

A Hunter's Wanderings in Africa

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BEING

A NARRATIVE OF NINE YEARS SPENT AMONGST THE
GAME OF THE FAR INTERIOR OF SOUTH AFRICA

CONTAINING ACCOUNTS OF EXPLORATIONS BEYOND THE ZAMBESI,
ON THE RIVER CHOBE, AND IN THE MATABELE AND MASHUNA COUNTRIES,
WITH FULL NOTES UPON THE NATURAL HISTORY AND PRESENT
DISTRIBUTION OF ALL THE LARGE MAMMALIA



BY

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with an escort from Lobengula to visit the Victoria Falls on the Zambesi. This gentleman gained a great reputation amongst the Kafirs as a successful hunter, and is, I believe, considered by them to be the best runner that has ever visited the country. He himself was, I think, much pleased with his trip, and delighted with the beauty and grandeur of the Falls.

After leaving Gubulawayo, we struck across country to the north-west, passing Bukwela's kraal, where we hired Kafirs for the trip, and crossing the river Gwai (tobacco) soon afterwards. The bed of the river was here composed of fine white sand, with very little water apparent above the surface, and was about 150 yards in breadth. After holding the same course for three days, we cut on to the hunting road leading from John Lee's farm at Mengwe to the valley of Linqāsi, which for several years past has been a regular camping place for hunters during the winter season. The following day we caught up to a party of Dutch hunters from Mengwe, consisting of two sons and a son-in-law of John Lee's, and the Potgieter family, whom I had met a few months before at Sebakwe.

About a fortnight from our start we reached Linqāsi, a long narrow valley, presenting the appearance of an ancient river bed, with several fine deep holes of water along its course, which, being fed by springs, never dry up. On the evening of our arrival, as, riding in front of the waggons, we emerged from the forest into the open valley, we came in sight of a black rhinoceros coming down to the water, which we shot. Two days later we killed two fine bull elephants within ten miles of our camp. The Linqāsi valley, which was as far as we dared venture

soon reached our nearest prize, and, leaving half the Kafirs here, I told them to be quick and chop out the tusks and satisfy their hunger, and then come on to me and the rest of the boys at the other elephant.

On reaching the carcase of the latter, I found he had indeed a splendid pair of tusks—the upper one, as he lay on his side, protruding 4 feet beyond the lip, measuring (after being chopped out) $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet in length, and weighing 84 lbs.,¹ the lower tusk being almost exactly similar, but weighing 2 lbs. less; the other had also a very fine pair of tusks, weighing 59 lbs. each; and after I had put a few square inches of elephant's heart out of sight (I am afraid to say how many), I felt at peace with all mankind, and well repaid for all the little inconveniences I had gone through on the previous day.

In about an hour and a half the boys came up with the first pair of tusks, and as much fat and meat as they could carry. As our two were also ready, we soon had the meat tied up, and, after telling off two boys to carry each of the big tusks by turns, once more turned our faces homewards, striking a bee-line straight across country. On our way we came across a great deal of game, including several rhinoceroses, both of the black and white species, two large herds of buffalo, and many zebras, impalas, wild pigs, etc.; we saw, however, no fresh elephant spoor.

At length, just at sundown, we reached the large drinking-place near our skerm, and while walking along the path leading from it to our camp, met two black rhinoceroses, which, however, luckily for themselves I think (for I had my old elephant gun in my

¹ These tusks afterwards lost 10 lbs. each in weight in drying out.

hands), did not think proper to molest us, but after eyeing us intently for a few seconds, and giving vent to a few snorts, wheeled round, and took themselves off at a quick trot. In a few minutes I once more reached my headquarters, and as the two boys I had left behind had cooked me a very nice stew of elephant's heart and rice, and had a kettle of tea ready, it need scarcely be added that it was not long before I was enjoying a delicious meal, bringing an appetite to bear upon it that none but a hunter can appreciate. The boys being too much knocked up with the last two days' work to care to dance, though their appetites were unimpaired, I was soon fast asleep beneath my kaross, dreaming of sport, such as one never meets with save in the happy hunting-grounds of the imagination.

For another fortnight, I remained in the same skerm or camp already described, hunting through the surrounding country in every direction with good success, and bagging three more fine bull elephants and five cows, two of the latter carrying remarkably fine tusks. As I then had more ivory than my eleven Kafirs could carry at once, I determined to get it to the waggons at Linqāsi as quickly as possible, and so set to work to transport it thither by instalments. Towards the end of the month I got the whole lot as far as Dett, a long open valley in the midst of thick goussy forests, with a spongy, marshy bottom, which is distant from two to three days' walk from Linqāsi. Here I met my Hottentot waggon-driver John, and two Kafirs, who were on their way from our headquarters with powder and lead to W.,¹ my partner, of whom I had heard nothing for more than two months. They told me

¹ George Wood.

that W.'s skerm was two days' hard walk from here, in the hills, and a little to the west of where I had been hunting. On hearing this news I at once gave up all idea of returning to the waggons, and so, after burying the ivory in a large hole dug in the soft sand to a depth which I thought would impede any hyænas from smelling it out, and, by scratching up the sand, exposing it to view, I started back for the hills with my guides.

On the morning of the third day, we reached W.'s skerm, perched like a crow's nest on the top of a hill, past the foot of which ran a broad sand river, with a thin stream of water meandering down it like a silver wire. The day after leaving Dett, we met a large party of Matabele on their way from their own country, near the sources of the Gwai, to collect salt in a pan amongst the hills; they all carried war shields, and woe betide any unfortunate Amachankas they might happen to come across; if they escaped being murdered, they would be infallibly stripped of all their possessions by these unscrupulous marauders. Some of these men knew me, and were very civil. After half an hour's conversation, I continued my journey, several of them following me in the hope that before long I might shoot them some large animal; and, as luck would have it, before we had proceeded a mile we came upon a black rhinoceros lying asleep, which John and I disposed of without much trouble. I only took the meat from the ribs for myself, leaving the remainder of the carcase for the Matabele, who, I think I may safely say, did not leave much of it for the vultures and hyænas.

On my arrival at the skerm, I found that W. was away hunting, but late in the evening he returned, and was very much surprised to find me awaiting

him. We had both been lucky since our last meeting, and, over a substantial meal of rhinoceros liver and rice and a kettle of coffee, we sat till far into the night recounting to one another our various hunting experiences during the past two months. W.'s plan of procedure was a little different from mine; he had given ten of his Kafirs guns, and they all hunted with him, firing away at the elephants indiscriminately. As a natural consequence, after every successful hunt there were several claimants for some of the elephants shot, and it was often difficult to decide who amongst them had really given the disputed animal the first bullet. Three of my Kafirs also carried guns, but I usually sent them out hunting alone; not that I cared much about their disputing among themselves, but I very much object to any of my servants claiming an elephant which I think I have killed myself. W., however, having probably shot more elephants than any Englishman living, was past this vanity, and only thought of how to secure the greatest quantity of ivory.

The day following my arrival, we left the skerm, and went away to the north-west, leaving two Kafirs behind to look after the ivory and baggage. We remained away five days, but only shot two elephant cows. The hills here (close to the Zambesi) were higher and more rugged and precipitous than those I had been hunting amongst farther to the eastward, and in many of the deep narrow ravines the scenery was most striking. Though the sides of these kloofs in some cases were almost perpendicular, several trees had nevertheless found a hold for their roots in the interstices of the rocks, and amongst them the fantastic-shaped baobabs, with their long leafless limbs, looked particularly strange.

At first sight, many of these cliffs appeared inaccessible to any animal but a baboon; but we found that the elephants had made regular paths up and down many of them, which paths zigzagged backwards and forwards like a road down a Swiss mountain, and in some places great blocks of stone had been forced aside by the efforts of these bulky engineers, in order to render their footing the more secure.

That elephants can climb up and down very steep places is, however, well known; but it may be new to some readers to hear that rhinoceroses are almost equally active. I have seen many of the black and one of the white species scramble with marvellous activity and sureness of foot up and down the most steep and stony hills that it is possible to imagine.

One evening, as W. and I were sitting on the summit of one of these steep hills, our attention was directed by the Kafirs to a grey shapeless mass lying amongst some large blocks of stone, near the top of a high ridge just opposite to us. Opinions differed as to whether it was an old buffalo bull, a rhinoceros, or a rock; but, as we watched, the last idea was quickly dispelled, for the hitherto motionless mass raised itself slowly, and, gaining a standing position, displayed to our view the well-known contour of a black rhinoceros. Being out of meat, this was just the thing we were looking for; so we at once made preparations to circumvent him. But, although the wind was favourable, the hill-side was bare and stony, and, despite our utmost pains to tread softly, he heard us coming, and made off before we were well within range. We both fired at once, W.'s six-to-the-pound bullet catching the animal low down in the fore-leg, and mine hitting him in the ribs, but

too far back. At first he kept along the ridge, and W.'s ball having slightly crippled him, we managed to get right above him with our second guns; on seeing which he turned, and went at a gallop down the almost precipitous face of the hill, picking his steps amongst the great blocks of stone in an extraordinary manner. Before he had got far, however, W. fired from above, when, the animal's fore-legs seeming to give way, he pitched on his head, and turned the fairest and most astonishing somersault I ever saw. He was up again in a second, but I was close behind, and when on reaching the level ground he turned along the face of the hill and offered me a good chance, I fired at his shoulder, making a bad but very lucky shot, as I broke his neck, and of course killed him on the spot. We found that the bullet W. had fired from above had caught him in the neck, about a foot behind the head; it must have just grazed the vertebral column, paralysing the animal for an instant, which accounted for the wonderful manner in which he had rolled head over heels down the hill.

On reaching W.'s skerm once more, we held a council of war, and determined that, as the elephants seemed to have left this part of the country, and neither of us had been to the waggons to see how our property was being looked after for more than two months, we ought to go thither at once. Accordingly, the next morning we started eastwards, and late in the afternoon reached the skerm which had been my headquarters during the best part of August, and which we had no difficulty in finding, as it was situated at the foot of a peculiarly-shaped hill. Strange, we had been hunting within a day's journey of one another for so long, and yet neither of us had

had any idea of the other's whereabouts. As soon as we reached the skerm, I took my two gun-carriers and a couple more boys with axes, and went to chop out a bees' nest I knew of close by. It proved to be a well-stocked one, and we got from it, I should think, from 15 to 20 lbs. of splendid honey. Whilst we were engaged chopping, one of my Kafirs who had wandered some distance away, came running up, saying there was a white rhinoceros lying asleep not a hundred yards off. Thinking the noise must have already disturbed it, I did not consider it worth while to go and see; but, when we had taken all the honey, I thought I would just walk to where it had been, and was very much surprised to find the confiding beast still lying fast asleep. It must have been deaf, for we had been making a tremendous noise and chatter for the last half-hour, certainly not more than 150 yards away from it. I walked close up to it and whistled, when the sleepy animal stood up, and I shot it behind the shoulder; it ran about 100 yards and then stopped, and a second bullet in the shoulder killed it. It was a cow, and very fat; so, leaving some Kafirs to cut her up, I returned straight to the skerm with the honey, and sent more boys to help carry the meat.

By this time it was quite dark, and W. was waiting for me to begin supper. Whilst chopping out the honey I had heard two shots, and found on inquiry that they had been fired by my comrade, who had killed a black rhinoceros down near the elephants' drinking-place. That night, two lions drank at the small hole of water close to our skerm, and then walked up a path just behind us, roaring terrifically the while. They were so near, that some of the Kafirs got uneasy, and threw stumps of fire-

wood and shouted at them. On going down to the large pools of water the next morning, we found that no elephants had drunk there during the night ; but, in order to give them another chance, instead of pushing on at once with the ivory to the waggons, we made a round amongst the hills to the north-west, returning to our skerm again at nightfall. As soon as the day dawned, we sent a couple of Kafirs down to the water to see if any elephants had been there, and on their return in a quarter of an hour with the joyful tidings that a fine troop of bulls had drunk during the night, we at once started in pursuit. We found they had come down from the right-hand side, and returned on their own spoor, feeding along nicely as they went, so that we were in great hopes of overtaking them without much difficulty. Our confidence, however, we soon found was misplaced, for after a time they had ceased to feed, and, turning back towards the N.E., had taken to a path, along which they had walked in single file and at a quick pace, as if making for some stronghold in the hills. Hour after hour we trudged on, over rugged stony hills, and across open grassy valleys, scattered over which grew clumps of the soft-leaved machabel trees, or rather bushes ; but, though the leaves and bark of this tree form a favourite food of elephants, those we were pursuing had turned neither to the right nor the left to pluck a single frond.

After mid-day, the aspect of the country changed, and we entered upon a series of ravines covered with dense, scrubby bush. Unfortunately the grass had here been burnt off, but for which circumstance the elephants, I feel sure, would have halted for their mid-day sleep. In one of these thickets we ran on to three black rhinoceroses (*R. bicornis*) lying asleep.

blood ; but after following it for a very short distance, it became obliterated by the tracks of a large part of the herd, which had turned back and crossed over it during the hunt. All our efforts to get it away were fruitless, and at last, when the sun went down, we were obliged to give it up and make for the nearest water hole, which we reached after about an hour and a half's walk in the dark. A herd of buffaloes had been there just before us, and trampled and wallowed in the shallow pool, till they had rendered the water quite undrinkable to any one but a thirsty hunter. Here we slept. We were without food or blankets, though for my part I did not think this much of a hardship, as I was too fatigued to feel hungry, and the nights were getting warm. The cut on my cheek was about two inches long, and deep, extending up under the cheek bone. Having neither needles nor thread to sew it up, and it being in an impossible place to bandage, there was nothing for it but to leave it to nature. Luckily, being in perfect health, it healed up straight away by first intention, in spite of being left exposed to the sun ; and though I still bear a scar, which serves as a souvenir of the most unfortunate and eventful day's elephant-shooting in which I ever took part, I was able to shoot again in about ten days' time. My shoulder was much bruised, and I must have ruptured some of the fibres of the muscles, for it was more than three months before I could hold my arm straight out at right angles to my body, though I could shoot with it perfectly well all the time.

Want of food forced us to abandon the search for the wounded elephant—which in such bush, and without spoor, would have been rather like looking for a needle in a bundle of hay—so we made our

way next day down the valley to our camp. In the afternoon, W. went out and shot a black rhinoceros, whilst I occupied myself in picking out the little black ends of the wait-a-bit thorns which were pretty evenly distributed over my person. The next day, we again made a start for Linqāsi, and, whilst crossing a large open glade, came across a herd of buffaloes, two of which W. shot. One of these was a very fat cow, and the meat delicious, being tender and juicy, and fully equal to the best beef. That evening we slept at Chuma-Malisse.

On the following morning, about two hours after leaving camp, and whilst passing through a belt of young forest, we had the luck to run right into a herd of elephant cows. It was a strong temptation to shoot, but I judged it better not to reopen the wound on my cheek, and so only ran with W., and helped to load and hand him the guns. He killed three, and our Hottentot boy also bagged one, besides a small thing that one of the Kafirs knocked over, which ought never to have been shot, and which I do not count. On sighting these elephants, we had put down the water calabashes, and laid a large thin sheet of meat, about a yard square, cut from the ribs of one of the buffaloes, on a patch of grass, and in their flight they ran right over these things, breaking two calabashes, whilst one of them trod fair in the centre of the piece of buffalo meat, which was only about half an inch thick, and stamped a hole through it just the size of her foot. That same day we chopped out all the tusks, and the next evening reached Linqāsi, where we found our bullocks, horses, dogs, and indeed everything else at the waggons, safe and in good order.

The three following days I remained in the same camp, hunting in the neighbouring bush with the very worst of luck, for though each day I got the fresh spoor of elephants, on all three occasions they winded me and decamped before I caught sight of them. I never saw such a place as this bush for the wind, which never seemed to blow for two minutes together from the same quarter. This I attributed to the different currents of air that were continually blowing over the open marshes on the other side of the river, and seemed to form eddies in the jungle. It was most disheartening, as in elephant-hunting on foot everything depends upon keeping below the wind of these keen-scented brutes, and here this was almost impossible. My only consolation lay in the hope that as the season advanced, and the weather became hotter, the winds would drop and the air become stiller. On each of these three days we encountered more than one large herd of buffaloes, but having meat I never fired a shot at them for fear of disturbing more valuable game. On the Thursday night a troop of elephant cows came down to drink close to our camp, trumpeting and splashing about in the water for a long time. The spoor of this troop I followed the next day, though unsuccessfully, as I have before said.

On Saturday morning (July 11), after burying the tusks of the bull I had shot the preceding Monday, being tired of my camp and the bad luck I had met with there, I packed up all my traps and made another start up the river. Whilst crossing Pookoo Flats early in the morning, I saw a black rhinoceros cow with a small calf not much larger than a pig, that, on getting our wind, at once made for the jungle at a quick trot, besides some koodoos.

the grass, reeds, and worst of all, the sharp edges of the shells of a sort of fresh-water mussel. Had I had a small accurately-sighted Express rifle the result would no doubt have been very different; but it must be remembered that my whole armoury consisted of only two four-bore elephant guns, and a ten-bore rifle, with scarcely any grooving, and for which I had only spherical balls, which latter was the one I used on this occasion. However, though unsuccessful so far, I resolved that I would not quit the Chobe without obtaining a good specimen of the head of one of these rare and beautiful antelopes. When first they make up their minds to run, these lechwe buck stretch out their noses, laying their horns flat along their backs, and trot like an eland, but on being pressed break into a springing gallop, now and then bounding high into the air like impalas. Even when in water up to their necks they do not swim, but get along by a succession of bounds with great rapidity, making a tremendous splashing and general commotion. Of course when the water becomes too deep for them to bottom they are forced to swim, which they do well and strongly, though not as fast as the natives can paddle, and in the rainy season when the country is flooded great numbers are driven into deep water and speared before they can again reach the shallows where they can touch ground. It is owing to their being thus driven about and harried by the natives in canoes, I suspect, that they are so wild, as I don't think they can often have heard the sound of a gun before.

On the following day, Monday, July 12, I again parted from Mr. Garden, and started away westwards, along the southern bank of the river, and soon finding traces of elephants, turned off to make a reconnaissance in the neighbouring jungles, but, though

rousing two herds of buffaloes, and a black rhinoceros with a small calf, I did not chance across any fresh spoor of the animals of which I was in search, so, returning to the water in the evening, I slept at a distance of only three or four miles from where I had camped the preceding night. The next day I made a new start, determined to keep straight on till sundown, unless I crossed the spoor of elephants that had drunk during the night, but the sun was scarcely an hour high, when, as I walked in front, my eyes were gladdened by the sight of the fresh footprints of a fine bull, and another half-grown; on walking a little way into the jungle on their track, so as to examine the spoor minutely, and settle about how long ago they had passed, we soon found, from the freshness of the leaves, broken twigs, and other indications, that they must have drunk just about daybreak, and as they were feeding along in fancied security, I felt sure they were still not far distant. The bull, we found by the spoor, had something the matter (probably an old bullet) with his right fore-leg, which he brought round at each step with a sweep, making a semicircular furrow in the sand. It seemed as though we might be led to a considerable distance from the river, so I told all my Kafirs except my two gun-carriers to run back and fill the calabashes with water as quickly as possible, and then with my two attendants commenced strolling quietly along the spoor, which was thickly strewn with leaves and chewed bark, expecting the boys to catch us up in a few minutes; suddenly, as I was thus sauntering along with my eyes bent on the ground, never dreaming of anything of the sort, a slight rustling in front of me caused me to look up, and there, not twenty yards off, stood a fine bull elephant quietly

carry the meat, and I feel sure that not one scrap of meat or bone of those two elephants was left to fatten the vultures or hyænas.

Upon questioning the men as to whether there were any elephants farther up the river, they informed me that about two days' journey to the westward, and not far from one of their towns, a large troop had been drinking for some time past, and offered to take me, my Kafirs, and all my belongings in their canoes to the town in question, in order that I might shoot them some more meat. Of course I was delighted at the idea, and on the following morning, five canoes having been told off for the accommodation of myself and party, I once more made a start up river. My two Bushmen, Hartebeest and Arotsy, walked along the bank, so as not to miss the spoor of any elephants that might have drunk during the night, but I went by canoe and enjoyed a delicious rest. I really did enjoy this canoe trip most thoroughly, and as we glided over the clear and rippling water, fanned by a cooling breeze and free from the persecution of the detestable "tsetse" flies, my mind recalled many a pleasant day spent in times gone by upon the quiet reaches of my dear old native Thames. Every now and then, however, a herd of graceful lechwe antelope, plunging through the shallow water, the blowing and bellowing of hippopotami, and now and then a hideous crocodile, lying like a log upon the sand, broke the association of ideas, and recalled the fact that many a mile of land and water lay between me and the old country.

Late on Saturday afternoon we reached the Makuba village, for which we had been making. It was situated upon an island at a spot where the river opens out into a sort of marshy lake, and about 400

yards from the mainland. In the evening I shot a lechwe antelope, a young ram, and the first of this species I had yet bagged. This I gave to the villagers, who in return gave me some splendid fish, a sort of perch, just caught or speared. These fried in elephant's fat were delicious and a real treat.

Shortly after dark we heard a black rhinoceros drinking on the mainland, and snorting violently every now and then. After a bit he retired and all was once more still; not for long, however, for it was soon evident, from the splashing and occasional trumpeting, that a large herd of elephants were drinking and bathing themselves just opposite our island, and not 500 yards from us.

The next day was Sunday, but believing that "the better the day, the better the deed," I followed the elephants, and came up to them about mid-day. There were no bulls amongst them, but some of the cows had fine long white tusks. Suffice it to say that I killed four of them, every scrap of meat and all the bones of which were carried by the Makubas to their island during the three following days. This meat was a godsend to these poor people, who, being refugees from the Barotse valley, had no corn, and were only eking out a precarious subsistence on fish, palm nuts, and some aquatic plants. The feasting and dancing that were carried on night after night as long as I remained here, vouched for the capacity of their stomachs, the lightness of their hearts, and the untiring vigour of their limbs—both legs and arms; and I think that the advent of the fair-skinned stranger, who supplied them with such an abundance of meat, and what they prize above all earthly blessings, fat, will ever be remembered by them with feelings of unmitigated pleasure.

rapidly in our direction, and a few minutes later their occupants were standing beside us. All four of these men I at once recognised, as they had followed me for meat during my preceding trip up the river in July. One of them had only one eye, the other, with the greater part of the flesh from that side of his face, having, according to him, been torn out, when a boy, by a hyæna. I should say he had not been a beauty to begin with, and his misfortune had certainly not added to his attractions. These men expressed themselves as very pleased to see me again, saying that all the people in the marsh were on the look-out for me, as they had finished the meat of the seven elephants I had shot them last month, and hoped I had now returned to again make them happy with a fresh abundance of fat flesh.

After a few inquiries as to the whereabouts of the elephants, they informed me that there were some on an island far out in the marsh, to which they wished to take me; and as nothing pleased me better than the prospect of penetrating into this interesting and unknown country, I at once acceded to their proposal, and agreed to wait where I was till the following day, when they promised to return with a sufficient number of canoes and men to carry my whole party and traps across the marsh. That night I retired to rest with a light heart, building all sorts of castles in the air. A troop of lions passed up the river soon after the moon rose, roaring magnificently, at one time being not a hundred yards from our camp.

A little before noon the following day my one-eyed friend and his comrades arrived, bringing with them thirteen canoes, each manned by two natives. They said that to get to the island where the

elephants were we should have to coast along the bank to a place they named (near which I had shot the four cows in the preceding month) before striking out into the marsh ; so, distributing my Kafirs and baggage amongst them, we started. The canoe prepared for me was the largest of all, and in the centre of it were a mat and small wooden stool for me to sit on. After punting along for an hour or so, one of the Kafirs espied a black rhinoceros standing amongst some bushes close to the water's edge ; so, having as yet no meat for my large party, I at once landed with my elephant gun and walked up to him. When within about twenty yards the animal either saw or heard something, for, wheeling round with a snort, he faced us, holding his head high in the air ; the next instant a four-ounce ball, catching him in the throat and probably injuring his vertebræ, knocked him down, and he lay sprawling about, raising his head continually and beating it violently against the ground, whilst snorting loudly. Taking my small ten-bore rifle, I ran up, and watching my opportunity, put a ball just behind his ear, which, penetrating to his narrow brain, at once put a stop to his struggles. On examination, he proved to be a black rhinoceros bull, that is, one with the long prehensile lip, of the so-called variety *R. keitloa*. The horns, which I still have in my possession, measured 2 ft. 1 in. the anterior one, and 1 ft. 4 in. the posterior. He proved to be as lean as a crow, yet my hungry followers cut up and stowed away in their canoes every fraction of the meat in a marvellously short space of time.

In the afternoon my boatmen paddled me cleverly behind a patch of reeds close up to a herd of

ashore, and set to work to form a camp under some fine forest trees, about twenty yards from the water's edge. Towards evening I took my ten-bore rifle, and, accompanied by some natives, went for a stroll, hoping to fall in with a pig, or perhaps get a shot at a lechwe near the water.

The soil of this island, which must have been several miles in circumference, consisted of fine white sand, into which one sank ankle-deep at every step. It was for the most part quite open, with patches of palm (growing principally round ant-heaps) and clumps of large forest trees scattered here and there. We had gone about a mile from camp without seeing anything, when we suddenly came upon a small troop of tsessebe antelopes, accompanied by one old blue wildebeest bull, feeding out in the middle of a large opening. Wishing to secure the tail of the wildebeest with which to keep off the tsetse flies, etc., I fired, but missed him. After reloading, I was again running on to try for another shot, when, looking to my right, I saw a black rhinoceros cow with a half-grown calf coming towards me. On this I relinquished the pursuit of the wildebeest, and resolved to try and bag the larger animal, regretting that I had not brought my big-bore elephant gun with me. The rhinoceros had evidently been disturbed by the shot, but did not know quite what to make of it. She was about 200 yards off, and coming straight on towards me at a quick walk, and turning uneasily from side to side at every few steps ; so I stood behind a little cluster of palm bushes and waited for her. She came steadily on, followed by her calf, until within about fifty yards, when she must have got a whiff of my wind ; for, wheeling suddenly, she started off at right angles at a quick trot. Taking her just behind the shoulder, I

buffaloes came up the Daka river to within a few miles of our camp, thirteen of which we shot, Wood, whom I had met, killing seven, and I myself six. It must not be thought that these buffaloes were shot for sport, as we killed so many in order to dry a supply of meat for use along the road to Tati for ourselves, Kafirs, and dogs. Setting two Kafirs to each buffalo, we had all of them skinned and cut up, and although a good deal of the meat was rather high when we got it to the waggons, it was none the less palatable to the dogs and Kafirs on that account.

At length, on the 8th of November, George Wood trekked out with the waggons along the regular caravan road, whilst I, taking my own Kafirs and Bushmen with me, and a few trading goods, started for Wankie's Town, which is situated about eighty miles to the east of the Victoria Falls, from which place I intended to cut right across country to Thamma-setsi, where I had arranged with my companion that he should wait for me with the waggons. This plan was carried out without any mishap, and I again reached the waggons on November 20, bringing with me over 300 lbs. of fine ivory that I had bought from Wankie. On my return journey I saw several enormous herds of buffaloes, and a good many rhinoceroses of both the black and white species, but not a single fresh elephant spoor. The following day we shot a black rhinoceros bull close to the waggons. Some days later, on reaching the Mitengue river, we met Mr. Schinderhutte, a man who had been many years trading and hunting in the interior, and was then on his way with a load of goods to Westbeech, at Pandamatenka. This was the third occasion upon which I had met Schinderhutte; he was a fine,

travelling through an uninhabited country, quite bare of game, though the pasture was good, and it being the rainy season, there was water in every pool. On the morning of the seventh day after leaving the Zambesi, we came upon a small herd of seven buffaloes, which unfortunately got our wind, and ran. I did my best to run up to them, but found myself terribly weak, and never managed to get within shot. In the evening, whilst the Banyais were making a camp, I went out again to look for game, and just at dusk saw a wild pig looking at me from the other side of a broad ravine. I fired at once, and knocked him over, but he recovered himself, and got into a patch of long grass. Following on the blood spoor for about fifty yards, we came upon him lying down. He at once jumped up, and made off again towards the dry rivulet at the bottom of the ravine. Before he reached it, however, my gun-carrier, "April," caught up to him, and stabbed him in the back with an assegai, when he turned round, grunting loudly. April got such a fright that he let go the assegai, and left it sticking in the pig's back, and before I reached the scene of action the brute had made good his escape into a large hole in the bank of the gully, assegai and all. Much disgusted, I went and inspected the hole; but, not liking to creep into it, and being unable to persuade any of the Kafirs to do so, returned to camp. During the night, lions roared loudly close to us. Early the following morning, April and some of the Banyais returned to see if they could not get the pig out of the hole, and soon appeared with the meat of the same. They told me they found it lying dead just outside the hole, April's assegai still sticking in its back.

April 15th.—Reached a Banyai town on the river

Gweo, a tributary of the Umay. It was only with the greatest trouble that I had persuaded the Banyai carriers to come thus far, and farther they would not go. We were now in a pretty mess. Owen could not walk a step; we had only five boys, three of them mere striplings, and, worst of all, but two and a half pieces of calico left. I myself also was very weak and ill; bad food, over-fatigue, and worry of mind that prevented my sleeping at night, had worn me to a shadow; and I now got an attack of "shakes" (ague) every other day. However, there was but one thing for it, which was for me to push on to the Matabele country, and send help back to Owen as quickly as possible. In my weak state I almost despaired of being able to tramp so far; but it was our only chance, for there was nothing left with which to pay men to carry Owen any farther, and we were still a long, long way from the Matabele country—ten days' hard walking for a healthy Kafir, across a very rough, broken country. Arrangements were soon made. I left Franz, my Basuto servant, to look after Owen, and a small boy whom Mendonça had given me to fetch wood and water, and took the other five Kafirs with me. I only took nine yards of calico with me, leaving the two whole pieces and all the beads with Owen; which was a sufficient supply to enable him, with a little economy, to buy food enough to last at least six weeks, by which time, if I lived, help would have reached him from the Matabele.

April 17th.—Said good-bye to Owen, and started southwards. After a very tiring walk through a rough mountainous country, I reached a small town on the banks of the river Sengwe, where I slept. Near here there is a remarkable mountain standing by

itself, and crowned with a mass of red-coloured rock, a landmark for miles round. This I called Mount Cromwell, in honour of him whom I consider the greatest of England's rulers. The following morning I shot an impala ram; this meat was a godsend, and no doubt put a little strength into my wearied limbs.

April 22nd.—Reached Inyungo, Inyoga's town. This place was well known to me by name. It is from here that Lobengula, king of the Amandebele, receives an annual tribute of tobacco. Here I met a young fellow from the Matabele country. He told me that five days' hard walking would bring me to Inyati. Old Inyoga is a fine-looking old Banyai, but very poor, not having a single goat in his possession. He told me that the Matabele took everything from him. I wonder he does not retreat to the farther side of the Zambesi. I tried to get a guide to the Matabele from him, as the intervening country is uninhabited; but, as I could not show them what I promised to pay, they would not trust me, so there was nothing for it but to strike straight through the country in a southerly direction. Gave away my last yard of calico, buying mealie meal for the road. Between the river Gweo, where I left Owen, and Inyoga's town, there were a great many buffaloes and black rhinoceroses. I never saw one actually; but I came across any amount of fresh spoor. An elephant spoor I did not see, old or new, between Inyoga's and the Zambesi.

April 24th.—Left Inyoga's for the Matabele, the last stage in my journey. I soon got into a mass of rough, rugged, steep hills, dreadful walking for a man in my weak condition. Saw a black rhinoceros cow with a small calf; but they got our wind, and I did not get a chance of a shot.

to the camp at Umfulé upon business, whilst Clarkson and I took a ride to the eastward, but saw no fresh elephant spoor.

September 16th.—Messrs. Wood and Cross having returned the previous evening, we determined, since we were getting no more fresh spoor, to inspan the waggons and trek over to the river Umbila. This we did, and reached the river by mid-day, where we were occupied during the afternoon in making a fresh camp. About here we saw a great deal of fresh rhinoceros spoor, principally that of the white species.

This evening we determined to leave the waggons the next morning, and take a round on horseback for ten days or so towards the north-east, as Wood, who had hunted this country years before, thought we should in all probability find elephants in the thick groves of mahobo-hobo (a tree bearing a very nice fruit, and only found, so far as I am aware, in the Mashuna country) which lie between the Umsengaisi and Hanyane rivers. Our preparations were soon made, and by an hour after daylight, on September 17, we were on the march, taking with us corn for the horses, and provisions for ourselves to last a fortnight.

We had scarcely forded the Umbila river when we crossed the fresh spoor of five or six elephant bulls, which we at once followed. It was about mid-day, and we were fast gaining upon them, when they took a turn and made straight for the "fly." As we had been all the morning upon the edge of the infested district, we now kept a sharp look-out, and it was not long before a "fly" was caught upon Clarkson's horse, which we killed, and then again took up the spoor, as Wood said the "fly" was not

very numerous about here ; and as we expected soon to come up with the elephants, we thought we might venture to follow them a little farther, keeping, of course, a sharp look-out all the time on our horses. It was shortly after this that the elephants we were following led us to the spoor of another large troop, also fresh. For some time the spoors were mixed, then that of the bulls turned to the left and again made for the "fly." Upon seeing this we resolved to leave the bulls—though we would far rather have shot them—and take the spoor of the troop, as it was leading us in a direction that would soon take us beyond the limit of the "fly." Shortly after making this turn we rode on to a black rhinoceros, the first animal we had seen that day. He honoured us with a hard stare, and then wheeling round trotted off, and disappeared in the bushes.

About 1 P.M. we off-saddled our horses for the first time that day, and had scarcely done so when three heavy shots, fired almost simultaneously, fell in the direction the spoor was taking, and at no great distance. Making sure it was some of Wood's Kafir hunters firing at the elephants we were following, we saddled up again, and cantered along the spoor, but, from the direction it took, soon found that the shots we had heard could not have been fired at the elephants. We now stuck to the spoor without a halt till about an hour and a half before sundown, when, fearing that it would get dark before we came up with them, we took our guns and galloped on, for the spoor was now becoming fresher every instant, and as the elephants were feeding nicely, easy to follow, by the machabel leaves alone, that lay scattered along the track.

I may here say that I was this day mounted on an

thinking that the meat, at any rate, would come in handy, I shot the largest amongst them, a heifer with tusks about 5 lbs. in weight. I then left them and rode back to the waggons, intensely disgusted at the bad luck I had met with, for the veldt was very open, and had the elephants only been worth shooting, I might have had a good and remunerative day's sport with them.

The next day we rode across to the Umbila river to look for elephant spoor, but saw none. Whilst on our way back I shot a sable antelope cow, with a very fine pair of horns.

On the 11th, as we were getting no fresh elephant spoor about the Umsengaisi, we inspanned the waggon and started back for the Umfule. We had just outspanned late in the afternoon, and were getting things square for the night, when the cattle-herd ran up to tell us that two rhinoceroses were coming down to water a few hundred yards up the valley. We seized our rifles, and ran down to try and get a shot at them, and soon espied two black rhinoceroses just emerging from the bush on their way to the water. The bush was very open, and the sharp-scented though short-sighted beasts seemed suspicious of danger; however, taking advantage of the cover afforded by a very small bush, I managed to approach within seventy yards of the cow, which was then standing broadside to me. I was just raising my rifle to fire when she must have made me out, for she wheeled round and faced towards me. Seeing that there was no time to be lost, I gave her a shot between the neck and the shoulder, which brought her to her knees, but she recovered herself at once, and wheeling round, was just starting off when Clarkson gave her another shot in the ribs that again

knocked her down. She was up again in an instant, however, and galloped off after the other as if unhurt. They both of them soon settled into a trot, but a rhinoceros trots as fast as an eland, and although we ran as hard as we could, we did not get near them. The dogs having heard the shots, now came rushing past, and were soon barking and jumping up at the ears of the rhinoceroses. However, they pursued the even tenor of their way, never stopping to fight with the dogs, and having crossed the open valley, were soon lost to our sight in the bush beyond.

Early the following morning we again inspanned and trekked on, but as I thought that there was a chance of finding the rhinoceros cow we had wounded the previous evening, I saddled up my horse and rode on her spoor, but after following her for several miles, and finding she had never once stopped, I gave it up and returned to the waggon, which I found outspanned. I will take this opportunity of remarking that I have found it, as a rule, of very little use following either elephants or rhinoceroses, however desperately they may have been wounded, unless, indeed, one of their legs has been injured; for these beasts, unlike other animals, do not go and stand, but walk on and on until they drop. This, I say, I have found, after considerable experience, to be the rule, though, of course, it is not an invariable one. On reaching the waggon I found that Clarkson had just shot an eland bull which he had seen as he was trekking.

Early on October 15 we reached our camp on the Umfule, and found that our friends Cross, Goulden, and Wood were still away hunting near Intaba Insimbi, between the Umfule and Zweswe rivers.

On the 16th, taking with us provisions and corn

for the horses sufficient to last ten days, Clarkson and I again left camp, and following the waggon-track, rode towards Zweswe, intending to hunt for a few days amongst the Machabi hills, through which that river runs. That day we only got as far as the Griqua encampment, and on the way Clarkson shot a sable antelope. The Griquas, we found, had shot no elephants during the last month. The following day we rode on again, still keeping the waggon-track, and crossing the Zweswe river, reached Gwāzān early in the afternoon. Here we set to work to make a rude sort of hut that would protect us from the weather, as we intended to remain where we were for several days, and a heavy thunderstorm was brewing, which, indeed, burst upon us before our hut was completed. Early the following day we were again in the saddle, and leaving all our baggage at the skerm, in charge of a couple of boys, took a round through the hills to the south of the waggon-road. These hills are clothed for the most part with forests of the machabel tree, the favourite food of the elephant; but, though several herds of these animals had been about during the last month, we did not find any very fresh spoor. At last we emerged from the hills, and rode out upon the open treeless downs which lie between this range and Intaba Insimbi. Here we came across a black rhinoceros cow, right in the open plain, and, as we wanted meat for ourselves and our boys, shot her, though not without a hard gallop, for these unwieldy-looking beasts run at a pace that, with their short legs and heavy bodies, one would not believe them capable of. She was in excellent condition for a black one, and we got some very good meat from her ribs, which was probably due to the fact that she was within a few days of calving.

Two days later we were again riding amongst the hills, and had just entered a large opening, when I espied two elands, a bull and a cow, standing in the shade of a small tree about 400 yards distant. Clarkson at once went for the bull, and as he was much better mounted than I, I just followed at a canter, not caring to distress my horse needlessly. The elands stood watching my friend's approach until he was within 200 yards of them, then, his real character seeming all at once to strike them, they wheeled suddenly round, and made off at a hard trot. This, however, availed them but little, for soon the pursuing steed, now urged to his utmost speed, dashed up to within fifty yards of them. Then, indeed, they broke into a gallop, each one taking his own course, and my friend followed the bull. I had a fine view of the chase, for, as the eland ran in a semicircle, I was never very far distant. The bull ran hard for his life, as most elands in this part of Africa do, when not overburdened with fat. For quite a mile, I think, he never broke from his gallop, and as long as he galloped my friend could not pass him, but just kept about twenty or thirty yards behind him. Then, however, his race was run, for directly he broke into a trot, the longer-winded horse dashed past him. Clarkson did not at once shoot him, but brought him back at a hard trot—the foam flying in long silver threads from his mouth, as he turned his head alternately from side to side—to where I was standing, near the steep bank of a deep gully, in which there were several pools of water; then cantering past him, and pulling in his horse, he fired from the saddle as the eland trotted broadside past him; but the horse must have moved slightly as he fired, for the bullet, instead of inflicting a mortal

wound, struck the animal too high up just in front of the loins, and must have just grazed the backbone, for he fell to the shot as if struck by lightning.

As we had but very few cartridges left, and feared to run short in case of meeting with elephants, and as the eland appeared unable to rise, we did not at once despatch him, but waited for the Kafirs to come up and administer the *coup de grâce* with their assegais. In the meantime, we led the horses down to the nearest pool of water, about 100 yards distant, and after off-saddling, knee-haltered them. The Kafirs were now close up, so calling to them to come on quickly, Clarkson and I walked back to the eland. As we neared him he made another violent and almost successful effort to rise, so I turned again and shouted to the Kafirs to bring an assegai. Three of them ran up, but not having heard what I said, and seeing the eland lying flat on the ground, apparently dead, they had only brought knives to cut up the meat. As they rushed up, the eland made another tremendous effort, and this time gained his feet. For an instant he stood still, then staggered forwards, gaining strength at every step, till he was soon going off at a trot that a footman stood no chance of keeping up with. Having neither rifle nor assegai, we were unable to hinder his escape in any way. Clarkson and the boys ran after him, shouting to the other Kafirs to bring a rifle; whilst I, thinking they would never get up to him on foot, ran back to the water, hastily caught and saddled up Clarkson's horse, and then seizing my rifle, galloped at full speed in the direction taken by the eland, that was now out of sight in a patch of scattered bush. At length I caught sight of him, and galloping in front, endeavoured to turn

him back again to the water, but do what I might he would not swerve from his course, so I jumped off and gave him a shot through the heart, as he trotted past me. That day several of our Kafirs having lagged behind, missed our spoor, our blanket-carriers amongst them, and as they did not come up by nightfall, we had to sleep upon the bare ground, which, however, as it was fine, did not inconvenience us much.

On the 21st we rode back to our waggon at Umfule to see if our friends had returned. They had not arrived, but we heard from a boy they had sent on, that they would be in camp on the following day. We this day witnessed a very pretty sight, as we were riding across a wide, open down between the Zweswe and Umfule rivers. We had a short time previously noticed a solitary old sable antelope bull feeding on the edge of a small strip of bush that intersected the plain. Suddenly this antelope, which was 600 or 700 yards distant, came running out into the flat straight towards us, on perceiving which we reined in our horses, and looked around for the cause of its alarm. This was soon apparent, for before long we saw that an animal was running on its tracks, and though still distant, overhauling it fast, for the sable antelope not being pressed was not yet doing its best, so that when it was about 200 yards from us, its pursuer, which we now saw was a wild dog, was not more than fifty yards behind it. The noble-looking antelope must just then have seen us, for it halted, looked towards us, and then turning its head, glanced at its insignificant pursuer. That glance, however, at the open-mouthed dog thirsting for its life-blood must have called up unpleasant reminiscences, for

instead of showing fight, as I should have expected it to have done, it threw out its limbs convulsively, and came dashing past us at its utmost speed. It was, however, to no purpose, for the wild dog lying flat to the ground as a greyhound, its bushy tail stretched straight behind it, covered two yards to its one, and came up to it in no time. It just gave it one bite in the flank, and letting go its hold instantly, fell a few yards behind ; at the bite the sable antelope swerved towards us, and upon receiving a second, in exactly the same place, turned still more, so that, taking the point on which we stood for a centre, both pursuer and pursued had described about a half-circle round us, always within 200 yards, since the sable antelope had first halted. As the wild dog was just going up the third time it got our wind, and instead of again inflicting a bite, stopped dead and looked towards us, whilst about 100 yards from it the sable antelope also came to a stand. The baffled hound then turned round, and, pursued by Clarkson, made off one way, whilst the sable antelope, delivered from its tormentor, cantered off in another. This is the only time I have ever heard of a wild dog pursuing an animal by itself, especially such a formidable antagonist as a sable antelope bull, which can use its horns with wonderful dexterity. The wild dog, I fancy, must have been well aware of this fact, and, if so, that would account for its only inflicting a bite, and at once letting go its hold, for if, like a tame dog, it were to have held on, it would have been infallibly transfixed. Whether in time it would have succeeded in tearing the sable antelope's flank open, and then pulling its entrails out piecemeal, which was its evident intention, I cannot say ; but I think it a

curious fact, and one well worth noticing, that an African hunting dog is capable of overtaking and attacking single-handed such a powerful animal as a male sable antelope.

On the following day, Cross, Goulden, and Wood came into camp just before sundown. They had shot two white rhinoceroses not more than three miles from the waggons, and that same morning had ridden out and shot a solitary old buffalo cow, the only buffalo seen by any of our party this season. They had also been more fortunate with elephants than Clarkson and myself, for one afternoon as they were sitting in their camp, near the river Zweswe, their Kafirs sighted a herd of these animals coming towards them. They rode after them at once, and the country being very open, and favourable for working with horses, they killed the entire troop, consisting of twenty-one elephants, with the exception of two tuskless ones, which they allowed to escape.

The next day we sent all the Kafirs and two pack oxen to bring in the meat of the two white rhinoceroses. I myself took a round to look for oribi antelope, but though I saw several, they were very wild, and I could not manage to bag one. These graceful little antelopes are common about here, and become more numerous towards the north-east; but to the south-west, in the direction of the Matabele country, I have never seen any after crossing the river Zweswe. They stand higher on their legs than steinbucks, and can be at once distinguished from them by their black tails and ringed horns. They are, I think, specifically identical with the oribi of the Cape Colony. Besides on the higher portions of the Mashuna country, I

have met with the oribi on the open plateau of the Manica country, to the north of the Zambesi, at Gazuma vley, about thirty miles to the south-west of the Victoria Falls (but nowhere else in the surrounding country), and on the marshy flats in the neighbourhood of Linyanti, on the northern bank of the river Chobe. All over this part of the country the remarkable standard-winged nightjar (*Cosmetornis vexillarius*) is very common; indeed, one can scarcely ride ten miles through the veldt without putting one up. The males had now assumed their long wing-feathers, which, if I am not mistaken, they only retain during the breeding season; at least I have observed that one does not see any nightjars with long feathers in their wings before September, or after December, and it is in the former month that the females usually lay. Like all other nightjars, these birds lie very close during the daytime, and when disturbed only fly twenty or thirty yards, and again alight and lie close to the ground. The females when sitting will almost allow one to tread upon them before they move; indeed, I have seen one sit still whilst four horsemen and about thirty Kafirs walked past within a yard of her in single file. Like its European congener, the African standard-winged nightjar lays two eggs upon the bare ground, the only difference being that the marblings are pinky-brown instead of grey. There is another species of nightjar, the *Caprimulgus mozambicus*, also very common in this part of the country, whose nesting habits and the colour of whose eggs are very similar to those of *C. vexillarius*, from which species, however, it may be at once distinguished by being of a greyer colour, and wanting the six bars across the wings which

mark the female of the latter species. The cock birds are easily recognised, *C. mozambicus* having no long feathers in the wings.

As we had now very little corn left, it was arranged that Clarkson and I should take one waggon and trek down to Lo Magondi's, near where we had shot the five elephant bulls a month previously, and endeavour to buy a load; so on the afternoon of the 25th we inspanned and started, taking our old road again as far as the Umsengaisi. After crossing this river, however, we had to make a road all the way to Hanyane, and, as in some places the mahobohobo forests grew very thickly, we had a good deal of chopping to do. Nothing worth relating happened during the trip. On our way to the Hanyane we one day came upon five white rhinoceroses as we were trekking with the waggon, but before we could get a shot at them, the dogs drove them away. On another occasion we came upon two bull elands, and mounting our horses pursued and shot them both, and loaded up all the meat to buy corn with from the Mashunas. Upon reaching our destination, we bought all the corn we required in two days. In the mountains about here, extensive excavations have been made, but whether for gold or iron we could not learn. Whilst we were buying corn, I shot three more elands, but they were all in very low condition. There did not appear to have been any elephants about at all since we were here before, but during our return to Umfule, and when near the Umsengaisi river, we very nearly came up to two fine bulls. Having started the waggon, Clarkson and I rode out to look for game, and before long crossed the fresh spoor of the two bulls that were feeding and sauntering slowly along, unfortunately in the direction

of our track, which they must have crossed just a little in front of the waggon. Shortly afterwards they must have heard the whip, or the talking of the Kafirs, and, of course, at once decamped. When we reached the place where they had got the alarm, they could not have been gone more than a quarter of an hour. We followed them up at once at a trot, and were very near them a second time in a thick mahobohobo forest; but, by a sudden turn, they got our wind, and again made off, this time in real earnest. We tried to gallop on the spoor, but the ground was hard in many places, and we could not hold it well, and at last gave it up in despair and rode back to the waggon. Whilst we were following these two elephants, we came upon a black rhinoceros, that did not see us until we were within fifty yards of him, when he turned and trotted off.

On November 3rd, we again reached our camp at Umfule, having neither seen nor shot anything but a few sable antelopes and tsessebes. One of my dogs also caught a large wild pig and held it fast single-handed until the Kafirs assegaied it. During this trip we lost three good dogs in the Umsengaisi river, all of which were caught by crocodiles. One of them was an old favourite of mine, that six years previously I had rescued from the jaws of a crocodile in the river Gwenia, whose teeth, however, had left some indelible scars upon his hind-quarters. Since that time he had faithfully followed his master's wandering footsteps over many hundreds of miles of wilderness, and had ever done his duty at pulling down wounded game, or catching wild pigs, and could show at least a dozen honourable scars, chiefly administered by the tusks of these latter animals, and now in his old age he had found a damp and dismal grave in the maw

of another of these voracious monsters. Poor old Bill ! it was terribly hard luck.

When we reached the Umfule again, we found that during our absence our friends had been equally unsuccessful with ourselves in coming across elephants ; so, as it seemed that there were no more of them about, and the rainy season was coming on apace, we resolved to finally break up our camp, and trek slowly out to the Matabele country, taking a road more to the south than that by which we had come in to the hunting veldt.

Accordingly, on November 5th, we made a move, and trekked about twelve miles to the south-west, all along the bank of a beautifully clear stream, a tributary of the Umfule. On the way I shot a zebra, and an eland bull with a fine even pair of horns 2 feet 5 inches in length. That night the rains came down with a vengeance, and we were detained for a week in the same spot by constantly recurring storms.

One morning Wood and myself, taking advantage of a few hours of clear weather, rode out to look for game, and after shooting a roan antelope bull, were returning home, when, in a small patch of bush, we rode right on to a black rhinoceros, that we at once saluted with two bullets. As the wounded animal galloped off, we saw for the first time that it was followed by a small calf, which could not have been more than a day or two old, for it seemed unable to keep up with its mother, and upon our approach ran under the legs of Wood's horse, who, calling to me to go on and kill the cow, pulled in, in order to secure it. With another bullet I despatched the cow accordingly, and returning to my friend, found him sitting under a shady tree, and the little rhinoceros

standing close beside his horse, which did not manifest the slightest alarm at the near proximity of the uncouth-looking and, no doubt to him, strangely-smelling little beast. The young rhinoceros, too, that was scarcely larger than a half-grown pig, did not seem at all frightened when either Wood or myself, or any of the Kafirs approached it, but stood quite still when we went up to it and passed our hands down its back. It was, of course, too young to have any sign of horns, but two round patches on the nose showed where they would in time have grown ; in other respects, with its prehensile lip, large ears, and little twinkling eyes, it was a perfect miniature of an adult black rhinoceros. One circumstance, I remember, that struck me at the time was that it sweated most profusely all over the back, which I never remember to have seen an adult animal do. As we found that it followed Wood's horse as closely as if it had been its own mother, we determined to try and get it to the waggons, which were about six miles distant, and endeavour to rear it on thin gruel, for, unfortunately, we had no milch cows with us ; so, leaving the Kafirs to cut up the old cow, we rode home, the little rhinoceros following us like a dog the whole way. The heat of the sun seemed to give it great inconvenience, for it halted and remained behind beneath every shady tree ; but, as soon as the horse was about twenty yards ahead, it would twist up its little tail, give a squeal, and come trotting up alongside of it again. At last we reached the waggons, when of a sudden the nature of the hitherto quiet little beast seemed changed ; whether it was the sight of the dogs, that came barking round it, or of the waggons, or the *tout ensemble* of sights and smells with which its eyes and nostrils were assailed, I know

not, but it was now transformed into a perfect little demon, charging people, dogs, and even the waggon wheel, with great fury. I now passed an ox-rein round its neck, and behind one shoulder, when it rushed alternately to the length of its tether, springing from the ground in its fury, and then back again at me, when it would inflict several bumps on my knees with its nose. Its *modus operandi* was to lower its head between its legs, and then, by throwing it up perpendicularly, strike several blows in quick succession with its nose. Small and weak as the poor little creature was, it still battered my knees with considerable violence. After being secured to the waggon-wheel it presently became quieter, though it still charged out to the full length of its tether at any dog or person that approached it. It, however, as I feared, obstinately refused all food, though I have no doubt it would have drunk milk had we had a cow with us; so, knowing that to let it run loose would be merely to condemn it to a lingering death from starvation, or an equally painful one by the fangs of lions or hyænas, I judged it most merciful to put a bullet through its head, which I did, though not without regret, for I should much have liked to rear it.

The rains having now fairly set in, and the ground being thoroughly soaked, we made but slow progress with the waggons, and did not reach the river Gwenia—which, as far as shooting is concerned, may be considered as the southern boundary of the Mashuna hunting country—until the 11th of December. During all this time we saw no signs of elephants, though we found other game fairly plentiful, and shot a few rhinoceroses, elands, sable, roan, and tsessebe antelopes, etc. Twice Cross, Wood, and I

These pools must have harboured many herds of hippopotami at no very distant date, for the broad, well-beaten, double footpaths made by these bulky beasts (the hippopotamus always forms a double footpath with a little ridge in the centre, as it moves its feet along in parallel lines), and leading from one pool to another, sometimes up and down very steep and rocky hillsides, were to be met with all along the river. The hippopotami had, however, disappeared from the scene, and betaken themselves to more secure retreats farther down the stream. This day we made a sad mess with a black rhinoceros, which, at some distance from the river, as we were going down a sloping hillside, I descried about 100 yards in advance of us, slowly making his way through some short scrub. We soon crept down to within fifty yards of him, and then waited till he came past us. When almost opposite he stood with his shoulder just behind a tree about a foot in diameter; here he remained for some seconds, then took another step, and stood again, evidently listening. I was afraid that he suspected something, and might wheel round at any moment, so, as he had enough of his shoulder beyond the tree, to allow a bullet to reach his heart, I nudged Jameson, and fired, and, sad to tell, instead of putting my bullet into his shoulder, I struck the tree. I hurried my friend's shot too, so that he only hit the brute too far back as it sprang forward, and in fact we lost the rhinoceros. What we said and the oaths we swore are fortunately not written in any book of Chronicles.

This disgracefully bad shot, I have reason to believe, was not my fault, for, after making a few more failures for which I could not account, I fired at a mark, and found that the bullets fell all over the

suddenly stopped short, and wheeling broadside on, stood looking towards us with upraised head and glaring eyes. Seizing the 10, I fired for his shoulder—I thought with a steady aim; but whether the run had unsteadied me, or my gun, in which I now placed but little faith, played me false, I do not know; anyhow, instead of giving the buffalo a dead shot, as I ought to have done, I apparently did him no harm, and, indeed, do not know whether I hit him at all, for when I fired, he went off again at a gallop. I followed him till the sun was well down, but never saw him again, and returned to the bull I had first killed, very ill satisfied, for I had wounded and lost two animals, and only secured one.

That night we slept without water alongside the carcase, and early the next morning cut up the meat and went to the native kraal we had seen the day before. These people informed me that from here to the junction of the Umfule and Umniati rivers it was only a short two days' walk, but over very rough country. After asking two or three different men about it, and comparing their statements, I came to the conclusion that they were really endeavouring to speak the truth, which is as much as can be expected from a Kafir; so I determined to get back to our encampment, and return here with Jameson as soon as possible, that we might solve the problem for ourselves.

As soon as my boys had finished buying meal and ground-nuts with their buffalo meat, I once more made a start, and slept at a small stream not far from the Umfule. Both on this night and the preceding, lions roared not far from my camp. About mid-day on the following day I got back to our big camp, and found that Jameson had arrived just

before me. He had found no buffaloes, but had shot two black rhinoceroses, besides some smaller game. Old Lo Magondi was still here with half his tribe, women and children, all of whom were trying to get outside of as much sea-cow meat as possible. Poles had been cut and raised upon uprights in every direction, all of which were red or white, with festoons of meat and fat. Some of the meat smelt very high, for Lo Magondi's people had let one sea-cow go bad before they cut it up ; I do really think that they like half-putrid meat better than fresh. The trees that surrounded the pool were covered one and all with the griffon and little black vultures, and here and there sat a couple of the carrion-eating marabout storks, eyeing the bones and ribs of the five sea-cows, now well picked, which strewed the rocks at the lower end of the pool. As soon as darkness set in, hyænas began to approach from every direction, and laughed and screamed and howled over the remains of the feast in a manner that must be heard to be appreciated.

In the middle of the night, when the fires were burning low, old Lo Magondi, who always slept at our skerm amongst our Kafirs, suddenly jumped up and called to our boys to make up the fires, as there was a lion close to us. Though I was awake I had heard nothing ; but soon after the boys had rekindled the fires, a low, deep growl, of disappointment, I suppose, broke the silence of the night—such a growl as can only issue from the throat of a lion ; the deep sullen sound was twice repeated, seemingly within fifty yards of where we lay, and then all again was still, nor were we further disturbed that night. The brute must have been sneaking about trying to steal some meat, for the old man said he had heard him

too late to do anything, but we thought our best plan would be to go back again to the vley we had left, and hunt about for a few days. This we did, and making a comfortable camp, remained there eight days, hunting the country round about, and returning every evening to our vley. We were unfortunate with elephants, for twice we got close to some of them in the thick bush, but they must have detected our tread upon the dead leaves, for we only heard them crashing through the branches, and never even saw them.

These thickets we found to be full of buffaloes, which drank in the river, passing the noontide heat in the shade of the thick bush. Almost every day we saw large herds of them, and might have killed several, but we only shot two cows for food.

The open valley in front of the vley of which I have before spoken was a great resort of zebras, sometimes as many as a hundred of these beautiful animals standing round us in troops of from ten to thirty, as we crossed it on our way to or from camp. There were also great numbers of the graceful little oribi antelopes always to be seen in twos and threes in this valley.

One day we did not get back to camp from our day's hunting till about ten o'clock at night; we had had a hard day of it, and a most toilsome walk home in the dark through the thick thorny bush. When we reached the valley on the other side of which, at a distance of about two miles, our camp was situated, the moon was well up, and cast a soft, subdued light over the long dry grass. We were stepping along the edge of the valley in single file, following a game path, when the leading Kafir stopped, and pointing across the vley, said, "Ini loco" (What's

that ?) adding, "There's a rhinoceros" ; and looking in the direction he pointed, we saw something dark looming in the moonlight ; it was coming towards us and we soon saw plainly that it was a black rhinoceros. When he was about thirty yards from, and half facing us, we both fired, dropping him on his knees ; however, he was up again in an instant, and wheeling round, went off at a gallop, snorting loudly, across the open valley. We followed the path, plainly perceptible in the moonlight, that he had made through the long thick grass ; by sweeping our hands along it we could feel that it was wet with blood, and we returned to camp, determined to take up the spoor again on the morrow.

Thus, at an early hour the following day, we were once more upon his blood-stained tracks. For about a mile he had never stopped galloping, and all the time had been throwing blood in jets from his nostrils in astonishing quantities, so that we knew he had been struck in the lungs, and expected to find him dead at every instant. After a time, however, the blood almost ceased flowing, and he seemed to have settled down to a very slow walk, as we had great difficulty in following his spoor ; but one of my Makalakas, with a patience and sagacity which would have done credit to a Bushman, got it away into some softer ground, and we then went along briskly for several miles till we came to a place where the animal had lain down and rolled in the sand ; here there was a pool of blood. A little farther on we found a second place where he had been lying, and we then thought he was about done for, but we were greatly mistaken ; he seemed to have once more arisen, like a giant refreshed, and led us for many a mile, always holding one course towards