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During this journey we passed over numerous deserted Mashona fields, which had evidently been devastated during the frequent raids of the Matabeli impi (army or warriors). The savage invaders had driven the more industrious Mashona away to the eastward, killing all who came within reach. Thus the once well-tilled fields were left to assume again the unprofitable wildness of their primitive condition; the furrows and ridges of the formerly cultivated land alone remaining to tell the sorrowful tale of conquest and desolation.

While hunting for rhinoceros one morning I came upon some antelopes, one of which I wounded. In the course of the swift pursuit which followed, I was thoroughly startled by the sudden appearance in the chase of two men, who turned out to be Mashona hunters. Both were armed with flint-lock muskets. Their persons were adorned with bracelets of buffalo hide, and necklaces of bone and claws, also pieces of the hoof of the small gazelle. Round their loins they wore sporans of leather, interwoven with beads of iron and brass. They carried their powder in horns.

As I could not speak the language, I signed to them to come to the waggon, which we could see indistinctly, almost buried in the long grass. On coming up to the caravan they asked for caps, and in reply we told them that we were going to the Zambesi, and if they would accompany us we would give them caps there. But they shook their heads, saying that it was very far, offering, however, to go on a hunting trip to get meat.

I was quite glad to see a strange face, for since leaving the mission station at Umhlangene, nearly a month before, we had not met a single soul. The hunters informed us that there was a Mashona kraal close by, and hinted that perhaps the chief, whose name was Chibero, would give us help.

After about three hours' trek we came upon numerous

little patches of cultivated ground. A stream of human beings kept pouring towards us, gradually swelling to a large crowd, until at length, with the babble of innumerable voices, varied by the strange notes of Mashona musical instruments, which some of our happy escort carried with them, we entered a lovely green valley where a few cattle could be seen grazing. The valley was walled in by low mountain ridges, and overlooked by the rocky fastnesses of the Mashona chief. We camped about 500 yards from where the town stood.

Taroman, the "thorn" of our party, had not appeared since the prairie fire. The sheep, of which there were only three left, and one goat, were such pets that they followed close under the waggon without herding.

The people were all very friendly, and eager to get some of the white man's treasures. They are a very different type to the bloodthirsty warriors whose country we had just left, and of whom they live in constant terror. Judging from first appearances, I could perceive that the physique of the Mashona was very inferior to that of the Matabeli. Their skin is darker too, and altogether they have a greater resemblance to the genuine negro. I sent word to the chief that I would visit him in the morning, and was not sorry when morning came, for the night was very stormy, and the waggon had its head to the wind, which passed through with great power, so that I might say that my lullaby was the loud voice of a hurricane.

Karemba and myself started across the plain, and walked into the fastnesses of a rugged mountain, composed of immense boulders, over and around which wound a tortuous path running right and left, up and down, and screwing in all directions, so as to avoid the rocks that jutted out over this wonderfully intricate track of the mountaineers.

Situated on the highest point of the mountain was the citadel. The spaces between the massive rocks which formed an impregnable barrier around the town, and whose sides were so smooth that even a cat could not scale them, were filled with stout posts interlaced with thorny bushes. It appeared to me that it would be impossible to effect an entrance without the aid of someone inside. All this powerful fortifying is carried out in order to secure their lives against the murderous attacks of their dreaded foes. Undisputed by the owners and tillers of the soil, all property in the form of corn and cattle must be abandoned to the caprice of the conquering Matabeli.

Attack is entirely a matter of cunning and stalking. A Matabeli impi (army) will approach as stealthily, and as invisibly as snakes, crawling as closely upon the ground, and concealed by the undergrowth, they watch the movements of their intended victims, the timid Mashona. Then, when a favourable opportunity occurs, up they rise like a wild black cloud of destruction. Hissing and shrieking their fiercest battle cry, they bound and leap like the "klipspringer,"\* from rock to rock, dealing with fearful precision the death-giving blow of the assegai; and ever and anon shouting with thrilling ecstasy, their terrific cry of triumph, as they tear out the yet beating hearts of their victims.

After a pursuit of the flying and panic-stricken horde, the ravagers herd in the straying cattle, and then the devastating cloud moves away, gathering, in its circuitous route, other nebulæ in the shape of slave girls and boys, as well as the cattle from perhaps hundreds of hitherto quiet and smiling valleys. They return to their king with news of victory; dancing as they sing the story of their soul-stirring and daring deeds, while in feasting they drink the beer made by

\* A small but extremely agile antelope living in the rocky kopjies.

## CHAPTER XI.

## AMONG THE MAKORIKORI PEOPLE.

Tedious marching—Magombegombe mountains—John is “varee seek”—Our comical goat—Baboons—Lubola mountains—Zingabila—Mode of making bark blankets—M’jela, the chief—Kunyangwi still far off—Desertions—Method of securing an ox—Difficulty in getting boys—Presents from M’jela—Umfana’s eating powers—The Dorah river—Camping places selected by natives—A lioness in the way—Lost chances of a shot—John’s lion experiences—A fearful position—A wild forest scene—Hovering vultures—Adventure with a lioness—Native scramble for the lion’s prey—Happy natives—The Mutua river—The Ruiana river—The Makomwe mountains—An amusing old fossil—Long fasting—poor diet—The “dry goods bank” nearly empty—“How many moon’s is dat since we leave Buluwayo?”—Miseries of travel—Native houses—The “Three Brothers”—The great basin of the Zambesi—Tropical forests.

A SILENT and lovely evening followed one of the hottest days which had been experienced during our long journey. Now the party was somewhat weary, for the march had been long and tedious. The many miles we had covered had carried us through tracts of marshy country, the deep black soil being intersected by numerous muddy rivulets. We had crossed the Ruia river, beside the headwaters of which we had encamped during the eventful journey to Chuzu’s.

We were now holding upon a more easterly course. Chuzu’s inhospitable country would, therefore, be left far to the south-west. We had to cross streams which had swollen to the proportions of goodly-sized rivers, and remembered that we had seen their original waters trickling in

tiny rills in their rough and rocky birthplaces on the slopes of the Umvukwe mountains.

Our first camp was pitched in a cosy spot under the frowning shades of the Magombegombe mountains, consisting of gigantic rocks, which were as bare of verdure as blocks of well-hewn stone, and whose yawning, cavernous gaps had for ages been the trumpets of the storm, shrieking aloud or groaning dismally through the riven nooks.

Where, oh where! was that much longed-for Zambesi? I was beginning to think that it was a mirage of the map-makers. The fact was clear that my party would soon break up. There was but one course left for me, and that was to press on with all possible speed. The aspect of affairs was daily becoming more serious.

John's conversation was far from being inspiring.

"Master, I am varee seek. I feel all de life" [he meant his body], "and dese peoples say that dey don't go to the rafeer. De town is long way dis side! Den I tink of my wife. My Gaut, I tink there is wanting in de house at home now! My heart is varee sore dis night."

"John, John!" I exclaimed, knowing his weak point; "elephants ahead, my boy. Never mind to-day—onwards!"

This chat occurred upon one of those nights when I had to cheer the man in his despondency. But now he proved to be inconsolable; therefore I told him that if he would go to the town to which our new guides would take us, he might afterwards return homewards. I would not ask him to go any farther; I would try and get Karemba to go with me. After this declaration I retired to my blankets.

When attempting to find repose, I found the old goat in an uncomfortably playful mood. It is curious what a lot of amusement may be found in observing the antics even of a goat, especially of such a truly comical one as ours. It

## CHAPTER XII.

## ENTERING THE "FLY COUNTRY."

A descent into heat—Tea the best drink—Drinking generally—Rhinceros—Symptoms of another strike—Intense heat—Msingua river—Suru—"Dar is the tsetse fly now, master!"—The "Fly Country" at last—An odd hue and cry—Mysterious words—Strange conduct of the guides—Unravelling the mystery.

THE country of the Makorikori, in which we had spent so long and so eventful a time, was now left behind, and it was not without satisfaction that we began the abrupt descent to the foot-hills of the Makomwe mountains.

Night was rapidly darkening our way, and as water was scarce, and the day had been a thorough "scorcher," we pitched camp in a sag on the breast of the mountains in proximity to a rocky gulch. The position was some distance from water, and there was little pleasantness in the general state of affairs, for we were short of provisions, and for some days had been living upon unvarying meat.

I felt as though I had an absorbing craving for tea. Living upon meat alone is a nauseating experience. What a powerful effect is felt by any one who after acquiring a strong predilection for, and becoming habituated to, any special kind of diet or drink, is suddenly deprived of the means of gratifying his appetite! It seems as though the article lost was the only thing that could make life bearable, or even desirable.

Speaking only for myself, although it may be mentioned

that I have noticed the same with others similarly situated, I say that as a thoroughly refreshing drink during fatigue, or for quenching violent thirst, HOT TEA is the best; for I cannot acquiesce to the common belief in the desirability of carrying bottles of cold tea, coffee, or any other beverage intended to be quaffed during the march, or when hunting, while the body is heated. Experience has taught, not only in Africa, but in other lands where I have had by no means an inconsiderable share of fatigue, that the human system is never invigorated, not to speak of benefited, by drinking anything cold or spirituous while the body is exposed to the fiery rays of a tropical sun. It is a good plan to do as the animals do—wait till sundown. Then when cooled off, or even before cooling, a small drink, so long as it is warm, will refresh the system besides assuaging the thirst. Provided any one begins to drink drops of water or cold tea, or tipples on something else, nothing less than absolute immersion and partial asphyxiation will check the craving, and that only temporarily.

I have heard people urging strongly the axiom that it is well to follow the habits of the natives as the proper system to adopt when travelling in their country. Had I followed the practices of the Kaffirs in regard to their water libations and ablutions I am positive that I never would have crossed the Orange river. A Kaffir is a wonderful creature in that way. He never thinks of what is beneficial or hurtful. Even when perspiration is flowing from every pore in his skin, he will plunge headlong into any cold and crystal water that may be near, disporting himself merrily in its refreshing coolness, and gulping at the same time big mouthfuls of the welcome draught. This I have seen on many occasions.

For some time before we camped, the roars of lions were



heard, the result being that we were almost deprived of water for the night, for nothing would induce the Kaffirs to go and fetch it, unless they were supported by a rifle. I went with them, and they carried their assegais and fire-brands. We had a good deal of searching before we found the spring, which was hidden in a deep rent in the rocks, which were exposed to the action of the torrents during the rainy season.

After this, the temper of the company, which was mercurial in its sensitiveness, pointed to fairer weather; for the Inyota men said: "To-morrow, we will be sure to reach the town."

During the night a black rhinoceros ran past at a great speed, breaking the brushwood, and creating much nervous excitement in camp.

Morning brought the old and familiar cries for a "strike," which, however anxious I might be, I could not then compromise in the way that these black cormorants would like; because I had no white calico left, not even a single yard. White calico they *would* have, and failing that, they expected me to tear up my red blankets and divide the pieces among them. The innocent audacity of the last demand was very amusing.

The gift of a few beads gave them but slight gratification. It was highly diverting to watch these big men stringing their precious beads, the sight carrying the thoughts back to the very early days of childhood.

About eleven o'clock we were again on our way, diving into the heated forest. Henceforth the fresh climate of the highlands was also to be numbered among the comparative comforts which had been left behind. As we descended, the heat became intense and oppressive, it being now the hottest time of the day. The sensation reminded me of the feeling of going from the cool to the hottest room in a

Turkish bath. The men were pouring with perspiration, and their bronzed bodies shone as though they had just emerged from the vasty deep.

In time we reached the bottom of the steep descent, and struck away into the torrid belt. Not a breath of air moved. The forest seemed actually to hold the heat. Thorny acacias were abundant, but they afforded no shelter. The only shelter that could be found from the resistless burning sun was in the lee of the baobab (native name *mulambo*), some of which were of gigantic dimensions, although, comparatively speaking, their branches seemed to be very small. The only sign of life was the winging of some grey plantain eaters (*Chizæris concolor*), which constantly took their short flights from tree to tree as our advance disturbed their silent or sequestered retreat.

A couple of hours of a melting walk brought us to the banks of the Msingua river, where we found a small town called Suru. The headman soon put in an appearance, for quite a stir was caused by the arrival of the white man and his escort.

The headman was a fat and far from unintelligent looking man. Around his loins he wore a cloth, and he stood before me in a position of attention. Then he drew back his right foot, scraping it upon the ground as he did so, a proceeding which was repeated with the left foot, while he clapped his hands and saluted me. I could see at a glance that this man had been trained by the Portuguese, or perhaps by their offspring, or dependents.

The people appeared to be friendly, but very much amazed. Although I am able to speak Spanish pretty fluently, my Portuguese is rather questionable; still, I tried to discover if any of our new friends could speak the latter tongue, but not a word could be extracted.

A large baobab-tree stood in the centre of the village, and the chief led me to its shade. The village consisted of circular huts with roofs like Japanese umbrellas, made of cane, and thatched with grass. Some of the huts were enclosed by cane fences, and, as a whole, the village had a very tidy appearance.

A cane mat was given me to sit upon, and unaccustomed to such attentions, I felt as if I had been given a bounce upwards in rank and consequence.

Beer was produced, and then I determined to start a conversation.

All at once I felt a sharp sting at the back of my neck. At the same time John made a wild clutch at something, as he exclaimed:—

“Dar is de tsetse fly now, master; we have leave de old gout in time!”

It did not take long to become painfully accustomed to the sharp reminders of these little pests, whose presence showed that we were in the “fly country,” as the infested land is termed. At that time a few fowls were the only domesticated live stock that could be seen.

“Who is the chief who owns or rules this country?” was my first question.

“The name of the king,” was the reply, “is Sakanii. He is Mzungo [white man].”

“Then,” I responded, “his colour is something like mine.”

“Oh, no!” said the chief, “I never saw a man like you before; he is something like him,” pointing to John.

“How far is it to the town?” I asked.

“Not far,” he said, showing by the sun how long the journey would take.

“Will you give me a guide?”

The answer to this question was that he, himself, would

guide me ; but we should in the meantime have to wait until word was sent to the king that I was in the country. I should have to stay where I was until an answer had been received.

This, I thought, was a strange decision. If his majesty was a Portuguese then he had evidently become acclimatised in mind, and had also adopted the customs of the natural sons of the soil. Nevertheless I felt that a great weight had been lifted from my shoulders. After all our dreary and fatiguing marches, and our harassing wrangles with the different tribes, we stood at last in the basin of the Zambesi. Only a short time ago we had been upon the eve of failure, but now I felt assured that we would obtain fresh supplies and strike off direct to the Lakes.

Just after sunset two of my assegais were stolen. Informing the chief of the theft, he immediately went through a most amusing procedure. As he walked through the small streets of the town, he stormed and raved furiously, letting the people hear what was doubtless very strong language, but the real drift of which was :

“Bring back the assegais ! Bring back the assegais of the white man ! If Sakanii hears that we have robbed the white man he will kill us.”

The excited walk of the chief gradually became a run, in which some others joined as supporters, and before midnight he appeared with the assegais, much to my delight, for they had a history, and of course were all the more valuable to me on that account.

The chief likewise brought the news that Sakanii was away at his town on the Zambesi river, and it was not known when he would return. Consulting my map, I found that from where we were to the river, the distance, in an air-line, was about fifty-three miles.

A long palaver ensued. Mystery seemed to cloud its words. Why should I stay here, as the chief desired, until Sakanii was informed of my arrival? Could I not, in any case, go on to his town, and hear what his people said; he must surely have subordinates?

No satisfactory reply could be had. I concluded therefore that to go ahead was the only plan to adopt. To be left at this spot would indeed be an awkward position, for how could I get out of it with sufficient goods to pay my way?

The night was warm, and the first blush of morning presaged a day of scorching heat. The indescribable glow of coloured light which heralded the advent of the sun told me clearly what was before us and made me anxious to hurry the men towards making a start.

The approach to the king's town was not made without a series of not only mysterious, but actually nervous signs on the part of our guides, who numbered about a dozen. Halts were repeatedly made and consultations held. I was quite unable to learn from John what it all meant. He was as much puzzled as I was.

This position was very trying to the temper, for I understood that we were approaching the town of a Portuguese.

Six miles were traversed, during which we crossed and recrossed the winding course of the Msingua river. The guides then said that it would be well that my party should now remain where they were, and that I should go on and see the man who was in charge of the town.

I lost no time. Taking Karemba with me, and armed with a small rifle in case we should meet game, we set out to unmask the strange mystery. Only one man accompanied us as a guide.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## CHIBINGA.

Skulls on gate-posts—Black but *not* comely—Meaning of Mzungo—A dubious reception—Karemba's *nonchalance*—Marching into the town—Confusion of tongues—Undesirable quarters—A waterless river—Hungry retainers—Absence of King Sakanii—Hunting, a last resource—The mother of the monarch—Rats swarming—A mutilating wolf—Inyota *versus* women—"Satan" is bibulous—Flies in myriads—Signs of disaffection—Negotiations with the "faithfuls"—Truculent Inyota—The monarch's mother commands my attendance—Curious reception—Hopes revived—Deplorable servility—Comparison with Mexican peone—The palmero punishment—"Us shall die from de hunger"—I start in search of the King—Bringing down a bear—Game on the route—The Mkumbura river—Spoor of wild animals—The busy tsetse—Description of the tsetse—A lion adventure—Fierceness of heat—The Umzengaizi river—Msenza—Meeting with Sakanii—Courteous greeting—Civilised comforts—The king's mode of travelling—His Portuguese connection—Returning to Chibinga—The king's bearers—Rapid progress—Prospects of relief—Noisy welcome to Chibinga.

WE soon arrived at the outskirts of the town, which was situated on the north bank of the Msingua, and was encircled by a high pole fence. As we approached the entrance, great numbers of people flocked to witness our arrival. I observed that a human skull was fixed upon the top of each post at the entrance gate.

We pushed our way through the surging throng and reached the centre of the town. There we found a sort of plastered divan, under a thatched roof, serving as a shade from the sun, and supported by a number of poles.

Beneath this shade stood a man blacker than ebony,

the proverbial black of blackness. The figure was dressed in a suit of coarse white cotton. Head-dress there was none.

I had been on the look out for somebody a little whiter, so I turned and said—

“Where is Mzungo?”

They intimated that the black object under the shade was Mzungo (white man).

Merciful powers! Had my vision been deceived for a lifetime? If this was white, where under the heavens could black be found? The fact was clear that if these so-called Mzungo were all like this man they had been called white because their clothes were white.

I walked up and shook hands with him, an act which it was only too clear was most repugnant to his feelings. At the time I remember being much impressed with the idea that never in my life had it fallen to my lot to see a worse physiognomy than his. He could not speak Portuguese, and looked very much annoyed about my arrival.

The crowd pressed round the house, listening with evident amusement to what the chief said. I could see that the people shuffled their feet as they approached the jet-like figure. One by one, before seating themselves upon the ground, would go through the formality of raising dust.

It was very amusing to note Karemba, who evidently wanted to show that he was no commoner. No shuffling of feet for him; he was a free son of the mountains, to whom such a silly ceremony had no meaning. With an air of great superiority, he walked in front of this black and earthly deity and requested a light for his pipe, which he wore as a pendent ornament when he was not smoking. The fact, too, of his having a hat and shirt gave impressive effect to his *tout ensemble*.

The dark enigma utterly ignored my presence. Worse

than that, none of us could understand a word that these people said. Although I continued to speak in my very best mixture of Portuguese and Spanish, I signally failed to create the slightest impression. He was the most uncouth being whom I had yet encountered.

Among the motley crowd which stood around was one old man who kept saying *Guerra, guerra!* Under the impression that I might be able to gather some hints from this old fellow, I abruptly left the inhospitable circle, signing to him to follow as I took my departure.

“*Elle tem mêdo de guerra!*” (he is afraid of war) the old boy continued to repeat. This, of course, was to me very ridiculous. He could not comprehend any question I put to him, so I proceeded towards where my party had been left, leaving him standing in silent solitude.

*En passant*, I may say that afterwards I discovered that these tribes have reason to be timid, through the petty wars which are being continually waged amongst themselves.

Despite the discouraging reception, I thought it would be as well to bring forward the party. We were soon within the skull-bedecked portals of the town; into which we marched with all the pomp of a conquering army. Everybody seemed to be frightened; not excepting the double-dyed, black-looking rascal I had previously addressed. Not a trace of him could be seen. We halted in front of what had the appearance of being the lounging place of the monarch—whoever he might be—during the heat of the day.

By this time we were a thoroughly mixed crowd. Few could understand what their neighbours said, so that we had all the confusion of a modern tower of Babel.

Strange to say, Umfana, whom we had always termed the Matabeli boy—although I am convinced that he was a



Mashona—could get on better with the language spoken here than any of the others. Therefore I sent him off as an ambassador to anyone who might appear inclined to listen to the proclamation that I was going to the Zambesi; that I wished to have a hut for my boys and for myself; and that it was my desire to see the great king Sakanii.

Who should appear but the veritable black man in the white cloth! Umfana had clearly succeeded in persuading him that our mission was not one of war, and that we were not bent upon demolishing the town.

John, who looked as if he were listening to the thunders of the Last Day, rapidly approached.

“Master,” said he, “dat black man is asking Umfana what for de master walk up to him mit de assegai, and Karem mit de gun and all de cartridges. Master, dese Portuguese is olful black.”

Of course, I told John, that so far I had not seen a Portuguese. Regarding what he said about my approaching the chief with an assegai in my hand, it was simply the way I had always travelled—that is to say either with a gun or an assegai. It never occurred to me that I was warlike; but no doubt the assegai gave me a bellicose or sanguinary aspect.

After a good deal of meditation and deliberation, the white man with the black knob sent some slaves to show us the huts. One which was circular, and 15 feet in diameter, I gave to the boys. The other, which I retained for my own use, was a small oblong building, evidently very old and very much off the straight. Its walls and floor were smeared with mud; the roof was a network of cobwebs, among which hung pendants of soot, like jet-black icicles; a window about the size of a family Bible admitted the

struggling light; and mingled with all these appearances was the olfactory perception of a diabolical odour, which would have suffocated an attic lodger in the Seven Dials.

A filthy abode, sure enough! But within its walls all our goods were stored. The thought often crossed my mind: "How infinitely preferable it would be to camp in the woods." And yet I had good reasons for taking quarters at this filthy place. I well knew that my party was bound to break up very soon, and that I should have to proceed alone; therefore a repository in which to leave my goods—what little there was left—was essential.

Every observation tended to show that my calculations with regard to our geographical position had been correct. Notwithstanding this, all dreams of canoeing had to be utterly abandoned when I looked upon the river on whose bosom we were to float to the Zambesi. Before us was the waterway's silent bed cut deeply down through sandy, alluvial strata, leaving steep banks on the sides bearing the marks of places where wild currents had played with the greatest force. Where was the water? Certainly not here; for nothing but sand, interminable sand, could be seen. We had traced it for miles, but had not seen even a solitary pool that might lead one to hope that water would be found a little farther down its arid course!

Canoeing indeed! What did Chief Mjela mean? There, before us, were the women digging holes in the heated sand in order to procure a supply of drinking water.

Above all things in my mind was the predominating thought: "Where are the beads and the cloth which will enable me to satisfy my men?" This was no white man's town: it was a regular Kaffir kraal! I had inquired if cloth could be purchased. There was none. All I had left were a few pounds of beads and four blankets, besides the two

or three yards of striped cloth which I had promised to John for his "leetle wife."

The men came forward in a body, and, patting their bellies, which certainly did look rather baggy, declared—

"We are hungry; give us cloth, and we will buy some meal." What was to be done? Before anything, it was necessary that the individual who ruled the town during the absence of Sakanii should be unearthed.

By a bit of good fortune a man turned up who could talk well with Karemba. He offered his services to show where game was to be found. I was determined not to rest or wander until I had cleared up the situation; so I made use of the man by persuading him to procure a messenger who would convey to Sakanii the intelligence that I was in the town. The people of the town would not do anything for me until they received orders from the king. The letter I sent to Sakanii was written in the best Portuguese at my command, and the man who took it said that he might be back in five days. The town of the king was on the Zambesi, and was called Chigurindi.

With the first streak of dawn John and myself were up and away in search of the much-longed-for meat. We moved out in different directions. Game was found to be very shy; but by noon we had both returned, I having bagged a very fat bush-pig and a fine specimen of the wart-hog with good tusks; while John had shot two Koodoo bulls (*Strepsiceros Kudu*), although he was able to secure only one of them. I had seen a big herd of eland, but could not get within range, as they had seen me. The spoor of white rhinoceros was discerned; but these animals are remarkably scarce in this neighbourhood. Black rhinoceros are more plentiful.

Having been informed that the mother of Sakanii lived

in a big round hut, enclosed by a thatch fence of high grass, and as it was hinted that she was the supreme dictator during the absence of her son, I sent her a large supply of meat, an act of courtesy and diplomaey which brought forth in return two baskets of tomatoes and one large basket of meal. The exchange was a considerable help to us.

The night which we had spent in the hut had been almost unbearable, to us who had been so long accustomed to the fanning of the freshest winds during the time of rest. Confinement was suffocating; but John remarked that we had better sleep inside, as the house had been given us. From whence its horrible effluvium arose I could not conceive; but apparently the dwelling (save the mark!) had not been used for years. Throughout the dismal night the swarming rats squealed and fought. The ends of two candles were still to the fore, so we lit them, and so long as they burned we had a little rest.

On the second night, however, I was determined to try a change, so I cleared the rubbish from beneath a neighbouring tree, and enveloping myself in a blanket lay down with much satisfaction. Mental congratulations, however, were soon disturbed by some of the townspeople who came and intimated that we should go into the hut, to avoid the ferocity of a wolf which came to the town at night, and was very dangerous owing to the freedom of its habits in the way of carrying off bites from the face, such as the nose, chin, and so forth.

In spite of this warning we remained outside; although the protestations of the people were very impressive. I felt, however, that it was better to take our chances in the open air than spend another miserable night in our filthy den overrun with vermin, which seemed to be its natural

inhabitants. It is fair to say that next morning I saw a woman who had one eye wholly destroyed, while several other women were very much disfigured in the face, the result of attacks by the wolf spoken of.

A complaint was here made to me that the Inyota men had been causing a disturbance among the young women. Should such conduct be continued there would be fighting between them and the men of the town. It was the satanically black man who made the complaint, which he did in a vehemently expostulatory oration, intended for all whom his voice could reach.

I had no copy of the Mutiny Act to read ; but, assembling the Inyota men before me, I said that if they expected either cloth or beads they would have to behave themselves. Failing to do so they would get nothing, and would be sent away without meat or meal. This impressive address was concluded by a few very decided words and penetrating looks, after which the meeting dispersed. I gave the ebony fiend a bottle of brandy to sooth his indignation, and another day was numbered with the past.

During the middle of the night our friend, his satanic majesty, appeared, much under the influence of the medicine which he had evidently partaken of very freely, so that his system had received a violent shock. He thoroughly appreciated the "liquid encouragement" which had upset him so completely, and said, as a matter of course, that he wanted more, more. I told him I had no more ; for I was not going to give away the only bottle I had left. After that he succeeded in making himself a successful nuisance, and effectually stopped our sleep for the main portion of the night by his tipsy uproar, although not another drop did he get from my canteen.

Days of hard work, followed by hideous nights, passed

slowly away. Throughout the day work was very hard, for we had to keep the town in meat. At this duty, John and I took turns. Sometimes we spent nights in the forest, which was in every way preferable to the usual resting place. The game was exceedingly shy, and so far from the town, that pursuit entailed long stalks under the burning sun, which glowed through the heated atmosphere, lying like a steam-cloud over the labyrinthine, tropical forest.

Whenever we shot anything, swarms of human vultures crowded around, so that the meat was soon exhausted. As a matter of fact, it would not keep for two days, as it rapidly became offensive.

Flies were literally in myriads. Fortunately the tsetse fly—although swarming in the neighbourhood, and, in fact, throughout all this belt of country between the foothills of the Makomwe mountains and the Zambesi—did not trouble us. In the town it was by no means constant in its attendance; in one place they might be innumerable, but a mile farther east, few could be seen.

It was at this stage that John came to me with rueful tidings for which I was not wholly unprepared. He said that Sagwam, Karemba, and himself were all “veree tired; they had wandered far from home, and wanted to go back.”

“I not want to leave de master,” continued John, speaking for himself; “but I must go. I tink of my leetle wife.”

“You must stay,” was my response to the so-far faithful trio, “at least, until I am able to get boys or to see the king. I can’t give you the present I would like to give, because I have but little left.”

“But,” remonstrated, John, “will the master not come back wid us to Buluwayo?”