

TO THE
VICTORIA FALLS OF THE ZAMBESI.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF

EDWARD MOHR,

BY N. D'ANVERS.

WITH NUMEROUS FULL-PAGE WOODCUT ILLUSTRATIONS, FOUR
CHROMO-LITHOGRAPHS, AND A MAP.

LONDON:
SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, SEARLE, AND RIVINGTON,
CROWN BUILDINGS, 188, FLEET STREET.

1876.

All rights reserved.





ED. MOHR.

Frontispiece

On Wednesday, the 25th of May, we found ourselves in a valley running from the south-west to the north-east, and shut in on the east and west by sand dunes from two hundred to two hundred and fifty feet high. On the summits grew large forest trees, not unlike the orange, with smooth, dark green leaves; the sides were clothed with thick, grey, leafless bushes, provided with long, straight, snow-white thorns; and at their feet waved the tall grass, varying in colour from pale yellow to brownish green. Bokkis, who had ridden forward on Roland at 12 o'clock, came back at 3 in the afternoon with the news that the tsetse were close upon us, and brought half a dozen of these poisonous flies, which had settled on his horse's neck, as a positive proof of his assertion. We could not therefore think of advancing any farther with the horses and oxen. Latitude $19^{\circ} 11' S.$ was to be the most northerly point reached by our cart; and as there was plenty of good grass and water here, we set up a permanent encampment for the animals and their attendants, resolving shortly to press on on foot for the Zambesi, accompanied only by our baggage carriers.

CHAPTER IX.

TO THE VICTORIA FALLS.

A permanent camp—Bokkis's illness—Deserters—Forward—Charge of a black rhinoceros—A meteor—Delgué turns out a deceiver—Cluley is taken ill—Passage of the Tehangani—Rebellion of the Makalakas—A buffalo appears in the nick of time—Arrival at the Daka—The Zambesi—Logier Hill—Wanki—Meeting with European traders—The Victoria Falls.

ON the 26th of May we set to work to erect a camp of solid construction on a neighbouring hill, with a pond on the south and one on the east. A strong and lofty hedge of brambles strengthened with stakes was soon thrown up as a protection from nocturnal attacks by wild beasts. Provisions and ammunition were carefully examined, sacks were made, and everything prepared for the forward march, whilst the surrounding districts were carefully reconnoitred by parties of natives, that we might obtain an exact knowledge of the peculiarities of the neighbourhood.

On the morning of the 30th of May I started with sixteen men, leaving Umloi, one of my oldest and most trustworthy servants, with three Maka-

lakas and a Bushman in charge of the cart. I was able entirely to trust Umloi with the oxen, horses, and the contents of the cart, and I also left him well provided with weapons and ammunition, that he might shoot game for himself and his party.

William Cluley and Bokkis accompanied me. I relied especially upon the services of the latter, as he was invaluable both as an interpreter and a hunter. He told me at the very beginning of the march that it was his belief the natives intended to desert on the first opportunity, and he advised me, therefore, to treat them as kindly as possible.

I could depend on Sililo, Induke, Cluley, and three or four others, but those few would not suffice to carry the instruments, wrappers, weapons, ammunition, provisions, beads, cooking utensils, etc., without which it would be impossible to proceed; so the journey, arduous enough in any case, commenced under anything but auspicious circumstances.

We had gone about six miles in a northerly direction, when we made our midday halt beneath a shady tree. We had hardly arrived there, when Bokkis was taken seriously ill with fever. He was sick, and soon began to wander in his thoughts. When he came to himself a little, I tried to give him some quinine; but he told me he had more confidence in the remedies of the Bush-

men, to whose treatment he submitted himself, taking a mixture they gave him of pounded vegetables and roots.

Nothing could have been more unfortunate than Bokkis's illness, as it was, of course, impossible to think of going any further that day. Old Debgué, too, grew bolder, and told me "My driver's illness would very likely make his people run back to the cart the next day!" To this impudent speech I made no reply, though my blood boiled when I looked at the fellow, for I knew that my getting to the Victoria Falls depended on my self-control.

Towards evening Induke saw a bastard eland come out of the bush at so great a distance off that I could distinguish nothing, and begged me to go with him and shoot it, which I readily consented to do, in the hope of pleasing my followers. Induke led me to within forty paces of the antelope; I fired with my heavy gun, and the bullet passed right through my prey, but for all that it ran two hundred paces farther before it fell. The natives, who had watched the hunt from beneath the tree, now came running up to fetch the meat, and apparently a very happy humour prevailed in the camp; only poor Bokkis was in wild delirium, so that I had all weapons put out of his reach, and appointed two men to watch him.

As I was afraid that Debgué and his people would perhaps desert in the night, I set up a

separate camp, and retiring to it with Cluley and my most faithful servants, we took it in turns to watch the Makalakas.

As soon as it was day on the 31st of May, two of the Bushmen ran off, and the old doctor and his friends wanted to go. After wearisome discussions and negotiations, I at last, by a promise of double pay, succeeded in persuading them to go on with me for the present, at least. As it was, however, I had yet farther to reduce my equipment, already small enough, as I had now only eleven men to carry it. Debgué declined to take anything but his own bundle.

I left Bokkis behind with his "Bushmen doctors," with orders that, as soon as he was strong enough, he was to go back to the cart, where he could be better taken care of.

Our march proceeded in a north-westerly direction, and after making about twelve miles, we halted in the evening in a thicket near a watering place. During the night two white rhinoceroses came so close, that for a moment I was afraid we should be trampled down; but the Kaffirs sprang up and threw lighted torches at the monsters, which ran off snorting with fright.

Gululo, one of my best and most trustworthy servants, was now attacked by fever. He had severe shivering fits, and was very cold, so I had him wrapped in two horse-cloths, and administered

some doses of quinine, which he, more reasonable than Bokkis, took willingly.

Our march of the 31st of May, up till noon, led us through an open undulating country, clothed with succulent grasses, and dotted here and there with groups of shady marula trees, looking like islands. On the north the blue mountains of the districts on the Lower Guay stood out more and more distinctly. In the course of the morning, soon after we started, we found a puff-adder benumbed by the cold of the previous night, during which there had been a frost. I touched the reptile with my stick, and finding it was still alive, it was, of course, killed at once. Later, our path ran beside the track of lions close to that of an eland, and the natives deciding both to be fresh, put down their bundles and followed them. They soon came to all that was left of the eland, viz., the head and marrow bones, which they brought back with shouts of triumph.

At noon we entered a vast open grass-clad district, called the Tuma Malissa by the elephant hunters, and containing ponds of beautifully clear water. As Paul Ziesmann had settled here the previous year, I hunted up his old camp, and settled myself in it, remaining there until noon on the 1st of June. I took the latitude by the sun, and found it to be $18^{\circ} 57' 42''$ S., so that I was about sixty-eight miles from Logier Hill, on the

southern bank of the Zambesi, opposite Wanki's village, the latitude of which was ascertained by Baines and Chapman to be $18^{\circ} 4' 58''$ S.

In the afternoon we pressed on in a northerly direction, and we had not gone far when a snorting black rhinoceros rushed out upon us from the forest. Induke at once ran up with my reserve gun, and I shot the animal through the head when it was close upon me. It wheeled round in narrow circles for a few minutes, and then fell, when Induke despatched it. To avoid delay, I left four men behind to bring the meat, the rest of the Kaffirs dividing their loads amongst them, and in the evening they joined us at our camp-fire.

I enjoyed the rare luxury of sweetened tea that evening, as a honey-guide (*Cuculus indicator*), that curious and pretty bird, which has so often been described, led me to a bees' nest.

In the affair of the rhinoceros I had unfortunately lost my pipe, and Gululo was the only one of the whole party to possess such an instrument. He offered it to me at once, but I then resolved to give up smoking for the rest of the journey, and since then I have used very little tobacco.

Our watch-fire was still burning brightly when we left our camp on the 2nd of June, and, keeping the running stream of the Denué on the right, pressed on on our northerly course. The scenery became more and more imposing as we approached

the Guay Mountains. At noon we halted on the left bank of the Guay, which here runs for about six miles from east to west between sandstone rocks. The breadth varies from one hundred and fifty to one hundred and eighty feet, and here and there it is deep enough for bathing; but that luxury should not be indulged in, except where the bottom of the stream can be seen, as crocodiles are very numerous. I took the latitude here also, and found it to be $18^{\circ} 41'$ S., so that I had advanced some sixteen miles since I left Ziesmann's old kraal in the Tuma Malissa district.

After twice crossing the stream, we encamped in the evening on the left bank. There we surprised an elephant which had come to drink, and sent three bullets into it, but though my people followed it for an hour, it escaped. Then we killed a goat, which left us with only two of the herd we had brought with us. Cluley told me that when my men "saw no more meat," as they expressed it, they would turn back. I did not, however, mind that so much now, as it was as easy to go on to the Zambesi as to return to the cart; and I knew that I could depend on Cluley and my old "body-guard," whatever old Debgué and the Makalakas might do.

In the night a meteor of the size of a skittle-ball dashed across the sky from the north-north-west to the south-south-east, and approached the stars Aldebaran in Taurus and Antares in Scorpio,

ous district, with here and there a break in the hills, through which we obtained extensive views over hill and forest, broken occasionally by wild rocky scenery. Not a sign of human habitation was visible; everything seemed wrapped in the most profound repose, broken only by the continuous cooing of thousands of turtle-doves. The whole country had been marked out by the pioneer engineers of Africa, the elephants and rhinoceroses, whose spoor often led over the highest mountains; and should it ever be inhabited by an intelligent race, these primitive paths will doubtless form the foundation of roads for traffic of all kinds. There is a road running from D'Urban to the Umgeni River, which was originally nothing more than an elephant track.

I may conveniently here relate a hunting adventure I met with on the Shluc in the Amatonga country on the 1st of August, 1866. My companion Rudd and I had brought down a white rhinoceros, which was at once attacked by two mighty black-maned lions, and before our very eyes. The huge beasts of prey at first attempted to tear the skin near the bullet-wounds, one of which was in the shoulder, but their claws could not get through the tough cuirass-like hide. At last, however, they bit the softer skin under the throat, soon making a large opening, through which they dragged the whole mass of flesh, their

proceedings watched by a circle of hundreds of seated jackals and hyenas. This was in broad daylight, at 10 o'clock in the morning! On our showing ourselves, the gentlemen in waiting made off, as did also the royal pair, the latter, however, only at a slow trot, with a halt and longing look back every now and then, finally leaving us masters of the field and of our game.

After a good day's march we reached the Daka, which here, as elsewhere, has clean good water and plenty of fish. It winds between gentle declivities clothed with fine forests.

Whilst the fire was being lighted, etc., I sent two men to look for wild honey, and went myself with the two Bushmen to shoot an antelope. We were scarcely a thousand paces from the camp, when some Impallah-boks came out of the bush. I fired, and one fell at once, the noise of the shot bringing the Kaffirs to carry off the spoil.

The Bushmen were unwilling to turn back yet, as they wanted to search for roots; and as something may always be learnt from the proceedings of these children of nature, I remained with them. Presently they found a long thin convolvulus-like plant with completely withered tendrils, scarcely as thick as twine, running along the ground, and they at once dug up a bulbous and succulent root of the size of an ostrich egg, to which they gave the name of "Gulefuma." When several similar

bulbs had been collected, they were carefully carried back to the camp. Arrived there, we found that the honey was before us, and my menu for the evening was grand, consisting of Impallah bouillon with durra, antelope steaks garnished with broiled kidneys, gulefuma roots stewed in grease, which tasted like chestnuts, and tea with honey. Our feast was lighted up by the golden beams of the setting sun, touching the mountain tips with glory, and accompanied by the vocal music of the birds singing their evening hymn in the bush. What could anyone wish for more?

The moral influence which the sight of raw meat has on the humour of the Kaffirs is always favourable, and, as usual, the best of spirits prevailed amongst them on this particular evening.

To keep the reader informed of my bearings, I must add that the line of our return march ran about sixteen miles to the west of that we had followed on our journey to the Falls, and that I endeavoured to maintain as far as possible a south-south-east course. To make quite sure of my whereabouts, I always asked the natives when I halted of an evening to show me in what direction lay the camp we had left, and it really was wonderful to see how with one accord they pointed to the same spot.

Of course I continued to note the difference in our latitude by stellar observations every evening,

to do so, had, in fact, become a passion with me; and I knew, moreover, of how much importance it was to keep myself well informed on this point. Unless I cut across the old line of route on the east—and should I do so every one of the Kaffirs would be sure to notice it—I ought to find my cart by an easterly march, when once I was in S. latitude $19^{\circ} 11'$; but as I was in doubt as to my longitude, I could only make a rough guess as to the number of miles I should have to go eastward before coming to it.

We brought down three rhinoceroses, but only one of them gave us any trouble. I must premise that my tame goat Busi was now in the habit of walking beside me, and as we were marching along in single file like a flock of geese on the track of the rhinoceros in question, the natives in the front of the procession suddenly came upon it asleep. It awoke at once, however, and rushed with a snort at the Kaffirs, who flung down their packages, and took to their heels in all directions, screaming and laughing, as is their wont on such occasions. I was at the moment unarmed, and therefore ran to cover as quickly as I could, but the bleating of my goat betrayed where I was; the monster approached me, and, to the horror of the natives, most of whom had taken refuge in trees, chased me from bush to bush. At last two of my men came up with guns; I fired four times at my

enemy, and it ran off severely wounded. I reloaded at once, gave the weapons to the Kaffirs, who dashed after it and completed my work.

In spite of the appetite always enjoyed, by me at least, in the African forest, an educated palate does not readily accommodate itself to rhinoceros bouillon or steaks; and as we shot two porcupines the next morning, I had the backs and legs roasted for myself. They had a pleasant taste, rather like that of turkey.

Our march of the 30th of June and the 1st of July led us through a district which had formerly been cultivated, as was proved by the straight furrows in parallel lines. The fruit of the marula trees lay rotting on the ground. There had been no one to pick them up.

A little to the south of the Umkoshi River we passed some stone walls, in good preservation, about one hundred and eighty feet long and eight feet deep. This was the site of the huts of Wanki and his race, which had been razed to the ground by the Matebeles under Mosilikatze, who had also laid waste the fields redeemed for a time from the surrounding wilderness.

In this neighbourhood also, but still only near water-courses, I saw some carefully constructed stone fortifications, similar to those on the Tati and Impague Rivers already described. They may have been erected by the Machonas, now living