



"Sharp had not yet learnt his buffalo, and waited for him."

(Illustration of an incident described in "From the Cape to Cairo")

Buffalo Shooting.

"From the Cape to Cairo," by E. S. Grogan (Hurst and Blackett).

TOWARDS the Urema plain opens out to a great width and becomes very swampy, and as the water had just subsided it was covered with short sweet grass. Here we saw between 10,000 and 50,000 head of game, mostly wildebeeste, who opened out to let us pass and then closed in again behind. It was a wonderful sight; vast moving masses of life as far as the eye could reach. A fortnight later they had eaten up the grass, and most of them were scattered about the surrounding country. Some of the swamps were very bad, and we were finally compelled to camp in the middle far from any wood.

Sharp and I turned out for an after-noon stroll to kill a crocodile; he had hardly left camp when he made his first acquaintance with buffalo; four old bulls came out of a donga, where they had been hidden, and he killed them all in a bunch with the double "303." His shots disturbed two more on the far side of the river, but too far to shoot, so I removed the brain-pan of one of the myriads of crocodiles that lined the banks, when a hippo head popped up about three yards off; the river, though deep, was only about ten yards wide, so he had not much room. I placed a shot between his eyes, and down he went; then I saw another on the far side, trundling towards me, evidently disturbed in his evening meal by the firing. I waited till he was within thirty yards, then opened fire; still on he came and plunged into the water, drenching me with spray; then he rose and I hit him again, and again he rose, and I hit him twice, when he rolled over and stranded in shallow water. Immediately the first one showed I hit him, and he dashed up the bank at an incredible pace. I poured lead into him till, feeling very sick, he doubled and came back for the water. On the edge I dropped him, and he rolled slowly in, making a mighty splash.

An Encounter with a Rhinoceros.

"From the Cape to Cairo," by E. S. Grogan (Hurst and Blackett).

At 7.30 I found fresh rhinoceros spoor, which I followed under a blazing sun until 12.30; the country had been very difficult, and I was just beginning to despair when I heard a snort, and, looking up, saw the rhino trotting round the corner of an ant-hill, behind which he had been sleeping. On seeing me, he stopped, snorting, blowing and stamping, looking exceedingly nasty. I was carrying my "303," and turning round for my four-bore, found that all my boys had bolted up a small thorn tree, from the branch of which they were hanging like a cluster of bees. They had thrown down the gun, and I was compelled to stoop down and grope about for it in the undergrowth; he continued blowing and snorting only fifteen yards away, and I felt very uncomfortable, as in my position I offered a magnificent target. However, at last I found the gun, and firing past his cheek, hit him full on the edge of the shoulder; instantly there arose a very hell of sound, squealing, stamping, and crashing of bushes and grass; the smoke hung like a pall around me and I thought he was charging. Having nowhere to run to, I stayed where I was, and suddenly his huge mass dashed past the edge of the smoke-cloud, and I saw him disappear at a tremendous pace into the grass. We followed hard, but though he bled freely and had down several times, we did not come up to him again till 3 p.m., when we found him standing at ten yards' distance in a bushy nullah far up in the hills. I fired the four-bore at his shoulder, knocking him down, but he rose again, and tried to climb the far bank; so I fired the second barrel hurriedly; the cartridge split at the back, and I was knocked over a tree two yards behind. That stopped him, and three solid bullets from the "303" finished him.

"WAR—AND ARCADIA," By Bertram Mitford. (F. V. White and Co.) 6s.

So many books, both fact and fiction, have been published lately dealing with the South African campaign that the title of Mr. Bertram Mitford's present story seems to suggest that he has once again sought inspiration from the real. "War—and Arcadia," however, is a stirring tale of adventure in the Western States—in Dakota, to be precise—and the rising of the Sioux, in 1890, after an acute spell of "Ghost Dancing," has been treated by the author in a very graphic and exciting manner. Among the passengers on the Punkville Stage that is "held up" by the Indians are a young Englishman, Kennion Lee, and a Southern girl, Adalie Wade, who together defend themselves most bravely against the horde of savages from the shelter of a "dog-out" at Gulsan's Station. The pair are rescued from their predicament of extreme peril by a body of U.S. Cavalry under Major Harvey Newlands; but Kennion Lee, taking part soon afterwards in a pitched battle with the Indians, is made captive, and is carried off to the "Bad Lands" of Dakota. There he all but shares the fate of a fellow prisoner, who is burnt and tortured to death in a most horrible way by the Sioux infuriated with the "Ghost Dancing." Lee fortunately prevails upon a Christian Indian to aid him to escape, and this rescuer and his helper, called Blood Feather and Eagle Neck, are, later on, met by Lee and Adalie at the second Wild West Show at Earl's Court. Before this, however, Lee had undergone another terrible experience at the hands of a jealous rival for the love of Adalie, the hero being suspended head downwards into a pit or well in a haunted mill on the Oppekonock. In this part of the story Mr. Mitford shows the descriptive faculty and power of "piling up the agony" effectively that he had displayed in the Indian incidents. Therefore, readers of "War—and Arcadia" will find that the contents of the book are more thrilling than its somewhat cumbersome title would seem to convey.

"CAPTAIN MAYNE REID: HIS LIFE AND ADVENTURES." By Elizabeth Reid, his Widow, assisted by Charles H. Coe. (Greening and Co.) 2s. 6d.

Although modestly priced, only 2s. 6d., there is far more matter in this interesting and pleasantly illustrated memoir than in many a pretentious six-shilling volume, and at the present period there is all the more reason that the book should be in the hands of very many boys, young and old, because the widow of that delightful writer of stirring romance and juvenile fiction, Mayne Reid, has recently undergone a reverse of fortune as severe as those that befel her beloved husband in the course of his life. Mrs. Reid has previously written a shorter Memoir of the author of "The Scalp Hunters" and "The Finger of Fate," for instance; but her present work, in which she has been assisted by an American gentleman, Mr. C. H. Coe, is fuller in matter of detail, and is eked out agreeably by extracts from Mayne Reid's newspaper writings, poems, plays, and unpublished reminiscences of his experiences in the Mexican War. Mrs. Reid was very naturally a hero-worshipper, and she narrates lovingly the romantic circumstances amid which the gallant, fluent, and versatile Irishman from Ballyrony, County Down, wooed her and made her his "child-wife," the title of one of his novels. The widow goes through Mayne Reid's varied career chronologically, from the days of the earliest youth of this descendant, on the mother's side, of the "hot and hasty Rutherford" mentioned in "Marmion." His emigration to America in 1839, at the age of twenty-one; his chequered career as journalist, tutor, hunter, student of Nature, actor, and soldier, his fine exploits in the Mexican War forming large in the last-named category; his active sympathy with the Hungarian and other Continental Revolutionists about 1849; his manifold literary labours, including, besides his numerous romances, those two easily and disagreeable enterprises of his, the starting of the *Little Times* in England and of the *Current Magazine* in America—these are among the matters which Mrs. Reid has set forth with as little bias as could be expected from the widowed "child-wife." She deals very frankly with the failure of some of her bold and impetuous husband's cherished schemes, and talks freely of the details of the severe illnesses from which he made several wonderful recoveries, alluding also to the curious fact that he had more than once during his life the popular satisfaction of reading his own obituary notices. Mrs. Reid very conveniently refers in the body of the book to the circumstances attending the writing of her husband's works, of which a classified list is given at the close, and the Memoir in its entirety affords delightful, if now and again painful, reading. Mayne Reid obtained only £25 for the first edition of his first romance, "The Little Rangers," which "was published in three volumes at one guinea, on an agreement to pay the author half the profits;" while of his second book, "The Scalp Hunters," "over a million copies have been sold in Great Britain alone, and it has been translated into as many languages as 'The Pilgrim's Progress.'" A pleasing picture is given of his life at his house "The Runche," at Gerrard's Cross, in Buckinghamshire; and as the widow remarks, "his usual manner of writing was peculiar," a couch, a portable desk, a fur robe, a dressing-gown, a Norfolk jacket, many cigars, and candles being among the paraphernalia of this gifted romancer's literary equipment. Mrs. Reid has dedicated this book to her husband's attached friend and assistant on the *Grand Magazine*, Charles Ollivant, who has contributed reminiscences to the volume. Edgar Allan Poe, Keats, John Oxenford, and Dion Boucicault, whom Mayne Reid charged with utilising incidents in "The Quadron" for his well-known drama "The Octoroon," are among the notabilities touched upon in the course of a work quite fascinating in its wisely devotion and its merit.



"I was compelled to stoop down and grope."

(An illustration of a thrilling encounter with a rhinoceros from Mr. Grogan's book "From the Cape to Cairo.")

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