

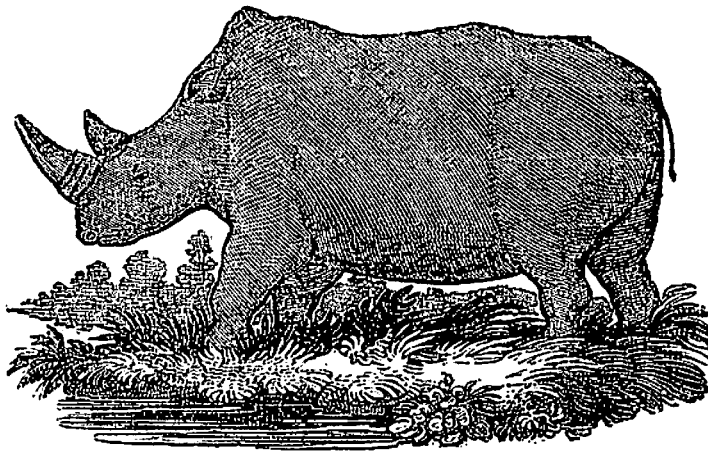
TRAVELS  
AND  
ADVENTURES  
IN  
SOUTHERN AFRICA

by  
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*Edited, with notes*  
*by*  
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## CHAPTER X.

EXCURSION TO THE EASTWARD.—THE WANDERER AREND.—KURUMAN FOUNTAIN.—RETURN.—FURTHER RUMOURS OF THE INVADERS.—SECOND EXCURSION.—AREND'S ACCOUNT OF THE INTERIOR TRIBES.

JUNE 16.—Seeing no prospect of rendering my excursion available for commercial purposes, in the present alarmed and disorganized condition of the native tribes, and being consequently desirous of returning without delay to Cape Town, I resolved, nevertheless, to obtain, if possible, a nearer view of the formidable marauders of whom I had recently heard so much; or at least endeavour to procure some more authentic and direct information respecting them. I therefore stated to Mr. Moffat my intention of proceeding as far as Lattakoo for that purpose. Mr. Moffat immediately volunteered to accompany me; and, accordingly, we set off this morning about nine o'clock, attended by my Bechuana servant; and the waggon of the missionaries was directed to follow us with all dispatch. The wondering inhabitants came out in multitudes to gaze at us, or rather at our horses, as we rode off,—for a horse here is almost as much an object of admiration as an elephant in England.

Our journey lay across a country thinly sprinkled with mimosa trees, and abounding with game. As we proceeded, immense plains opened interminably to our view, waving with a sea of grass. About two o'clock we reached the Maquareen River,<sup>1</sup> where we purposed

<sup>1</sup> The Matlaring or Matlhwareng River flowing north-westward some 20 miles north-east of Kuruman.

to await the arrival of the waggon, and to spend the night. Here, to our surprise, we found a waggon already outspanned, and a party of men along with it. Mr. Moffat immediately conjectured that this must be the party of one Arend, a runaway slave,<sup>2</sup> of whom he had heard as a wanderer in these parts; and so it proved, for on approaching we discovered Arend seated in his waggon, with his gun in his hand, prepared to defend himself to the last extremity, for he had taken us for colonists coming to apprehend him. Matters being cleared up in this respect, we instantly came to a good understanding, and joined company. Arend informed us that he had belonged to a boor in the Sneeuwberg, but, being very cruelly used, had absconded from the Colony, about seven years ago, since which period he had been leading a wandering life among the tribes of the interior. By trafficking he had acquired some little property, being now possessed of a waggon, a musket, a considerable quantity of ivory, and about ninety head of cattle. His party consisted of an old Hottentot, named Cupido Kackerlackie<sup>3</sup> and his wife, together with several Bechuanas of the Barolong, Morootzee,<sup>4</sup> and Wankeet tribes, whom he had picked up in travelling among these nations. His last residence had been at Nokuning, a town already mentioned as lying to the eastward of Lattakoo. This place he had abandoned on the approach of the Mantatees, and he was now flying from these destroyers towards the south. Arend treated us with the broiled flesh of a springbok which he had just shot, and which we eat with much relish, without either bread, salt, or any other sauce than a keen appetite. On the arrival of our waggon, we all gathered round a blazing fire, forming a motley groupe of very various lineage and complexion. The night was chill but serene, with a refulgent moon, illuminating the solitary wilds that environed us; and, while the social pipe fumed around the fire, Arend entertained us with many anecdotes of his own wild and wandering life, and of the barbarous tribes he had visited. He had accompanied the Rev. Mr. Campbell in his last journey, as far as Kurrechein,<sup>5</sup> in the Morootzee country; and avowed his readiness to accompany me even to Delagoa

<sup>2</sup> The Dutch word for Eagle. He is referred to as Aaron by Campbell, who employed him on part of his 1813 journey and met him at Old Lattakoo (Dithakong) in 1820. His adventures are sketched in Campbell, 1822, vol. I, p. 130; vol. II, pp. 356-9. Moffat, 1842, p. 496, calls him Aaron Josephs, a builder and thatcher by trade who helped to build the mission schoolhouse at Kuruman. Schapera states that he had formerly accompanied Coenraad Buys. (Moffat, 1951, pp. 106, 292.) See also Kirby, 1939, Van Riebeeck Soc., vol. 20, pp. 355-7.

<sup>3</sup> The Dutch word *kakkerlakje* means a little cockroach or a small albino. He was a Hottentot from Bethelsdorp who had accompanied Campbell on part of his 1820 journey. He became an assistant preacher of the L.M.S. in 1814 and was stationed among the Korana at Nokaneng. (Campbell, 1822, vol. I, p. 125. Moffat, 1951, pp. 18, 79.)

<sup>4</sup> BaHurutshe, a BaTswana tribe. (Moffat, 1951, p. 293.)

<sup>5</sup> In 1820 to Kadiitshwene, on the slopes of the Enzelberg which lies NE. of Zeerust. (Campbell, 1822, vol. I, chap. 20. Kirby, 1939, Van Riebeeck Soc., vol. 20, p. 326. Moffat, 1951, p. 73n.)

some one thundered at the door, and, on its being opened, in rushed Sampin,<sup>14</sup> one of Mateebè's captains, the very picture of terror and dismay. As soon as he could speak he called out "Mantatees! Mantatees!" to our no small alarm; for, from the extreme agitation of poor Sampin, we at first conceived that they were actually entering the town. However, we at length ascertained that this new alarm proceeded merely from certain intelligence having arrived of their entrance into Nokuning, accompanied by the usual extravagant exaggerations of their force and ferocity. Had Mr. Moffat and I continued our excursion we should have reached that place this evening, and might have run no small hazard of falling unawares among them. As it was, however, matters now began to look rather serious. This fierce and formidable enemy was now within about eighty miles of us, which, at the rate the Bechuana and Caffer warriors frequently travel in their expeditions, was not three days' march. And as there were no sufficient precautions taken by the Bechuana to prevent a surprise, by sending out scouts to watch their motions, we might, not improbably, be suddenly overwhelmed by these savages while we sat deliberating.

Sampin had not been long with us when about twenty other Bechuana Chiefs also rushed into the house, accompanied by the Queen, Mahoota, and her principal female attendants, all under the influence of great fear and perturbation. Mateebè himself was unfortunately absent. The queen, therefore, came to ask the advice of the missionaries in this alarming crisis, and, at their suggestion, sent off messengers immediately to hasten the king's return. On consulting with Mr. Hamilton, we also considered it proper to dispatch messengers towards Griqua Town<sup>15</sup> to expedite the movements of the Griqua auxiliaries. In the meanwhile we endeavoured to encourage the Bechuana to prepare manfully for their own defence, advising the chiefs to send to all their villages and outposts, to call out the inhabitants *en masse* to meet the enemy, and not to allow the cattle to be pastured in the direction from which they were expected. The entire want of any thing like a confederacy among the contiguous tribes of Bechuana, or of any thing like system or decision in the plans for self-defence in the several communities, strikingly manifests their unwarlike character, and their unfitness to withstand such formidable assailants as those who were now destroying, piecemeal, their separate hordes.

19.—This morning brought us no news to relieve the alarm and anxiety of the preceding day. Mateebè had not returned, and there was no intelligence of the Grikwas. The last gleams of hope and

courage seemed to forsake the panic-struck Matchapees. The cattle were now collected and kept near the town. The people had begun to bury their most valuable effects, their corn, &c. in large earthen jars. The missionaries were likewise preparing their waggons, to fly at a moment's notice. There was no word of the messengers we had sent out; all was suspense and anxiety. In the town the most vague and contradictory rumours prevailed,—some persons coming in from the outposts contradicting the account of the Mantatees having entered Nokuning, alleging that they were still at a Barolong town a great distance off; others asserting that they were marching direct upon us. Mr. Moffat had previously assured me that no confidence could be placed in the rumours and stories of the Bechuana, among whom veracity is a virtue little practised, and many of them are much given to romancing and the propagation of extravagant tales. As an example of their propensity for dealing in the marvellous, he instanced an absurd rumour, then current among them, that the white people in the south had been attacked by an army composed of myriads of pigmies, whose stature did not exceed six inches!<sup>16</sup>

It now occurred to me, that, instead of longer enduring this state of suspense and anxiety, it would greatly relieve my own feelings, and at the same time, perhaps, materially add to the security of my friends, the missionaries, and of the distracted tribe among whom I was a visitor, if I proceeded myself, as I had formerly intended, to reconnoitre the host of marauders, and bring back some certain information respecting them. This resolution was no sooner formed than acted upon. Having got my knapsack supplied with some provisions, I set out, attended only by my Bechuana guide, and was out of sight of the town in a few minutes. Taking the same route which I had formerly pursued with Mr. Moffat, we reached the station of the slave Arend, on the Maquareen River, about three hours after sunset. Arend was still there with his party, but intended to fly next morning. On acquainting him, however, with my design, he, after a little deliberation, agreed to accompany me to Lattakoo, in order to ascertain whether or not the enemy were advancing.

This being arranged, I joined the motley groupe around the fire. I lighted a segar, and the others betook themselves to their pipes, intermingling conversation with the tranquillizing fumes which poured around us. From these wandering men, Arend and his comrade old Cupido Kackerlackie, I learned some interesting particulars respecting the Bechuana tribes, and the country towards the north-east. Cupido, I found, had also accompanied Mr. Campbell on his last journey, and was the person who shot the remarkable rhinoceros, of

<sup>14</sup> Champan (Van Riebeeck Soc., vol. 20, p. 371). Champani (Burchell, 1953, vol. II, pp. 290, 302). Possibly TCampee (Campbell, 1822, vol. II, p. 153).

<sup>15</sup> The distance by road to Griquatown was between 120 and 130 miles.

<sup>16</sup> It is possible that a missionary had told his followers of the diminutive Lilliputians who figure in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, 1726.

whose head Mr. Campbell has given a drawing.<sup>17</sup> The wanderers related many of their wild hunting adventures, especially in pursuit of the rhinoceros, which abounds in these regions, and is a very fierce and formidable animal.\*

On again interrogating Arend as to the possibility of proceeding through the Bechuana tribes to Delagoa Bay, he stated, that but for the Mantatees he would willingly now have accompanied me thither, being acquainted with most of the native chiefs on the route. Not long ago he had been, he said, within a very short distance of that place.<sup>18</sup> Being in want of clothing for his wife and child, he set out with the intention of going to Delagoa Bay to purchase some, but when within about a day's journey of the Portuguese settlement, he procured the goods he wanted from the natives, and returned without going farther. He gave me a piece of chintz which he procured in this manner, and which is of Indian manufacture. On this excursion, which he computed to be about ten days' easy journey,<sup>19</sup> he travelled through a fine country very thickly inhabited. I requested him to detail, in regular order, the various places he had visited on this excursion, which he accordingly did to the following effect.

Leaving Lattakoo, which belongs to the Matchapee tribe, and of which Levenkels is now chief,<sup>20</sup> under Mateebè, he proceeded to Nokuning about eighteen miles distant. The chief of this place, Mahoomapelo, has been already mentioned. From Nokuning to the

\* Two distinct species of the two-horned rhinoceros are found in South Africa. The figure in the vignette at page 110 was drawn from life by Mr. Melvill, and conveys an accurate representation of the species which abounds most in the Bechuana country. The horn of the female is, however, much longer and more slender than that of the male; I have one in my possession, three and a half feet long. Being a strong, ponderous, and elastic substance, it is much prized by the natives for handles to their battle-axes. The secondary horn is, in many instances, and especially in the female, so small as to be scarcely perceptible at a little distance. The general figure of the rhinoceros is that of an enormous hog. His prodigious size and strength, and his destructive horn, point out this animal, in my apprehension, very distinctly as the real unicorn of Scripture—a conclusion in which I have been anticipated by Burchell and other scientific travellers, and which is now, I believe, generally concurred in.

<sup>17</sup> Cupido is not mentioned in this connection by Campbell, 1822, vol. I, p. 294 and plate opposite. It is described as 'remarkable' as it was a White Rhinoceros, *Ceratotherium simum simum* (Roberts, p. 241) rare in those parts. This conclusion is supported by G. C. Shortridge, *Mammals of S.W.A.*, vol. I, London, 1934, p. 428. The common species there was the Black Rhinoceros, *Diceros bicornis bicornis* (Roberts, p. 242).

<sup>18</sup> This journey is briefly mentioned in Kirby, 1939, Van Riebeeck Soc., vol. 20, p. 356.

<sup>19</sup> A manifest understatement for a straight-line distance of about 550 miles. The BaKwena tribe where his journey ended was at a distance of about 250 miles.

<sup>20</sup> Moffat referred to him as Sewekel, and Schapera suggests that he may have been Sebekedi. (Moffat, 1951, pp. 98, 113.)

chief town of the Barolongs,<sup>21</sup> he took three days. The chief or king of this tribe is called Mashow,<sup>22</sup> which name Mr. Campbell has by mistake transferred to the town, calling the king, Kousie, which is not his name, but his title, *kousi*<sup>23</sup> signifying king or principal chief in their language.<sup>24</sup> From the Barolong to the Marootzee tribe<sup>25</sup> he was about five days. From thence one day brought him to Kapan,<sup>26</sup> chief of the Manamagans, a very large tribe.<sup>27</sup> Another day brought him to King Lasak<sup>28</sup> of the Maqueens.<sup>29</sup> From the residence of this chief to Delagoa Bay was two days' easy journey.<sup>30</sup> The mountains in the Maqueen country, as described by him, agree with those mentioned by Captain Owen,<sup>31</sup> as visible from the vicinity of Delagoa Bay.<sup>32</sup>

I endeavoured to ascertain from Arend, whether any thing was known among these tribes of the actual fate of Dr. Cowan's party. It had been stated, on the authority of the Matchapee chiefs, that this unfortunate band of travellers had been destroyed by Makabba, King of the Wankeets, a chief still living.<sup>33</sup> This account Arend (in the same manner as the Griquas, formerly mentioned,) affirmed to be altogether erroneous, and invented by the other tribes, by whom Makabba is generally disliked and dreaded, to render that chief obnoxious to the colonists. From a similar spirit, a son of Makabba's, who recently visited Kuruman, had likewise represented his father as the murderer or Cowan, with the view of prejudicing the mis-

<sup>21</sup> Probably Khunwana, 40 miles SSW. of Mafeking. (Moffat, 1951, p. 85.)

<sup>22</sup> Mosweu. (Moffat, 1951, p. 86n.)

<sup>23</sup> Kgosi, a chief.

<sup>24</sup> Campbell, vol. I, p. 171; Moffat, 1951, p. 86n.

<sup>25</sup> The BaHurutsi, visited by Campbell in 1820 at Kaditshwene a few miles north of Zeerust. See note 4 on p. 99 above and Moffat, 1951, p. xvii.

<sup>26</sup> No such name appears in the history of the BaNgwato given by Sillery, A., *The Bechuanaland Protectorate*, London, 1952, pp. 116-18, who gives Kgama as their chief at that time. It is improbable that the name Kapan is in any way connected with Kapain, a Matabele town near Zeerust visited in 1836 by Captain W. C. Harris. (Harris, W. C., *Wild Sports of Southern Africa*, 3rd ed., London, 1841, p. 98.)

<sup>27</sup> Possibly the BaNgwato, an offshoot of the BaKwena, but if so, given in the wrong order as the former dwelt north of the latter. (Moffat, 1951, p. 138.) The Mangwathos of Thompson's map are the BaNgwato. If these were the Manemagans he does not seem to have recognized this fact.

<sup>28</sup> Possibly the BaKwena chief termed Cassan by Moffat, properly spelt Kgasane. (Moffat, 1951, p. 86.)

<sup>29</sup> BaKwena, a northern BaTswana tribe then dwelling near Molepolole.

<sup>30</sup> The direct distance is not less than 450 miles. Arend's account was probably also erroneous regarding the order in which the tribes lay to the north.

<sup>31</sup> They were certainly not the Lebombo Mountains, about 35 miles inland, unnamed but described as 'hills in the country of the Vatswals' in Owen's account in Thompson's footnote on p. 181 below.

<sup>32</sup> This remark appears to show Thompson's faith in Arend's reliability as an informant. On the strength of this evidence Thompson mapped the Bechuana tribes much too far to the east, particularly his Maqueens (BaKwena). Another account given by Arend of this journey appears in Campbell, 1822, vol. II, pp. 357-8, but has little resemblance to his tale as printed by Thompson.

<sup>33</sup> Makaba II (c. 1795-1824), chief of the BaNgwaketse who lived at Kgwakgwe near Kanye. (Moffat, 1951, p. xvii.)