LAKE NGAMI;

OR,

EXPLORATIONS AND DISCOVERIES,

DURING

FOUR YEARS' WANDERINGS IN THE WILDS

OF

SOUTH WESTERN AFRICA.

BY

CHARLES JOHN ANDERSSON.

WITH A MAP, AND NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS

REPRESENTING SPORTING ADVENTURES, SUBJECTS OF NATURAL HISTORY, DEVICES FOR DESTROYING WILD ANIMALS, &c.

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ward off the sun's rays, but useless and inconvenient in windy weather.

The Malays are, usually, very honest; but, strange to relate, on a certain day of the year, they exert their ingenuity in purloining their neighbours' poultry, and, Spartan-like, do not consider this dishonourable, provided they are not detected in the fact:—

> 'To be *taken*, to be *seen*,
> *These* have crimes accounted been.'

To be at Cape-Town, without ascending the far-famed Table Mountain, was, of course, not to be thought of. The undertaking, however, is not altogether without danger. On the side of the town, access to the summit is only practicable on foot, and that by a narrow and slippery path; but, on the opposite side, the Table may be gained on horseback, though with some difficulty. The whole mountain side, moreover, is intersected by deep and numerous ravines, which are rendered more dangerous by the dense fogs that, at certain seasons of the year, arise suddenly from the sea.

One fine afternoon, I had unconsciously approached the foot of the mountain, and the top looked so near and inviting, that, though the sun was fast sinking, I determined to make the ascent. At the very outset, I lost the road; but, having been all my life a mountain-climber, I pushed boldly forward. The task, however, proved more difficult than I expected, and the sun's broad disc had already touched the horizon when I reached the summit. Nevertheless, the magnificent panorama that now lay spread before me, amply rewarded me for my trouble. It was, however, only for a very short time that I could enjoy the beautiful scene; darkness was rapidly encroaching over the valley below; and, as in these regions there is but one step from light to darkness, I was

compelled to commence the descent, without a moment's delay. I confess that this was not done without some apprehension; for, what with the quick-coming night, and the terrible ravines that lay yawning beneath my feet, the task was anything but agreeable. I found it necessary, for safety, to take off my boots, which I fastened to my waist; and, at length, after much exertion, with hands torn, and trousers almost in rags, I arrived late in the evening at our hotel, where they had begun to entertain some doubt of my safety. As a proof that my fears were not altogether groundless, a short time before this, a young man, who was wandering about the mountain in broad daylight, missed his footing, was precipitated down its sides, and brought in, the next day, a mutilated corpse.

When Europeans first arrived in the Cape Colony, it would appear that almost all the larger quadrupeds indigenous to Southern Africa existed in the neighbourhood of Table Mountain. A curious anecdote is preserved in the archives of Cape-Town, relating to the death of a rhinoceros, which, for its quaintness and originality, is perhaps worthy of record.

Once upon a time—so runs the legend—some labourers employed in a field, discovered a huge rhinoceros, immovably fixed in the quick-sands of the salt river, which is within a mile of the town. The alarm being given, a number of country people, armed with such weapons as were at hand, rushed to the spot with an intention of despatching the monster. Its appearance, however, was so formidable, that they deemed it advisable to open their battery at a most respectful distance. But seeing that all the animal's efforts to extricate itself were fruitless, the men gradually grew more courageous; and approached much nearer. Still, whether from the inefficiency of their weapons, or want of skill,

they were unable to make any impression on the tough, and almost impenetrable, hide of the beast. At length, they began to despair, and it was a question if they should not beat a retreat; when an individual, more sagacious than the rest, stepped forward, and suggested that a hole should be cut in the animal's hide, by which means easy access might be had to its vitals; and they could then destroy it at their leisure! The happy device was loudly applauded; and though, I believe, the tale ends here, it may be fairly concluded that, after such an excellent recommendation, success could not but crown their endeavours.

We had now been at Cape-Town somewhat less than a week; and had already added considerably to the stock of articles of exchange, provisions, and other necessaries for our journey. To convey this immense quantity of luggage, we provided ourselves with two gigantic waggons, each represented to hold three or four thousand pounds weight, together with a sort of cart [1] for ourselves.

Mr. Galton bought, also, nine excellent mules, which could be used either for draught or packing; two riding horses; and, in addition to these, he secured about half a dozen dogs, which, if the truth be told, were of a somewhat mongrel description.

Mr. Galton also engaged the needful people to accompany us on our travels, such as waggon-drivers, herdsmen, cooks, &c., in all amounting to seven individuals.

Our preparations being now complete, we were about to set out on our journey, when, to our dismay, we received information which entirely overthrew our plans. It was reported to us that the Boers on the Trans-Vaal river (the very line of country we purposed taking) had lately turned back

[1] The term 'cart' in this sense, implies a large, roomy, and *covered* vehicle, capable of holding four or six individuals, and from five hundred to one thousand pounds of baggage. It is usually drawn by six or eight mules or horses.

region, excited within me some emotion, and I now fully appreciated the touching expression of Mungo Park, when, having, in a state of complete exhaustion, thrown himself down to die, he discovered at his side a beautiful little moss, and exclaimed—"Can that Being who planted, watered, and brought to perfection in this obscure part of the world, a thing which appears of so small importance, look with unconcern upon the situation and sufferings of a creature formed after his own image?—Surely not!"

Even the mighty Nimrod, Gordon Cumming, whose whole soul one would imagine to be engrossed by lions and elephants, seems to have been struck with equal delight as myself, at the sight of this charming flower: "In the heat of the chase," says he, "I paused spell-bound, to contemplate with admiration its fascinating beauty."

We continued our journey over the same sterile plain (Naarip) till about ten o'clock a.m., when we suddenly entered a narrow and desolate-looking mountain gorge, called Usab, sloping rapidly towards the bed of a periodical river. Here, under the shade of a stunted acacia, Stewardson recommended us to 'outspan;' and, leaving our cook in charge of the cart, we proceeded with the animals at once in search of water.

For more than two miles we continued to follow the gorge, which, as we approached the river, assumed a more gloomy, though perhaps more striking, appearance, being overhung with towering and fantastically-shaped granite rocks. Notwithstanding this, the river—to which the natives give the name of Schwackaup, or Swakop, as Europeans call it—presented a most cheerful and pleasant aspect; for, though not flowing at the time, its moist bed was luxuriantly overgrown with grass, creepers, and pretty ice-plants. The banks on either side were also more or less lined with gigantic reeds, of a most refreshing colour; and above the reeds

rose several beautiful trees, such as the acacia, the black-ebony, &c.

Under a projecting rock, a few hundred paces from the spot where we struck upon the river, we discovered a pool of excellent water, where man and beast, in long and copious draughts, soon quenched a burning thirst. This being done, we indulged in a delicious bath, which highly refreshed our fatigued and dusty limbs.

On a lofty and inaccessible rock overhanging the river-bed, I again saw some of those beautiful flowers which in the early morning had caused me so much delight; and, with a well-directed ball, I brought down one almost to my feet.

In the sand we discovered the broad foot-prints of a rhinoceros. From their freshness it was apparent that the monster had visited the river-bed during the preceding night, but all our endeavours to rouse him proved ineffectual.

Whilst still talking about the prospect of soon seeing this singular animal in his native haunts, I remembered a story Mr. Bam had told us, of a wonderful escape he once had from one of these beasts, and which I will endeavour to give in his own words.

"As we entered the Swakop river one day," said he, "we observed the tracks of a rhinoceros; and, soon after unyoking our oxen, the men requested to be allowed to go in search of the beast. This I readily granted, only reserving a native to assist me in kindling the fire and preparing our meal. While we were thus engaged, we heard shouting and firing; and, on looking in the direction whence the noise proceeded, discovered, to our horror, a rhinoceros, rushing furiously at us at the top of his speed. Our only chance of escape was the waggon, into which we hurriedly flung ourselves. And it was high time that we should seek

refuge; for the next instant the enraged brute struck his powerful horn into the 'buik-plank' (the bottom boards), with such force as to push the waggon several paces forward, although it was standing in very heavy sand. Most providentially, he attacked the vehicle from behind; for, if he had struck it on the side, he could hardly have failed to upset it, ponderous as it was. From the waggon, he made a dash at the fire, overturning the pot we had placed alongside it, and scattering the burning brands in every direction. Then, without doing any further damage, he proceeded on his wild career. Unfortunately, the men had taken with them all the guns; otherwise, I might easily have shot him dead on the spot. The Damara, however, threw his assegai at him; but the soft iron bent like a reed against his thick and almost impenetrable hide."

The greater part of the afternoon was spent under the shade of some wide-spreading acacias, and in hunting for specimens of natural history. A species of Francolin *(francolinus adspersus)*, and one or two pretty kinds of fly-catchers, were amongst the day's spoil.

A little before sunset we returned to the camp; and, as we were to continue our journey on the morrow's dawn, we picketed the mules and horses, and made our encampment as snug as possible. Though the ground was our couch, and the sky our canopy, we slept soundly, and awoke early the next morning, greatly refreshed. We much needed this renewal of our vigour, for the day proved exceedingly trying both to men and cattle.

Once more we were on the Naarip plain; though this time we travelled parallel with the Swakop (which here pursued an easterly course), on the edge of those gloomy rocks through which its deep and turbulent channel has forced its way.

After a few days' rest, it was determined that Hans and myself, together with most of the people, should return to Scheppmansdorf, for the purpose of breaking-in the oxen, and bringing up the waggons and the stores.

Hans presented me with an ox, called 'Spring,' which I afterwards rode upwards of two thousand miles. On the day of our departure, he mounted us all on oxen, and a curious sight it was to see some of the men take their seats who had never before ridden on ox-back. It is impossible to guide an ox as one would guide a horse, for in the attempt to do so you would instantly jerk the stick out of his nose, which at once deprives you of every control over the beast; but by pulling *both* sides of the bridle at the same time, and towards the side you wish him to take, he is easily managed. Your seat is no less awkward and difficult; for the skin of the ox, unlike that of the horse, is loose; and, notwithstanding your saddle may be tightly girthed, you keep rocking to and fro, like a child in a cradle. A few days, however, enables a person to acquire a certain steadiness, and long habit will do the rest.

Ox-travelling, when once a man is accustomed to it, is not so disagreeable as might be expected, particularly if one succeeds in obtaining a tractable animal. On emergences, an ox can be made to proceed at a tolerably quick pace; for though his walk is only about three miles an hour at an average, he may be made to perform double that distance in the same time. Mr. Galton once accomplished twenty-four miles in four hours, and that, too, through heavy sand!

Early one morning we reached Annis Fountain, where, as on a previous occasion, we observed a number of rhinoceros tracks. Leaving the men to take care of the oxen, Hans, Stewardson, and myself selected the freshest 'spoor,' and started off in pursuit; but after several hours' hard walking

under a burning sun, we were apparently as far from the quarry as ever, and Stewardson, who was quite knocked up, used his best endeavours to persuade us from proceeding further. We would not listen to him, however, but, allowing him to return to the encampment, continued to toil on, though with but little hope of success.

An hour might have elapsed, after we had thus parted from Stewardson, when I observed in a distant glen a dark object, which, as it excited my suspicion, I instantly pointed out to Hans, who would not believe that it was anything but a large 'boulder.' Nevertheless, we proceeded towards the spot, and I soon saw that the shapeless mass was nothing less than the rhinoceros of which we were in search. Hans, however, who had had frequent opportunities of seeing this animal in all positions, remained sceptical on the point; and it was not till we were within about twenty paces of the beast that his doubts were removed. With noiseless and quickened step, and our guns on the full cock, we made up to the monster, which still gave no signs of life. At last, however, one of us whistled; on which, and with the rapidity of thought, the beast sat up on its haunches, and surveyed us with a curious and sulky look. But it was only a moment; for, before he had time to get on his legs, two well-directed balls laid him prostrate within less than half-a-dozen paces of our feet.

In the pride of success, I somewhat foolishly leaped upon his back, and, African-like, plunged my hunting-knife into the flesh to ascertain if our prize was fat. But whether life was not altogether extinct, or that the sudden access of my weight caused a vibration in the lately-living body, certain it is that I felt the beast move under me, when, as may be supposed, I speedily jumped to the ground again, and made off. Though my apprehensions in this instance were

groundless, the following anecdote, related to me by the natives, will show that there is considerable danger in too quickly approaching an apparently dead rhinoceros :—[1]

Some Namaquas had shot one of these animals, as it was rising from its sleep. One of the party, imagining the beast to be dead, straightway went up to it; and (with like object as myself) acted precisely as I had done. The beast, however, had only been stunned; and as soon as he felt the cold steel enter his body, he started to his feet and made off at full speed. This action was so instantaneous, as to prevent the man from dismounting, and the other Namaquas were paralysed with fear. Fortunately, however, after the beast had run forty or fifty paces, he suddenly stopped short and looked round. The favourable opportunity was not lost—for one of the party, more courageous than the rest, instantly fired, and, as good-luck would have it, brought the animal to the ground, with his terror-stricken rider still clinging to his back.

On re-joining our party, Stewardson was not a little surprised at our success, and mortified at his own want of perseverance. The flesh of the rhinoceros was poor, but not unpalatable; and we remained a day at Annis, to cut up and dry part of it as provision for the journey. We also carried away a goodly supply of the beast's hide, for the purpose of converting it into 'shamboks.' [2]

[1] Most animals, when shot, or otherwise killed, fall on their sides: but the rhinoceros is often an exception to this rule, at least such is my experience. In nine cases out of ten, of all those I have killed during my wanderings in Africa—and they amount to upwards of *one hundred*—I found them on their *knees*, with the fore part of their ponderous heads resting on the ground.

[2] The 'shambok' (a Dutch term) consists of a strip of the stoutest part of the hide of the rhinoceros, or the hippopotamus. After being stretched on the ground, and when it has acquired a certain stiffness, the stripe is subjected to a severe hammering, for the double purpose of condensing it, and giving it a rounded shape. It is then reduced to the desired size by means of a knife, or plane; and, lastly, a piece of sand-paper, or glass—if at hand—is employed to give it the finishing smoothness

One day, as I was riding with Hans, he pointed out to me a place where he had been attacked by a lion in broad daylight, pulled off his ox, and only escaped death by a miracle.

Not being encumbered by a vehicle, we were now able to hold the course of the Swakop uninterruptedly; but, on arriving at the Usab gorge, it became necessary to leave the river, and to cross the Naarip plain to Scheppmansdorf. From the great length of this stage (fifteen hours' actual travel), and the total absence of water and pasturage, it is necessary to traverse it during the night. As thick fogs and mists, however, are not uncommon here, the traveller is exposed to some risk. It not unfrequently happens that he loses the track—the result of which usually is that, when the day breaks upon him, he finds himself either back at the place from which he started, or in some unknown part of the plain. Instances are narrated of people having remained in this inhospitable desert as long as three days! "Losing the way," as my friend Galton says, "is the rule here, and not the exception; and a person who has crossed the plain without doing so, rather plumes himself upon the feat."

Hans recited to me the particulars of an adventure which happened to an European in this wilderness. During the time Captain Greybourn (to whom allusion has already been made) was established at Walfisch Bay, the medical gentleman who resided with him had occasion to cross the Naarip plain; but, being a total stranger to the country, he engaged a Hottentot as guide. The day proved hot and oppressive, and the wayfarers had not proceeded far, when the doctor felt faint and thirsty. On inquiry of his attendant, whether

and polish. The 'shambok' is exceedingly tough and pliable, will inflict the most severe wounds and bruises, and will last for years. The price of one of these 'whips,' in the colony, varies from eighteen pence to as much as nine or ten shillings.

CHAPTER VII.

DEPARTURE FROM SCHEPPMANSDORF—CATTLE REFRACTORY AT STARTING —TINCAS—ALWAYS TRAVEL BY NIGHT—RHINOCEROS HUNT—THE AUTHOR IN DANGER OF A SECOND SUN-STROKE—REACH ONANIS— A TRIBE OF HILL-DAMARAS SETTLED THERE — SINGULAR MANNER IN WHICH THESE PEOPLE SMOKE — EFFECTS OF THE WEED — THE EUPHORBIA CANDELABRUM — REMARKABLE PROPERTIES OF THIS VEGETABLE POISON—GUINEA FOWL: THE BEST MANNER OF SHOOTING THEM—MEET A TROOP OF GIRAFFES—TJOBIS FOUNTAIN AGAIN— ATTACKED BY LIONS — PROVIDENTIAL ESCAPE—ARRIVAL AT RICHTERFELDT.

AFTER only three weeks' stay at Scheppmansdorf, and though our oxen were but partially broken-in, Hans one day informed me that we might set out in safety. Accordingly, the final arrangements were hastily completed; and, on the 13th of November, I once more bade farewell to the place, and its kind, obliging and hospitable inhabitants.

At first starting, and whilst the sand was very deep and yielding, the oxen caused us much trouble; but when we were on the hard and firm Naarip, all went well, and we arrived at the Usab gorge, where we encamped, without farther inconvenience than passing a cold and sleepless night.

The next evening we resumed our journey; but, instead of following the course of the Swakop—which, with

our young oxen and heavy waggons, would have been next to impossible—it was deemed advisable that we should still continue on the Naarip—where, though water was scarce, the road was hard and good. Tincas Mountain, which, on our former journey, was to the right, was now, of course, to our left. After about fourteen hours' fatiguing travel, we reached the small river Tincas, where we unyoked, and rested ourselves and the weary oxen until nightfall, when we were again *en route.*

As we had now adopted the plan of travelling during the night, so as not to distress the animals too much, we found it necessary to keep a sharp look-out, both on account of the wild beasts, and for fear of losing our way. The latter was particularly to be guarded against; for, in this land of drought, any considerable deviation from the regular track is not unfrequently followed by serious consequences. Hans and myself were accustomed to keep watch by turns, for we never dared trust to the men; but this night, owing to our previous fatigue, we both unfortunately fell asleep.

When I awoke, I found that we were far out of our proper course, and all the men were snoring in the waggons. However, as it was starlight, and the landmarks very conspicuous, we had not much difficulty in recovering the proper track.

Towards break of day, we unyoked the tired oxen in the bed of a small dry water-course, where we found abundance of excellent grass. The unattached cattle did not join us till late in the afternoon, as the men in charge of them had fallen asleep. Their negligence, however, was excused on account of the good news they brought. It appeared that soon after it was light they discovered a huge rhinoceros, accompanied by a nearly full-grown calf, following in their wake, and that they had only lost sight of the beasts, when within a short distance of our bivouac.

So favourable an opportunity was too tempting to let slip. Having hurriedly partaken of some breakfast, and provided ourselves with a small supply of water, I, Hans, and an attendant, started in pursuit of the animals; and we had not left the camp for much more than an hour when we fell in with their 'spoor.' The beasts themselves, however, could nowhere be seen; and as several tracks crossed each other more than once (the animals having probably been feeding thereabouts), Hans and I took different directions in search of the trail we were to follow. We had hardly parted, when I heard a tremendous crash amongst the bushes; and about a hundred yards in advance, I saw, to my great vexation, the two rhinoceroses going away at full speed. Notwithstanding the distance, and the unfavourable position of the beasts, I fired at the mother; but, though the ball apparently took effect, she in no wise slackened her pace.

Hans did not discharge his gun, because, as he said, the bushes prevented him from having more than a very indistinct view of the beasts.

When I had re-loaded, we gave chase; and, as that part of the plain we had now reached was totally devoid of every kind of vegetation that could obstruct the sight, we easily kept the animals in view. By degrees they slackened their speed; and, in about twenty minutes, abruptly came to a stand-still, curiously regarding me as, having (though unobserved by myself) separated from Hans, I rapidly made up to them. When within fifteen to twenty paces, I halted, took aim at the mother, and pulled the trigger; but, to my great annoyance, my gun missed fire. Whilst in the very act of discharging my second barrel, she wheeled about, and the ball, instead of entering her heart, lodged in her hind quarters, and only tended to quicken her pace.

In the heat of pursuit I had taken no notice of Hans

and our attendant; but now that my attention was no longer exclusively drawn to the rhinoceros, I looked round to ascertain why they had not fired as well as myself, when to my utter astonishment, I saw both of them about half-a-mile in the back-ground, standing motionless and watching my proceedings. On their rejoining me, and in the first burst of indignation, I charged them with cowardice; but Hans immediately drew himself up to his full height, and indignantly, but respectfully, replied as follows:—

"Sir! when you have had my experience, you will never call that man a coward who does not attack a wounded black rhinoceros on an open and naked plain. I would rather," he continued, "face fifty lions than one of these animals in such an exposed situation; for not one in a hundred would take it as quietly as this has done. A wounded black rhinoceros seldom waits to be attacked, but charges instantly; and there would not have been the least chance of saving one's life in an open place like this. Had there been but the smallest bush or stone, I shouldn't have hesitated a moment, for the sight of the rhinoceros is bad, and if there is the least cover it is easy to avoid him. Not many years ago, a great Namaqua chief, who, contrary to the advice of his friends, had fired at a rhinoceros under precisely similar circumstances to yourself, lost his life by his rashness."

I could not but be sensibly aware of the injustice of my accusation, and my own fool-hardiness; yet I then felt but half convinced of the truth of what Hans had told me, and should certainly have acted in the like imprudent manner (as indeed I did on many subsequent occasions) had another opportunity offered. But, after all, Hans was perfectly right; as I am sure every one who has come much in contact with the beast in question will readily admit. Indeed, after the severe lesson which, at an after period, I received from a black

rhinoceros, I am free to confess that nothing in the world would ever again induce me wilfully to expose myself in the way just mentioned.

To proceed. After receiving my fire, both mother and calf galloped off as fast as their legs would carry them; but gradually they slackened their pace to a canter, then to a trot, and finally to a walk. By this time, however, they were so far away that, but for the certain knowledge of their identity, we might readily have taken them for stocks or stones. The indistinctness of objects, moreover, even at a moderate distance, was increased by the effects of a most perplexing mirage.

Whilst discussing the propriety of following up the rhinoceroses, we saw them make for an isolated tree—no doubt, with the intention of sheltering themselves from the scorching rays of the sun. This decided us on continuing the chase; and, although already suffering greatly from thirst (our small supply of water having been long exhausted), the hope of ultimate success gave us strength to proceed.

Approaching under cover of some stunted bushes, and when almost certain of closing with the beasts, and putting an end to one or both, I was startled by the report of guns close behind me; and, on turning round, I found that Hans and our man had fired. I never felt more vexed in my life; for we were still a good hundred yards from the animals, and it had been previously agreed that—unless the beasts knew of our presence—we were not to fire until within a very short distance of them. As, however, the evil could not be remedied, I lost no time in firing; but the brutes being fully one hundred and fifty paces from me, I had small hope of inflicting serious injury. That I hit the mother, however, was very certain; for, at the instant of discharging my gun, she

bounded like a cat into the air; and Hans, who looked upon this as a sure sign of her being mortally wounded, exclaimed, "Aha, old girl, you are safe!" Annoyed as I was, I could not help smiling, and ironically replied—"To be sure, she is safe enough." And so it proved, for we never saw her or her calf again.

I felt disappointed at our failure, and the chance of a feast; and was, moreover, sorry for the poor rhinoceros; for, though she was lost to us, I felt certain it was only to die a lingering death at a distance. From experience, indeed, I should say that a similar fate awaits a large portion of birds and animals, that escape us after being badly wounded.

Under ordinary circumstances, I would certainly have continued the pursuit; but this was now impossible. We could not reach our encampment under many hours, and we suffered painfully from thirst; while, owing to severe and continued exertions under a burning sun, I was attacked by torturing headache. Long before we could reach the waggons, I experienced precisely the same feelings as when I received a sun-stroke. Knowing that a renewal of the same infliction would in all probability prove fatal, I still toiled on; yet, at last, the faintness and exhaustion became so overpowering, that, regardless of danger, I threw myself on a small flat rock —so heated by the sun, that I was unable to hold my hand on it for a moment; and even the limbs protected by my dress were almost blistered. I then urged Hans to proceed as quickly as possible, in order that, if he found I did not immediately follow, he might send me some water.

Hans had not long been gone, however, when the rock became so intolerably hot that, stupified as I was, I found it necessary to rise from it; when, with a faltering step, and in a state of almost total unconsciousness, I made for the waggons, which I reached in safety, just as Hans was about to

never had the good fortune to fall in with any of these animals.

Furious battles are said to take place occasionally between the two last-named; and though, of course, strength in the elephant is infinitely superior to the rhinoceros, the latter, on account of his swiftness and sudden movements, is by no means a despicable antagonist. Indeed, instances are known where they have perished together. At Omanbondè, we were told that a combat of this kind occurred not long before our arrival. A rhinoceros, having encountered an elephant, made a furious dash at him, striking his long sharp horn into the belly of his antagonist with such force as to be unable to extricate himself; and, in his fall, the elephant crushed his assailant to death.

In sauntering one day about the neighbourhood of Omanbondè, Galton suddenly found himself confronted by a lion, which seems greatly to have terrified him; and he candidly tells us that, being only armed with a small rifle, he would "much rather have viewed him at a telescopic distance."

As soon as we had somewhat recovered from our bitter disappointment, we began seriously to consider our situation, and to consult on our future plans. Once more we were without a definite object. Should we return, or push boldly forward? At one time my friend entertained thoughts of going no farther; in which case, though it was probable we might reach home in safety, it was very certain we should reap but little credit for what had been done. On the other hand, by continuing to travel northwards, we exposed ourselves to much risk and danger. From experience, we were aware that, to accomplish even a comparatively short distance, in our very slow mode of travelling, months would elapse. In that time, all the pools and vleys which now contained water would probably be dried up. This would be certain

destruction to ourselves and cattle. Besides this, our men were disheartened, and wished to return. However, in that respect there would be less difficulty, as they were now nearly as much dependent on us as we on them; inasmuch as a broad tract of wild, inhospitable country separated us from the nearest point of civilization.

From Jonker Afrikaner, and various other sources of information, we had already learnt that, at a considerable distance to the north, there lived a nation called Ovambo, who had much intercourse with the Damaras, with whom they bartered cattle for iron-ware. They were a people, moreover, of agricultural habits, having permanent dwellings, and were reported to be industrious and strictly honest. The Damaras spoke in raptures of their hospitality and friendliness towards strangers; and represented them as a very numerous and powerful nation, ruled by a single chief or king, named Nangoro, who, to their notions, was a perfect giant in size. With regard to the distance to this country, they gave us the same wild, conflicting, and unsatisfactory accounts as those we received about the position of Omanbondè. A variety of circumstances at last induced us, let the consequence be whatever it might, to attempt to reach this interesting land.

As, however, no reliance could possibly be placed on the accounts of the natives with regard to water, character of the country, and so forth, it was deemed advisable, before moving from our present encampment, to make a short exploratory excursion, in order to see and judge for ourselves.

Mr. Galton, accompanied by a few of the men, therefore, rode northward, in order to ascertain if the route we purposed taking was traversable with waggons. On the evening of the third day he returned, being assured of its practicability. He had met with several native villages; and, though his

CHAPTER XXX.

GHANZÉ—SPOTTED HYÆNA—THE RHINOCEROS—WHERE FOUND—SEVERAL SPECIES—DESCRIPTION OF RHINOCEROS—SIZE—APPEARANCE—AGE—STRENGTH—SPEED—FOOD—WATER—THE YOUNG—AFFECTION—SENSES—DISPOSITION—GREGARIOUS—INDOLENCE—DOMESTICATION—FLESH—HORNS—THE CHASE—MR. OSWELL'S ADVENTURES WITH RHINOCEROSES—A CROTCHET—WHERE TO AIM AT THE RHINOCEROS—DOES NOT BLEED EXTERNALLY WHEN WOUNDED—GREAT NUMBERS SLAIN ANNUALLY.

GHANZÉ, according to the interpretation of my Griqua, signifies very large, and yet very small. Absurd as this explanation may appear, there is, nevertheless, some aptness in it. The 'very large' means that, from the moisture of the ground, there is an indication of much water, whilst the real quantity is trifling. Ghanzé is a peculiar and dreary-looking place, consisting of an extensive hollow, with innumerable small stones scattered over its surface, and on one side fenced by a natural limestone wall, three to five feet in height. The whole is hemmed in with thorn-coppices, intersected by numerous foot-paths, the work of those huge creatures, the elephant and the rhinoceros, who have probably wandered here for ages in undisputed sway. Here

and there an 'iron' tree, the mythological progenitor of the Damaras, stands majestically forth, shooting its wide-spreading branches high into space.

Ghanzé, it would appear, has been long known to the Bechuanas and the Griquas. A party of the latter, I was told, reached it many years previously to my arrival in a despairing state, having been obliged to abandon their waggons in the Kalahari. The body of men from whom I obtained my interpreter had also visited it. It had even been frequented by Europeans. An English traveller, Moyle, crossed the desert in safety, and arrived at Ghanzé in 1852, on a trading and hunting expedition. From this place he was guided by Bushmen to Great Namaqua-land, whence he retraced his steps home. The year after this, he again crossed the desert, though under unfavourable circumstances—having, with the exception of two horses, lost all his beasts of burden; as also his servants, some of whom died from want.

Almost the first animal I saw at this place was a gigantic 'tiger-wolf,' or spotted hyæna, which, to my surprise, instead of seeking safety in flight, remained stationary, grinning in the most ghastly manner. Having approached within twenty paces, I perceived, to my horror, that his fore paws, and the skin and flesh of his front legs had been gnawed away, and that he could scarcely move from the spot. To shorten the sufferings of the poor beast, I seized my opportunity and knocked him on the head with a stone; and, catching him by the tail drove my hunting knife deep into his side. But I had to repeat the operation more than once before I could put an end to his existence. I am at a loss how to account for his mangled condition. It certainly could not have been from age, for his teeth were good. Could it be possible that from want of food he had become too weak for further exertions, and that, as a last resource, he had attacked his

own body? Or was he an example of that extraordinary species of cruelty said to be practised by the lion on the hyæna, when the latter has the insolence to interfere with the monarch's prey? [1]

Fortune once again favoured us; for, in the course of the few days we remained at Ghanzé, several rhinoceroses were shot, affording an abundance of provision. These animals were very numerous, but rather shy. One night I counted twenty defiling past me, though beyond reach. The cause of so unusual a number being seen together was as follows:—In the early part of the night, one or two were approaching the water, but, having winded me, they kept walking restlessly round the place, grunting and snorting most viciously. This had the effect of putting those who arrived later on their guard, and they soon joined company.

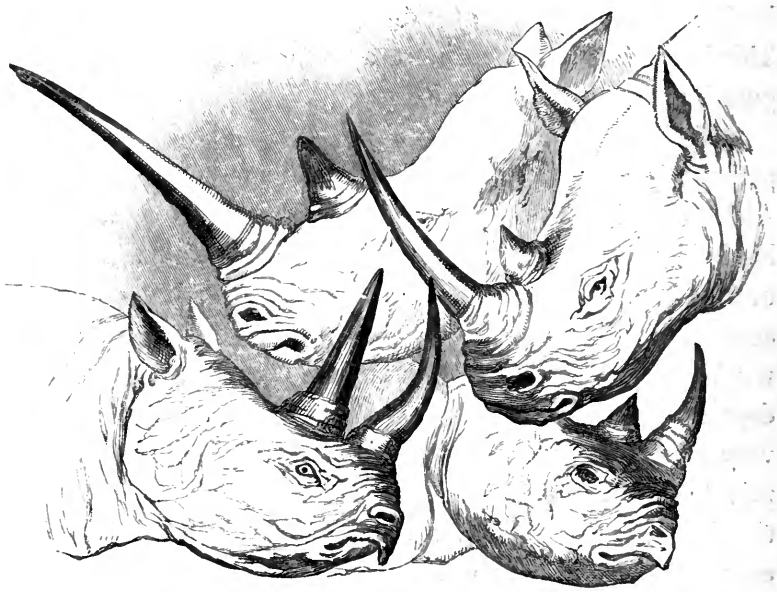
Of all the South African animals, not the least curious, perhaps, is the rhinoceros. He inhabits a large portion of the African continent—such localities, at least, as are suitable to his habits. Formerly, as before mentioned, he was common even in the immediate vicinity of Cape-Town; but, owing to constant persecution, is now rarely met farther to the southward (I speak of the west coast) than about the twenty-third degree of latitude. In the interior, however, the tribe is still very numerous. "On one occasion," says Captain Harris, in a private letter, "whilst walking from the waggons, to bring the head of a koodoo that I had killed about a mile off, I encountered twenty-two rhinoceroses, and had to shoot four of them to clear the way."

The rhinoceros is, moreover, an inhabitant of Bengal, Siam, China, and other countries of Asia; as also of Java,

[1] It is asserted by more than one experienced hunter, that when the hyæna proves troublesome, the lion has been known to bite off all its feet, and, thus mutilated, leave the poor animal to its fate!

Sumatra, and Ceylon. But the three species[1] indigenous to this quarter of the globe would seem to be quite different from any yet found in Africa. Almost all the Asiatic species have an exceedingly coarse hide, covered with large folds, not unlike a coat of mail; whilst that of the African species is comparatively smooth. Two of the Indian rhinoceroses have only one horn, whereas all the African are provided with two.[2] The third Asiatic species, which is found in the island of Sumatra, resembles the African in having two horns, but in other respects differs considerably.

Though the rhinoceros is abundant in the interior of



HEADS OF RHINOCEROSES.[3]

[1] *Rhinoceros Indicus*, *Rhinoceros Sondaicus*, and *Rhinoceros Bicornis Sumatrensis*.

[2] I have met persons who told me that they have killed rhinoceroses with three horns; but in all such cases (and they have been but few) the third, or posterior, horn is so small as to be scarcely perceptible.

[3] The above woodcut is a rough but characteristic outline of the heads of the four distinct species of rhinoceroses recognised as indigenous to Africa. The two lowest heads in the sketch are those of the 'black.'

Africa, it is described as far from numerous in Asia, and as less generally distributed than the elephant.

Four distinct species of rhinoceroses are known to exist in South Africa, two of which are of a dark colour, and two of a whitish hue. Hence they are usually designated the 'black' and the 'white' rhinoceros.

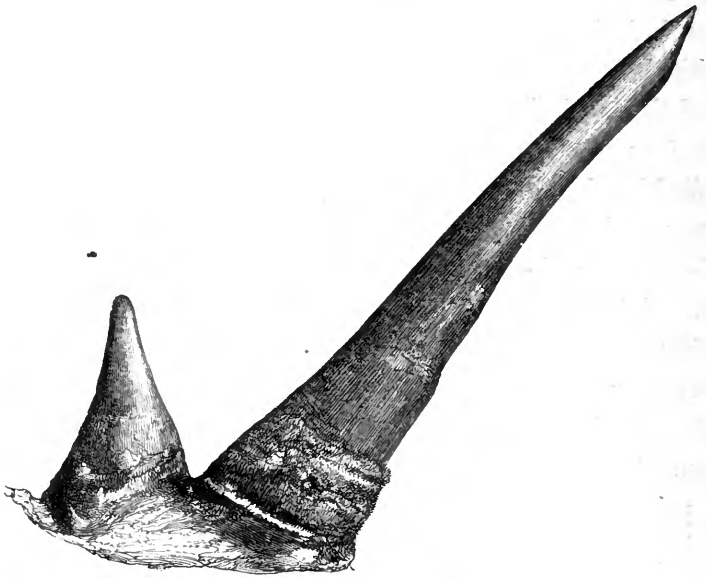
One of the two species of 'black'—the Borele, as it is called by the Bechuanas—is the common small black rhinoceros (*rhinoceros bicornis*); the other, the Keitloa (*rhinoceros Keitloa*), or the two-horned black rhinoceros, as it is also termed by naturalists. The latter differs from the Borele in being somewhat larger, with a longer neck; in having the horns of nearly equal length, with a lesser number of wrinkles about the head; and it is of a more wild and morose disposition. The upper lip of both (more especially in the Keitloa) is pointed, overlaps the lower, and is capable of extension. It is pliable, and the animal can move it from side to side, twist it round a stick, collect its food, or seize with it anything it would carry to its mouth. Both species are extremely fierce, and, excepting the buffalo, are perhaps the most dangerous of all the beasts in Southern Africa.

Of the white species, we have the common white rhinoceros (*rhinoceros simus*, Burch.), called Monoohoo by the Bechuanas, and the Kobaaba (*rhinoceros Oswellii*, Gray), or long-horned white rhinoceros.[1] It is with regard to their

[1] Only the horns of this species have been described by naturalists. Dr. Gray, of the British Museum, seems to be one of the first who drew attention to the Kobaaba as a distinct rhinoceros. In the 'Proceedings of the Zoological Society,' No. ccl. p. 46, the following details appear. They were obtained from a pair of horns (of which the woodcut in the next page is an excellent likeness) presented by Mr. Oswell to Colonel Thomas Steele, of Upper Brook Street:—

"The front horn is elongated and thick; but instead of being bent back, as is the general character of *R. bicornis*, or erect, as in *R. simus*, it is bent forwards, so that the upper surface is worn flat by being rubbed against the ground. The front horn is thirty-one inches long, flat, square, rough and fibrous in front, rounded and smooth behind. The hinder horn, eleven inches in length, is short, conical, and subquadrangular."

horns that the two species chiefly differ from each other; for whilst the anterior horn of the Monoohoo has an average



HORNS OF RHINOCEROS OSWELLII.

length of two or three feet, curving backward, that of the Kobaaba not unfrequently exceeds four feet, and is slightly pointed forward, inclining from the snout at about an angle of forty-five degrees. This rhinoceros is also the rarer of the two, and is only found in the more interior parts of South Africa.

The chief distinguishing characteristics of the white rhinoceros, are its superior size; the extraordinary prolongation of its head, which is not far from one-third of the whole length of the animal's body; its square nose (hence also designated 'square-nosed rhinoceros'), and the greater length of the anterior horns.

The 'black' and the 'white' rhinoceros, though so nearly allied to each other, differ widely in their mode of living,

habits, &c. The chief sustenance of the former animal consists of the roots of certain bushes, which it ploughs up with its strong horn, and the shoots and tender boughs of the 'wait-a-bit' thorn; whilst the 'white' rhinoceros, on the contrary, feeds solely on grasses.

In disposition, also, there is a marked distinction between them; for whilst the 'black' is of a very savage nature, the 'white,' on the other hand, is of a comparatively mild disposition; and, unless in defence of its young, or when hotly pursued, or wounded, will rarely attack a man.

The body of the rhinoceros is long and thick; its belly is large, and hangs near the ground; its legs are short, round, and very strong; and its hoofs are divided into three parts, each pointing forward. The head, which is remarkably formed, is large; the ears are long and erect; its eyes small and sunk. The horns, which are composed of a mass of fine longitudinal threads, or laminæ, forming a beautifully hard and solid substance, are not affixed to the skull, but merely attached to the skin, resting, however, in some degree, on a bony protuberance above the nostrils. It is believed by many, that when the animal is at rest, the horns are soft and pliable, but that when on the move, they at once become hard and solid. Moreover, that it can, at will, turn the posterior horn, the other horn meanwhile remaining firm and erect. But there can scarcely be sufficient foundation for such notions.

In size, the African rhinoceros—the white species, at least—is only exceeded by the elephant. A full-grown male (*R. simus*) measures, from the snout to the extremity of the tail (which is about two feet), between fourteen and sixteen feet, with a circumference of ten or twelve. To judge from these data, and the general bulkiness of the body, it cannot weigh less than from four to five thousand pounds. In our 'bush-

cuisine,' we reckoned one of these animals equal to three good-sized oxen.

The general appearance of the African rhinoceros is not unlike that of an immense hog shorn of his hair, or rather bristles; for, with the exception of a tuft at the extremity of the ears and the tail, it has no hair whatever. And, as if in mockery of its giant form, its eyes are ludicrously small; so small, indeed, that at a short distance they are imperceptible. Altogether, what with its huge body, mishapen head, ungainly legs and feet, and diminutive organs of vision, the rhinoceros is the very image of ugliness.

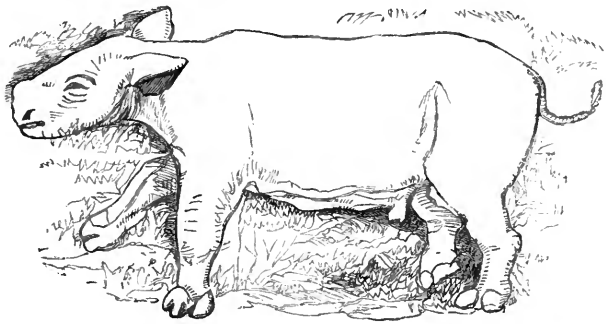
I have no data that would enable me to determine the age of this animal; but if we are to judge from the length of time that the horns require to be perfected, and supposing the animal to continue to grow in the meanwhile, it may be safely conjectured that he is one of the most long-lived of beasts. Indeed, it is probable he attains the age of one hundred years.

In strength, the rhinoceros is scarcely inferior to the elephant. Of its prodigious power, sufficient evidence was shown in the manner in which it charged the missionary waggon, as mentioned at page 35 of this volume. It is on record, moreover, that the rhinoceros, which Emanuel, King of Portugal, sent to the Pope in the year 1513, destroyed, in a paroxysm of fury, the vessel in which he was transported.

Ungainly and heavy as the rhinoceros looks, it is, nevertheless, so exceedingly swift of foot—at least, as regards the black species—"that a horse with a rider," to quote the words of Gordon Cumming, "can rarely manage to overtake it." The testimony of Captain Harris is to the like effect; for, when speaking of the chase of this animal, and after telling us that it is most difficult to kill, he says:—"From its clumsy appearance, one would never suppose it could dart about as it does, like lightning."

The food of the rhinoceros consists entirely, as mentioned, of vegetables, shoots of trees, grasses, &c. It is fond of the sugar-cane, and eats all kinds of grain;[1] but it does not seem to be a voracious feeder. Indeed, it would appear to be somewhat fastidious in the selection of its food, in search of which it wanders far and wide.

Water is indispensable to the rhinoceros, and, even if his usual haunts be distant from the fountain, he seeks it at least once in the course of the twenty-four hours, as well to quench his thirst, as to wallow in the mud, with which his body is frequently encrusted—leaving to the thirsty traveller nothing but a mass of well-kneaded dough.



FŒTUS OF RHINOCEROS KEITLOA.

Little seems to be known of the breeding habits of this animal; whether it lives in monogamy, or has a plurality of wives, and so forth. It appears certain, however, that the female only produces one young at a birth, and that too at considerable intervals. During the first month, the young rhinoceros exceeds not the size of a large dog, with the merest indication of horns. A complete and full-grown fœtus of *R. Keitloa* that I once obtained measured thus:—

[1] The Asiatic specimen in the Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park, is fed on clover, straw, rice, and bran. His daily allowance is one truss of straw, three-quarters of a truss of clover, one quart of rice, half a bushel of bran, and twenty to twenty-four gallons of water.

Length of body (from tip of nose, over the head, and along the back) to insertion of tail	3ft.	6in.
Length of tail	0	10
Circumference of body behind shoulder . . .	2	4
„ neck	1	6
„ head (across the eyes) . . .	1	8
Height at the shoulder	2	1
Length of head between ears and eyes . . .	0	4½
Breadth „ „ „	0	4
„ „ „ eyes (corner nearest nostrils) .	0	7

At the age of two years, the horn is said to be not more than an inch long; at six years old, it is nine or ten inches long, and grows, as seen in the white species, to the length of three or four feet.

The rhinoceros is a very affectionate mother, and guards her offspring with the tenderest care. The young, in its turn, clings doatingly to its dam; and, even for a day or two after the latter has been killed, the calf is frequently found alongside the carcase. Several instances of the kind have come under my personal notice, and many others are to be found in the records of African travellers and hunters.

The sense of hearing and smell of this animal is most acute. I have had numerous opportunities of testing both these qualities. Even when feeding, lying down, or obeying any passing demand of nature, he will listen with a deep and continued attention until the noise that has attracted his attention ceases. He 'winds' an enemy from a very great distance; but, if one be to leeward of him, it is not difficult to approach within a few paces.

His sight, on the other hand, is not good. From the peculiar position of his eyes—which are deep set in the head—and his unwieldy horns, he can only see what is immediately before him.

The 'black' species, as before said, are of a very sullen and morose disposition. They are, moreover, subject to

sudden paroxysms of unprovoked fury, rushing and charging with inconceivable fierceness animals, stones, bushes—in short, any object that comes in their way.

Seen in his native wilds, either when browsing at his leisure, or listlessly sauntering about, a person would take the rhinoceros to be the most stupid and inoffensive of creatures; yet, when his ire is roused, he becomes the reverse, and is then the most agile and terrible of animals.

Colonel Williamson speaks of a rhinoceros in India whose ferocity was such as to render the roads impassable, by attacking travellers, or those who passed near his haunts; and he relates an attack upon a sporting company by the same animal, in the close of the year 1788, as generally known to the army and residents of the district. "Two officers belonging to the troops cantoned at Dunapore, near Patna, went down the river towards Monghyr, to shoot and hunt. They had encamped in the vicinity of Derrzapore, and had heard some reports of a rhinoceros having attacked some travellers many miles off. One morning, just as they were rising, about daybreak, to go in quest of game, they heard a violent uproar; and, on looking out, found that a rhinoceros was goring their horses, both of which, being fastened by their head and heel with ropes, were consequently unable either to escape or resist. Their servants took to their heels, and concealed themselves in the neighbouring jungle; and the gentlemen had just time to climb up into a small tree not far distant, before the furious beast, having completed the destruction of the horses, turned his attention to their masters. They were barely out of his reach, and by no means exempt from danger, especially as he assumed a threatening appearance, and seemed intent on their downfal. After keeping them in dreadful suspense for some time, and using some efforts to dislodge them, seeing the sun rise, he

retreated to his haunt; not, however, without occasionally casting an eye back, as with regret, at leaving what he wanted the power to destroy."

But the rhinoceros is not dangerous to man alone—all the beasts of the forest dread him, and none venture to attack this truly formidable animal. The lion, if they chance to meet, slinks out of his way. Even the elephant, should they encounter, retreats, if possible, without hazarding an engagement. Major Lally stated to the author of 'Oriental Sports,' that he once witnessed, from a distant hill, a most desperate battle between a large male elephant and a rhinoceros, in which the former was worsted and fled. Amral told me, that one day, whilst himself and party were engaged in pursuit of an elephant, a black rhinoceros suddenly appeared amongst them, charging madly both beasts and men, several of whom had narrow escapes from being gored by the animal.

The rhinoceros will also fight his own species. One night, when at the 'skärm,' I saw four huge beasts engage each other at the same time, and so furious was the strife, and their gruntings so horrible, that it caused the greatest consternation amongst my party, who was encamped some little way off. I succeeded after a while in killing two of them, one of which was actually unfit for food, being quite rotten from wounds received on previous occasions, and, probably, under similar circumstances.

The rhinoceros, though it cannot strictly be called a gregarious animal, and though most commonly met with singly or in pairs, would seem to be of a somewhat social disposition. Indeed, as many as a dozen have been seen pasturing and browsing together.

The rhinoceros is nocturnal in his habits. At the approach of dusk he commences his rambles, and, if not dis-

turbed, generally visits the pool at an early hour of the evening; afterwards, he not unfrequently wanders over a great extent of country. Soon after sunrise, he seeks repose and shelter against the heat, under some friendly mimosa, or the projecting ledge of a rock, where he spends the day in sleep, either stretched at full length or in a standing position. Thus seen from a distance, he may easily be mistaken for the fragment of a rock.

The Asiatic species is frequently kept in confinement, but, though generally tractable, his morose and savage nature makes him rather dangerous. The least provocation often puts him into a tempest of passion, when he will not hesitate to destroy his best friend. In his rage, he will jump about, and leap to a great height, driving his head furiously, and with incredible swiftness, against the partitions of his place of confinement. Three or four specimens are at the present day alive in England.

The flesh of the rhinoceros varies greatly in quality. That of the 'black' species, from its leanness, and the animal feeding on the 'wait-a-bit' thorn-bushes, which gives it an acrid and bitter flavour, is not over-esteemed. That of the white, on the other hand, whose sustenance consists of grass, which imparts to it an agreeable taste, coupled with its usual fatness, is greatly sought after by natives and colonists. Indeed, the flesh of this animal seems always to have been in repute in the Cape-Colony. Kolben, when speaking of it, says: "The flesh of a rhinoceros, which I have often eaten with a great deal of satisfaction, is not so sinewy as some writers have represented."

The horns of the rhinoceros, which are capable of a high polish, are a valuable article of commerce. At the Cape, this commodity fetches half as much as ordinary elephant ivory. It is extensively used in the manufacture of sword

handles, drinking cups, ramrods for rifles, and a variety of other purposes. In Turkey the rhinoceros-horn is much esteemed, more especially such as have a reddish tint about the grain. These, when made into cups, the Turks believe to have the virtue of detecting poison.

"The horns of the rhinoceros," says Thunberg, "were kept by some people, both in town and country, not only as rarities, but also as useful in diseases, and for the purpose of detecting poison. As to the former of these intentions, the fine shavings of the horns taken internally were supposed to cure convulsions and spasms in children. With respect to the latter, it was generally believed that goblets made of these horns in a turner's lathe would discover a poisonous draught that was put into them, by making the liquor ferment till it ran quite out of the goblet. Such horns as were taken from a rhinoceros calf were said to be the best, and the most to be depended upon."

"The horn of the rhinoceros," Kolben tells us, "will not endure the touch of poison. I have often been a witness to this. Many people of fashion at the Cape have cups turn'd out of the rhinoceros-horn. Some have them set in silver, and some in gold. If wine is pour'd into one of these cups, it immediately rises and bubles up as if it were boiling; and if there be poison in it, the cup immediately splits. If poison be put by itself into one of those cups, the cup, in an instant, flies to pieces. Tho' this matter is known to thousands of persons, yet some writers have affirm'd that the rhinoceros-horn has no such virtue. The chips made in turning one of those cups are ever carefully sav'd, and return'd to the owner of the cup; being esteem'd of great benefit in convulsions, faintings, and many other illnesses."

The chase of the rhinoceros is variously conducted in Southern Africa. One of the most approved plans is to stalk

the animal, either when feeding or reposing. If the sportsman keep well under the wind, and there be the least cover, he has no difficulty in approaching the beast within easy range, when, if the ball be well directed, the prey is usually killed on the spot. With a little precaution, this kind of sport may be conducted without greatly endangering a person's safety.

But by far the most convenient way of destroying this animal, is to shoot him from the 'skärm' as he comes to the pool to quench his thirst. In this manner I have myself killed several scores of rhinoceroses.

Occasionally he is also taken in pit-falls, which are constructed in pretty much the same manner as those for the capture of elephants, and other large game.

He is not often pursued on horseback, and chiefly because his speed and endurance are such that it is very difficult to come up with and follow him—to say nothing of the danger attendant on such a course. Many a hunter, indeed, has thereby endangered his life.

"Once, as I was returning from an elephant chase," said Mr. Oswell to me, one day, in conversation, "I observed a huge white rhinoceros, a short distance a-head. I was riding a most excellent hunter—the best and fleetest steed that I ever possessed during my shooting excursions in Africa—at the time; but it was a rule with me never to pursue a rhinoceros on horseback, and simply because this animal is so much more easily approached and killed on foot. On this occasion, however, it seemed as if fate had interfered. Turning to my after-rider, I called out—'By Heaven! that fellow has got a fine horn! I will have a shot at him.' With that, I clapped spurs to my horse, who soon brought me alongside the huge beast, and the next instant I lodged a ball in his body, but, as it turned out, not with deadly

effect. On receiving my shot, the rhinoceros, to my great surprise, instead of seeking safety in flight, as is the habit of this generally inoffensive animal, suddenly stopped short, then turned sharply round, and, having eyed me most curiously for a second or two, walked slowly towards me. I never dreamt of danger. Nevertheless, I instinctively turned my horse's head away; but, strange to say, this creature, usually so docile and gentle—which the slightest touch of the reins would be sufficient to guide—now absolutely refused to give me his head. When at last he did so, it was too late; for, notwithstanding the rhinoceros had only been walking, the distance between us was so inconsiderable, that by this time I clearly saw contact was unavoidable. Indeed, in another moment, I observed the brute bend low his head, and, with a thrust upwards, struck his horn into the ribs of the horse with such force as to penetrate to the very saddle on the opposite side, where I felt its sharp point against my leg. The violence of the blow was so tremendous as to cause the horse to make a complete somersault in the air, coming heavily down on his back. With regard to myself, I was, as a matter of course, violently precipitated to the ground. Whilst thus prostrated, I actually saw the horn of the infuriated brute alongside of me; but, seemingly satisfied with his revenge, without attempting to do further mischief, he started off at a canter from the scene of action. My after-rider having by this time come up, I rushed upon him, and, almost pulling him off the horse, leapt into the saddle; and, without a hat, and my face streaming with blood, was quickly in pursuit of the retreating beast, which I soon had the satisfaction to see stretched lifeless at my feet.

"My friend, Captain Vardon, by whom I was accompanied on this journey, soon after joined me, and, seeing my head and face covered with blood, at first imagined me to be

mortally hurt or dying. However, with the exception of a blow on the skull, occasioned by the stirrup-iron, which laid my head open a few inches, I received no further injury. But the horse was killed on the spot."

Again:—"On another occasion, as I was bending my steps towards my camp on foot, I espied at no great distance two rhinoceroses of the species Keitloa. They were feeding, and slowly approaching me. I immediately couched and quietly waited their arrival; but though they soon came within range, from their constantly facing me, I was unable to fire, well knowing the uselessness of a shot at the head. In a short time, they had approached so close that, on account of the exposed nature of the ground, I could neither retreat nor advance, and my situation became highly critical. I was afraid to fire; for, even had I succeeded in killing one, the other would, in all likelihood, have run over and trampled me to death. In this dilemma, the thought struck me, that on account of their bad sight I might possibly save myself by trying to run past them. No time was to be lost; and, accordingly, just as the leading animal almost touched me, I stood up and dashed past it. The brute, however, was much too quick for me, and before I had made good many paces, I heard a violent snorting at my heels, and had only time to fire my gun at random into his head, when I felt myself impaled on his horn.

"The shock stunned me completely. The first return to consciousness was, I recollect, finding myself seated on one of my ponies, and a Caffre leading it. I had an indistinct notion of having been hunting; and, on observing the man, I asked quickly why he was not following the track of the animal, when he mumbled something to the effect that it was gone.

"By accident I touched my right hip with my hand, and on withdrawing it, was astonished to find it clotted with

blood. Yet my senses were still so confused, and the side so benumbed, that I actually kept feeling and working the wound with my fingers. Whilst trying to account for my strange position, I observed some of my men coming towards me with a cartel, and on asking them what they were about, they cried out that they had come to fetch my body, having been told that I was killed by some animal. The truth now for the first time broke upon me, and I was quickly made aware of my crippled condition. The wound I had received was of a very serious character, and, though it ultimately healed, it left scars behind which no doubt will remain to the day of my death."

We are fond of the marvellous. It is generally received as a fact that the hide of the rhinoceros is impenetrable to a bullet, or even to an 'iron ingot,' as a certain writer quaintly expresses it. But this is just as idle a notion, as regards the African species, at least, as that entertained respecting the softness and pliability of the animal's horns; for a common leaden ball will find its way through the hide with the greatest facility. It is true one should be near the brute; for, though I have known a rhinoceros killed at the distance of a hundred yards, it is an exception to the rule. Indeed, beyond thirty or forty paces one cannot make sure of the shot. Under all circumstances, a double charge of powder is desirable.

Though a common leaden ball may do the work well enough, I would not recommend it. The best metal is spelter, which has almost the hardness of iron, with all the weight of lead; but it is often difficult to procure. For want of a better, two-thirds lead and one-third solder answers the purpose very well.

The most deadly part to aim at is just behind the shoulder; a ball through the centre of the lobes of the lungs is certain to cause almost instantaneous death. From the

very solid structure of the head, the great thickness of the hide on that part, the position of the horns, the smallness of the brain,[1] a shot in the head rarely, or never, proves fatal. The same may be said of the breast.

However severely wounded the rhinoceros may be, he seldom bleeds externally. This is attributable in part, no doubt, to the great thickness of the hide, and its elasticity, which occasions the hole caused by the bullet nearly to close up; as also from the hide not being firmly attached to the body, but constantly moving. If the animal bleed at all, it is from the mouth and nostrils, which is a pretty sure sign that it is mortally stricken, and the chances are it will be found dead within a short distance.

The number of rhinoceroses destroyed annually in South Africa is very considerable. Of this, some idea may be formed, when I mention that Messrs. Oswell and Vardon killed, in one year, no less than eighty-nine of these animals; in my present journey, I, myself, shot, single-handed, nearly two-thirds of this amount.

[1] Sparrman says that the cavity containing the brains of a rhinoceros that he shot was only six inches long, and four high, and of an oval shape. On being filled with peas, it was found to hold barely one quart; a human skull, measured at the same time, did not require much less than three pints to fill it.

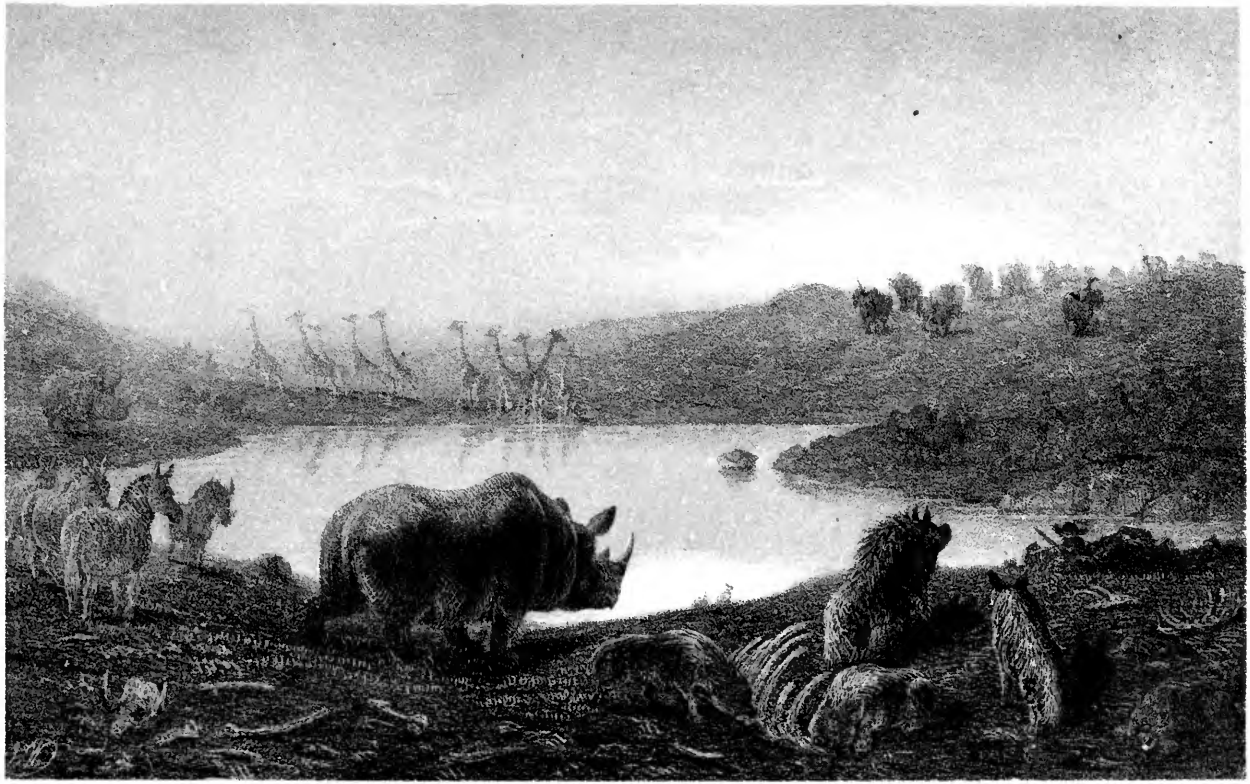
several deep gashes about the flanks and chest, caused by the claws and teeth of its fierce assailants. The strong and tough muscles of the neck were also bitten through.

All thought of pursuing the wounded lion was now out of the question. The natives remained gorging on the carcass of the cameleopard until it was devoured. A day or two afterwards, however, I had the good fortune to fall in with my royal antagonist, and finished him without much difficulty.

At Kobis, and the neighbourhood I enjoyed shooting to perfection.[1] But I had many hair-breadth escapes from elephants and rhinoceroses.

One fine moonlight night, when snugly ensconced in my 'skärm,' and contemplating the strange, but picturesque scene before me, my reverie was interrupted by the inharmonious grunting of a black rhinoceros. He was evidently in bad humour, for, as he emerged from amongst the trees into more open ground, I observed him madly charging anything and everything that he encountered, such as bushes, stones, &c. Even the whitened skulls and skeletons of his

[1] The accompanying plate represents one of those numerous and exciting scenes that I have witnessed at night, at the water, when lying in ambush for game. There is one fact—a fact that has hitherto escaped the attention of the African sportsman—connected with this illustration that makes it particularly interesting, and which induced me to designate it 'The Approach of Elephants.' The animals are just appearing above the distant hill. If the spring or pool, as the case may be, be of small extent, all the animals present will invariably retire from the water as soon as they are aware of the presence of the elephants, of whom they appear to have an instinctive dread, and will remain at a respectful distance until the giants have quenched their thirst. Thus, long before I have seen, or even heard, the elephants, I have been warned of their approach by the symptoms of uneasiness displayed by such animals as happened to be drinking at the time. The giraffe, for instance, begins to sway his long neck to and fro; the zebra utters subdued, plaintive cries; the gnoo glides away with a noiseless step; and even the ponderous and quarrelsome black rhinoceros, when he has time for reflection, will pull up short in his walk to listen; then, turning round, he listens again, and, if he feel satisfied that his suspicions are correct, he invariably makes off, usually giving vent to his fear or ire by one of his vicious and peculiar snorts. Once, it is true, I saw a rhinoceros drinking together with a herd of seven male elephants; but then he was of the white species, and, besides, I do not believe that either party knew of each other's proximity.



own species, lying scattered about on the ground, were attacked with inconceivable fury. I was much amused at his eccentric pastime; but, owing to the openness of the ground, and the quantity of the limestone thereabouts, which made objects more distinct, he was not easy of approach. However, after divesting myself of my shoes, and all the more conspicuous parts of my dress, I managed to crawl—pushing my gun before me—to within a short distance of the snorting beast. As he was advancing in a direct line towards me, I did not like to fire, because one has little chance of killing the rhinoceros when in that position. Having approached to within a few feet of me, his attention was attracted, and suddenly uttering one of those strange 'blowing' noises, so peculiar to the beast when alarmed or enraged, he prepared to treat me in a similar manner to the stones and skulls he had just so unceremoniously tossed about. Not a moment was to be lost; and, in self-defence, I fired at his head. I shall never forget the confusion of the animal on receiving the contents of my gun. Springing nearly perpendicularly into the air, and to the height of many feet, he came down again with a thump that seemed to make the earth tremble—then plunging violently forward (in doing which, he all but trampled on me), he ran round and round the spot for fully five minutes, enveloping every object in a cloud of dust. At last he dashed into the wood and was hidden from view. Not finding blood on his tracks, I had no reason to suppose he was much hurt. My notion is, the bullet struck his horn, partially stunning him with its jarring violence. Had my gun missed fire when he charged, it is more than probable, I should have been impaled.

Again: having on a certain night, stalked to within a few paces of a huge white rhinoceros (a female as it proved), I put a ball in her shoulder; but it nearly cost me dear—

for, guided by the flash of the gun, she rushed upon me with such fury that I had only time to throw myself on my back, in which position I remained motionless. This saved my life, for, not observing me, she came to a sudden halt just as her feet were about to crush my body. She was so near to me, that I felt the saliva from her mouth trickle on my face! I was in an agony of suspense, though, happily, only for a moment; for, having impatiently sniffed the air, she wheeled about, and made off at her utmost speed. I then saw, for the first time, that her calf was in company, and at once recognized the pair as an old acquaintance, and as specially vicious animals.

On another occasion, when the night was very dark, I crept to within a short distance of seven bull-elephants, and was endeavouring to pick out the largest, when I was startled by a peculiar rumbling noise close behind me. Springing to my feet, I perceived, to my surprise and alarm, a semi-circle of female elephants, with their calves, bearing down upon me. My position was critical, being between two fires, so to say, and I had no other choice than either to plunge into the pool, which could only be crossed by swimming, in the face of the male elephants, or to break through the ranks of the females. I adopted the latter alternative, but first fired at the nearest of the seven bulls; and then, and without a moment's delay, I rushed on the more open rank of the female phalanx, uttering, at the time, loud shouts. My cries caused a momentary panic amongst the animals, of which I took advantage, and slipped out between them, discharging my second barrel into the shoulder of the nearest as I passed her. No sooner, however, had I effected my escape, than the whole herd made a simultaneous rush at me, and trumpeted so shrilly as to cause every man at the camp, as I learnt afterwards, to start out of his sleep. For-

tunately, the darkness prevented the beasts from following me; and, the jungle being close by, I was soon in safety. In my precipitate flight, however, I severely lacerated my feet; for, when stalking the elephants, I had taken off my shoes, that I might the better steal upon them.

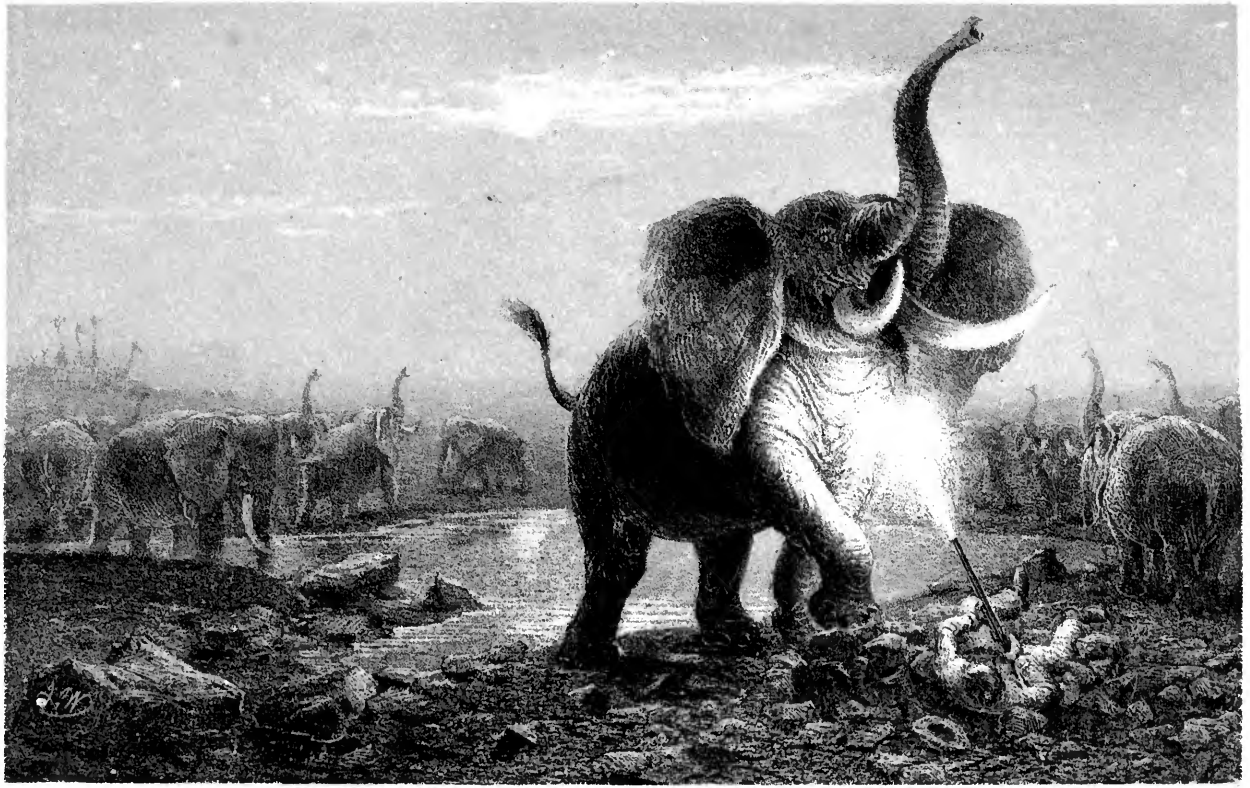
When, after a while, I ventured out of my place of concealment, I found every thing quiet: only one solitary elephant remained. Having approached within a short distance, I could distinctly see him laving water on to his sides with his trunk. I immediately suspected he belonged to the troop of seven bulls, and was the one that I had fired at. Seating myself right across his path, I quietly watched his proceedings. After a time I saw him, as I thought, moving off in an opposite direction. But I was mistaken; for in an another instant his towering form loomed above me. It was too late to get out of his way; so, quickly raising myself on one knee, I took a steady aim at his fore leg. On receiving the ball, he uttered the most plaintive cries, and rushing past me, soon disappeared in the neighbouring forest. The next afternoon he was discovered dead within rifle-shot of the water. It had been a very successful night; for a fine female elephant had also fallen to my other shot.[1]

[1] I lost many noble beasts from the small calibre of my guns, which did not carry more than fourteen and seventeen balls respectively to the pound. This was more especially the case as regarded the elephants; and it was not until after a time, and when they had become scarce and shy, that I found out the way of bringing them down with any certainty at one or two shots. I found the best part to aim at (when shooting by night) was the shoulder, either behind or in the centre, near to the lower edge of the ear. Another good point, provided the gun be of large calibre, is to fire at the leg, which once broken, the animal, in almost every instance, is completely at the mercy of the hunter.

afforded till his enormous bulk towered above my head. The consequence was, that, while in the act of raising the muzzle of my rifle over the 'skärm,' my body caught his eye, and, before I could place the piece to my shoulder, he swung himself round, and, with trunk elevated and ears spread, desperately charged me. It was now too late to think of flight, much less of slaying the savage beast. My own life was in imminent jeopardy; and seeing that, if I remained partially erect, he would inevitably seize me with his proboscis, I threw myself on my back with some violence; in which position, and without shouldering the rifle, I fired upwards at random towards his chest, uttering, at the same time, the most piercing shouts and cries. The change of position in all human probability saved my life; for, at the same instant, the trunk of the enraged animal descended precisely on the spot where I had been previously couched, sweeping away the stones (many of a large size) that formed the fore part of my 'skärm,' like so many pebbles. In another moment his broad fore-feet passed directly over my face.

I now expected nothing short of being crushed to death. But magine my relief, when, instead of renewing the charge he swerved to the left, and moved off with considerabe rapidity—most happily without my having received other injuries than a few bruises, occasioned by the falling of the stones. Under Providence, I attribute my extraordinary escape to the confusion of the animal caused by the wound I had inflicted on him, and to the cries elicited from me when in my utmost need.

Immediately after the elephant had left me I was on my legs, and, snatching up a spare rifle lying at hand, I pointed at him, as he was retreating, and pulled the trigger; but, to my intense mortification, the piece missed fire. It was matter of thankfulness to me, however, that a similar mishap had



not occurred when the animal charged; for had my gun not then exploded, nothing, as I conceive, could have saved me from destruction.

During this incident, the rest of the elephants retreated into the bush; but by the time I had repaired my 'skärm' they re-appeared with stealthy and cautious steps on the opposite side of the pool, though so distant that I could not fire with any prospect of success. As they did not approach nearer, I attempted to stalk them, but they would not allow me to come to close quarters; and after a while moved off altogether.

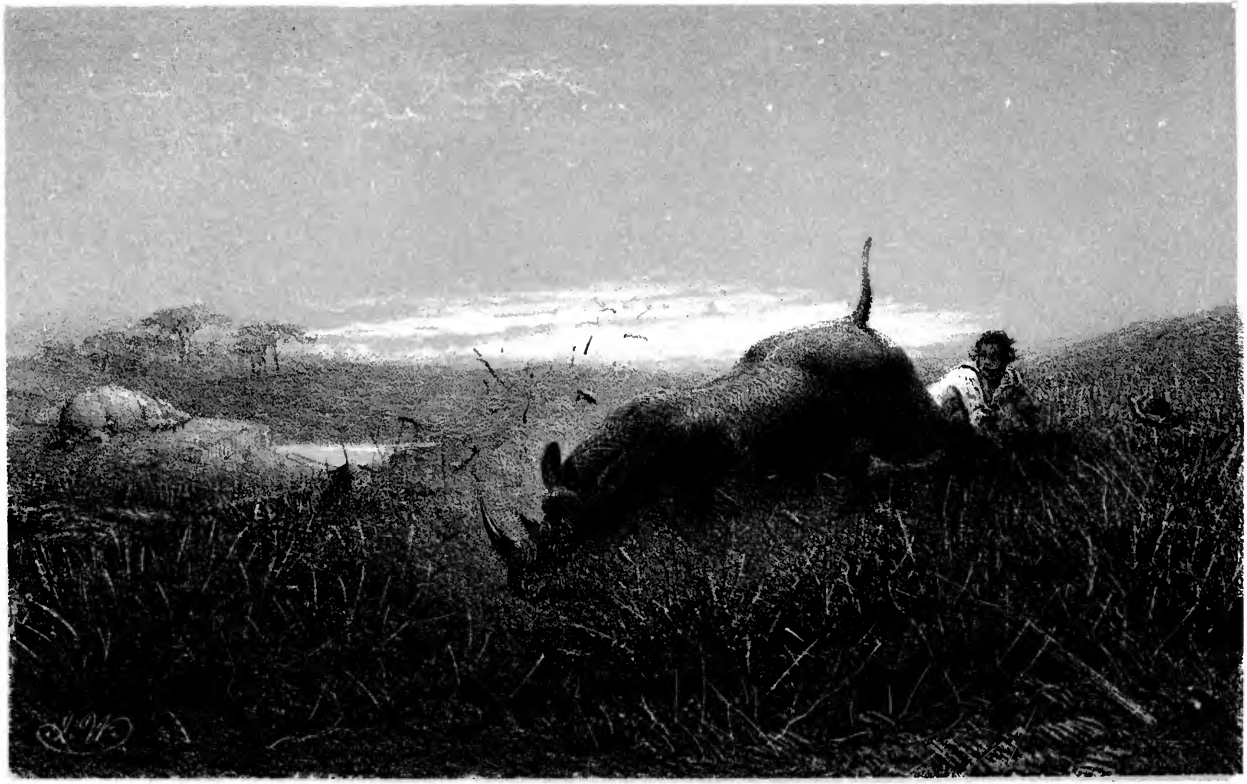
Whilst pondering over my late wonderful escape, I observed, at a little distance, a huge white rhinoceros protrude his ponderous and mis-shapen head through the bushes, and presently afterwards he approached to within a dozen paces of my ambuscade. His broadside was then fully exposed to view, and, notwithstanding I still felt a little nervous from my conflict with the elephant, I lost no time in firing. The beast did not at once fall to the ground, but from appearances I had every reason to believe he would not live long.

Scarcely had I reloaded when a black rhinoceros of the species Keitloa (a female, as it proved) stood drinking at the water; but her position, as with the elephant in the first instance, was unfavourable for a good shot. As, however, she was very near me, I thought I was pretty sure of breaking her leg and thereby disabling her; and in this I succeeded. My fire seemed to madden her: she rushed wildly forward on three legs, when I gave her a second shot, though apparently with little or no effect. I felt sorry at not being able to end her sufferings at once; but as I was too well acquainted with the habits of the rhinoceros to venture on pursuing her under the circumstances, I determined to wait patiently for daylight, and then destroy her with the aid of my dogs. But it was not to be.

As no more elephants, or other large game appeared, I thought after a time it might be as well to go in search of the white rhinoceros, previously wounded; and I was not long in finding his carcase; for my ball, as I supposed, had caused his almost immediate death.

In heading back to my 'skärm,' I accidentaly took a turn in the direction pursued by the black rhinoceros, and by ill luck, as the event proved, at once encountered her. She was still on her legs, but her position, as before, was unfavourable. Hoping, however, to make her change it for a better, and thus enable me to destroy her at once, I took up a stone and hurled it at her with all my force; when, snorting horribly, erecting her tail, keeping her head close to the ground, and raising clouds of dust by her feet, she rushed at me with fearful fury. I had only just time to level my rifle and fire before she was upon me; and the next instant, whilst instinctively turning round for the purpose of retreating, she laid me prostrate. The shock was so violent as to send my rifle, powder-flask, and ball-pouch, as also my cap, spinning in the air; the gun, indeed, as afterwards ascertained, to a distance of fully ten feet. On the beast charging me, it crossed my mind that unless gored at once by her horn, her impetus would be such (after knocking me down, which I took for granted would be the case) as to carry her beyond me, and I might thus be afforded a chance of escape. So, indeed, it happened; for having tumbled me over (in doing which her head, and the forepart of her body, owing to the violence of the charge, was half buried in the sand), and trampled on me with great violence, her fore-quarter passed over my body. Struggling for life, I seized my opportunity, and as she was recovering herself for a renewal of the charge, I scrambled out from between her hind legs.

But the enraged beast had not yet done with me!



Scarcely had I regained my feet before she struck me down a second time, and with her horn ripped up my right thigh (though not very deeply) from near the knee to the hip: with her fore feet, moreover, she hit me a terrific blow on the left shoulder near the back of the neck. My ribs bent under the enormous weight and pressure, and for a moment, I must, as I believe, have lost consciousness—I have at least very indistinct notions of what afterwards took place. All I remember is, that when I raised my head, I heard a furious snorting and plunging amongst the neighbouring bushes. I now arose, though with great difficulty, and made my way, in the best manner I was able, towards a large tree near at hand, for shelter; but this precaution was needless; the beast, for the time at least, showed no inclination further to molest me. Either in the *mêlée*, or owing to the confusion caused by her wounds, she had lost sight of me, or she felt satisfied with the revenge she had taken. Be that as it may, I escaped with life, though sadly wounded and severely bruised, in which disabled state I had great difficulty in getting back to my 'skärm."

During the greater part of the conflict I preserved my presence of mind; but after the danger was over, and when I had leisure to collect my scattered and confused senses, I was seized with a nervous affection, causing a violent trembling. I have since killed many rhinoceroses, as well for sport as food; but several weeks elapsed before I could again attack those animals with any coolness.

About sunrise, Kamapyu, my half-caste boy, whom I had left on the preceding evening, about half a mile away, came to the 'skärm' to convey my guns and other things to our encampment. In few words, I related to him the mishap that had befallen me. He listened with seeming incredulity; but the sight of my gashed thigh soon convinced him I was not in joke.

I afterwards directed him to take one of the guns and proceed in search of the wounded rhinoceros, cautioning him to be careful in approaching the beast, which I had reason to believe was not yet dead. He had only been absent a few minutes, when I heard a cry of distress. Striking my hand against my forehead, I exclaimed—"Good God! the brute has attacked the lad also!"

Seizing hold of my rifle, I scrambled through the bushes as fast as my crippled condition would permit; and, when I had proceeded two or three hundred yards, a scene suddenly presented itself that I shall vividly remember to the last days of my existence. Amongst some bushes, and within a couple of yards of each other, stood the rhinoceros and the young savage; the former supporting herself on three legs, covered with blood and froth, and snorting in the most furious manner; the latter petrified with fear—spell-bound, as it were—and riveted to the spot. Creeping, therefore, to the side of the rhinoceros, opposite to that on which the boy was standing, so as to draw her attention from him, I levelled and fired, on which the beast charged wildly to and fro without any distinct object. Whilst she was thus occupied I poured in shot after shot, but thought she would never fall. At length, however, she sank slowly to the ground; and, imagining that she was in her death agonies, and that all danger was over, I walked unhesitatingly close up to her, and was on the point of placing the muzzle of my gun to her ear to give her the *coup de grace*, when, to my horror, she once more rose on her legs. Taking a hurried aim, I pulled the trigger, and instantly retreated, with the beast in full pursuit. The race, however, was a short one; for, just as I threw myself into a bush for safety, she fell dead at my feet, so near me, indeed, that I could have touched her with the muzzle of my rifle! Another moment and I should probably

have been impaled on her murderous horn, which, though short, was sharp as a razor.[1]

When reflecting on the wonderful and providential escapes I recently experienced, I could not help thinking that I had been spared for some good purpose, and my heart was lifted in humble gratitude to the Almighty who had thus extended over me His protecting hand.

The second day after the scenes described, my bruises began to show themselves; and on the third day they were fully developed, giving my body a black and yellow hue. So far as I was aware, none of my bones were broken; but burning and agonizing pains in the region of the chest were clearly symptomatic of severe internal injury. Indeed, at first, serious apprehensions were entertained for my life. After great suffering, however, I recovered; and, as my shooting mania had by this time somewhat cooled down, my whole thoughts were bent on seeing the Ngami. Though my frame was quite unequal to bear fatigue, my spirit would not brook longer delay.

With the assistance of my men, I therefore mounted my steed, on the 23rd of July, and was off for the Lake, leaving my hunting spoils, and other effects, under the care of the Bushman-chief at Kobis.

[1] The black rhinoceros is, under all circumstances, as already mentioned, a morose and sulky beast. The one in question was unusually savage, as she had probably a young sucking calf. We did not see the latter, it is true, but assumed such to be the case from the beast's teats being full of milk. It is most likely that her offspring was of too tender an age to accompany her, and that, as not unfrequently happens, she concealed it amongst the bushes when about to quench her thirst at the pool.