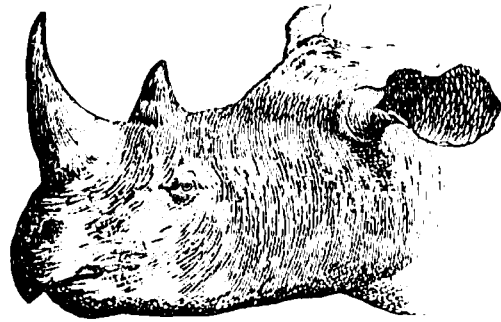


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W. H. DILLMUND, 1873. Large Scam and Alabam. History of South- and India-Emt. Africa.



CHAPTER II.

RHINOCEROS.

ONE day in spring, when although, and perhaps because, we had as yet had no rain, the heat was more overpoweringly great than it was in summer, four of us found ourselves late in the afternoon on the brink of a small water-hole, and in a few seconds afterwards each individual was lying in the deep mud which surrounded the lukewarm and beastly stuff that, though composed of every nastiness under heaven, we dignified with the name of water, and which we were at that particular moment only too glad to get.

We had left our camp on the Black Umfolosi on the previous morning, and had gone to sleep at a place some

twenty miles distant, where the native who guided us had assured us we should find plenty of water, as well as the buffalo we were after; but on getting there at sunset we found the hole dried up, only about a breakfast-cupful of liquid mud being procurable after digging as deep as we could without a spade, and in consequence we were forced to sleep the whole night, and hunt the whole of the next day without a drop to drink, until, when nearly exhausted after upwards of thirty hours without being even able to moisten our tongues, we had seen the fresh track of game that ultimately landed us at this water-hole.

It was already so late, and the sufferings we had all undergone without water under that broiling sun had so fatigued us, that it was determined we should sleep where we were, and not attempt to reach camp that night, especially as, having killed nothing, and there being plenty of fresh spoor about, we were in no particular hurry to return now that we had found water; all places being much alike to hunters so long as there is game to be found. Two of my comrades therefore started off in different directions to look for food, and I did the same, as soon as I had pointed out to the boy who carried my mat the spot to form the camp in.

At first I followed some of the buffalo-tracks which were so numerous, but after going a little distance I found that they joined, and the footprint of one of the hunters warning me that he was already after them, and that it would be useless for me to go further, I turned off into the thickets and glades in search of anything that might be feeding, and just at dusk I saw a white cocked-up tail about twenty yards off. The thicket was too dense

for me to see anything more, and covering it, I fired without any idea of what the animal might be. As the smoke cleared I ran forward and saw an nkonka, or male bush-buck, running round in a circle, evidently stupified by the shot, and as I had learned by dear-bought experience that they are nasty beasts for charging, I thought I would rather waste another bullet than go up to it as it was. I afterwards found that the first ball, entering exactly where it was aimed, had pierced right through the animal and had come out at the chest. It fell to the second, and then I had the hard task of carrying it to camp, and as an nkonka is generally supposed to be a good load for two, and I have seen four men carrying the larger specimens found in the heavy timber jungles, it may be imagined that my chest and arms ached for some time after I had thrown it down. It was lucky that I had come across this antelope, for half an hour after my return the two hunters came in empty-handed, saying that the herds of buffalo they had respectively been after had not remained in the neighbourhood, but had crossed the open and gone in the direction of the hills; and indeed in this hot dry weather they would be sure to make for the highest ground, only coming down to drink.

Our camp was a primitive one in all ways, for I had been guided in choosing it chiefly by the sight of a dead tree, the nearness of which would save our one boy a good deal of trouble in getting firewood. I had not, however, while doing so, altogether forgotten my wood craft, and from the other side of the untonbe tree under which it was placed, it was impossible to see our camp-fire, so that

whatever game might come to the water-hole to drink during the night would not be disturbed by its glare. Several small bushes grew round the trunk of the tree, and those in the centre had been cut down and added to the others, and when the fire was lighted and the shoulder and legs of the nkonka stuck on sticks round it to roast, it did not look by any means an uncomfortable sleeping-place, nor unpicturesque with the flame gleaming on the barrels of the guns standing against the tree, and lighting up the whole interior, while it made the enclosing bushes look the blacker and thicker by contrast.

In about an hour the first shoulder was done, and the boy brought it to me and stuck it up in front of me by means of the stick which had already been supporting it while roasting, and I, drawing my hunting-knife, and sharpening a stick for a fork, was just in the act of breaking my fast for the first time that day, when I heard a sudden succession of puffs, like a train just starting, and could distinguish the heavy foot-fall of some animal. In a second everybody was on his feet, and in another we were all scrambling up the tree, I, I am sorry to say, still holding on to my shoulder of antelope, and oblivious of the fact that I had left my gun down below. We were barely in time; indeed, if the rhinoceros had charged straight up to the tree it must have caught me, but it was not necessary to go very high, and I was soon able to watch its movements. Hardly ten seconds had elapsed since I had heard the first warning puff, and now our fire was scattered in every direction, and the vicious animal was stamping upon it and everything else it saw, and squealing with rage the whole time. The meat had

disappeared, some of it trampled into the ground, and some thrown yards away by its feet; two great burning logs of wood were smoking on the top of my spread-out bed, and even from where I was I could smell the smouldering blankets; the remains of my water-calabash were lying in every direction, and everything in camp, save my gun, which the brute had not so far touched, was more or less destroyed. It was enough to try any one's temper, and I asked the man next me if his gun was loaded, and on getting an affirmative answer, I told him to pass it over to me, and propping myself up against the trunk to prevent myself being knocked down, for it was an elephant-gun of six to the pound, I aimed at the shoulder of the trampling and squealing beast, and pulled the trigger. A stillness followed the report for a second, and then a heavy thud, and after that violent struggles on the ground. The other hunter had a double-barrel, and emptied both of them into the struggling mass below him, but despite the shots the brute regained its legs, and went away the moment after it did so; its vicious temper much sobered by the treatment it had received. Ours were not, however, improved by the incident, and it was all I could do to prevent one of the hunters, who was almost speechless with rage at losing his supper, from giving chase on the spot. We had, it is true, the satisfaction of knowing that the upetyane, for it was one of those vicious representatives of the 'Black' species, had received a wound that would to some extent punish him for his unprovoked attack, but a shoulder of antelope was not much among four famished men, for of course I shared it with the others, and the loss of my water-calabash was a serious one where it could not be replaced.

I rather over-slept myself next morning, for the sun was just rising when I awoke, and I found that the two hunters had started a few minutes previously on the spoor of the rhinoceros. It was not difficult to follow them, as the heavy dew on the long grass showed very plainly where they had passed; and as I could do so at a run, while they had to slowly pick out the toe-marks of the animal, which, despite its great size, makes but a faint spoor on the hard ground, and as the dew had since fallen, rendering it all the more difficult to do so, it was not long before I overtook them. The beast was not bleeding, as indeed we had not expected, the thick india-rubber-like skin closing so quickly over a wound as to make bleeding, except in rare instances, next to impossible; but it was unsteady in its gait, and in more than one place the marks on the ground showed that it had come to its knees. We therefore fancied it could not go far, and hunted with the greatest caution through the thickets into which it had entered, even though the general opinion was that we should find it dead.

We passed several places where it had stood under the trees, and at last we came to where it had lain down, and where we could see that it had passed the night, and had not left until daybreak. The spoor was now easy to follow; indeed, it was not necessary to look at it much, for once assured we were following the right animal, the broad trail of where it had brushed the dew off enabled us to go after it as fast as we liked. There was no question either of whether we should find it alive or not, as, facing the open, it had gone straight across, a distance of some two miles, heading for a line of thick bushes that bordered

an old water-course beyond, and if it had strength to do this, there was no doubt it would also have strength sufficient to make itself very formidable when we found it. As we neared the edge of these trees, the wind, which had hitherto been coming in little puffs from every point of the compass, could be felt blowing on our backs, rendering it no longer safe to follow the animal by its spoor, and we had therefore to turn off, and, keeping well out on the flat, to go down the water-course for half a mile, and then, crossing it, to go for about three times that distance up it, when we concluded that the rhinoceros was probably lying somewhere between us and the spot at which its spoor had entered, a mile lower down. The fringe of jungle which bordered the water-course on either side was nowhere more than thirty yards across, and though, as in all semi-moist positions, there were a good number of evergreen bushes, which made some spots very gloomy and dark, yet on the whole it was pretty open, and had a fair sprinkling of trees easy to climb, and sufficiently large to protect one even from so powerful an animal.

It was decided that I and one hunter should search the ground on the side on which it had entered, while the other should keep parallel with us on the opposite side as well as he could, and that, if possible, whoever found it first should warn the others of his having done so by making the bird-call in common use among hunters, and on this understanding we entered the thicket. When we had gone about half a mile, my companion, who was nearer the water-course than I, called me with a low whistle, and on going to the spot I found him bending over the fresh imprint of a rhinoceros's foot, though he was uncertain

whether it had been made by the one that we were after or by another. I was, however, able to set that question at rest at once, as one of the toes of the wounded beast was unusually small, and this was undoubtedly the same animal.

It had come from below, and here, turning on its track, had gone back again—a manœuvre that proved to any one who had before seen instances of this animal's cunning that it was thinking of lying down, and was taking this precaution in case any one should follow it. The other hunter was soon brought to our side by means of a whistle that resembled the accentuation of the words, "Mena, nangu'mzila-bo," "Here, here's the spoor," and leaving him to do the tracking, we searched the ground on either side, but a few yards in front, until the low chirp of a rhinoceros-bird struck our ears, upon which we left the spoor, and, joining, stole up towards the sound. Guided by the continued chirping, we kept on until I made out the loom of the animal lying in a bare spot in the shade of a thick thorn-tree. There was another thorn-tree between us and it, and, motioning to the Kaffirs to follow me in single file, I glided towards it, sheltering myself behind its trunk, and hardly daring to breathe for fear of disturbing the watchful birds. At last we all three knelt down behind it, not ten yards from the unsuspecting brute, and, in the lowest of whispers, I told the one who had a double-barrel to fire at it as it lay simultaneously with myself, so that we should all have a shot left when it rose. It was lying on its knees, nearly broadside to us, its long protruding snout turned in the direction of its upward spoor, and its bare black hide

glistening where the sun's rays, penetrating the thick thorns, danced upon it. I aimed at the shoulder, it being so near that I could pick out the exact spot that I thought would be fatal, while my comrade took it in the head, having a crotchet that there was some vulnerable spot there.

Smoke always hangs long in jungle, but the moment after we fired our ears warned us, and we sprang into the tree with our second barrels undischarged, while the other hunter, who had waited to plant his ball in the brute's chest, barely escaped by dodging to one side of the tree as it passed on the other. There was just time to send another bullet after it before it disappeared, and then we all got down, and, after reloading, prepared to follow it. This was all very well so long as it kept galloping; but when, after about half a mile, it reduced its pace on entering a large thorn jungle to a walk, and began to stand about, come back on its spoor for ten yards, make short parallel lines, and, in a word, do everything that its cunning suggested to lead us astray or within its reach, it became frightfully dangerous, and after a short time its spoor became such a labyrinth of converging circles, some larger and some smaller, that, besides the difficulty it caused in tracking it, it made the risk to ourselves so great that I thought it my duty to ask the men whether they cared to go on, and though they both answered in the affirmative, they urged the advisability of our leaving it alone for a while, so as to allay its suspiciousness, and allow time for its wounds to get stiff. To this I agreed, though rather doubtful whether any lapse of time would make an animal with seven balls

in it much less suspicious, suggesting that meanwhile we should make sure that it had not left this jungle, and that they should walk round on one side while I examined the other, and this being decided upon, we separated.

I had not gone very far when I came across a track, which a few seconds' examination proved was that of the identical animal, which, after leaving a maze of spoor that would take hours for us to unravel, had taken itself straight off to another cover, to which I at once followed it, only to find that after standing about in several places it had left it also, and gone on. No doubt the pain it was in rendered it restless, and as in the direction it now took there were only a few scattered bushes for some miles, I thought that the chase seemed likely to be a long one. On reaching the first clump, however, I found that it had stood there also for some time, and had wandered about round it, probably with the intention of lying down; though it occurred to me that its taking to the flat might be only a stratagem, the better to enable it to see any one approaching, and that I ought to be careful in going near similar places.

It was indeed lucky that the thought had entered my mind; otherwise it is more than probable that I should have walked heedlessly on, never dreaming of any danger in the open, until I had placed myself within its reach; for, as I got near the very next clump, it struck me that the shadow was unnaturally deep in one spot, and there being no tree of any size closer in I sat down by the one by which I was, and, after watching the suspicious place for some minutes, I determined to try the effect of a shot, as, even if I was mistaken, it would serve to guide the

hunters to me. I therefore covered the blackest part of the shadow and pulled the trigger, and in another second the rhinoceros, for it had been it after all, was charging straight towards me. There was no particular hurry, as the tree was an easy one to climb, and I waited until it was within fifteen yards before I fired again; the white flake on its chest where the big bullet had already entered serving as a mark. I could hear the clap of the ball as it struck, but it did not take the slightest notice of it, and for the third time I had to take refuge in a tree. This time, however, it did not go so far, but pulling up when about three hundred yards off, it walked under a thorn and stood, its wounds at last evidently beginning to tell upon it.

At this moment I saw the two hunters hastening towards me, having heard the shots, and I had to jump down and wave and shout at them before they saw the danger they were running into, though, even when they walked up to a tree within two hundred yards of the beast, it remained quiet and took no notice of them. The moment I was loaded I went towards it; there were two trees intervening, one about half way, the other fifty yards nearer, and it was an anxious moment as I crossed the open towards the first, for had it charged then, it must have caught me. Just as I gained the shelter, the hunters, who had probably been waiting for me to do so, fired, neither of their bullets, however, touching the animal, and only causing it to wheel half round with a stamp of its foot and bring its body broadside to me. I knew that I could hit it from where I was, but one hundred and fifty yards is a long way in firing at large game, and I thought I would try and reach the next

tree, and so lessen it by a third before I made the attempt; so, stealing out for a few yards, I made a sudden rush, and succeeded in my object, though it saw me, and probably feeling too sick for a downright charge, trotted out as if to meet me, halting when about half-way. It was now facing me, little more than fifty yards off, and covering the chest I again fired, this time bringing it to the ground, and before I reached the spot it had ceased to struggle. It is noticeable that this shot, so suddenly fatal in its results, was the third aimed at the chest, and it shows how little trust can be placed on a single bullet to stop or turn one of these animals, unless by accident.

It is not here necessary to discuss at length the as yet undecided question of the number of distinct species of rhinoceros found in Africa, though I hope to do so at some future time. As far as my experience and inquiries have gone, I believe, in accordance with the recorded opinions of most travellers and sportsmen who have given any attention to the subject, that there are four,—two of the so-called “white,” and two of the “black.” This distinction, however, of black and white, seems to me misleading and misapplied, all rhinoceros being of the same colour, namely, a peculiar shade of brown, or, if any difference does exist, it being in *R. bicornis* possessing a tinge of red. That to different observers, and in different localities, they do appear to be of different colours—Baldwin mentions a blue kind—is undoubted, but, except any slight variation that may locally exist, from the animal, as in Darwin’s theory of protective resemblance, conforming to the prevailing colour of the district it inhabits, all such cases may be referred to outward circumstances, such as the position

of the sun, or the kind of mud they may have been rolling in last, and partly, no doubt, to the age and sex of the animal. In exemplification of this I may mention that I have watched a bull of *R. simus* trotting past in the full glare of the mid-day sun, and it has appeared to me almost white, while after following the same animal up, and finding it feeding with the long shadows of evening on it, its colour has then seemed to be, as it really is, a deep brown.

These four species I would class as follows:—*R. bicornis*, otherwise known as the borele, or upetyane; *R. Keitloa*, the keitloa of the west, and unkombe tovote of the east; *R. simus*, the moholu of the Bechnanas, and the unkave, or unkombe wogobo of the Amazulu and Amatonga tribes; and last of all the *Kulumane*, which, though I claim for it the position of a distinct species, and believe that I am able to fully prove that claim, has not as yet received a scientific name or recognition from naturalists. There is yet another species—the *R. Oswellii*, or kabaoba,—and if indeed it is not merely a variety of *R. simus*, as I am inclined to believe, it would follow that there are five kinds to be found on the continent.

The first two mentioned are those known as the “black,” the latter as the “white.” Of these *R. bicornis* (though why it should distinctively be named the “two-horned,” when all African rhinoceros are equally so, is not very clear) is the smallest, most savage, and most to be dreaded. I consider it the most dangerous of all African game, and thousands of anecdotes might be related of its morose and vicious disposition, similar to the one already mentioned of its scattering my camp-fire.

R. Keitloa, which would better deserve the name of two-horned, as its back horn, which in other species is a mere stump, is in it of almost equal length with that in front, is a less common and better-tempered species, slightly differing in its conformation, especially about the head, from the last, which it also surpasses in size, though its chief characteristic is in the above-named peculiarity of the horns.

R. simus, the common white rhinoceros, is the largest of all, and is remarkable for the great length the front horn grows to, as well as for its gentle and inoffensive disposition. The *kulumane* differs from the other species in three important particulars: firstly, in its horns, which, though following the conformation of *R. simus*, never attain to the same size; secondly, in its measurements, which, while considerably inferior to those of the common white, are greater than those of the other two species, while it is to be noted that it possesses, though in a less marked degree, the long and prehensile upper lip which characterizes *R. bicornis* and *R. Keitloa*; thirdly, in its food, for, though preferring, as was to be expected from the formation of its snout, the young tender shoots and leaves of thorns, it also resembles *R. simus* in consuming large quantities of grass. In its disposition it would seem to combine the characteristics of the other species; seldom charging without provocation, but displaying great ferocity when roused, and it may also be said to be the most gregarious, herds of from five to fifteen being by no means rare. *R. Oswellii*, which in other points resembles *R. simus*, is considered to be a distinct species, from its front horn, which is straight and unusually long, pointing forward at an

acute angle instead of standing erect from the snout, and is only found far to the north, though I have come across specimens presenting the same peculiarity in a modified form within three hundred miles of the coast.

No rhinoceros can fairly be called a handsome animal; its long protruding head and neck, the total length of which is almost equal to that of the entire body, with the horn—for the back stump may be ignored, and indeed is not visible from a front view—set, like that of the fabulous unicorn, in the centre, its great uncouth ears, and small cunning eye, the latter of which is placed far lower down than that of any other quadruped, and the unwieldy size of the great carcass set on such short legs, utterly depriving it of any claim to such a title. The great white species, however, which possesses all these characteristics in their least unpleasing form, and which in size nearly approaches to an elephant, is certainly a noble animal when seen, as it often is in undisturbed regions, quietly grazing amid all the beauties of tropical vegetation, lopping up with its tongue the rank grass in huge mouthfuls, and a whole flock of rhinoceros-birds perched, half asleep, or lazily picking off an occasional tick, on its broad back, while, it may be, a little hornless calf—a ludicrous miniature of its mother—runs between its legs, and is gently guided forward by the maternal snout. Such scenes often occur towards evening in the broad bottoms through which the rivers run, or on the edge of some water-hole to which the animal is going to quench its thirst after the long heat of the day.

Knowing no fear itself, and harmless towards all animals but man, it approaches the water in company with

wild beasts of every description. Sometimes I have seen a troop of lions walk past an old bull with its mouth buried in the pool, and laying themselves down, commence to lap the water within a few yards of him, either party seemingly unconscious of the other's existence; sometimes I have seen a herd of the beautifully striped koodoos spring away in alarm as their sharp ears caught the heavy footfall, only to return to the water as the grumbling ill-tempered upetyane came into sight, ploughing up the ground in long furrows as it pawed it with its foot, after the manner of savage bulls, but hardly making the antelopes stir as he walked past them into the centre of the pool, and, after drinking, began to roll in it, his great carcass forming deep hollows in the soft mud, and at times nothing but his hideous pig-like head protruding from the water. In winter, when most of the pools have dried up, and more especially in early spring, at the end of September or beginning of October, before the rains have come, and when the heat has already become great, the game congregates wherever there is water, and as rhinoceros are extremely fond of rolling in soft mud, it is to such holes as retain water that they go, in preference to the rivers. Gnu, zebra, eland, and other open flat-loving antelopes favour the same spots, and just as the sun is setting, or at early dawn, the most wonderful herds of mixed game may be seen converging from all points of the compass to some water-hole, perhaps the only one within a radius of twenty miles. Among the antelopes and zebra there is always a timid suspicion that their great enemy the lion may be concealed near the spot, and I have seen half a dozen rhinoceroses come down to the water in succession, drink

and roll, and go away again; the white species to feed on the rich grass, often within a few yards of where I lay concealed, waiting for buffalo, and the others to seek their food among the dense ukaku thickets; while great herds of gnu and zebra, with perhaps a sprinkling of eland, stood three or four hundred yards off and watched them, fearful of approaching nearer so long as the wind, blowing from them to the water, put it out of their power to decide whether there was danger in so doing; and there they have stood almost motionless, too thirsty to graze, till near midnight, looking weird enough in the calm moonlight, till, their thirst conquering their prudence, they would come forward, halting every fifty yards, and even sometimes wheeling away in a panic that had originated with the gnu, till at last, as the foremost entered the water, those behind would quicken their pace, and jostling forward, the whole pool would be covered with them, the gurgling sound from hundreds of thirsty throats sounding strange in the stillness; then, unless—despairing of buffalo—I fired at them, the whole herd would retire, and, when the grass was good, feed all round me for hours, fresh troops occasionally arriving to quench their thirst, and sometimes the same returning a second time before going off to the great flats where they would spend the day.

Watching water-holes was always a very favourite mode of passing the night with me, especially during the warm spring evenings (for it is often chilly after the sun has set during winter), when there was sufficient moon to enable me to see. Many animals that one rarely comes across in the day-time, such as wild dogs, hyenas, leopards, panthers, jackals, and wild cats of many kinds,

used to come prowling about, and there was always the charm of solitude and silence, broken only by the companionship of wild animals, and the many noises of a tropical night, while one never knew what game to expect, as, from the lion to the timid impalla, or little duiker antelope, all came at different times to drink, and, as the night is to much of the brute creation what the day is to us, many a curious scene has come under my notice, increasing my stock of natural history, while I have killed more game during these solitary watches than during all my other hunting put together.

There was one particular pool at which I spent many nights, sometimes when the moonlight was so bright that I could see the game approaching for several hundred yards, but more generally when I had only the light of the stars to assist my aim, while at others, when heavy thunderstorms covered the sky with black clouds, I could only see when the flashes of lightning lit up the scene. I found that buffalo and the larger kinds of antelopes avoided the water-holes during the bright moonlight, but that it made no difference to rhinoceroses and to the other kinds of antelopes, in common with the smaller carnivora, while the thickest of a storm was the time generally chosen by the lions to make their appearance. I remember once during a hail in a thunderstorm hearing the cat-like lapping of one of these great beasts, and when the next flash came, I saw three of them crouched flat on the bank still drinking. I levelled my gun at the spot, and waiting for the next flash, fired a snap-shot at the nearest, and when the lightning enabled me to look again, they had disappeared. I was sitting in the fork of a tree about six

feet from the ground, and in about half an hour I heard a rustling at my feet which continued for some time, though, as the storm had passed, and it was pitch dark, I could not see what made it, but next morning I discovered by the spoor that it had been a lion, and on following it back, I found that it was the identical one I had fired at, and which, after making a detour, had come to pay me a visit, and must, from the way the grass was crushed, have been lying for some time within easy springing distance of me.

The pool that I have mentioned was one that, being fed by a spring, never dried up, and possessed such deep clear water, that the game came long distances to it, preferring it to the river, as being cooler. It was about fifty yards long, and surrounded by a fringe of thick evergreens, except at the upper end, where it was shallow and muddy, and where the animals entered it when they came to drink. My hiding-place was in the thick branches of a great cabbage-tree, just opposite the spot where the buffaloes generally stood when drinking, and about ten yards from where the rhinoceroses were accustomed to roll. On one occasion I remained here without moving for two nights and a day, sleeping in the shade at the foot of the tree during the noonday heat, and watching all night; a piece of sun-dried meat I had brought with me supplying me with food. This freak created great alarm in my camp, as I had left it at early dawn, before any one was awake; and though on the first night it was supposed that I had killed some game and was sleeping by it, yet when another day, followed by a night, passed without my appearing, the general idea was that I had met with some accident;

and when I arrived I found that every one had gone to search for me; and, as an instance of the wonderful spooring powers of some of the natives, I may mention that, the ground having been softened by a shower that had fallen the previous evening, one of them followed me through all the windings that I took while hunting on the day I left camp, and positively tracked me to the water-hole where I had been.

On this occasion I had unusually good sport, killing three rhinoceroses, two buffaloes, and a hyena, and wounding a water-antelope, that was afterwards got. I reached the pool towards five o'clock, and having noticed that there was a great quantity of spoor of all kinds of game that had been there on the previous night, and as I knew that the moon was nearly full, and as the wind was also favourable, I determined to watch that night, though, on most occasions when I did so, I brought, in addition to my double breech-loader of ten to the pound, a large-bored elephant-gun, that did great execution among rhinoceros and buffalo. Game might be expected to arrive at any moment after six o'clock; and so, after spending the interval in sitting at the foot of the tree, rising now and then to watch the flight of some rhinoceros-birds, whose cry high up in the air had caught my ear, and to notice with satisfaction that they were coming from the direction from which I expected sport, and that, after a short absence, during which they were probably drinking at the river, they passed back again, showing that they were returning to the game, having seen none nearer, I climbed up, and took my seat on the convenient arrangement of branches that had originally caused me to choose

this tree, and having disposed the great cabbage-like leaves, from which it takes its name, so as to conceal me, I quietly waited.

In half an hour there was a rustle beside me, and a little duiker antelope, its grey skin shining like silver in the rays of the setting sun, stole down, and after gazing round it for a few seconds, stooped to drink, the reflection of its head and tiny horns being quite plain on the surface of the dark still pool, and then silently retired. A few minutes after another appeared on the opposite bank, followed by two more, and having satisfied their thirst, returned to nibble the young shoots of grass in the glades among the thickets where they lived. The next to arrive were a pair of reed buck, mother and calf, which had no doubt been lying in the long rank grass in the "vlei" beyond, and which, like all the smaller species of antelopes which inhabit the thorn jungles in common with the coast flats and the timber forests, were not nearly as large as those found in the latter places. The bush partridge, a species of francolin, had for some time been uttering their grating cry among the surrounding bushes, and now made their appearance to drink, while dozens of partridges of other kinds, mingled with turtle-doves and paroquets, and the little long-tailed pigeon, alighted on all sides, attracted by the common want.

Suddenly a commotion among them heralded the approach of something larger, though my duller organs had not as yet detected any sound; and in a few minutes a herd of koodoo walked up to the top of the bank and stood, scanning the ground—previous to descending,—for any sign of lurking danger. At last an old doe, as I

could tell by her lighter colour and great size, walked forward, her great thin ears flapping as she moved, and the prominent eyes that are so remarkable among these beautiful antelopes visible even at this distance. She was followed by the whole herd, their movements possessing that wonderful stillness that induces in the observer a feeling that he is not looking at flesh and blood. Among them was only one bull, excepting a yearling with horns not larger than those of an inyala, who, though he had allowed the wary old doe to lead the way, no sooner saw her reach the water in safety than, using his magnificent horns to clear his path, he pushed his way through the rest, and advancing past them into the deeper water, stood, seemingly looking at his own reflection, within five yards of me. I could count every white stripe that marked his sleek skin, could notice the flaws in his horns where he had damaged them, either in fighting, or against a tree, and I could see every wrinkle and scratch in his great dark neck, and every line of his delicate limbs. It was a sore temptation, and at a later hour I should certainly have given way to it; but as I did not know what I might disturb, or how near the larger game might be, I allowed him to go unhurt.

Twilight in the tropics is of very short duration, and soon after this, the moon having not as yet risen, it became as dark as it ever is in that clear atmosphere, where myriads of stars of a magnitude unknown in this country cover the sky, and where the planets shine so brightly as to throw a distinct and dark shadow, so that, although I could now and then hear the rustling of small animals as they passed on their way to the water, I could

not distinguish their outlines. Two hours passed like this, during which I amused myself by watching the huge bats and goatsuckers as they skimmed round me, and by listening to a great owl (*Bubo verraucii*) that from some of the fissures of the mountain above me was imitating the cry of the leopard with such precision that no one unaccustomed to hear it could have detected the imposture.

I was, however, beginning to doubt whether I should see any game before morning, as the smaller animals had already mostly quenched their thirst, and there was no sign of the larger ones, when I heard a rumbling that I knew could only be produced by one of two animals, either an elephant or a rhinoceros, and as there had been no fresh spoor of the former about for some time, I rightly concluded that it was the latter. It seemed to issue from an open glade between two thickets about sixty or seventy yards off, and I waited for nearly half an hour, during which I again heard the sound once or twice, momentarily expecting to see the animal appear. At last, losing patience, and suspecting, as was really the case, that it had drunk at a smaller pool below me, and was now feeding, I got down from the tree, and, stealing round the edge of the water, I passed through the adjoining thicket, and crept forward to its edge. The moon had been up for some time, but was still looming large and misty through the moisture rising from the earth, and directly between me and it I saw the great black outline of a rhinoceros grazing broadside to me about forty yards off. I might no doubt have fired from where I was, but seeing by the long front horn that I had to deal with one of the white species, and

noticing a shrub within a few yards of it, I determined to try and creep in nearer, as there was little fear of alarming it if I was careful, especially now when the watchful rhinoceros-birds were absent.

Ten minutes' crawling sufficed to place me under the lee of the shrub, which was of sufficient size to form a screen even when I should have to sit up to fire, and, still keeping my gun-barrels out of sight, as I was afraid of some gleam of the moonlight on them catching its eye before I was ready, I raised myself and looked through the intervening twigs. I had got near enough in all conscience, for I found its nose within a yard of my own, some slight noise I had made having struck its ear and caused it to wheel round. Of course, I remained like a statue, though I was nearer than I liked, the danger being that it might walk forward and come right upon me, when it would be difficult to say what even such an amiable-tempered animal as a white rhinoceros might do. They are always slow and deliberate in their movements, and this one stood there listening, while I could hear and almost feel its breath, till in my cramped position I would have given anything for just one kick. It would have been utterly useless to fire, for a rhinoceros, especially of the long-horned species, offers no mark whatever when it stands facing you with its head down, its chest being invisible, and, even if you were desirous of making the experiment of a shot at those well-protected spots, the horn guarding the brain and neck.

There was nothing for it but patience, and mine was pretty nearly exhausted before, to my great relief, it at last turned away, having heard something stirring in the

thicket beyond. Fearing lest it should make some fresh movement, and so again conceal its shoulder, now in full view, I at once raised my gun, and hesitating for a second between the centre of the shoulder-blade and just behind it, I decided in favour of the latter and pulled the trigger, at the same time jumping clear of the bush and smoke, and throwing myself down in the open, where the grass was long enough to hide me. Loading as I lay, I watched the mighty struggles of the brute to rise, till, fearing it would succeed, I went up and fired both barrels, the first into the one shoulder, the second into the other, hoping in that way to at least disable it; and after waiting on the spot for ten minutes, I thought it unnecessary to do more, and returned to the pool.

Knowing very well that after all that noise I need not hope for anything to come for a long time, I stretched myself out as comfortably as the branches of the tree would allow, and placing my gun so that it could not fall, I tried to keep sleep off by thinking; however, I was tired, and the cool air and stillness made me drowsy, and before long I found myself sleeping in snatches, which at last ended in utter unconsciousness.

Some hours had passed when I next awoke, half falling off the tree before I remembered where I was, but the instant I did so the sullen gurgle of displaced mud warned me that there was something in the pool. Gently raising myself therefore into a sitting posture, I looked, and saw, for the moonlight was now almost as bright as day, a rhinoceros wallowing in the shallow water and mud, while its companion stood on the sky-line on the bank above. Looking more closely, while my hand sought my gun, I

saw by their small size and diminutive horns that they were both upetyane (*R. bicornis*), a species against which, ever since I had been so roughly handled by one of them, I had always borne malice for their evil disposition and vicious propensities, and therefore, though their horns were utterly worthless, I was glad to get the opportunity. I could not at first decide which to fire at; for though the one in the pool was not ten yards off, yet it was lying in such a position that I doubted my being able to mortally wound it, while the other, unless it charged, would be out of sight the moment I fired and startled it; I therefore thought I would try a shot at the latter, which, though it was fully forty yards off, I could, from its prominent position, see almost more plainly than the other, and, resting the gun on a branch, I did so. The bullet told loudly, and the animal, puffing and snorting, disappeared, while the one in the water, springing to its feet, and sending the mud pattering among the surrounding leaves, trotted out, and then, wheeling half round, stood, evidently listening for some indication of my whereabouts. This I soon gave it, aiming as before at the shoulder, and bringing it to the ground on the spot, though, instantly recovering itself, it charged straight for the place where it had seen the flash.

Short as the delay had been, it had enabled me to load one barrel, and when it was within a yard of the tree I again fired down into its hump, making it swerve with the pain, and, losing its balance, fall bodily into the pond below. The water was deep, and it floundered about for some seconds before it found its feet, enabling me to reload, and to again plant my balls, right and left, in its shoulder, upon which it rushed off, scattering the water as it did so,

and, going over the rise, was lost to view. While this had been going on I had an impression that I could hear distant squealing, such as these animals make only in their death-agonies, or when in very great pain, unless it be in moments of fury, but now in the restored quiet I could hear it quite distinctly, and I knew by it that my single bullet must have mortally wounded the first one. It would not, however, do to leave the brute squealing there for long, disturbing everything within hearing, and not impossibly bringing lions about, in which latter case I need not hope to see any buffalo, so, although I was rather nervous at the risk of coming across the other, which was very likely close by, and would not, I knew, spare me if it got the chance, I again got down, and proceeded in the direction of the cries. I had to be careful; the moon, shining brightly enough in the open, cast deep black shadows among the trees, and forced me to go forward foot by foot, sometimes standing more than a minute examining some dark recess before I ventured to pass it. The squealing of the animal, loud enough when I started, also gradually died away, until, ceasing altogether, it left me without any guide. However, I persevered, and, after going about a quarter of a mile, I saw a great shapeless heap by the side of a clump of bushes, which turned out to be what I was looking for, and, as it was quite dead, I made the best of my way back.

Nothing more disturbed the stillness of the pool until after the morning star had risen, when I heard the startled cry of the ititihoya plover, and knowing that it never stirs during the night unless almost trodden upon, I waited in expectation, and in a few minutes three old

buffalo bulls, seeming almost white in the moonlight, came down to drink. Fancying that they would roll as well as drink, I did not fire at first, but when I saw that one, having satisfied its thirst, walked out, while the others stood with the water dripping from their mouths, only waiting to have another drink before they joined it, I delayed no longer, and taking the nearest one in the point of the shoulder—and it was almost opposite me, and not five yards off,—I dropped it where it stood. Its next companion, unawed by the sudden and loud report and the blaze of light, uttered a grunt, and, instead of taking to flight, charged straight out of the water, and tried to climb the bank on which the tree in which I was stationed grew, offering me, as it did so, a most beautiful shot at its broad chest. It was lucky for me that I was in a place of safety, for it did not even swerve when the ball struck it, but rushed past under me, breaking off one of the brittle lower branches in its way, and I saw no more of it.

Soon after this it became apparent that day was breaking, though for some time it was difficult to distinguish between it and the light of the moon, and some of the smaller antelopes were already making their appearance, when, hearing a noise at the further end of the pond, to which, as I had never seen any game drink there, my back was turned, I looked round and saw, to my surprise, the great heads and fore-quarters of several rhinoceroses protruding through the bushes, some drinking, and others standing still. I counted six, and from their numbers and short thick horns I knew that they were kulumane, making the third species I had seen that night. There was no good in my firing from my present position, as from

the distance and the thickness of the bushes I could not make them out very distinctly, so I dropped down, and getting outside the fringe of bushes, would soon have got close to them, had not a seventh, which I had not seen, and which was standing with its head towards me, having probably finished drinking, and being on its way to feed, suddenly given the alarm; and though I fired as they trotted off at fifty yards, I believe I missed with both barrels, as I did not hear the clap of the ball following either.

Perhaps people who have never hunted large game may think that it would be almost impossible for any one who could shoot at all to miss such a mark as half a dozen rhinoceroses at fifty yards, but I assure them I have seen men come out from England, first-class grouse and partridge shots, and who were able to make wonderful practice with a rifle at a target with measured distances, but who could not for months kill more than an occasional head of the quantities of game by which they were surrounded; and I have seen rhinoceros missed clean, standing not twenty yards off, by men who could kill a couple of snipe right and left three times out of five. Judging the distance correctly is the chief stumbling-block in an atmosphere so different to that of Europe, and which, from its clearness, causes an animal at one hundred and fifty yards not to appear much over seventy, and the probable explanation of my missing these is that, deceived by the peculiar light of early dawn, I judged them to be fifty yards off, while they were perhaps eighty in reality.

There was, however, nothing for it but to return to my ambush, where I patiently waited till about seven

o'clock without seeing anything worth firing at, and as the sun was by this time well up, and the game was retiring to their lairs, I descended, and, after having a bathe, during which I succeeded in moving the fallen buffalo, whose dying struggles had fortunately carried it into deep water, and towed it to the other end of the pond, where I covered it up with branches to keep the vultures from seeing it during my absence, I went off, in the first place, to visit the white rhinoceros cow that I had left still living, and then to see what had become of the upetyane at which I had fired so many shots, as well as the buffalo bull which had charged me. To my disgust I found that the former had got up and disappeared, though, from the marks on the ground, it was evident she could not go far as she was dragging one of her fore-legs, and in point of fact, I found her within a hundred yards of the spot, lying down, and rising with the utmost difficulty when I walked up. I settled her with three more shots, and then returned to the pool to take up the spoor of the other. It had gone away at a furious gallop, tearing up the ground, and smashing branches and small trees like reeds before it, and had kept up this headlong course for nearly a mile, when, reducing its pace to a walk, it entered an ukaku thicket, went straight through it, following the windings of an old game-path, passed through the next open, fully a mile broad, over which I had great difficulty in tracking it, and went into a large jungle that edged it; turning off at right angles to its former course, it then proceeded to make for the upper end, and after another mile I began to guess the spot it wished to reach. One part of this jungle was remarkable for having a

creeper which, twining round the thorn-trees, formed a number of vegetable caves, so regular in their formation that, at first sight, it appeared to be impossible that it could be the work of nature, and that they must have been trained by the hand of man.

I had once before been there in pursuit of a herd of buffaloes, which we found lying in them, and at the time I had noticed that there were a great many rhinoceros spoors, both old and new, and several places in which they were evidently accustomed to lie, and as the direction this one was taking would bring it there in half an hour, I had no doubt but that it belonged to that spot,—as they wander so far during the night in search of food,—and was now, sick and wounded, trying to return there, perhaps expecting to meet its mate. As I proceeded I found that my conjecture was correct, and I also noticed several fresh spoors, and other signs that led me to believe that there were more rhinoceros in the neighbourhood, all by the smallness of their track belonging to the same species. On reaching the outskirts of the creeper-covered bushes I had to be very careful; indeed, the thought more than once crossed my mind of going back to camp and getting help before I prosecuted my search, and if it had not been so far I should probably have done so, as not only would the wounded one charge the moment it heard or saw me, but as there seemed to be so many about I ran the risk of being caught by one whose existence I knew nothing of, while intent upon following the other, and, added to this, I saw the fresh footprints of a lion, which might possibly be after my wounded rhinoceros, although I have noticed that it is generally rare to go far into the haunts

of this species without finding that there has been a lion about lately.

However, I went on, the sole precaution I could take being silence, while I was often passing within a foot of a mass of tangle that, for aught I knew, might contain a rhinoceros or a lion. The feeling that one is passing thickets from which dangerous game may be watching you, especially when it is more than probable that it is so, and when one can do nothing whatever to mitigate the danger, is by no means a pleasant one, and before I had got far in I was wishing myself well out of it; indeed, I might have turned had I not thought it almost as dangerous to do so as to advance. In ten minutes I was in the centre of this patch, and still the spoor led me on until I began to hope that it would pass through, and that I should not have to tackle the most dangerous of African animals, rendered, if it is possible, more ill-tempered than usual by its wounds, by myself, and in the heart of its stronghold, when it made a sudden turn to the right, taking me past a dense wall of creepers.

I hardly know what tempted me to go and peer through them, gently passing my hand in, and moving them so that I could see a little, for I had not done it before, though I had passed dozens of similar places; but so it was, and there, scarcely a yard away, lay the great brute, its head turned to the entrance, opposite me, where it had gone in, and its side and hind-quarters towards me. It was no time for hesitation. I first glanced round for a tree, put the muzzle of the gun to the hole through which I had been looking, and, holding it at arm's-length, pulled the trigger, and then, nervous with

the gloomy stillness of the spot. I climbed up into the tree without waiting to see the result of the shot, unfortunately leaving my gun at the bottom when I did so. I had hardly got into one of the lower branches before I could tell by the faint sounds of struggling in the thicket that I had no real cause for fear, and I was turning to come down again when I became conscious of an approaching noise of bushes breaking, accompanied by snorting and puffing, and in a few seconds a fresh rhinoceros made its appearance, evidently in the very highest state of rage and excitement at a gun being fired in this den of theirs. It soon got my wind, although it failed to see me sitting on a bare branch not two yards from its head, and went off in the direction I had come from, making a most tremendous noise, and tossing its head about in a very vicious manner, so that I judged it best to get out of the place as soon as possible; and as on going up to the wounded one I found it dead, my last shot having destroyed what little life was left, and there was nothing more to keep me, I made for the outside as fast as I could, only fearing, as was likely enough, that the brute might come back, and, striking my fresh trail, overtake me somewhere where I should not have the shelter of a tree; but I saw nothing more of it, and went straight back to the pool, arriving there shortly after mid-day; and after convincing myself that the wounded buffalo had not fallen in my neighbourhood, but that to kill it would entail a long and wearisome chase, the success of which was uncertain, I lay down under the tree and slept till evening, not awaking till the rustling of the long grass and leaves announced the arrival of the breeze which usually springs up at that

time, and which is so refreshing after the furnace-like stillness and glare of the day. Rubbing my eyes, I climbed into my perch, and before long was surrounded by all the smaller animals and birds which had come to drink on the preceding night, and which, though I had seen them hundreds of times before, never wearied me in watching them. There was always variety. To-night a herd of wild pigs came rooting down the bank among the first arrivals, and remained in sight until dark, grubbing up the soil with their long snouts in search of the succulent roots on which they live, and among them was an immense old boar, with tusks forming three-quarters of a circle: one could not help being struck with the family resemblance he displayed both to elephants and rhinoceroses.

There was a large herd of impalla too, whose sleek skins, terminating in the purest white beneath, and set off by black points, and by a streak of similar colour that extends along the back, showed that they were now in the highest condition, as indeed at this time of year they always are. There was a little clump of bush standing alone on the flat above the pool, and as the herd retired, grazing as they went, a young ram went close to it. I was watching them at the time, admiring their graceful movements as, spreading out like a herd of sheep, they commenced feeding, though, as is the case with all gregarious antelopes, there was always some head up in search of any sign of danger, which, if seen, would at once have been announced to the others by a signal of alarm, resembling a suppressed sneeze, causing them to cease feeding, and to gaze in the direction indicated, from which,

as has often been the case when I have been the cause of alarm, they would gradually edge away, although they could detect nothing, while, if the danger was palpable, they would assemble together, the oldest males still standing looking at it until the does and young ones had gone some distance, when they would join them, and, galloping away into the centre of the nearest plain, would resume their feeding unconcernedly, conscious of their safety in the bare open. The danger that now threatened one of them was, however, unnoticed by themselves or by me, until I saw a long spotted body spring out of the little clump of bush, and alight on the neck and head of the young ram that had gone so near it. The action was momentary, and the sudden change from the herd of antelope peacefully grazing, with several wild pigs and a duiker in the foreground to a deserted flat, tenanted only by the leopard and its struggling victim, was almost theatrical. There were a few un-availing plunges, a half-choked bleat, and the antelope fell on the edge of the thicket in its last agonies, while the great cat never stirred from its original position, and never for an instant ceased tearing at its throat.

Although I was posted there for a precisely similar object to that of the leopard, while I had not even its excuse of hunger and necessity, I must confess the sight made me angry, and getting down, I went as near as the vegetation surrounding the water enabled me to go unperceived. Even here I was sixty yards off, though I was at the nearest spot to the clump in which concealment was possible, its very isolation having probably caused the leopard to choose it as making it a less sus-

pected spot than a larger thicket would have been. It was also but an imperfect view of the animal that I could obtain through the long grass, and I hesitated considerably before I fired, not only doubting whether I could hit it at that distance, but aware that if I let it alone now it would go away before long, nay, might even come to the water to drink, and at any rate would enable me to hide myself during its absence in the clump of bush itself, and afford me every opportunity for a certain shot on its return; but my mind reverting to the tracks of a very large herd of buffalo which I had noticed when following the black rhinoceros, and which would in all probability come to drink during the night, I preferred to chance a shot now, rather than risk losing them while watching for it. I could just see its spotted skin crouched above the carcass, and, aiming low, I fired, the shot being answered by a low growl, while the animal bounded off, sufficiently in view to tempt me to try the other barrel. It however disappeared in the bushes, and I walked up and examined the impalla, finding no other wound, except some trifling scratches on the shoulders, but the one in the throat; and as it was not altogether impossible that the leopard might return after all, especially if it happened to be very hungry, and was unwounded, I did not attempt to touch it, but left it lying as I found it.

Soon after my return to the tree, however, I heard the melancholy howl of a hyena to leeward, growing louder and louder as the beast came nearer, and then, after suddenly ceasing, probably just when it caught the impalla's scent, I next heard it tearing at the carcass. It is curious how all creatures, whether birds or beasts,

that prey upon dead bodies, seem to become aware of the existence of their food by some instinct independent of their senses; it has been commented upon again and again how vultures make their appearance in flocks ten minutes after the game has fallen, when there was not a single one in sight before; and in night-shooting, though of course there are numerous exceptions, I have often noticed how quickly hyenas and jackals would find out anything I had killed, and how rapidly they would congregate the moment a single one had discovered it; and yet it seems certain that they do not call one another to the feast, as they rarely howl except when in search of prey, and quarrel and fight over every mouthful. To-night was a case in point, and during the hours of darkness before the moon rose, I could hear them in increasing numbers, snarling and crunching, and when the impalla was finished, it being but a morsel among two or three of them, it was evident enough by the sounds that they had discovered the dead rhinoceros, and were trying their teeth in its tough hide.

Once before the moon rose some large animal came down to drink, but it was so dark that I could not even distinguish its outlines from where I was, so I crossed out into the open, and lay down flat, hoping that I should be able to see it against the sky when it returned, but the rhinoceros, as the spoor afterwards told me it was, kept lower down and I missed it. However, as I did not know this at the time, I waited, wondering what was keeping it, till a low rumbling sound on the other side attracted my attention, and in a few seconds I could see—for though the moon was as yet invisible, it was up,

and it was not nearly so dark as it had been—the foremost of a long line of animals whose great size proved them to be buffaloes. They were approaching in single file, though in places there were three or four together, and before long the leading ones had passed, almost touching me where I lay. I at once decided not to fire until they had all gone down to the water, when, as I should be between them and the only way of egress, I should probably have time for several shots, so, remaining still, I attempted to count them.

There were sixty-seven in all, as well as I could make out, a large proportion of which were yearlings and two-year-olds, though among them were several large bulls, easily distinguishable by their massive fore-quarters and superior size. Ten minutes passed while I listened to the splashing of the water and to the gurgling of the soft mud as their heavy hoofs sank into it, and by that time the moon had fairly risen, enabling me to see pretty plainly, and then they began to come back again, though more irregularly than they had gone down. The first half dozen were cows and young ones, and close behind them was a large bull, which I picked out at once, and, waiting till he was within three yards of me, I knocked him over with the first shot, the echo of which had hardly broken the stillness before I could hear the whole herd thundering up the bank, and in a second more I was in danger of being crushed beneath their hoofs.

Jumping up, I levelled at the head of the nearest, the bright flash causing them to swerve, some passing on each side of me, and as I rammed fresh cartridges in I could tell by the sound that they had halted, and on

turning round I saw them standing about seventy yards off, while on looking about I noticed that the bull I had knocked over had also disappeared. My first impulse was to run in and fire again, but while hesitating a low roaring caught my ears, and I could see that they were slowly advancing. I had heard this roaring before; it is a sort of suppressed sound, and peculiar to buffalo bulls when excited by the presence of a lion, and generally precedes a general charge upon the common enemy. I glanced behind me, the pool was thirty yards off, and the danger was every instant becoming more imminent, for the brutes, whether they mistook me for a lion or not, were evidently bent on mischief.

In this predicament it struck me to drop down among the long grass, and then crawl as rapidly as possible towards the pool, rightly, as it turned out, imagining that they would be puzzled by my sudden disappearance, and think that it concealed some stratagem. They were not now more than forty yards off, and I could already see that the front line was composed of bulls, so there was no time to be lost, and down I went, crawling away as hard as I could go, until, finding myself on the top of the bank, and not ten yards from the pool, I ventured to raise my head and look back. They were still standing where I had last seen them, so, aiming low, I fired both barrels in succession at the dark mass, bringing them down upon me like a troop of cavalry. Of course I jumped up, and took to my heels, easily reaching the tree in time to see them sweep round the head of the pool and gallop off in a cloud of dust in the direction they had come from. The next thing was to go and look whether they had

left any wounded behind, and on reaching the spot I found a cow dead, shot through the brain by one of my last shots, while the two first, though neither were fired at over three yards' distance, had made good their escape. Nothing more worthy of note occurred that night. Some hyenas discovered the dead buffalo, and, as their teeth were able to penetrate the softer portions of its hide, and they would soon have destroyed it, I crept up and fired at them, killing one. Towards morning a herd of water-antelopes came to drink, and the one at which I fired, though it made off at the time, was found dead by the men I sent to skin the buffaloes, and to cut off the rhinoceroses' horns.

In all large game shooting, but perhaps especially with rhinoceros, the weight and the hardness of the bullet used is of the last importance, and much more depends upon it than would be thought, even by those who have had some experience, unless they have paid special attention to the proportions used, and have made it a practice to cut their bullets out, and notice what the effect of the concussion has been, both on the projectile itself, and also on the bones with which it has come in contact.

There are two compositions in general use for hardening balls in those countries where the game is of sufficient size to render it necessary, namely, lead and pewter, and lead and tin, to which may be added the occasional use of quicksilver. Formerly, lead and pewter was invariably used, in the proportion of about four of lead to one of pewter; but of late years tin has almost entirely taken the place of that compound. A bullet is generally con-

sidered at a proper state of firmness when the teeth will just slightly indent it, and one invariably sees native hunters applying this test to the first ball of a fresh casting. It not unusually happens, particularly in the more remote districts, that all hardening matter becomes exhausted, and one hears stories of canteens, tin cups, etc., being melted down as a makeshift; in such an extremity resort is had to fat—generally the hard tallow found about the intestines of a buffalo, or a water-antelope—a quantity of which is mixed with the liquid lead, and, further to harden them, each bullet as it is cast is immersed in cold water. The result of this is tolerably satisfactory, the firmness attained nearly equalling that of a mixture of pewter and lead.

It may be interesting to see what experience shows is the effect produced by bullets in different states of hardening. The object desired—and which is attained when exactly correct proportions are used—is that the ball, in striking a bone, should flatten sufficiently to prevent its boring through, should smash the obstacle sufficiently, while at the same time it must retain enough of the round form to obviate any chance of the increased resistance offered to the larger surface stopping its way, and thereby preventing its penetrating far enough. Such a bullet will often smash—I use the word in contradistinction to merely break—both the shoulders of a buffalo, and remain in the skin on the further side, or will penetrate a couple of inches into the enormous mass of bone which protects that animal's brain.

When no hardening, or an insufficient quantity, has been put in, the effect is that the whole force of the ball

is expended on the first serious opposition it encounters. Should that chance to be strong enough to resist the shock, the bullet merely flattens itself, as it would against an iron target: though the stunning effect of such a blow is far greater than that caused by a hardened ball, a fact that has been discovered through game dropping more frequently to such a shot than when a better prepared missile has been used. When, however, the resistance offered is not so great, and the bone gives way, the smash that takes place is something wonderful. The flattened ball breaks up into innumerable fragments, which, by some unknown law of attraction, adhere to the bone, along which they run, rending and splitting it, until the ultimate result is very much the same as would be produced by a shell bursting. Of course, in such a case, the ball goes no further, and, though the animal is maimed, it is not vitally wounded. Firing unhardened bullets, as far as rhinoceros, hippopotamus, and elephants are concerned, is mere trifling—it may possibly amuse you, but it certainly cannot hurt them,—and even with buffalo, it will probably cause you to lose three-quarters of all those you may wound; though, on the other hand, it is decidedly to be preferred for lions, tigers, leopards, panthers, and such like animals, on account of the stunning and disabling nature of the blow on such comparatively small bones. There is a story told of an African native hunter, who affirmed that his soft lead bullet had rebounded from a rhinoceros's hide, and struck him in the face; and though perhaps this may be too gross an exaggeration to have ever obtained credence, yet some such idea was for a long time believed in, and even at the present day it is

not impossible that some one may exist to whom it is news that an African rhinoceros's hide is easily penetrable by spears, not to speak of bullets, that is, so long as the animal is alive; for when the skin is taken off and dried it becomes so hard that it is even doubtful whether a hardened ball would then pierce it.

Generally speaking, it may be laid down as a rule, that whenever shells are found efficacious, hardened bullets will not only be unnecessary, but even not so useful, though to this buffalo prove an exception, as, at certain angles, it is possible to fire a shell into the vitals without meeting with any resistance sufficient to cause it to burst prematurely; while, when the part presented to the hunter entails the breaking of a large bone, a hardened bullet becomes necessary.

Too much tin is often accidentally added, and the result of so doing is diametrically opposite to that caused by its absence. The bullet will then penetrate through the bone as far as the projecting force will carry it, retaining meanwhile its exact spherical form. In a word, it combines the maximum of penetration with a minimum concussion. In proof of this it may be stated, that instances have occurred of the same bullet having been cut out of the carcase, and reloaded several times in succession, and having, in the hands of natives accustomed to stalk close, and make sure of their aim, killed several head of game without being recast. Indeed, were it not for the brittleness of overhardened bullets, they would be in general request for such shots as require great penetration; but, unfortunately, they cannot be depended upon, and often split and glance harmlessly off the first thing

they strike. When fired at limbs, such bullets produce no great shock to the animal's system, generally only boring a hole through, and not breaking the bone, the practical result of which is that the animal will go ten miles further and stand double the number of shots—will indeed often go so far as to render it impossible to overtake it. Clean wounds are not so immediately disabling as those of an opposite nature, and though probably many, if not most, animals, that get away at the time, shot through and through, ultimately die, yet that is a very poor consolation indeed to the sportsman.

So much for the proper hardening of the bullets, their weight, which principally depends upon the size of the gun used, producing in its own way very similar results. The advocates of small bores say that their use requires more skill, while it makes the shooting neater and cleaner, and inflicts less pain. This must at once be allowed to be the case with all the small game, and even with many of the larger antelopes. It is undoubtedly far prettier work, and more sportsmanlike, to kill with a single ball, even though not larger than a pea, than to ultimately cause the death of an animal from weakness and loss of blood, after repeated shots, no one of which is in itself immediately fatal; and were it possible to carry it out in shooting the really large game, there could be no argument about the matter. Unfortunately this is impossible. Practice teaches us that no amount of experience or deadliness of aim suffices, even when large balls are used, to render the killing of such animals as elephants (I am speaking of the African species, which presents no certain mark in its forehead, as its East Indian *confrère* does) and rhinoceroses, and, in a

lesser degree, hippopotami and buffaloes, by a single bullet, a moral certainty.

In my own experience I have found that the bullet which to-day has proved all but instantaneously fatal, has to-morrow, though seemingly entering at precisely the same spot, and at exactly the same angle, had no effect; and while this has been my own personal experience, not of once, but of many times, any hunter, white or black, will bear witness to the times without number where he has planted his bullet in the exact spot he desired without the slightest immediate result.

A hippopotamus (most of which are shot in the water) presents a small mark in the head, the penetration of which by ever so small a ball causes instant death, while a buffalo, when hit exactly in a well-known spot in the forehead, drops to the shot; and therefore, when the hippopotamus is in the water, and when the buffalo's forehead is turned to you, a small-bored weapon is of equal use with a larger one, but when these conditions are not attainable, as in nine cases out of ten they are not with the latter animal, the lighter gun becomes in comparison useless, as, like an over-hardened bullet, it will but pierce the bone, and not break it, while it produces no shock whatever to the system, and, though very possibly mortally wounding the animal, renders the chances exceedingly small that the hunter will get it, thus inflicting more pain, as death from such a tiny ball may not take place for a week, or even a month, afterwards. In the case of elephants and rhinoceros, there is, on the contrary, no place at which the entrance of a ball is certain to be at once fatal; and though there are spots in the ear and shoulder

of the former, and in the shoulder of the latter, which not seldom prove so, yet it is utterly impossible to predicate as to when it will and when it will not.

As an instance of this, I may mention the case of a rhinoceros at which three shots were fired, all from the same angle, and all of which could have been outwardly covered by a crown-piece, the two first of which had no effect whatever, while the third killed it dead; and it all tends to prove that, as it is impossible under any circumstances to make sure of killing with one shot, resort must therefore be had to heavy missiles, which will sicken and weaken the animal, and will produce the same effect in an hour that smaller ones would take a week to accomplish.

On one occasion I happened to witness, and indeed to take an active part in, the capture of a young rhinoceros calf of the species I have already mentioned by the native name of kulumane, and as it afforded us an unusually good opportunity of studying the habits and characteristics of this hitherto unrecognised species, it is worth while to give an account of it, although, unfortunately, the little animal did not exist very long in captivity, dying a few days after we had caught it.

Its mother had been shot by one of the hunters on the previous day, and, true to the instinct so generally displayed in similar cases by the young of all rhinoceroses, it remained the whole night by the dead body, and when we visited the place next morning we found it still there. We had, in anticipation of its being so, provided ourselves with a number of strong rheims, or thongs cut from the hide of a buffalo, and at once set to work to catch it; and as the thicket in which its mother lay enabled us to

surround it unperceived, we had but little difficulty in approaching near enough, and, after some trouble and confusion, in slipping a noose round one of its hind-legs, for although it continuously made short charges out at any one it saw, it would not go any distance from its mother's corpse, and made no attempt to escape. Ultimately we succeeded in securing another thong to the other leg, and ten or a dozen men having got hold of each, we attempted to drive it out, but, with pig-like obstinacy, it utterly refused to go in the desired direction, charging back on us, or going the wrong way, while it puffed and snorted, and now and then squealed with rage. At intervals it got jerked off its legs by the sudden tightening of the thong held by the men opposite to those it was charging, on which occasions it would lie where it fell, and refuse to move. After a time, however, it somewhat calmed down, exhausted by the violence of its efforts, and we hit upon a plan which enabled us to guide it towards camp. One man was sent in front of it as near as he dared to go, and was instructed to run in the proper direction the instant it noticed and charged him, and ultimately it settled down into a sober jog-trot, the man still running in front, and I and my European companion bringing up the rear, convulsed with laughter at the ludicrous appearance it presented as it trotted along, followed by its numerous attendants, all the while emitting loud snorts, and its hide glittering with the perspiration induced by such unusual exercise.

We had anticipated considerable difficulty in getting it across the somewhat broad river, on the opposite bank of which our camp was situated, but it took the water better

than we had expected, and was soon tethered there in safety.

The bottom in which it was contained abundance of the rich grass which forms the chief food of *R. simus*, but it did not eat much of it, though, even on the first evening, it consumed a large quantity of the young shoots and tender leaves of the thorn branches provided for it, and seemed to be most fond of the hack, or waitabit thorn, turning over the other kinds with its snout and tasting them, and then passing them by to search for the former. On the second evening, however, I noticed it, after returning from water, commence to eat the surrounding grass; and though it did not show as great a relish for it as it did for the thorn-shoots, it ate it, both then and afterwards, in such large quantities as proved that it naturally forms a by no means inconsiderable portion of their food, and this is a more important point than it seems, as showing the individuality of the species; both of those which form the "black" subsisting almost entirely on thorn branches and roots, while *R. simus*, as I have said before, feeds chiefly, if not solely, on grass. It was also noticed to be remarkably partial to the leaves of the umganu tree, a water-loving species, which is found in the damp bottoms, and whose fruit, formed by the natives into an intoxicating drink, is so esteemed by the elephants that they annually come hundreds of miles in search of it to places where it is common. It used to be taken down to water twice a day, and very soon became tame enough to be led there by a couple of men without attempting to charge; in fact, before its death it would come to any one who brought it a bundle of thorn branches, and,

unless irritated by seeing a dog, to which it had a great aversion, or by too much familiarity, would not attempt to hurt him. When annoyed it warned us of the fact, and of the advisability of getting beyond the limits of its tether, by its forcibly expelling the air through its closed lips, forming a noise resembling an emphatic sneeze, while at the same time it imparted a sudden stiffness to its neck, very similar to what may be observed in cattle when displeased with anything they see passing. This was all particularly interesting to us; for although the sound they make was one well known to every hunter as the precursor of a charge, the imminent danger it usually announced had prevented any of us from hitherto learning how it was made.

We ascribed its death, which occurred before long, to too sudden a change from its mother's milk, but, if a specimen were really wanted for this country, and there is not a single one as yet, I have no doubt that even this difficulty—a serious one in a land where cattle do not exist on account of the tsetse—might be got over by the sacrifice of the lives of a few cows, for, as the bite of this insect does not cause immediate death, although they would ultimately die, yet they might be brought down to the plains, and would probably live long enough to take the young rhinoceros on to the higher districts, where plenty of milk could be procured.

Although I have come across kulumane in greater or less numbers in all parts of South Africa, I have never found them so common as they were, and are even to this day, despite the hundreds that have been shot, in the valley of the Black Umfolosi. In many parts where

they only occasionally occur, they are often mistaken, both by whites and blacks, for *R. simus* not yet attained to its full growth, but there their numbers are so large that it is impossible to feel a doubt of their being a distinct species, especially as both *R. simus* and *R. bicornis* are also represented, the former in considerable numbers. It is also noticeable that where the latter species is common the kulumane is rare, and *vice versa*, while *R. simus* seems to exist independently of the others. Different districts, however, appear to be more or less suitable for each distinct species; in the valley of the Black Umfolosi the kulumane decidedly preponderates; in the great thorn district which is watered by the upper portion of the Umkusi the common white is more plentiful; in all the country lying between the Umkusi pass in the Bombo mountains to the Mbuluzi both the black species are found, *R. bicornis* being the most common, though both the other species are also represented, while on the great flats to the south known as Illopekulu *R. simus* alone practically exists.

The best shooting that I had at kulumane was in this valley of the Black Umfolosi, a spot that at one time contained more variety and larger quantities of game in proportion to its size than any other that I have visited in Africa. My introduction to them took place before I had as yet killed any large game, and it was at one of them that I fired my first shot at anything larger than the small antelopes. Our party, which had but lately arrived, and which had hitherto been staying at a native village, started on that day to camp in the open, and as the absolute distance was not great, I did not go with the carriers,

A. bicornis
2 specimens

but, taking a native with me who was acquainted with the country, I kept on one side in search of game. The country presented the usual peculiarities of all thorn districts, stunted aloes and thorns clothing the stony ridges, and gradually increasing in numbers until on the flats the latter formed vast thickets, many of them all but impenetrable, while a few euphorbias grew in the hotter spots, and the water-courses, dry during winter, were lined with wild dates and bananas and tree-ferns, with here and there a wild fig-tree, or a white-stemmed *untombe* towering above the rest. We were just in the act of entering one of these thorn thickets when the native who was guiding me, and who was in front, suddenly stooped down, glanced back to see if I was following, and then, making a motion to say he saw something, ran rapidly though cautiously forward, while I repeated his actions without an idea of what they meant, until he pulled up and pointed out a black mass in front of us, at the same time whispering "kulumane."

It was a troop of six or seven of those animals, standing huddled together, so that, though I could see their outlines, I could hardly distinguish one from another, but as it was evident by their stamping and general uneasiness that they suspected danger, I at once fired. As the bullet told—and it always does so loudly on these thick-skinned animals,—they trotted out, going across me and slightly separating, so that I could see them plainly and had a capital shot with my second barrel, bringing the one I fired at down on the spot; but it jumped up again, and the whole of them, either turned by the shot, or, more probably, only then discovering for the first time where

we were, came thundering down straight at us, barely giving me time to follow the native's example and spring into a small tree, on either side of which they passed, enabling me from my elevated position to see where both balls had taken effect. The first had broken the fore-leg below the knee, while a white spot behind the shoulder marked the second, and I should undoubtedly have got the former, had I not allowed myself to be dissuaded from following them, as the great weight of a rhinoceros incapacitates it from travelling far on three legs, and a broken limb may always be accounted a fatal wound. The ball of the foot is also an extremely tender spot, and I remember seeing one that had already gone four or five miles with a bullet through the lungs completely disabled by a chance shot hitting it in the former place, making it squeal with pain, and stand on three legs, holding up the other, unable to place it to the ground.

Some time after this I was returning to camp one evening with fifteen hunters after having been engaged all day with a troop of buffalo that had taken refuge in the reeds. We were marching in native fashion, my gun-bearer leading, myself next, and the hunters and two or three water-bearers following us in Indian file, when four rhinoceroses made their appearance about two hundred yards off, trotting towards us along the very path that we were on. Of course, from the way we were walking, only two or three of the foremost could see them, but that did not prevent the others following our example as we sprang to leeward of the path, and lay down in the long grass. The great brutes trotted on, perfectly unsuspecting, and, with their usual blindness, taking no notice of the line of black

heads that bordered the path, until I, having allowed the first three to pass me, opened fire on the last, and, staggering him with my first barrel, brought him on to his knees with the second.

The instant I had fired the whole line took it up, and the irregular volley that succeeded lasted for fully a minute. The rhinoceroses, severally wounded in half a dozen places, broke into a gallop, and seemed going to make their escape, when one, a yearling, suddenly halted and commenced squealing, and its mother, enraged by the sound, wheeled on the spot, and came charging down upon us. The scatter she caused was complete; no one had a breech-loader, and therefore no one was loaded but myself, so, while I made the best of my way to a tree, I kept my eye on her, and seeing her pressing one of the water-bearers whom she had singled out, I pulled up short and fired, attracting her attention to myself. I gave her the other barrel as she came on, puffing and snorting, and then made for a tree; but there was no necessity for doing so, as she broke down immediately afterwards on one of her fore-legs which had been pierced by a bullet, but had not hitherto given way, and which placed her completely at our mercy. Seeing this the hunters descended from the trees, and for some minutes there was a general ringing of iron ramrods on ill-fitting bullets, while I fired at, and tried to finish, the one I had at first brought to the ground, but, though I tried every spot I knew of, taking the most deliberate aim, it was not till the sixth bullet that it fairly fell, having hitherto been plunging about, trying to rise from its knees. A far greater number of shots were fired by the hunters at the cow and yearling before they killed

them, and I have no doubt, counting misses and badly-aimed shots, that there were over fifty bullets expended altogether on the three head; yet I have seen three rhinoceroses killed with three single shots by some of these very men.

R. Keitloa is a species of which I have personally only killed one specimen, and, though I have seen twenty or thirty pair of horns that were either killed by my acquaintances or by my own men, I have but rarely met with it alive, and that chiefly far inland of the Portuguese settlement of Lorenzo Marquis. It exists, however, more plentifully to the north than to the north-east or east, and has been met with by other travellers in considerable numbers, whose testimony would seem to point to the fact of its being savage and morose in disposition, one very noted sportsman (Andersson) going so far as to consider it more dangerous than *R. bicornis*. Such, however, is neither my own experience nor that of the other hunters, both European and native, whom I have consulted on the subject; all accounts going to prove that it bears no comparison whatever in this respect to the dreaded upetyane; and I should feel inclined to place it on a par in disposition with the kulumane.

The one that I killed I was fortunate enough to finish with a single shot, though under circumstances that with *R. bicornis* would certainly have insured a charge. The previous night had been a very disturbed one from the continued roaring of two lions which had taken up their abode in the same thicket in which we had camped, and which had so far prevented me from sleeping that had it not been for the necessity of hunting to procure food, I

certainly should not have gone out that day. Soon after I had done so, however, we saw some eland running across us, and hoping that they might halt again before long, we started in chase, and had run perhaps a couple of miles when a flock of rhinoceros-birds rose out of a clump of bush just in front, and I saw the snout of a rhinoceros protruding from it.

The birds had alarmed it, and it was only by rushing in that I got a slanting shot at it as it trotted off through the open in full view, and as it took no notice, and I had not heard the crack of the ball, I fancied I had missed, and not only did not hurry myself to reload, but allowed the Kafir who accompanied me to go after it alone, until I heard it squealing, sure proof that it was mortally wounded, and then a shot.

Hastening to the spot, I found it standing, screaming and swaying its body to and fro, while its nearly full-grown young one was quartering about trying to get our wind, and the native was observing the whole proceedings from the top of a tree, at the bottom of which was his gun. I at once fired at the young one, making it charge past and go straight off, and then I went up to its mother, which had now fallen, and found that it was an unkombe tovote. My ball had penetrated from close in behind the shoulder through the head of the heart. The native had missed it, and had so frightened a number of Amaswazi who happened to be in that direction by the whistling of the bullet, that they had taken refuge in trees, but from its body we cut out four old balls, which had seemingly been in it for years. Its horns, which were unusually good, measured twenty-four inches for the front one, twenty for the back,

and this, as far as the difference in their length goes, has been the average of those I have seen, except in one pair (unique in my experience) where the hind one was slightly the longer.

Generally speaking, the habits of the different species are the same, slightly diversified by their peculiar characteristics. Leaving their lair about four o'clock in the afternoon, or later if the district is much disturbed by human beings, they graze towards water, or, if of the black species, browse on the thorn shoots in their way, reaching it soon before or after dark, distance sometimes deferring their arrival till a later hour, and if it is a mud hole, they probably have a roll after drinking. They then start for their favourite feeding-ground, a rich grass bottom in the case of *R. simus*, the dense akaku thickets in the case of the other three, keeping along the regular beaten paths in doing so, which they make all over the country, and which they make use of night after night. After generally, though not always, watering again about daylight, they retire to their sleeping places sooner or later, according to what extent the country is free from human beings, reaching it at any rate before the heat of the day. This is always in an extremely sheltered and deeply shaded spot, and so heavily do they slumber, that a practised stalker could almost touch them with the muzzle of his gun, unless alarmed by the birds which accompany them in search of ticks. I do not, however, consider it a good plan to fire at a rhinoceros lying down, from the difficulty of judging exactly how your bullet will penetrate, and now, after many unavailing attempts, I always rouse them first—an easy thing to do, for on the breaking of a twig, or a cough,

they will get up and stand, turning round and round, trying to discover what has disturbed them, and you can then aim where you like.

This, with me, totally depends on the angle at which they are—the upper part of the heart being the mark, and it is therefore impossible to say more than that the best place is about the shoulder, behind or before, as the case may be. A ball entering the centre of the chest is often immediately fatal, and in all front shots there is a fair chance of cutting an important blood-vessel. In the flank, when it is running nearly stern on, and three inches above the tail when it is quite so, are both good marks, but it must always be borne in mind that, with the rhinoceros, as with the African elephant, there is no place that is perfectly certain to prove fatal. I have heard much about a spot in the head, between the ear and eye, or up the nostril, and I even know of two cases - not in Africa, however, but India—where the animal was killed by wounds in that part only; but in my own experience I have never seen or heard of a single bullet in the head being successful, except to stun, and from the extraordinary thickness of the skull-bones, and the peculiar position and smallness of the brain cavity, I do not see how serious damage could be caused, unless by chance.

As I have before said, sufficient anecdotes of the ferocity, chronic bad temper, and cunning of *R. bicornis* might be related of themselves to fill a volume. Their cunning is only equalled by their viciousness. In most, if not in all cases, they will at once charge on getting the wind of a human being, and if they cross his track, they will often follow it up like a dog, making none of the

puffing sound natural to them when angry, till they absolutely see him. When wounded, and occasionally when much disturbed, their spoor consists of parallel straight lines, so that it is next to impossible to overtake them without being discovered, and giving them an opportunity of charging you from one side. They will wait with the utmost patience concealed in thick jungle, until you almost touch them, and then rush out at you. When they do catch an unfortunate being, they knock him down and knead him with their feet, returning again and again until nothing but a shapeless mass remains, uttering all the day their shrill squeal of rage. This I once saw myself.

Four of us, consisting of myself, three native hunters, and my gun-bearer, were on our way to join a native hunting party some twelve miles off, and just after crossing a small stream about half way we saw a flock of rhinoceros-birds hovering over an ukaku thicket, and evidently accompanying some game passing through it. The place was of no great size, so two of the hunters ran round to the further sides, while I and the remaining one went into it, and in a few seconds struck the spoor of an upetyane. I am thankful now to recollect that I at once suggested leaving the vicious brute alone, partly because it was such dangerous work, and its death would do us no good, partly on account of the time it would waste and the distance we had yet to go. However, the hunter wanted to go after it, and to have said more would have implied fear on my part, a thing one has to guard against when, being the only white man amongst natives far in the interior, one's comfort, and not impossibility one's life,

depends upon one's prestige ; and so we went on, and in scarcely five minutes I saw it, having already heard it snorting like a steam-engine, trotting along, tossing its head, and looking like mischief personified, having evidently got the wind of some of us, and being quite as anxious to find us as we it. It was about fifteen yards off, and I instantly let drive with both barrels into its shoulder, springing as I did so into the tree under which I was.

My unlucky companion, who was a little distance on one side, and had hitherto only heard it, came running towards the shots, and absolutely met it face to face ; he at once fired and turned to run, but it was too late, and he was caught on the spot, thrown up with a single toss, which must probably have stunned him, and was then trampled out of all semblance to humanity by the blood-thirsty brute. Any description would be sickening ; I could do nothing, for my gun-bearer had disappeared, seeking safety in some other spot, and I found that I had not a single cartridge left in the little pouch I carried ; but after a minute I could stand the inaction no longer, and getting down from the tree unperceived, I stole away, and as soon as I was out of reach, began to shout to the others. Two of them soon came up, my gun-bearer and a hunter, one of them having hidden himself on finding the sort of animal we had to deal with ; and I having got a supply of cartridges, we went back to the spot until we got sight of the brute, still trampling and squealing, when kneeling down, we fired at it together.

My nerves had been so much shaken, that I was unsteady and missed clean, not twenty yards off, but the ball from my companion's great elephant-gun sped more

truly, and the brute fell on its knees, where, by dint of repeated, if not very well-aimed shots, I succeeded in keeping it until he had re-loaded, when we finished it off together.

Other instances of the same sort are not wanting, but that was the only one that ever occurred within my personal knowledge, though, during the time I was hunting, two of my men were killed by rhinoceroses—one by an upetyane, the other by a kulumane—and from what I heard of the details, they must have been very similar. I only know of a single instance of a person escaping with life. A lot of Kaffirs were crossing the Bombo flats, and a woman, carrying her baby on her back in the native fashion, joined the party for protection. During the journey they were charged by an upetyane. Everybody threw down their bundles, regardless of breaking calabashes and pots of fat, and climbed up trees, all except this woman, who, impeded by her burden, and terrified out of her wits, was overtaken and tossed. When she fell again, the rhinoceros came up, sniffed at her and the baby, and walked away, not attempting to do any further harm, and luckily she was only bruised. What had caused it to do this no one knew, and therefore ascribed it to witchcraft. Perhaps the resemblance of the baby's squalling to its own made it so unusually merciful.

One killed in Zululand, in 1871, destroyed no less than seven people before its death. It had been well known for some years as infesting a certain district, and had succeeded at different times in catching three native women while drawing water. Possibly its presence in the thicket adjoining the stream might have been acci-

dental, although the Kaffirs appeared to think that it had stationed itself there with malice prepense. In August that year a son of the Zulu king died, and, as is customary, all the males of the country were sent to hunt in the bush, and by the act of shedding blood purify themselves and the nation from the defilement consequent on his death. One of the largest regiments, the Tulwane, numbering perhaps 2000 men, came across this brute, and he at once charged it, causing a general flight. This was, however, only momentary; they came back, and though merely armed with assagais, ultimately killed it, after a hard fight and the loss of four of their number, one of whom, if I mistake not, was an officer, besides several more who were placed *hors de combat*. There must have been over a thousand spears in it before it fell.

My first introduction to this animal was by no means a pleasant one. I was hunting as usual, and buffalo having been reported in the reeds which lined a small stream near our camp, I was skirting along them in hopes of finding their fresh spoor; and after going some miles I saw two rhinoceros-birds, which were coming from the same direction as I had, make a swoop, and settle a few hundred yards ahead. On reaching the place I could hear something breaking inside, and as the bank was high and there was a tall dead tree on it, I told my gun-bearer to climb up and have a look. He did so, and on coming down, reported two upetyane. I had long wished to kill one of those animals, as I had already killed all the other species, including a modified form of *R. Oswellii*, but it would have been foolish to have gone into the reeds after them; in such cover I should have had little chance of inflicting

any damage, and less of coming out alive; so I climbed up the tree myself, hoping to be able to have a shot from there. I, however, found I could not, as only one was in sight, and it was in such a position that I could not depend on wounding it seriously. Breaking off, therefore, a dead branch, I threw it in, and in a few minutes they walked out on the opposite side, going slowly, and looking about uneasily to see whether the noise portended danger. I can still see the picture in which they formed a part. A great sea of reeds rustling and waving with every passing air, dotted with a few old trees, naked and dead, stretching out their white branches above them, and edged for the most part with dense evergreen bushes. Far away an immense flat, unbounded as far as the eye could reach, and covered with masses of dark jungle alternating with patches of the white sun-dried grass between, and here and there glimpses of a lagoon, half buried in reeds. Complete stillness, and no signs of life, except the two rhinoceroses as they walked quietly away, and two solitary human beings watching them.

In a few minutes more they were concealed by the intervening bushes, and I came down, and crossing over, took up their spoor and tried to follow it; finding great difficulty, however, in doing so, as their foot, being very small, hardly, indeed, larger than that of a buffalo bull, and very soft, leaves no impression but that made by the three toes, and on ground as hard and dry as it is in winter in Africa, even that is very slight. Few people would believe the fact that, except during the wet season, it is far easier to track a buffalo than an elephant or rhinoceros, despite their great weight and size; the mark

made by the harder hoof being so much more clear and well defined. I had in consequence to go slowly until I reached the thicket, where it became easier, and after tracking them for some distance the spoor led us into an extremely thick mass of ukaku thorns, along an old rhinoceros path which wound through it. Here at last I overtook them, and caught a glimpse of one, and though the only part of its body that I could see was the fore shoulder, I at once fired. With a succession of tremendous snorts they instantly charged.

It would be quite impossible for me to describe what occurred. One saw me as I tried to get away, and chased me as I dodged through and in and out of the thick thorns, until at last I found myself alone, hardly knowing how I got there, standing breathless and bleeding, my clothes torn to ribbons, my cap gone, and scarcely a square inch of my body that had not its particular thorn. My bearer had disappeared—it had been much against his will our ever following them, and I did not see him again that day—but I was so thoroughly roused by the pain I was in, that after loading, as soon as I could find my gun, I did not lose a moment in getting on the spoor, which I was glad to find spotted with blood. They did not stand again for several miles, but ultimately went to a place that I knew well. It was a large patch of thorn by the river, and in the centre were several cactus-trees, round which the tangle was so thick, that except at one spot there was no entrance. Some years before a native hunter had been found dead in it, with a buffalo lying a few yards off unable to rise, and ever since the spot had been avoided. Just before reaching it the spoors had

separated, an unusual, but for me fortunate, occurrence, one going on, the other making towards it, a drop of blood on the latter showing it to be that of the wounded one. I soon, however, got confused in the maze of tracks it had made in standing and walking about, and fancying it had thought of entering, but had changed its mind and gone after the other, I went up to the narrow opening, then only a few yards off, and where it had evidently passed in and out several times, and looked in. At first it was too dark to see, but as I got accustomed to the gloom, I decided that the place was empty, and was in the act of turning away, muttering, "It's gone on," when, with a loud grunt, it rushed out, just brushing past me as I shrunk on one side. I ran in and climbed up the nearest tree, hardly a second before it returned in search of me, puffing and snorting, and as it stood listening for some indication of my whereabouts, not three yards from the foot of the tree, I gave it both barrels in the shoulder, and before the smoke had cleared, it had forced its way out, clearing a path for itself, and I could hear it as it galloped away. Coming down, I loaded and again went in pursuit, finding it standing in the open, about fifty yards from the edge of the wood, from the concealment of which I again fired, making it charge, but I dodged behind a tree, and it passed through the smoke, and then stopped and walked back to its former position. Determining to get nearer, I stalked up behind a solitary thorn-tree to within fifteen paces, and then planted another ball, like the last, in the shoulder, bringing it down, but it struggled up in spite of my second barrel, and stood, only looking round at the noise I made in loading. It was beaten at

last; though it took three more shots—nine in all—before it finally fell dead. Six of these were well placed about the shoulder, one was rather too far back, one in the head, and the last in the centre of the chest.

