic plants. The ground was broken and stony, and in parts abounded with deep holes. In the act of killing a sassayby, my horse put his feet into one of these, and came down with frightful violence, cutting my knees and elbows to the bone, breaking his own nose, and, what was a far greater misfortune, and one that I had long anticipated, fracturing the stock of my only and especially favourite rifle. I could have wept, if the doing so would have availed any thing. A strip of the sassayby's hide rectified the damage, for the present at least; and having packed the flesh in the waggon, we continued winding among the hills, constantly assured by the guides that the kraal at which they had resolved we should pass the night, was close at hand, but still not reaching it until we had travelled full thirty miles from Mosega, by which time it was fairly dark. At last we perceived fires in the valley beneath us, and soon drew up under the fence of a little village, constructed as usual on a slope.

Scarcely were the oxen unyoked, when the clouds, which had been collecting for some hours, burst at once upon our devoted heads. Deafening claps of thunder peeled above us, preceded by forked and vivid lightning, which cast upon the surrounding landscape a lurid and almost incessant glare. The windows of heaven were literally opened, and a pelting pitiless deluge descended, which in an instant extinguished the fire, and put an end to all culinary operations. We, however, succeeded in obtaining a little milk from the village, and in a few minutes Morpheus strewing his poppies over us, we ceased to trouble our heads about the state of the weather, or our soaking supperless condition.

A tranquil morning succeeded the most tempestuous of nights. The inhabitants of the kraal were anxious that we should shoot a rhinoceros, which they pretended to have seen at no great distance; but although we sacrificed one-half of our raiment in the attempt to oblige them, the animal was no where to be found. The road still wound among the mountains; three hours travelling brought us to a kraal at no great distance from the ancient town of Kurricane, in which Mr. Campbell found the Baharootzis about ten years ago. This once populous city was destroyed by Moselekatse, and the inhabitants scattered in various directions. Here the guides declared it was the king's command that we should tarry until the following day, when he expected to see us. But as the royal lodge was still far distant, we obstinately

insisted upon continuing our journey after breakfast, so as to get clear of the hills in the course of the day; and were accordingly preparing to start when a herald, called, in the Matabili language, *Imbongo*, a proclaimer of the king's titles, suddenly made his appearance outside the kraal, to give us a little insight into his Majesty's biography. Advancing slowly towards the waggons, he opened the exhibition by roaring and charging, in frantic imitation of the king of beasts—then placing his arm before his mouth, and swinging it rapidly in pantomimic representation of the elephant, he threw his trunk above his head and shrilly trumpeted. He next ran on tiptoe, imitating the ostrich; and lastly, humbling himself in the dust, wept like an infant. At each interval of the scene, he recounted the matchless prowess and mighty conquests of his illustrious monarch, and made the hills re-echo with his praise. He was a brawny athletic savage, upwards of six feet in height, naked as he was born. Frenzied by his energetic gesticulations, the perspiration trickled from his greasy brow, and white foam descended in flakes from his distorted mouth, whilst his eye glared with excitement.

The road now became almost impassable—large trees overhung the way, and threatened the destruction of the waggon tents; we proceeded very slowly, and narrowly escaped being upset, the jungle becoming more and more intricate as we advanced. Game-traps and pit-falls were to be seen through every avenue, many of the thorn fences

extending across the path, and impeding the waggons until cut away with the hatchet. A party of six natives had followed our tracks and volunteered to show a giraffe.* I emerged under their guidance from the forest we were threading, into a wide plain, on which I saw, for the first time, the footsteps of four of these gigantic quadrupeds, but no living objects, save a few sassaybys, one of which I foolishly shot, when four of my savages immediately slunk behind to eat him. I was much struck with the *spoor* or track of the cameleopard—it was different from every thing I had seen or imagined it would resemble. The largest impression was eleven inches in length, of parallelogramatic form, tapered at the toe, and rounded at the heel. I felt singular satisfaction in finding myself at length treading on ground imprinted with the recent footsteps of that extraordinary animal.

I had by this time ridden far in advance of the waggons, and as night was fast closing around, I began to be apprehensive that I should have to bivouac in the bush. The savages appeared to contemplate the same contingency, and evinced a vast longing to join their companions, who had wisely remained with the flesh-pots. I gave them by signs to understand that I disapproved of such a measure, and we all pushed on as briskly as possible. A contumacious rhinoceros † was standing directly in our path, and, although hailed repeat-

* *Cameleopardalis Giraffa.*

† *Rhinoceros Africanus.*

} Delineated in the African Views.

edly, refused to make way. There was just light sufficient to admit of my discharging both barrels of my rifle into his unwieldy sides. Sneezing violently, and wheezing, he ran off in the direction we were taking, and presently subsided in the path. We approached him with caution, but he was dead. At the same moment a discharge of musketry, and a bright beacon fire bursting forth, directed our benighted steps to the encampment. It was at the termination of the forest, and not more than two hours' journey from the residence of the king.

of the country, and furnish employment to a considerable portion of his lieges, who are precariously maintained by his bounty, but depend chiefly for support upon their success in hunting. The deaths and casualties which occur amongst the oxen at different out-stations are regularly reported, and we had an opportunity of seeing this frequently done during our visit. Running with all speed to within about fifty yards of the king, a warrior places his arms upon the ground, and assuming a subdued posture, with his head bowed to the dust, crawls within ear-shot, when all those about the royal person exclaim "*Haiyah! Haiyah!*" and the report is made in a raised tone. This done, the soldier remains crouched a few seconds, his eyes bent on the ground, and if the king has no questions to ask, suddenly springs on his feet, exclaiming "*Haiyah!*" and runs back to his arms.

Moselekatse frequently inquired about King William's flocks and herds, asking if they were very extensive, a subject on which we could not enlighten him. He also spoke of our Sovereign's armies. The king's own warriors, who were present, we could not but admire, although the despot described them as young unfleshed soldiers, who had not yet gained a name in arms. They were, generally speaking, tall and handsome; clad with the usual tails, and the addition of two long red feathers in the hair when it was unshorn, or a cluster of variegated white and black feathers from the kingfisher or jay, falling gracefully so as to obscure one eye. They

carried a short thrusting-spear—a club of rhinoceros horn, which is thrown with unerring precision—and an elongated elliptical shield of ox-hide, with the hair displayed. The size of this buckler is regulated by the stature of the warrior, reaching in all cases from the ground to his chin. A stick variously decorated at the ends is secured on the inner side, and two parallel strips of hide, differing in colour from the shield, are so interlaced as to traverse its whole length, imparting a striking effect to the accoutred warrior.

Excepting those individuals of distinction by whom he was generally attended, no subjects, or “dogs,” as he termed them, ever passed the royal person without bending their bodies almost double, preserving that obsequious posture several paces before and after passing. The king seldom moved without half a dozen magnates in his train, the heralds howling at intervals, leaping about in imitation of some wild beast, and loudly praising “the noble elephant.” The usual answer to an order was “*Ya, bo ba*,”—“yes, my father;” and no one quitting or approaching the presence omitted to exclaim “*Hai-yah!*” Any attempt to have taken the king’s portrait openly would probably have been attended with disastrous consequences, drawing being supposed to be connected with witchcraft, but I seized the first opportunity of giving his Majesty a sitting unobserved. I exhibited several drawings of animals, and was surprised to find him so quick of apprehension. He instantly recognized them all, repeat-

ing the Matabili name. He inquired if we did not wish to visit the Great Lake in the interior, which he said we might easily do, as there had been plenty of rain, and he would send a commando to take care of us. This was a very tempting offer, but we replied we were sadly pushed for time, and were afraid of displeasing the white king by overstaying our leave. He rejoined that he would take care and prevent any unpleasant consequences by sending the white king a message about us.

This afternoon he was reclining on Richardson's bed, his little dark eyes moving with restless activity in every direction, when the well-known sound of a box, which had been imprudently opened by the Parsee, drew his attention to the baggage-waggon. He pricked his ears, hastily sprung from the bed, and, before the alarm could be given, had plunged both arms into the bead chest. Never shall I forget the triumphant expression of his face at that moment. The lid having been closed upon his arms, his idols were hidden from his sight, but he consoled himself by feeling them, and conjecturing their colour, grinning the while with extacy, and, if so mild a term can express his manner of asking, *requesting* to have them all. We said that they were all we had left, and that they were brought expressly for him ; but that we must be allowed to keep them until he granted us permission to depart, it being in our country the custom to make a present on taking leave of a great man. Looking eagerly at the beads, he exclaimed "*Mooe, mooe ! monanti,*

hung with festoons of flowering creepers, heightened the effect, screening with their soft and feathery foliage considerable portions of the refreshing sward, across which troops of querulous pintadoes and herds of graceful pallahs* were to be seen hurrying from our approach.

As we threaded the mazes of the parasol-topped acacias, which completely excluded the sun's rays, a peep of the river itself was unexpectedly obtained. A deep and shaded channel, about twenty yards in breadth, with precipitous banks overgrown with reeds, was lined with an unbroken tier of willows. These extended their drooping branches so as nearly to entwine, had they not been forbidden by the force of the crystal current, which swayed them with it as it foamed and bubbled over the pebbly bottom. A plain on the opposite side, bounded by a low range of blue hills, was dotted over with mokaala trees, beneath which troops of gnoos, sassaybys, and hartebeests, were reposing.

We drew up the waggons on a verdant spot on the river bank, at a convenient distance from an extensive kraal constructed on the slope. Although the sun shone, the cold occasioned by a dry cutting wind was scarcely to be endured, even with the assistance of a great coat ; and the inhabitants being clamorous for food, I readily placed myself under the guidance of their chief with ten of his men, and diving into the heart of the extensive groves, soon furnished them with the carcass of a black rhinoceros

* *Antelope Melampus*. Delineated in the African Views.

upon which to whet their appetites. This huge beast crossed the river twice after being mortally wounded at duelling distance ; and I was compelled, cold as it was, to wade after him through water reaching to my middle—following his trail by the blood, until from single drops, the traces became splashes of frothy crimson. Struggling to force his tottering frame through the tangled cover, the wounded monster at length sank upon his knees, another bullet from the grooved bore ending his giant struggles, while he was yet tearing up the ground with his ponderous horn.

CHAPTER XIX.

FROM THE MARIQUA RIVER TO TOLAAN, THE
RESIDENCE OF MOSELEKATSE'S SON.

AT daybreak the following morning, a large party of hungry savages, with four of the Hottentots on horseback, accompanied us across the river in search of elands, which were reported to be numerous in the neighbourhood. We formed a long line, and having passed over a great extent of country, divided into two parties; Richardson keeping to the right, and myself to the left. Beginning to despair of success, I had shot a hartebeest for the savages, when an object which had repeatedly attracted my eye, but which I had as often persuaded myself was nothing more than the branchless stump of some withered tree, suddenly shifted its position, and the next moment I distinctly perceived that singular form, of which the apparition had oftentimes visited my slumbers—but upon whose reality I now gazed for the first time. It passed rapidly among the trees, above the topmost branches of many of which its graceful head nodded like some lofty pine—it was the stately, the long sought giraffe. Putting spurs to my horse, and directing the Hottentots to follow, I presently found myself half choked with excitement, rattling at the heels of the tallest of all

the Mammiferes, whom thus to meet, free on his native plains, has fallen to the lot of few of the votaries of the chase. Sailing before me with incredible velocity, his long swan-like neck keeping time to the eccentric motion of his stilt-like legs—his ample black tail curled above his back, and whisking in ludicrous concert with the rocking of his disproportioned frame, he glided gallantly along “like some tall ship upon the ocean’s bosom,” and seemed to leave whole leagues behind him at each stride. The ground was of the most treacherous description; a rotten black soil overgrown with long coarse grass, which concealed from view innumerable cracks and fissures that momentarily threatened to throw down my horse. For the first five minutes I rather lost than gained ground, and despairing, over such a country, of ever diminishing the distance, or improving my acquaintance with this ogre in seven-league boots, I dismounted, and had the satisfaction of hearing two balls tell roundly upon his plank-like stern. But I might as well have fired at a wall: he neither swerved from his course, nor slackened his pace, and had pushed on so far ahead during the time I was reloading, that after remounting, I had some difficulty in even keeping sight of him amongst the trees. Closing again, however, I repeated the dose on the other quarter, and spurred along my horse, ever and anon sinking to his fetlock; the giraffe now flagging at each stride, until, as I was coming up hand over hand, and success seemed certain, down I came

headlong—my horse having fallen into a pit, and lodged me close to an ostrich's nest, in which the old birds were sitting.

There were no bones broken, but the violence of the shock had caused the lashings of my rifle to give way, and had doubled it in half—the barrels only now hanging to the stock by the trigger guard. Nothing dismayed by this heavy calamity, I remounted my jaded beast, and one more effort brought me ahead of my wearied victim, which stood still and allowed me to approach. In vain I attempted to bind my fractured rifle with a pocket handkerchief, in order to admit of my administering the *coup de grace*—it was so bent that the hammer could not by any means be brought down upon the nipple. In vain I looked around for a stone, and sought in every pocket for my knife, with which to strike the copper cap, and bring about ignition, or hamstring the colossal but harmless animal, by whose side I appeared the veriest pigmy in the creation—alas! I had lent it to the Hottentots to cut off the head of the hartebeest. Vainly did I wait for the tardy and rebellious villains to come to my assistance, making the welkin ring, and my throat tingle, with reiterated shouts—not a soul appeared—and, in a few minutes the giraffe having recovered his wind, and being only slightly wounded in the hind quarters, shuffled his long legs—twisted his tail over his back—walked a few steps—then broke into a gallop, and diving into the mazes of the forest, disappeared from my sight. Disappointed

and annoyed, I returned towards the waggons, now eight miles distant, and on my way overtook the Hottentots, who, smoking their pipes with an air of gentlemanly laziness, were leisurely returning, having come to the conclusion that "Sir could not catch the kameel," for which reason they did not think it worth while to follow as I had directed.

My defeat did not cause me to lose sight of the flesh-pots. Any change from the monotony of an unvaried bread and meat diet being highly agreeable, I went back to the nest of the ostrich with a view of obtaining the eggs. So alarmed were the old birds by my unceremonious intrusion in the morning, that they had not returned. Twenty-three gigantic eggs were laid on the bare ground without either bush or grass to conceal them, or any attempt at a nest beyond a shallow concavity which had been scraped out with the feet. Having broken one, to ascertain if they were worth carrying home, a Hottentot took off his trowsers, in which (the legs being first tied at the lower end,) the eggs were securely packed, and placed on the saddle. Although each of these enormous eggs weighs about three pounds, and is equivalent to twenty-four of the domestic fowls', many of our followers could devour two at a single meal, first mixing the contents, and then broiling them in the shell. When dressed in more orthodox manner, we found them a highly palatable omelette.

Richardson shortly returned, having been engaged in deadly conflict with a rhinoceros. Aroused

from a siesta by the smarting of a gun-shot wound, the infuriated animal had pursued his assailant so closely that it became necessary to discharge the second barrel into his mouth, an operation in the performing which the stock was much disfigured by the animal's horn. I employed the rest of the day in repairing my own weapon with the iron clamp of a box, binding it with a strip of green hide from the carcase of an eland.

There being no practicable road across the Mariqua within several miles of our position, we were compelled, on the 28th, to make one by paring down the steep banks: and even then, experienced great difficulty in towing our heavy vans to the opposite side by the united strength of the teams. The descent was almost perpendicular, requiring both wheels to be locked: the bed of the river, covered with loose stones, was too confined to admit of the oxen acting in concert:—and the current, straightened by the narrowness of the channel, was rapid, and rose to the floors of the waggons.

Shortly after we had crossed, a large mixed herd of sassaybys and quaggas, alarmed by the sudden appearance of our cavalcade, charged past me so close, that one of the latter fell at my feet at each discharge of the rifle. Several savages had followed us to obtain a supply of dried meat and assist in hunting; but although they were greatly delighted at this performance, it was not until an unwieldy white rhinoceros* had bit the dust, that they were

* *Rhinoceros Sinus*. Delineated in the African Views.

perfectly satisfied. Smacking their thick lips, patting their stomachs, and repeatedly exclaiming "*Chikore, Chikore*," they pointed out this huge beast standing stupidly under the shade of a spreading acacia. I crept within thirty yards before firing, but it was not until he had received six two-ounce bullets behind the shoulder that he yielded up the ghost—charging repeatedly, with his snout almost touching the ground, in so clumsy a manner, that it was only necessary to step on one side to be perfectly safe.

This grotesque-looking animal, which in many points bears a ridiculous resemblance to, or rather is a gross caricature upon, the "half reasoning elephant," is upwards of six feet high at the shoulder, its shapeless head exceeding four feet in length. It is the larger, but less ferocious, of the two species of African rhinoceros, neither of which is clad in shell armour like their Asiatic brethren; they have in lieu, tough hides an inch and a half in thickness, of which the whips known at the Cape under the denomination of *Sjamboks*, are usually manufactured. Both have double horns: those of the black species are short, and sometimes nearly of equal length—whilst the anterior horn of the white rhinoceros is upwards of three feet in length, the second being a mere excrescence. These animals may be readily approached within a few yards, against the wind, and being heavy and inert, their attacks are easily avoided.

Rejoining the waggons to breakfast, we found

many savages assembled from neighbouring kraals, clamorous for snuff. One old lady inhaled it in large quantities, and without wasting a single grain, by means of a long tube of wood, the ends of which were respectively applied to her nose and to the back of her hand on which the powder was placed.

The country through which we passed this day was more thickly wooded than any we had seen since leaving Kurrichane: and I for the first time observed several pit-falls constructed for the purpose of taking the rhinoceros. They differed from others in being dug singly instead of in groups—very deep and large—at the extremity of a narrow path cut through the bushes, and fenced outside with thorns—a sharp turn leading directly upon the trap, so that an unwieldy animal, being driven furiously down the avenue, could have no chance of avoiding the snare. Many skulls and bones of these huge beasts were lying at the bottom of the sepulchres that had swallowed them up alive.

After travelling upwards of fifteen miles, and passing three or four very large kraals, we arrived at the Tolaan River, a deep, narrow, and rocky channel, containing several extensive pools—the hollowed banks bearing testimony to the depth and rapidity of the current at certain seasons. The bed was perfectly dry where we crossed, but covered with huge fragments of granite, which threw the waggons from side to side with frightful violence—and, added to the almost perpendicular character of the banks, rendered the passage extremely perilous. We

halted on an isthmus, formed by a double bend of the river; a grove of large acacia trees proving an agreeable shelter, and rendering the spot delightful. Here we were visited by Moselekatse's son, an aristocratic and intelligent lad, fourteen or fifteen years of age. His dress consisted of the usual girdle with long fur streamers, and a chaplet of white beads bound about his forehead, to which were attached three tufts of clipped quills, resembling in size and shape the flower of the African marigold. A lad of his own age attended him. The blood of the despotic sire flowing in the veins of the heir apparent to the throne of the Matabili, his first step was to deprive Mohanycom of a clasp-knife that we had given him, which he immediately hung about his own neck, with a look of absolute superiority hardly to be expected from such a youth.

with his request. Accustomed from childhood to the use of the assagai, or javelin, without which the Matabili never quits his home, they are expert in the destruction of the elephant ; hemming him into a defile, they attack him with great intrepidity, and not unfrequently incur the utmost effects of his rage and fury. Occasionally, also, they assail the rhinoceros, but this inert animal is more usually ensnared in the pitfalls already described, which are generally provided with a sharp stake at the bottom, on which he is impaled.

The Matabili possess no horses ; all those that have been from time to time taken from the Griquas and other tribes, with whom they have been engaged in war, have been carried off by the *distemper*, as it is called, a fatal murrain, which sometimes extends itself to the oxen, over every part of Southern Africa during the early months of the year. The ravages of this disease, which is said to be an affection of the lungs, are supposed to be occasioned by the young grass which springs up after the first rain ; and at these seasons, the colonists who can send their horses into the more elevated districts, are able generally to preserve them.

The attempts of our friends at equitation drill, and horsemanship, were ludicrous and awkward in the extreme. Although active, muscular, and agile in a wonderful degree, they tumbled off the horse as fast as they ascended, notwithstanding that the saddle, bridle, mane, and even tail were unceremoniously pressed into the service.

Although a soldier of fortune who has gained all his glory and power in the field, Moselekatse has now ceased to lead his armies to battle ; but he still honours with his presence the great hunting expeditions which frequently take place. On these occasions he is attended by a retinue of several thousand men, who extend themselves in a circle, enclosing many miles of country, and gradually converging so as to bring incredible numbers of wild animals within a small focus. Still advancing, the ring at length becomes a thick and continuous line of men, hemming in the game on all sides, which, in desperate efforts to escape, displays the most daring and dangerous exhibition of sport that can be conceived. As the scene closes, the spears of the warriors deal death around them, affording a picture thrilling to the sportsman, and striking in the extreme.

The dexterity of the Matabili in the use of the knob-stick is also wonderful: they rarely miss a partridge or a guinea-fowl on the wing, and knock over hares, cats, and other ground game with equal precision. In a nation such as I have described, it will be readily conceived that agriculture is not in high repute, and accordingly, excepting for the grain used in making beer, I saw little attempt at cultivation. A few melons, rather deserving the name of vegetables, were the only fruit we met with, and these I presume are nurtured chiefly for the gourd, which becomes their calabash, or water flagon. We could hear of no funeral ceremonies amongst them.

High and low, their bodies are thrown forth upon the plain, soon after life departs, a prey to wild beasts; the flap of the eagle's wing and the howl of the hyæna being their only death-note. In the Zooloo tribe, however, from which Moselekatse has sprung, some respect is shown to the memory of royalty and persons of high distinction; the defunct dignitary being interred with his head above the ground, within the hut where he has expired or been assassinated. The marriage ceremonies of the Matabili were exceedingly difficult to understand. Acceptance or non-acceptance of a snuff-box on the part of the lady, indicates the success of her suitor, or the contrary: and it would seem that marriage has sometimes altogether been prohibited amongst the Zooloos, or confined to men in advanced life. We were informed that the *issigoko*, or ring, so often alluded to, indicated a married warrior; but to this rule there must be exceptions. Of the population of Moselekatse's empire, I can form no correct estimate. The constant wars in which he is engaged diminished the number of the males, but the women are exceedingly prolific. His standing army of warriors of his own tribe exceeds five thousand men, but numbers of the conquered nations swell his followers to a large amount, and are chiefly employed as guardians of his cattle during the intervals of peace.

On the 29th we took the field, accompanied by the whole of the male inhabitants of three kraals, in addition to those that had accompanied us from

the Mariqua River. The country here is generally undulating, extensive mimosa groves occupying all the valley, as well as the banks of the Tolaan River, which winds amongst them on its way to join the Mariqua. We had not proceeded many hundred yards before our progress was opposed by a rhinoceros, who looked defiance, but took the hints we gave him to get out of the way. Two fat elands had been pointed out at the edge of the grove the moment before, one of which Richardson disposed of with little difficulty, but the other led me through all the intricacies of the grove to a wide plain on the opposite side, immediately on emerging upon which the fugitive was prostrate at my feet in the middle of a troop of giraffes, who stooped their long necks, astounded at the intrusion, and in another moment were sailing away at their utmost speed. To have followed them upon my jaded horse would have been absurd, and I was afterwards unable to find them. Returning to the camp after killing several elands and rhinoceroses, besides other game, which the savages quickly took charge of, I was furiously charged by a herd of horned cattle, and my horse being much exhausted, I had no small difficulty in escaping their persecution. Objecting, I presume, to my garb or complexion, they pertinaciously pursued me through thickets and over ravines, regardless of the loud whistle of the herdsman, to which they are usually very obedient. During the night, our camp was thrown into disorder by the intrusion of a rhinoceros,

which actually stood sometime between the wag-gons.

Several hours' diligent search the next day brought us upon a herd of twelve cameleopards. We pursued them a considerable distance, and repeatedly wounded the largest, a gigantic male, probably eighteen feet in height; but our famished horses falling repeatedly into the numerous holes with which the ground was covered, we at length became convinced of the impossibility of humbling the lofty head of the giraffe, until our steeds should have improved in condition upon the fine pasturage which now abounded. The day was sultry and the glare distressing. To the north-eastward, the distant prospect was bounded by a range of blue mountains which we visited some weeks afterwards; the whole of the extensive plain being sprinkled with huge mokaala trees, mat rushes, and thistles. Large herds of elands were grazing amongst these, the host of savages by which we were attended quickly clearing away the carcasses of those we slew, and then quarrelling for the entrails. I hope my reader has understood that these barbarians generally devour the meat raw, although when at leisure they do not object to its being cooked. They usually seize a piece of the flesh by the teeth, cutting a large mouthful of it with the assagai close to the lips, before masticating it, which they do with a loud sputter and noise. The meal being finished, they never failed to wipe their hands on their bodies, and then being generally gorged, they lay them-

selves down to repose—previously relaxing their leathern girdles, which are so contrived as to be readily expanded according to their girth.

How truly has it been remarked by Captain Owen, that the state of those countries which have had little or no intercourse with civilized nations, is a direct refutation of the theories of poets and philosophers, who would represent the ignorance of the savage as virtuous simplicity—his miserable poverty as frugality and temperance—and his stupid indolence as laudable contempt for wealth; widely different indeed were the facts which came under our observation; and doubtless it will ever be found, that uncultivated man is a compound of treachery, cunning, debauchery, gluttony, and idleness.

As the sun was setting, our friend the rhinoceros imprudently appeared upon the bank of the river within pistol shot. Five balls were immediately lodged in his body, with which he retreated, and was picked up the following morning.

Leaving the Tolaan River, we passed between two ranges of hills, and travelled nearly south-east, over a rugged country, strewn with huge loose masses of stone, and thickly covered with low bush. To the right, extensive stone walls marked the site of a once flourishing Bamaliti town, now destroyed. At noon we unyoked in a well-watered valley, covered with turf and abundantly cultivated. Here 'Unchobe, the captain of an adjacent Matabili kraal, paid us the compliment of climbing into the waggon, and of squatting himself without ceremony upon my

bed, inviting his greasy *vrouw* to do the same. The stench of this worthy couple was quite overpowering, but he was evidently considered by his countrymen as a person of consequence, being loaded with a profusion of beads and ornaments, amongst which we remarked a necklace composed of Spanish dollars, and a medal which had been struck in England in honour of the abolition of slavery. His hair, contrary to the custom of the Matabili, was matted with grease and *sibilo*, and his consort also was decorated with beads of various colours, to the amount of at least thirty pounds weight. In her own person this lady possessed a concentration of ugliness, which would have more than satisfied a score of ordinary females; and it might almost be asserted without fear of contradiction, that a being of more repulsive exterior never disgraced the fair form of humanity. A crowd of women and girls assembled round the waggon, clamorous for snuff and tobacco, and afforded us much amusement by their insatiable curiosity and good humour. The looking-glass, that never-failing source of surprise and delight to uncivilized beings, produced more than its usual effect upon them. Forming a group of merry faces at the end of the waggon, and chattering to each other, they gazed incessantly at their reflected images, trying, by pressing their hands behind the mirror, to discover the cause of such a magical effect; covering their eyes, and peeping askance to see if their double selves imitated the action. Scarcely a less powerful impression was

produced by some of my drawings of wild animals, which I exhibited to them. In India even educated natives are exceedingly slow in recognizing representations of objects, but these unsophisticated damsels instantly acknowledged the likenesses, by pronouncing the name of the quadruped in an animated manner, drawing the attention of their neighbours to the sight. The Matabili females are neither prepossessing nor engaging; they shave their heads in the manner already described, and wear a short leathern petticoat, which in most cases is their only covering, although they occasionally also have a flap of leather suspended from the neck. Their skin, from being constantly lubricated with grease and fat, acquires a shining appearance, and is of a dark brown colour approaching to copper. Both sexes occasionally employ themselves in sewing skins, an operation which is performed by means of a skewer or awl, by which they pierce a hole, and afterwards introduce a thread composed of an animal's sinew, resembling our fiddle-strings. Of this substance, which is also used to string beads upon, they are generally provided with a large supply suspended from the waist. So far as we remarked, the women appeared little oppressed with sensibility, although affectionate to their children; the latter wander almost in a state of perfect nudity until the age of puberty. All classes are equally devoted to tobacco, taken as snuff; and the plant is so precious that it is never used alone, but invariably adulterated with a due admixture of earth or sand.

Late in the afternoon we halted on the banks of the Simalakate, a deep and tranquil stream, margined by reeds and rushes, affording a ready covert for lions, whose fresh marks were every where visible in the neighbourhood. The day had been very sultry, and our two dogs, nearly blind from thirst, ran down the steep bank to the water's edge, into the jaws of an enormous alligator. One of them returned immediately in a state of great alarm. Suddenly a splash was heard, and bubbles of blood rising a minute after, too truly told what had been the fate of his unfortunate comrade. Not content with depriving us of our valued four-footed companion, the alligators quitted their watery homes during the night, and ate up a portion of the leather of the waggon furniture, besides the shoes of our followers. These scaly monsters are very common in many of the African rivers, and this was not the only occasion on which we suffered from their ravages. We frequently killed some of an immense size.

About sunset an unwieldy white rhinoceros approached the waggons, evidently with hostile intentions. There being neither bush nor hollow to conceal my advance, I crawled towards him amongst the grass, and within forty yards fired two balls into him. He started, looked around for some object on which to wreak his vengeance, and actually charged up, with his eye flashing fire and gore streaming from his mouth, to within an arm's length of me. Crouching low, however, I fortunately

cluded his vengeance, and he soon afterwards dropped down dead.

Thus far on our journey we had pursued a partially beaten track, dignified by the Hottentots in colonial phraseology with the name of a road, though since leaving Kurrichane, it had consisted merely of the faint vestiges of the traders' waggons, which "few and far between" had traversed it—and even these could only be discovered by a practised eye. But from our entrance into the hills this morning, all traces had disappeared, nor did we again see the tracks of a waggon for several months, until we had crossed the river Vaal on our return to the colony. Thus left to ourselves, matters resumed a smoother aspect, and the dread of Moselekatse appeared to have forsaken the Hottentots, leaving behind it, like an intermittent fever, an interval of tranquillity, which lasted for some time.

CHAPTER XXII.

RHINOCEROS AND WILD BUFFALO HUNTING
ALONG THE CASHAN MOUNTAINS.

LEAVING the waggons to proceed to the ground where our operations against the elephants were to commence, I went with 'Lingap to the carcass of the antelope I concealed yesterday, near which I killed two females of the same species. I believe I may with safety assert that I am the only European that ever shot a water-buck. This noble antelope is about the size of an ass, and of somewhat browner colour. The hair is coarse, like that of the Indian *Rusa* stag, and in texture resembles split whalebone. The appearance of the male animal is stately; the eyes are large and brilliant; the horns ponderous and beetling, three feet in length, white, ringed, and placed almost perpendicularly on the head, the points being curved to the front. A mane encircles the neck, and an elliptical white band the tail, which is tufted at the extremity. The female is similar, but hornless, and rather smaller. The flesh of both is coarse, and so highly ill savoured that even savages are unable to eat it. On cutting off the head, the effluvia literally drove me from the spot. Mr. Steedman had the merit a few years ago of bringing this antelope under the observation

of the scientific world, and Dr. Smith brought down other two specimens with the late expedition.

On the bank of the river I observed the perfect skeleton of an elephant. Near to it 'Lingap suddenly stopped, and pointing with his assagai to a bush a few yards off, whispered "*Tao*," and I immediately perceived three lionesses asleep. Enscouring himself behind his shield, he made signs to me to fire, which I did into the middle of the party, at the same moment springing behind a tree which completely screened me. Thus unceremoniously awakened, the three ladies broke covert, roaring in concert, and dashed into the thick bushes, while we walked as fast as possible in the opposite direction. In the course of a few minutes we heard several discharges of musketry, and an infuriated rhinoceros, streaming with blood, rushed over the brow of the eminence that we were ascending, and was within pistol shot before we were aware of his approach. No bush presenting itself behind which to hide, I threw my cap at him, and 'Lingap striking his shield and shouting with stentorian lungs, the enraged beast turned off. I saluted him from both barrels, and he was immediately afterwards overturned by a running fire from the Hottentots, every one of whom I now saw had left the waggons at the mercy of the oxen, conduct for which we reprimanded them severely, threatening to withhold further supplies of ammunition.

Three hours' travelling between two ranges of the Cashan mountains, brought us to the Ooli river, a

pretty little stream, upon the further bank of which we halted. A party of savages joined us, having feasted heartily upon the gnoo killed yesterday ; and as we did not require their services, we sent them to eat up the rhinoceros, with injunctions to return in the evening. The banks of the Ooli are precipitous, and clothed with extensive mimosa groves, abounding with wild buffaloes, pallahs, and guinea-fowl.* We made a large bag of the latter, and obtained a supply of ostrich eggs. In order to drive the elephants into the plain, preparatory to hunting them the next day, we set fire to the grass, and moved the camp to a more secure position, where the savages, who had returned, assisted in fortifying our stockade against the lions.

At daybreak the following morning, we crossed an extensive valley which skirts the mountain range, passing the ruins of several stone kraals, which in former times served to confine the cattle of numerous Bechuana tribes then living in peaceful possession of the country. These crumbling memorials now afford evidence of the extent to which this lovely spot was populated before the devastating wars of Moselekatze laid it waste, and indicate also a refinement in the art of building that I had not met with before. Our guides eagerly plucked several plants of tobacco that grew wild about the enclosures, drying them for the manufacture of snuff. Soon afterwards we entered a gorge of the mountains, and began to ascend. The ravages of elephants were here

* *Numida Meleagris.*

still more conspicuous, and footsteps of the preceding day were numerous. We paused on the mountains to admire the stupendous depth and formidable character of the ravines and chasms, which have been scooped out by the mighty torrents of water that roll down during the rainy season, with fury irresistible, uprooting ancient trees, and hurling into the plain below huge masses of rock, which, once put in motion, bound from ledge to ledge until they reach the bottom of the valley. Nearly all the rivers in this part of Africa take their source in the Cashan range. It divides the waters that flow to the eastward into the Mozambique Sea, from those that run to the westward into the Atlantic Ocean; and the country on both sides being abundantly irrigated, is far better calculated both for grazing and cultivation than any part of the district that we found the Matabili occupying. The fear of Dingaan, however, has led them to neglect it, and to establish themselves in a more secure position. A gigantic savage of a subordinate tribe of the Baquaina, a conquered nation to the northward, here accidentally joined us. He was a perfect ogre in dimensions, six feet four inches high, and stout in proportion. From him we learned that there was a large herd of elephants on the opposite side of the mountains, out of which he had speared a young one the day before. We proceeded under his guidance, and threading a pass in the mountains formed by the dry channel of a ravine, through which a waggon might be brought with little difficulty, sat down to breakfast by a re-

freshing mountain rill. A large colony of pig-faced baboons* shortly made their appearance above us, some slowly advancing with an inquisitive look, others deliberately seating themselves on the rocks, as though debating on the propriety of our uncere- monious trespass on their domains. Their inhospitable treatment at length obliging us to make an example, we fired two shots among them. Numbers assembled round the spot where the first had struck, scraping the lead with their nails, and scrutinizing it with ludicrous gestures and grimace. The second, however, knocked over one of their elders, an enormous fellow, who was strutting about erect, laying down the law—and who, judging from his venerable appearance, must have been at least a great-grand-sire. This national calamity caused incredible consternation, and many affecting domestic scenes. The party dispersed in all directions, mothers snatching up their infants, and bearing them in their arms out of the reach of danger with an impulse and action perfectly human.

Conducted by an elephant path, we descended through the forest to a secluded dell on the northern side of the range. Beyond, the whole plain was studded with detached pyramidical stony hills, amongst which we could perceive the extensive remains of cattle enclosures and ruins, similar to those we had passed in the morning, testifying of “cities long gone by.” The tracks of the elephants leading back again to the mountains, we reascended by a

* *Cynocephalus Torcarius*.

steep path considerably to the westward of the defile through which we had come, and, on arriving at the summit, perceived our waggons, like small white specks, in the distant valley. Bare and sterile rocks occupy the highest elevation of these mountains, commanding an extensive view, and forming a strong contrast with the middle and lower regions, so thickly covered with verdure and forests, the latter chiefly occupying the ravines. Having reconnoitered the whole country with a telescope, without being able to discern the animals of which we were in quest, we descended by a steep foot-path, the face of the mountain being strewn with round white pebbles. Near the summit grew a venerable mimosa, which completely overshadowed the path, and a little on one side of it we observed a large heap which had been formed by each passenger contributing one of these pebbles as he passed. Our savages added their mite, simply picking up the nearest, and casting it irreverently towards the hill. This being the only approach to external worship or religious ceremony that we had seen, we naturally became very inquisitive on the subject, but could elicit no satisfactory information. Mohanycom said it was "the king," from which very sapient reply we were left at liberty to conclude, either that the hill was a monument of respect to royalty, or that they had been engaged in an idolatrous rite. The former is the most probable, for, amongst the Matabili, the reigning monarch, whilst he absorbs all their praises, is the only deity. He it is, in the opinion of this

benighted race, that "maketh the rain to fall and the grass to grow, that seeth the evil and the good, and in whose hands are the issues of life and death." They have no idea of a Creator, so far as we could learn, or knowledge of a future state; nor could we ascertain that by the term "king," they ever referred to any being beyond the despot who presides over their mortal destinies.

On reaching the foot of the mountains, we found a portion of the skull of the elephant's calf that our colossal savage friend had destroyed the day before. It was all that the hyænas had left of the little that he had considered too hard for his own digestion. The tracks of the drove had gone eastward over country where we had already hunted, and as it waxed late, we made the best of our way to the camp. I shot two quaggas for our savage allies, who returned during the night laden with flesh, and bringing with them a wild hog* that they had buried in the morning in a porcupine's earth, to which it had been driven by their dogs.

The grass on the opposite side of the mountains having been burnt, we resolved, by the advice of the natives, to skirt them on the south side for a day or two. As soon as it was light, I set out with Mohanycom, and killed a spotted hyæna† that had been attracted with many others by the smell of the pork to our camp. I was glad to have my revenge, for the vagabonds had annoyed our cattle all night long, moaning funereally in concert with the dismal

* *Sus Larvatus.*

† *Hyæna Crocuta.*

yelling of jackals,* and roaring of lions, with whose melody our only surviving dog never failed to chime in. The sole of my shoe coming off, during the hot pursuit of a water-buck, whose leg I had fractured, I had the felicity of completing the animal's destruction barefooted, and afterwards running about two miles over sharp flint-stones to overtake the waggons, which had crossed four inconsiderable mountain streams, and were entering a field of tall reed-grass, that waved above the heads of the oxen. An immense white rhinoceros suddenly started from his slumbers, and rushed furiously at the leading waggon, crushing the dry reeds before him, and alarming the cattle by his loud snorting and hostile demonstrations. A volley, however, cooled his courage, and he retired to a suitable bush, where we despatched him. Three more rhinoceroses were added to the list on our way to the Massellan river, which flowing through the mountains, joins the Lingking, a tributary to the Limpopo.

Although said to be very expert in following the tracks of wild animals, the Hottentots are far less skilful than the Asiatics, and I not unfrequently eclipsed them myself. Piet was the most accomplished in wood-craft, and besides being possessed of considerably more nerve, was the only one of our followers upon whom I could depend for any assistance in the field. The rest were ready enough to go out, that they might obtain a supply of ammunition, and gain a pretext for evading their other

* *Canis Mesomelas*.

duties ; but their natural indolence extending itself even to their recreations, they never hesitated to abandon me at their convenience, in order to divert themselves with the more common species of game, which could be circumvented with little exertion. The savages never accompanied us beyond the carcass of the first large animal slain, upon which having gorged to repletion, they fell fast asleep over the fire.

On the 5th November, we followed the traces of elephants along the side of the mountains for miles, through stupendous forests, all the Hottentots excepting Piet dropping in the rear in succession, either to solace themselves with a pipe, or to expend their ammunition upon ignoble game. Time not permitting us to continue the search, we descended into a valley, bent upon the destruction of a roan antelope,* a large herd of which rare animals were quietly grazing. A pair of white rhinoceroses opposed our descent, and being unwilling to fire at them, we had some trouble in freeing ourselves from their company. A large herd of wilds wine,† or as Indians term it, a *sounder* of hog, carrying their long whip-like tails erect, then passed in order of review, and immediately afterwards two bull buffaloes were observed within pistol shot. It was a perfect panorama of game ; I had with great difficulty restrained Piet from firing, and was almost within reach of the bucks, when a Hottentot sud-

* *Aigocerus Equina*. Delineated in the African Views.

† *Phascochærus Africanus*.

denly discharging his gun put every thing to flight. The buffaloes passed me quite close on their way to the hills. I fractured the hind leg of the largest, and mounting my horse, closed with him immediately, and after two gallant charges performed upon three legs, he fell, never to rise again. This was a noble specimen of the African buffalo, standing sixteen hands and-a half at the shoulder. His ponderous horns measured four feet from tip to tip, and like a mass of rock, overshadowing his small sinister grey eyes, imparted to his countenance the most cunning, gloomy, and vindictive expression. The savages instantly set to work upon the carcass with their teeth and assagais—Piet providing himself with portions of the hide for shoe soles, and of the flesh, which, though coarse, is a tolerable imitation of beef.

From the summit of a hill which commanded an extensive prospect over a straggling forest, I shortly afterwards perceived a large herd of buffaloes, quietly chewing the cud beneath an umbrageous tree. Creeping close upon them, I killed a bull with a single ball, but the confused echo reverberating among the mountains alarming the survivors, about fifty in number, they dashed panic-stricken from their concealment, ignorant whence the sound proceeded; and every thing yielding to their giant strength, I narrowly escaped being trampled under-foot in their progress. We moved five miles to the eastward in the afternoon, stopping to take up the head of the buffalo, which Andries could with diffi-

culty lift upon the waggon. Myriads of vultures, and the clouds of smoke which arose from the fires of the giant and his associates, directed us to the spot. In commemoration, I presume, of the exploits of Guy Fawkes, they had kindled a bonfire, which bid fair to destroy all the grass in the country, the flames fanned by the wind already beginning to ascend the hills. Nothing can be conceived more horribly disgusting than the appearance presented by the savages who, gorged to the throat, and besmeared with blood, grease, and filth from the entrails, sat nodding torpidly round the remains of the carcass, sucking marrow from the bones, whilst their lean famished curs were regaling themselves upon the garbage. Every bush was garnished with flaps of meat, and every man had turned beef butcher, whilst swollen vultures* were perched upon the adjacent trees, and others yet ungorged were inhaling the odours that arose.

The sun set upon us with every demonstration of rain. The night was dark and gusty. Thunder pealing amongst the mountains, and vivid flashes of forked lightning presaged a coming storm; fortunately, however, it expended its fury in the hills, and only visited us with a few drops. Before going to bed, I had been gazing for hours upon the singular and sublime effect produced by the extensive and rapidly spreading combustion of the grass. A strong south-easterly wind setting towards the hills,

* *Vultus Fulvus*, and *Vultus Auricularis*; White and Black Aas-vogel of the Cape Colonists.

was driving the devouring element, with a loud crackling noise, up the steep grassy sides, in long red lines, which extending for miles, swept along the heights with devastating fury, brilliantly illuminating the landscape, and threatening to denude the whole country of its vegetation. Suddenly the storm burst above the scene. The wind immediately hushed ; a death-like stillness succeeded to the crackling of the flames. Every spark of the conflagration was extinguished in an instant by the deluge that descended, and the Egyptian-like darkness of the night was unbroken even by a solitary star.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ELEPHANT HUNTING IN THE CASHAN
MOUNTAINS.

BEFORE daybreak the following morning, it was discovered that the oxen, having been alarmed by lions, had made their escape from the pound. A party was despatched in pursuit of them, and we proceeded into the hills to look for buffaloes. The thunder-storm having purified the atmosphere, rendered the weather delightfully cool, and a deep wooded defile which had not been approached by the conflagration of the day before, was filled with game that had fled before the flames. A rhinoceros was killed almost immediately, and before we had reloaded, a noble herd of near one hundred and fifty buffaloes was perceived on a slope overhanging a sedgy stream. Having crept within five-and-twenty yards, we despatched two bulls before the alarm was spread. Crashing through the forest, they overturned decayed trees in their route, and swept along the brow of the opposite hill in fearful confusion, squeezed together in a compact phalanx, and raising an incredible cloud of dust to mark their course. We mounted our horses, and after sticking some time in the treacherous mud of the rivulet, gained the opposite bank, and brought two

more to bay, which were despatched after several charges. Our savage friends, still torpid from their yesterday's feast, had not made their appearance; we therefore despatched Claas, after breakfast was over, to bring in some marrow-bones, in the act of collecting which delicacies, he was put to flight by a lion that jumped out of a bush close to him, and did not leave him time to think of his gun. After some hours, however, he mustered courage to proceed with a large party to recover it.

Early in the afternoon the Hottentots returned with the oxen, and we proceeded without loss of time to the eastward, following the course of the mountains through very high grass, and passing between two conical hills of singular appearance, which stood like sentinels on either hand; after crossing six inconsiderable streams, we with some difficulty gained the vicinity of a remarkably abrupt opening in the range, which through a telescope appeared to afford a practicable road to the northward. Both our wag-gons stuck fast in the Sant river, and were with difficulty extricated by the united efforts of the teams. The heat was intense, not a breath stirred, and heavy black clouds fast collecting bade us prepare for a deluge. We therefore formed the camp in a sheltered and elevated position, under the lee of a high stone enclosure, which only required the entrance to be closed with bushes to make a secure pound for the cattle. Scarcely were these arrangements completed, when a stream of liquid fire ran along the ground, and a deafening thunder-clap

nished with elephantine tusks—or those ponderous feet with which “the formidable and ferocious quadruped” is wont “to trample down whole fields of corn during a single night.” Defenceless and inoffensive, his shapeless carcass is but feebly supported upon short and disproportioned legs, and his belly almost trailing upon the ground, he may not inaptly be likened to an overgrown “prize pig.” The colour is pinkish brown, clouded and freckled with a darker tint. Of many that we shot, the largest measured less than five feet at the shoulder; and the reality falling so lamentably short of the monstrous conception I had formed, the “river horse,” or “sea cow,”* was the first and indeed the only South African quadruped in which I felt disappointed.

The country now literally presented the appearance of a menagerie; the host of rhinoceroses in particular, that daily exhibited themselves, almost exceeding belief. Whilst the camp was being formed, an ugly head might be seen protruded from every bush, and the possession of the ground was often stoutly disputed. In the field, these animals lost no opportunity of rendering themselves obnoxious—frequently charging at my elbow, when in the act of drawing the trigger at some other object—and pursuing our horses with indefatigable and ludicrous industry, carrying their noses close

* The Hippopotamus is termed by the colonists *Zekoe*, or Sea Cow, the least applicable designation perhaps, not excepting that of the *River Horse*, that could have been conferred.

to the ground, moving with a mincing gait, which ill-beseemed so ungainly and ponderous a quadruped, and uttering, the while, a sound between a grunt and a smothered whistle. In removing the horn with an axe, the brain was discovered, seated in a cavity below it, at the very extremity of the snout—a phenomenon in the idiosyncrasy of this animal, which may in some measure account for its want of intelligence and piggish obstinacy; as well as for the extraordinary acuteness of smell with which it is endowed. Irascible beyond all other quadrupeds, the African rhinoceros appears subject even to unprovoked paroxysms of reckless fury; but the sphere of vision is so exceedingly limited, that its attacks, although sudden and impetuous, are easily eluded, and a shot behind the shoulder, discharged from the distance of twenty or thirty yards, generally proves fatal.

On our way from the waggons to a hill, not half a mile distant, we counted no less than twenty-two of the white species of rhinoceros, and were compelled in self-defence to slaughter four. On another occasion, I was besieged in a bush by three at once, and had no little difficulty in beating off the assailants. Wild buffaloes, too, might often be seen from the waggons. Riding up a narrow defile, flanked by steep banks, I one morning found myself suddenly confronted with the van of a vast troop of these formidable animals, which were ascending from the opposite side—their malevolent grey eyes scowling beneath a threatening brow. Unable to

CHAPTER XXVII.

HUNTING THE CAMELEOPARD, OR GIRAFFE.

To the sportsman, the most thrilling passage in my adventures is now to be recounted. In my own breast, it awakens a renewal of past impressions, more lively than any written description can render intelligible; and far abler pens than mine, dipped in more glowing tints, would still fall short of the reality, and leave much to be supplied by the imagination. Three hundred gigantic elephants, browsing in majestic tranquillity amidst the wild magnificence of an African landscape, and a wide stretching plain, darkened, far as the eye can reach, with a moving phalanx of gnoos and quaggas, whose numbers literally baffle computation, are sights but rarely to be witnessed; but who amongst our brother Nimrods shall hear of riding familiarly by the side of a troop of colossal giraffes, and not feel his spirit stirred within him? He that would behold so marvellous a sight must leave the haunts of man, and dive, as we did, into pathless wilds, traversed only by the brute creation—into wide wastes, where the grim lion prowls, monarch of all he surveys, and where the gaunt hyæna and wild dog fearlessly pursue their prey.

Many days had now elapsed since we had even seen the cameleopard—and then only in small num-

bers, and under the most unfavourable circumstances. The blood coursed through my veins like quicksilver, therefore, as on the morning of the 19th, from the back of *Breslar*, my most trusty steed, with a firm wooded plain before me, I counted thirty-two of these animals, industriously stretching their peacock necks to crop the tiny leaves which fluttered above their heads, in a mimosa grove that beautified the scenery. They were within a hundred yards of me, but having previously determined to try the *boarding* system, I reserved my fire. Although I had taken the field expressly to look for giraffes, and had put four of the Hottentots on horseback, all excepting Piet had as usual slipped off unperceived in pursuit of a troop of koodoos. Our stealthy approach was soon opposed by an ill-tempered rhinoceros, which, with her ugly calf, stood directly in the path; and the twinkling of her bright little eyes, accompanied by a restless rolling of the body, giving earnest of her intention to charge, I directed Piet to salute her with a broadside, at the same moment putting spurs to my horse. At the report of the gun, and the sudden clattering of hoofs, away bounded the giraffes in grotesque confusion, clearing the ground by a succession of frog-like hops, and soon leaving me far in the rear. Twice were their towering forms concealed from view by a park of trees, which we entered almost at the same instant; and twice, on emerging from the labyrinth, did I perceive them tilting over an eminence immeasurably in advance. A white turban, that I

wore round my hunting cap, being dragged off by a projecting bough, was instantly charged by three rhinoceroses ; and looking over my shoulder, I could see them long afterwards fagging themselves to overtake me. In the course of five minutes, the fugitives arrived at a small river, the treacherous sands of which receiving their long legs, their flight was greatly retarded ; and after floundering to the opposite side, and scrambling to the top of the bank, I perceived that their race was run. Patting the steaming neck of my good steed, I urged him again to his utmost, and instantly found myself by the side of the herd. The stately bull, being readily distinguishable from the rest by his dark chesnut robe, and superior stature, I applied the muzzle of my rifle behind his dappled shoulder, with the right hand, and drew both triggers ; but he still continued to shuffle along, and being afraid of losing him, should I dismount, among the extensive mimosa groves, with which the landscape was now obscured, I sat in my saddle, loading and firing behind the elbow, and then placing myself across his path, until, the tears trickling from his full brilliant eye, his lofty frame began to totter, and at the seventeenth discharge from the deadly grooved bore, bowing his graceful head from the skies, his proud form was prostrate in the dust. Never shall I forget the tingling excitement of that moment ! Alone, in the wild wood, I hurraed with bursting exultation, and unsaddling my steed, sank exhausted beside the noble prize I had won.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

RETURN TO THE SOUTHWARD FROM THE TROPIC
OF CAPRICORN.

ALTHOUGH hunting the cameleopard we continued to advance to the northward, by marches of ten and fifteen miles a day, over extensive rugged tracts, strewed with numerous stone walls, once thronged by thousands, but now presenting no vestige of inhabitants. Wherever we turned, the hand of the destroyer was apparent :

—————" The locusts' wasting swarm,
Which mightiest nations dread,"

is not more destructive to vegetation than he has been to the population of this section of Southern Africa. We frequently travelled for days without meeting a solitary human being—occasionally only falling in with the small and starving remnant of some pastoral tribe of Bechuana, that had been plundered by Moselekatse's warriors. These famished wretches, some of whom had been herding the king's cattle during the absence of Kalipi's commando, hovered around us, disputing with vultures and hyænas the carcasses we left, which they devoured with such brutish avidity as scarcely to leave a bone to attest the slaughter.

The moon was full on the night of the 23rd, and

a spotted, or “laughing” hyæna, superior in size to the largest mastiff, was shot through the head, by the clear light it afforded, as he was in the act of skulking under the sheep-pen. The great muscular power of this animal, which is called by the colonists “the wolf,” renders it exceedingly formidable; the difficulty of determining the sex being the most remarkable feature it possesses. On the 27th we again encamped on the banks of the Limpopo, in which a buffalo was shot as it was swimming across. Few other sporting incidents occurred of an extraordinary character, except the death of a very large black rhinoceros, which, being pent up in an old stone enclosure, forming a *cul de sac*, the entrance to which I closed up, received no less than twenty-seven shots before it fell. A troop of brindled gnoos, being pursued by another of these animals, dashed into a narrow defile in the hills, at the outlet of which, having stationed myself, I disposed of two with each barrel.

As we approached the junction of the Mariqua with the Limpopo, in about latitude $24^{\circ} 10'$, bushes usurped the place of trees; the country daily became less inviting, and the game in consequence less and less abundant, although a supply was still always to be obtained. The few inhabitants that we now met with refused to hold any communication with our escort—seating themselves at a distance, and declining the proffered snuff-box. These men were the wreck of the Bakone or Baquaina, once the most powerful and prosperous of the Bechuana

nations. Conquered by Moselekatse, however and Caama,* their king, having been slain, they fled to this part of the country, and are now reduced to an extremity of misery and want, little short of actual starvation—the emaciated forms of many too plainly testifying to their precarious means of subsistence.

The obtaining of information relative to the country and inhabitants had uniformly been attended with much difficulty; but our guides, who had evidently received instructions from the king to entice us as far as possible from the scene of contention with the emigrant boors, in the hope of eventually inducing us to return by Kapain, instead of by the Likwa, being now apprized of our intention of discontinuing our journey northward, brought seven savages who volunteered information regarding the *great inland lake*, and even proposed, for a suitable remuneration in beads, to accompany us thither as guides. They stated that this vast freshwater sea, towards the discovery of which geographical attention has long been directed, and the existence of which was first fully established by Dr. Smith's expedition, might easily be reached from our present position in *two moons*, through the country of the Bukaws; a small intervening desert tract being passable at this season, the recent heavy rains having filled the pools upon which the supply of water depends. Nothing could be more tantalizing than this proposal, made at a time when

* King Hartebeest!

our oxen were in superb condition, our supplies abundant, and our followers in better heart than usual ; but knowing from experience how little reliance can be placed upon a savage's estimate of distance, we were not without reasonable apprehensions of being detained beyond the Bukaws until after next rains, and thus exceeding our leave. All circumstances but this, conspiring to favour both the successful continuance of our journey, and the discovery of the " great water,"—it was with feelings of no ordinary regret and disappointment, that we felt ourselves thus compelled to return, at the very moment when a prize of such value appeared actually within our grasp.

Although not more than fifty miles to the south of the tropic of Capricorn, we did not find the heat by any means oppressive ; a circumstance which was of course in a great measure to be attributed to the prevalence of rain. After the thunder-storm which usually ushered in the night, the mornings had been always remarkably cool ; and even during the middle of the day the range of the thermometer in the waggons had rarely exceeded 85°. Before turning to the southward, we crossed the Limpopo, and made an excursion of forty miles to the north-eastward, on horseback, with a design of determining the course assumed by this interesting feature in the geography of Southern Africa. So far as it was possible to comprehend the descriptions given by savages, which are not the clearest in the world, this river, after being joined by another, called the

Clabatz, or Balapatse, which rises in the Mural mountains, turns suddenly through that chain, and flows into the unexplored country of the Babariri, towards Delagoa, distant probably about three hundred and fifty miles. This account is in a great measure confirmed by information given me by David Hume, an exceedingly clear-headed, observing traveller, who has made several enterprising journeys into the interior, in quest of the gold-mines said to exist in the country of the Bakalaka. By whomsoever it may eventually be traced, therefore, the Limpopo will in all probability be found identical with the *Manice*, the river which was surveyed by Captain Owen, from its embouchure in Delagoa Bay, as far as latitude $25^{\circ} 21'$ south, and longitude $32^{\circ} 52'$ east.

For the satisfaction of those of my readers who take an interest in the geography of the African quarter of the globe, it may be proper here to state, that with a view of ascertaining our position on the map, I adopted the very simple, but excellent method pursued by Burchell, during his travels. The exact distance passed over each day was calculated by a table, computed from the circumference of the larger waggon-wheel, multiplied by the number of revolutions performed per minute; the time that the vehicle was actually in motion being carefully noted by an inside passenger, as well as the course by compass. This plan, with occasional correction from the now broken pocket sextant, used on a sheet of pasteboard by way of false horizon, had

determined our position in so level a country with sufficient accuracy. Rude as it may appear, few inland portions of this vast continent have been surveyed by a more scientific process; and during the early part of our journey, especially while travelling between known points, I had frequent opportunities of satisfying myself of its practical correctness.

Judging, therefore, from a minute daily register kept throughout our journey, we must now have been about the tropic, our distance to the north of the known latitude of Mosega being upwards of one hundred and fifty miles. We retraced our steps on the 1st December, the previous night having been passed at a kraal of starving Baquaina, for whom we had killed a rhinoceros. Fearful indeed was the uproar that attended the division of the carcass—a large party of ladies, possessing remarkably slender wardrobes, rushing forth like witches, and leaving nothing in the course of a few hours but a pool of blood.

Thus far we had been treated by the guides with tolerable civility. No sooner, however, had we turned to the southward than they began to evince the greatest impatience at their detention, complaining loudly of their limited rations of snuff and bread, and insolently urging our return to the Cashan mountains with all expedition, upon the plea that the king would be displeased at our making so long a stay; his Majesty having, they said, instructed them that we were only to hunt during one moon.

Knowing this to be false, we continued hunting giraffes, and paid little attention to their remonstrances; but on arriving opposite the scene of the Griqua defeat, we were joined, on the 6th, by four Matabili warriors from Kapain, who stated that they had been following our waggon tracks, by command of the king, for ten days past, in order peremptorily to direct our return to the Cashan mountains, where we should be met by our friend Um'Nombate, who had a further message to communicate. This mysterious intimation had the effect of conjuring back the dormant apprehensions of the Hottentots: Andries, as usual, gloomily persisting that the king had never intended to let us go through by the Vaal River, and was now about to recal the permission we had extorted. Although we stoutly combated these dismal forebodings, there really appeared to be some grounds for entertaining them—it being impossible to imagine why else the minister should have been sent. The result of our deliberations, however, was, that nothing short of main force should induce us to relinquish the permission we had purchased; and that having successfully struggled thus far with difficulties and annoyances, we would now

“Not bate a jot
Of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer
Right onwards.”

With this determination we hurried our advance towards a large Matabili kraal, which, situated to the north of the Cashan range, among a group of

pyramidical hills, had been selected as the point of rendezvous with the ambassador. On arriving there, however, crowds of both sexes issuing forth, we were informed that he was still a day's journey in advance; and were thus provokingly hurried from place to place, until late on the evening of the 8th, when we reached a small collection of deserted wigwams, on the Sant river, immediately under the mountains. But even here we were destined to experience further disappointment and suspense—the catiff guides declaring that the object of our search, who was still not forthcoming, must have been *asleep* in one of the kraals that we had passed in the morning! Suspecting the story of his advent to be a hoax, invented merely to annoy us, we now distinctly intimated to the messengers, that if the minister did not make his appearance in the course of the following forenoon, we should not wait for him; and with this understanding they left the waggons, accompanied by the guides, faithfully promising to return with the great man in the morning.

Genus. RHINOCEROS.

11. *Rhinoceros Africanus*. The African Rhinoceros. Rhinaster of the Cape Colonists. Chukuroo of the Matabili.

Upwards of six feet high at the shoulder, and above thirteen feet in extreme length. Body very robust and clumsy. Legs short and small, each with three toes. Head long and large. Eyes small and lateral. Snout hooked, and resembling that of a tortoise: armed with two horns* on the muzzle, placed one behind the other; the anterior usually from one to two feet long; the posterior generally small, but capricious—in some specimens attaining the same, or nearly the same length. Ears pointed and approximated, placed on the neck. Skin naked; very thick, rugous, and knotty, but without plaits or folds. Colour brownish black. Tail about two feet long, laterally compressed at the end, and furnished with a few bristles.

Female similar, but smaller. Mammæ two. Very common in the interior.

12. *Rhinoceros Sinusus*. The White Rhinoceros. Witte Rhinaster of the Cape Colonists. Chicore of the Matabili and Bechuana.

Six feet six or eight inches high at the shoulder, and above fourteen in extreme length. Head four feet long. Muzzle truncated, upwards of eighteen inches in breadth; furnished with two horns placed one behind the other as in the last species; the anterior robust at the base, tapering, and about three feet in length; the posterior a mere excrescence, five or six inches long. Ears pointed and approximated, placed on the neck. A square hump immediately behind them. Eyes very diminutive and lateral. Legs short and straight, terminating in three toes. Tail about two feet long, compressed and bristled at the extremity. Hide very rough and knotty, extremely thick, with folds and plaits about the neck. Colour varying; usually dirty brownish white.

Female similar, but smaller. Mammæ two. Very common in the interior, after passing Kurrichane.

* The horns of no two specimens of this animal that came under my observation were exactly the same. Disease or accident not unfrequently renders the anterior horn the shorter of the two.

Genus. Equus.

13. *Equus Zebra*. The Zebra. Wilde Paard of the Cape Colonists.

About four feet high at the shoulder, and eight feet two inches in extreme length. Shape light and symmetrical. Legs very slender. Feet small, terminating in a solid hoof. Head light and bony. Ears and tail asinine; the latter blackish, about sixteen inches long, and tufted at the extremity. Ground colour of the hair white. The whole of the body, neck, head, and legs, covered with narrow black bands, placed wider or closer together; the upper ones connected with the dorsal line, but not extending over the belly, or inside of thighs. Mane erect and bushy, alternately banded white and black. Two transverse black bands on the ears. Brown stripes on the face terminating in a bay nose. A bare spot a little above the knee on all four of the legs.

Female with two inguinal mammæ.

Gregarious. Found within the Cape Colony. Inhabits mountainous regions only.

14. *Equus Burchellii*. Burchell's Zebra. Bonti Quagga of the Cape Colonists. Peechey of the Bechuana and Matabili.

Four feet six inches high at the shoulder, and eight feet six inches in extreme length. Body round. Legs robust. Crest arched and surmounted by a standing mane, five inches high, banded, black and white. Ears and tail equine; the latter thirty-five inches long, flowing and white. Muzzle black. General ground colour of the head, neck, and body, sienna, capriciously banded with black and deep brown transverse stripes forming various figures, and unconnected with the dorsal line, which widens towards the croup. Belly and legs pure white. Bare spots above the knees on the inside.

Female an udder with four mammæ.

Inhabits the plains of the interior beyond the Gareep in immense herds.

15. *Equus Quagga*. The Quagga. Quagga of the Cape Colonists.

About the height of Burchell's Zebra, but of a more robust form. Ears and tail equine, as in the preceding; the former