

FIVE YEARS
OF A
HUNTER'S LIFE
IN THE
FAR INTERIOR OF SOUTH AFRICA.

WITH NOTICES OF THE NATIVE TRIBES, AND ANECDOTES OF THE
CHASE OF THE LION, ELEPHANT, HIPPOPOTAMUS, GIRAFFE,
RHINOCEROS, &c.

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FIVE YEARS' HUNTING ADVENTURES IN SOUTH AFRICA.

CHAPTER XVII.

We march from Sabié — Track along a River-bed — The dry Grass on Fire for miles — Glorious Elephant-shooting — Cowardice of my After-rider — Strange circumstance at the Death of a Bull Elephant — A Sable Antelope — Tête-à-tête with a disabled Elephant — The Klipspringer Antelope — A pack of Wild Dogs capture and kill a Koodoo — The coming of Summer — Vast numbers of Birds visiting the Fountains — My trusty two-grooved Rifle bursts — My Snuffers, Spoons, and Candlesticks melted for Bullets — Elephants taking a Douche Bath — Two of them slain — Yet more Elephants — My Horse Colesberg dies of the African Distemper — Virulence of the Scourge.

I REMAINED at Sabié, hunting elephant and rhinoceros with various success, till the morning of the 22nd of August, when I inspanned, and marched for Mangmaluky, which we reached at sundown, when I drew up my waggons in an open grassy glade on a rather elevated

position, commanding a fine view of the bold outline of the surrounding mountains. On the march I shot a white rhinoceros in the act of charging down a rocky face, with all the dogs in full pursuit of him. The ball disabled him in the shoulder, when, pitching upon his head, he described the most tremendous somersault, coming down among the stones and bushes with the overwhelming violence of an avalanche.

On the 27th I cast loose my horses at earliest dawn of day, and then lay half asleep for two hours, when I arose to consume coffee and rhinoceros. Having breakfasted, I started with a party of the natives to search for elephants in a southerly direction. We held along the gravelly bed of a periodical river, in which were abundance of holes excavated by the elephants in quest of water. Here the spoor of rhinoceros was extremely plentiful, and in every hole where they had drunk the print of the horn was visible. We soon found the spoor of an old bull elephant, which led us into a dense forest, where the ground was particularly unfavourable for sporing; we, however, threaded it out for a considerable distance, when it joined the spoor of other bulls. The natives now requested me to halt, while men went off in different directions to reconnoitre.

In the mean time a tremendous conflagration was roaring and crackling close to windward of us. It was caused by the Bakalahari burning the old dry grass to

In the evening I laved in the fountain my sunburnt eyes, which were sore and irritated from the constant strain necessarily concomitant on sporing; after which I sat for a long time silently contemplating the tranquil scene. As the sun went down, the number of the feathered tribe that visited the fountains was truly surprising: turtle-doves, and extremely small long-tailed pigeons, were most abundant. These kept collecting from every side, uttering their gentle notes, till the trees and bushes around the glade were thickly covered with them. I also observed four distinct varieties of partridge; and guinea-fowls attended in flocks of from twenty to sixty. On the 4th, having few followers, I was occupied from early dawn until the sun was under in cleaning the skull and hewing out the tusks of my bull elephant; and on the following day I returned to camp with a party of Bakalahari bearing them upon their shoulders. On the 6th I took the field with about forty natives and held through the forest in a south-easterly direction. Falling in with two white rhinoceroses, one of which carried an unusually long horn, I was induced to give her chase; and by hard riding I soon overtook and finished her with four shots behind the shoulder.

In the afternoon I was engaged for three or four hours combating with a vicious elephant, which I finished with thirty-five bullets in the shoulder, in an impracticable jungle of wait-a-bit thorns. The conflict was greatly

prolonged by the "Immense Brute," which capered continually, and constantly destroyed the correctness of my aim. While I was fighting with this elephant, my dogs were combating with a younger bull, which they hunted backwards and forwards in the same thicket with myself. This elephant took up a position beside the one which had fallen, and the dogs continued barking around him. My rifle being now extremely dirty, I experienced considerable difficulty in ramming home the balls, notwithstanding the power of my rhinoceros-horn loading-rod. This being accomplished, I ran cautiously within twenty yards of this second elephant, and, resting my rifle on a branch, I aimed for his heart and pressed the trigger. Alas! it was for the last time. The barrel burst with a terrific explosion, sending the locks and half the stock flying right and left, and very nearly sending me to "the land of the leal." I, however, received no further damage than a slight burn on my left arm, and the loss for many days of the use of my left ear, a fragment of the barrel having whizzed close past it. At first I was so stunned that I knew not if I were wounded or not, and on recovering from the shock my person underwent a strict scrutiny. Before I discovered these elephants I was faint from thirst, and quite done up with the power of the sun, owing to which I considered that I did not attack the elephant so bravely as I might otherwise have done.

The loss of my trusty two-grooved rifle, in such a remote corner of the world, was irreparable, and cut me to the heart. It was my mainstay; and as I thought of the many services it had performed for me in the hour of need, I mourned over it as David mourned for Absalom. On the evening of the 7th I returned to Mangmaluky under a burning sun, which continued oppressive throughout the day. Having lost my two-grooved rifle, I resolved to try what could be done with the double-barrelled Moore and Purdey rifles, carrying sixteen to the pound, and I accordingly set about casting hardened bullets to suit them. For this purpose I had brought in with me a quantity of solder, but I now had the mortification to discover that all that I had possessed of this important article had mysteriously vanished by some underhand transaction betwixt my followers and Sicomy. I was thus reduced to the extremity of melting the contents of my old military canteen to harden the bullets; and upon overhauling it, I ascertained that the tray of the snuffers, the spoons, candlesticks, teapots, and two drinking-cups, were admirably suited for this purpose, and I accordingly sentenced them to undergo the fiery ordeal of the ladle.

In the evening I had much pleasure to behold my old friend Mutchuisho walk into my camp, followed by a numerous party of the natives. He seemed glad to see

me, and we at once arranged to make an expedition to the eastward on the following day. Accordingly, on the morning of the 9th I took the field with Johannus and Mutchuisho and about eighty men, and proceeded in a south-easterly direction. We continued our course till the sun went down without finding fresh spoor, when we halted for the night to leeward of a fountain, where we hoped that elephants would come to drink. The heat throughout the day had been most oppressive, the dense level forest rendering it still more insupportable. On the morrow we cast loose the horses to graze long before the dawn of day. No elephants had visited the fountain, so after an early breakfast we saddled up, and again held on in an easterly direction through boundless forests, till I found myself in a country which I had not hitherto visited. Passing along beneath a rocky hillock we started a detachment of hideous hyænas, which sought shelter from the sun beneath the shadow of the rocks. We passed several large herds of lovely camelopards, and I also obtained two very deadly chances of rhinoceros, both fine old bulls; but knowing well from past experience that my policy was to keep my followers hungry, I refrained from firing a single shot.

In the afternoon we reached a small vley, where five first-rate bull elephants had drunk on the preceding evening. Here my followers all sat down and rested for a quarter of an hour, a wild duck swimming fearlessly

beside us. We then took up the spoor, but, as it was late in the day, I had not the slightest expectation of success, and was so done up with the power of the sun that I felt it irksome to sit in the saddle. The spoor led east, right away from camp, but the elephants seemed to have proceeded slowly, having extended widely from one another, and rent and uprooted an amazing number of goodly trees. Presently the spoor took a turn to our left, when I grieved to remark that we were following it down the wind; thus we eventually started the elephants, which were feeding in the forest at no great distance, but, owing to a check among the trackers, we were not aware of this until the elephants had gained a considerable start.

On finding that they were gone, Johannus and I went off on the spoor at a rapid pace, but I had not the slightest expectation of overtaking them; for it was so late that, even if I had already commenced the attack, the chances were that before I could finish one the night would have set in. It is much easier to hold the spoor of a herd of elephants that have been alarmed than to follow those which have been undisturbed, since the former adopt a decided course and follow one another in a direct line. Thus we were enabled to hold the spoor at a gallop without a check until our horses began to evince distress; and, despairing of success, I was just going to pull up, when I heard Johannus exclaim, "Sir, sir, dar stand

illa," and, looking before me, I beheld five enormous old bull elephants walking slowly along. They seemed heated by the pace at which they had retreated, and were now refreshing themselves with large volumes of water, which nature enables them to discharge from their capacious stomachs, and shower back upon their bodies with their extraordinary trunks. I overtook these elephants in open ground, which enabled me at once to make a fine selection. I had never before obtained so satisfactory a view of a herd of bulls: they really looked wondrous vast. It is a heart-stirring sight to behold one bull elephant; but when five gigantic old fellows are walking slowly along before you, and you feel that you can ride up and vanquish whichever one you fancy, it is so overpoweringly exciting that it almost takes a man's breath away; but it was now too late in the day to part with my breath for a single moment. Johannus whispered to me to wait a little, to allow the horses to recover their wind; but Wolf dashing in upon them, I was obliged to follow to obtain an accurate selection of the tusks. Spurring my horse, in another moment I was in the middle of them, closely followed by Johannus; and in a twinkling the finest bull had received the contents of the Moore and Purdey behind the shoulder. I was now joined by Wolf, who rendered me important service by considerably engrossing the attention of the elephant, running barking before him as he charged. I was in a

precious hurry, as the sun was setting, and I kept loading and firing at duelling distance. On receiving the twenty-fourth shot he stood trembling violently for several seconds, and then fell heavily forward on his tusks, after which he rolled over and rested on his side. I reckoned this to be a fortunate conclusion after the hard and toilsome day I had spent under the power of a scorching sun. Mutchuisho and the natives soon made their appearance, all in wondrous good humour at our success.

The nearest water to this elephant was in a vley situated several miles to the eastward; and when the natives had constructed a number of water-bags of the under skin of the elephant, a watering party was despatched with these and a number of calabashes which they always carried along with them. This party rejoined us at the hour of midnight, and reported that while they were filling their water-bags at one side of the vley a troop of bull elephants were drinking at the other. Accordingly, on the morrow I went in quest of these, accompanied by Mutchuisho and a small party, and on the second day I came up with them and bagged an old bull whose tusks were the stoutest I had ever seen.

After a most weary and toilsome spoor of two days I cast loose the steeds at earliest dawn of the 3rd, and soon after we heard the hoarse cry of an elephant within

half a mile of us. I permitted my horses to graze while the dew was on the grass, after which I sent them along with the dogs to water with a party of Bakalahari at a fountain reported three miles distant, and in the mean time I regaled myself with coffee and rhinoceros.

It is extraordinary how soon the mind accustoms itself to everything, good or bad. There I sat taking my breakfast, with a troop of princely elephants feeding within a few minutes' ride of me, with as much indifference as if I were going woodcock-shooting. I certainly did not feel half so anxious about the matter as I usually did when taking my breakfast on a fine May morning, with a southerly wind, before starting to fish my native river. This indifference was probably owing to the reduced state of my system from improper diet and constant toil.

When the Bakalahari returned with the dogs and horses, they reported fresh spoor of bull elephants by the fountain; and at the same moment another party, whom Mutchuisho had despatched in the direction of the cry, returned to say that it was a herd of bulls which we had heard that morning. This was very pleasing intelligence, for I had fancied that the elephants must be a troop of cows, whose traces we had observed on the preceding evening. Everything being ready, we made for the elephants, and, as we approached them, an old bull rhinoceros was detected standing within forty

yards, which, as if aware that I dared not fire on him, kept trotting along the path before me. We discovered the elephants quietly browsing on very unfavourable ground, the greater part of the forest consisting of the ever-recurring wait-a-bits. The troop was composed of three old bulls, two of which carried stumpy and broken tusks.

On the evening of the 20th, after bowling over another elephant with a splendid pair of tusks, I returned to camp, where, to my utter horror, I found my favourite Colesberg dangerously ill. Guessing that it was the distemper, I had him up instantly and bled him freely, but to no purpose. Finding him worse on the morrow, I bled him again, but before midday he died in great pain, and shortly after life had departed a copious discharge of white foam issued from his nostrils, by which I knew that his illness was the African distemper.¹

¹ This bitter scourge of the African sportsman prevails throughout every district of the interior during the greater part of the year. At no season is the hunter's stud exempt from its ravages; it is most prevalent however during the summer months, generally commencing with the early rains. There are various opinions among the horse-breeders of the colony regarding its prevention and cure; but notwithstanding all that has been done and said, the subject still remains wrapped in utter mystery. The distemper rarely visits districts adjacent to the sea, and is also unusual in mountain districts. In proportion as the traveller advances from the sea, so will he find the sickness prevalent. In all years it is not alike, and every fifth or seventh year it ravages the farms on the frontier districts, where a farmer often loses from fifty to a hundred

I had also the mortification to observe that the "Immense Brute" was affected, evincing symptoms similar to those of Colesberg, on which I had him caught and bled him freely. About the hour of midday we got under way, when I trekked till sundown in a south-westerly course, steering for the mountains of Bamangwato. I formed my encampment beside a little fountain, whose name I never ascertained.

horses in a single season. Bleeding is generally believed to act as a preventive. When a horse is attacked with it he almost invariably comes up to his master's waggon, or the door of his dwelling-place, as if soliciting assistance in his deep distress, and when led away to a distance, unless he be secured, the poor animal will continue to return to his master's dwelling. This was the case with my much-lamented Colesberg, of the free and fiery indomitable spirit.



and examining the fountain, I sought in vain for the tracks of elephants; the natives, nevertheless, declared that one or two herds of these were still to be met with in the district, which I inclined to credit; and this report turned out to be correct, for the succeeding day I followed and succeeded in bagging a whole herd of eight bull and cow elephants, after a most exciting chase. The natives were overjoyed at my success, and, while talking over the circumstance to each other, I observed that they frequently drew their hands across their mouth, a gesture commonly made use of by them when a "clean sweep" (as in the present instance) had been made, either in the chase or in their combats with each other.

I continued hunting at Massouey till the 12th, when, bidding a long farewell to the land of elephants, I inspanned, and marched upon Lepeby, which I reached at an early hour on the following day, having travelled several hours during the night, availing myself of the bright moonlight. When last I visited this fine fountain the game drank at it in numerous herds, but now not an animal of any kind came near it, with the exception of a few rhinoceroses. This I always found to be the case at the fountains during the summer months, when the game are very independent of water, owing to the more abundant moisture contained in the young grass. In the forenoon I went birdnesting among the reeds and rushes which grew around the fountain. Hundreds of birds

resembling the redpole were busy building their grassy nests, which they ingeniously suspended between the tops of the reeds. In the rushes I found two nests of the water-hen, containing eggs, which, along with the nests, exactly corresponded with those in Scotland. Two beautifully-painted wild geese, an egret, or white heron, and about twenty teal, ornamented the fountain, and were so tame that they permitted me to approach within a few yards of them.

At an early hour on the 16th I trekked for Boötlo-namy, which I reached at sundown on the same evening, and drew up the waggons under an impenetrable grove of picturesque mimosas, which were then gaily decked with a profusion of highly scented yellow blossoms, brightly contrasting with their summer vestment of delicious green. Here I continued hunting for several days, and enjoyed excellent sport, daily securing several fine specimens of the different varieties of game frequenting the district. On one occasion while hunting I started a secretary from off her nest, which was built on the top of a very dense green tree, with thorns on the fish-hook principle. With much difficulty I cut my way to the large thorny branch on which the nest was built, and, to proceed farther being impossible, from the denseness of the thorns, I cut through this branch with my knife, and by dragging it down I got hold of the eggs, which were the size and shape of a turkey's, and the colour of a buzzard's egg.

On the forenoon of the 19th we were visited by a most terrific storm. The thunder was the most appalling I had ever heard, resembling the simultaneous discharge of a thousand pieces of artillery: it burst close over my head with a report so sudden and tremendous, that I involuntarily trembled, and the sweat ran down my brow. At other times the thunder rumbled on every side, and rolled away with a long-protracted sound, which had not died before fresh explosions burst above and around me. The lightning was so vivid that it pained my eyes; it seemed so near, that I fancied every moment it must strike the waggons, which would certainly have proved extremely inconvenient, as I had 300 lbs. of gunpowder stowed in one of them beneath my bed. About sundown the storm had passed away, having exquisitely purified the atmosphere, while the grateful earth and fragrant forest emitted a perfume of overpowering sweetness. I then sauntered out with my rifle towards where the oxen were grazing, and, falling in with a herd of brindled gnoos, I shot a couple of shaggy old fellows, firing right and left. The storm set in again about ten P.M. with thunder and lightning, which continued throughout the greater part of the night.

CHAPTER XIX.

All my Colonial Servants desert me — Pursue them in vain — Both Waggons get disabled — Melancholy Anticipations — Cut a Path through the Forest — A sandy Desert — Cattle dying for want of Water — Troubles surmounted — Pallahs and Koodoos — A Lion and Leopard visit the Camp at Midnight — Another Horse dies of Distemper — We reach Booby — One of the Axletrees breaks — The Bakatlas assist me — The Baggage-wagon upset in a River — The Distemper kills more Horses — Lions roaring — Arrive at Dr. Livingstone's — March upon Chouaney — The Ngotwani — A Herd of Buffaloes among the Reeds.

I HAD NOW arrived at a period of considerable importance in my lonely expedition, an event here occurring which caused me a world of trouble and anxiety, yet which was nevertheless finally beneficial in its results, as it taught me what difficulties a man may surmount when he is pressed by adversity, and it was also the means of my becoming an accomplished waggon-driver. I allude to my being abandoned by all my colonial servants, with the exception of Ruyter, the little Bushman. I attributed this unmanly and dastardly proceeding mainly to their despair of succeeding in bringing the waggons safely across the sandy deserts intervening betwixt me and the distant missionary

station of Bakatla, on account of the broken state of one of the axletrees of my travelling waggon, Kleinboy in one of his drunken fits having driven it against a tree with such violence that one of the wooden arms of the fore axletree was cracked right across, so that little now held the wheel excepting the linchpin and the iron skein. I remarked on the 22nd that there was something unusual on the minds of my colonial followers, for none of them could look me in the face ; and in the evening I spoke harshly to them concerning some ground coffee which I had missed from my canteen.

On the 23rd of October I was lying asleep in my waggon, a little before the day dawned, when Ruyter awoke me, to report that my four Hottentots had decamped during the night. He said that each of them had taken with him a large bundle of biltongue or sundried meat, and that they had tried hard to prevail on him to accompany them. This was a rather startling announcement, for I had barely enough of hands to perform the work when they were with me, and the four savages from Bamangwato were, like myself, quite unaccustomed to the laborious and intricate art of waggon leading and driving, and the inspanning and outspanning of oxen. Imagining that the Hottentots would not persevere in so rash and unwarranted a measure, and that they would assuredly change their minds and retrace their steps to their master when they reflected on the step they had

taken, I did not endeavour to overtake them, but employed the morning in stowing the waggons, lashing down pots, spades, axes, &c., in their proper places, and overhauling the gear preparatory to marching.

Having breakfasted, I and the little Bushman, assisted by the savages, lassoed, sorted, and yoked twenty-four oxen, placing twelve before each waggon, when we cracked our whips and started from Boötlonamy. Mollyee and Mollyeon led the teams, and Kapain and Kuruman followed behind the waggons, driving the horses and loose oxen. In former days I had acquired considerable experience in driving tandem and four-in-hand; but I had now undertaken a pursuit of a widely different character. I soon, however, became quite *au fait* in the mysteries connected with the driving of oxen, and learnt to inspan and drive my own waggons with nearly the same expedition as before the desertion of the Hottentots.

The vley of Boötlonamy being firm and hard, we rattled along it at our wonted pace; but in the evening, as we cleared the vley, and entered on the sandy tracts beyond, the oxen, having discovered that their new drivers could not wield the whips with the rapidity and execution of the old, declined to move along the heavy sand beyond the pace they fancied, often halting of their own accord. Eventually, in ascending a sandy ridge, the Bushman's waggon stuck fast in the deep sand, and in trying to drag it out the oxen broke the "dissel-

boom," or pole. Finding that the labours we had undertaken were greater than I had calculated upon, I resolved to ride on the morrow in pursuit of the runaways; and accordingly at daybreak on the following day, leaving the waggons and their valuable contents at the mercy of the savages, I started with the Bushman and a spare horse to endeavour to overtake them. There was no water where the waggons stood, so I instructed Mollyeon to proceed with the cattle in quest of that essential requisite. I held along my old waggon-track, where we traced the footsteps of the Hottentots; and having ridden some miles, we reached the spot where they had slept, and where the ashes of their fire still were smouldering. I followed up their spoor till midday, when I accidentally took up the spoor of a party of Bakalahari, which we followed in a westerly direction, imagining that the Hottentots were with them. This spoor we eventually lost in stony ground, and then we rode back to where we had lost the right spoor, which after some search we found, and once more held on. Our steeds were now fatigued, for we had ridden sharp, and they were faint with thirst, as we were also; but we sought in vain for water in the vleys which had contained it when we last passed through the country. A little before the sun went down we reached three small pools of water left by the recent rains, and here the Hottentots had drunk and were at that moment hiding in a bush within a hundred

yards of me, as I discovered on the ensuing day. I however failed to observe them; and fancying that they had held on to a larger vley, where I had encamped on my way to Bamangwato, we proceeded for that place, but, night setting in, we at length lost our way in the intricacies of the forest.

Faint, hungry, and thirsty, we now desisted from our fruitless search, and on looking for my matches I found to my intense mortification that I had lost them; and being on this occasion minus my shooting-belt and rifle, we spent the night without a fire, thereby incurring great danger of losing the horses and ourselves by lions. Scarcely had we off-saddled when two huge rhinoceroses came up and stood within twenty yards of us, and would not for a long time be persuaded to depart. Some time after I observed a dark-looking object prowling around us, and evidently anxious to cultivate the acquaintance either of ourselves or the horses. It was a hyæna. Rising from my comfortless couch, I pelted him with stones, when he took the hint and made off. The horses were completely done up, and when knee-haltered would not feed. One of them on being off-saddled lay stretched upon the ground, and after a while, on endeavouring to walk, repeatedly rolled over on his side.

On the 25th I cast loose the horses as soon as it was clear, and ascended to the summit of a pyramidal little hill beside which we had slept, to ascertain from thence

whither I had wandered ; but the view from this hill did not help to elucidate matters, endless forests stretching away on every side without a mark to assist my memory. I now resolved to seek no longer for my ruffianly Hottentots, but to retrace my spoor to the water I had discovered on the preceding evening, and halt there for a day until the horses should sufficiently recover their strength to carry us back to the waggons. By adhering to the horses' tracks, I reached the water at an early hour, and here I discovered the fresh tracks of the Hottentots on the top of our horses' spoor of the preceding evening. I had, however, resolved not to ride another yard after them ; I accordingly off-saddled, and remained there for the remainder of the day. In the vicinity of the water we discovered the spot where the Hottentots had slept during the night. Although possessed of flint and steel, they had not kindled a fire, having nevertheless collected fuel for that purpose previous to our arrival on the preceding evening. This, as I afterwards learnt from themselves, was to prevent our discovering their position, in case we had returned that evening. I spent most of the day in endeavouring to make fire, which I failed to accomplish for want of tinder. This was extremely annoying, for I had brought along with me both tea and coffee, as also a kettle, and a haunch of springbok.

On the morning of the 26th we cast loose our horses, and proceeded to consume raw meat and water. While

the distemper which had carried off my other two horses. The night set in with thunder, lightning, and rain ; jackals and hyænas prowled around us, and soon found the remains of my lamented charger, on which they feasted till the dawn of day.

The 17th ushered in a lovely morning, and the sky was beautifully overcast with clouds. When I got things dry I finished stowing the waggon, and we then trekked, holding on till the evening, when the axle-tree which I had made burst, and the linchpin giving way the wheel rolled off, leaving me once more a wreck. While securing my few remaining horses, I remarked that a handsome little bay horse, named "Hutton," evinced symptoms of the distemper, but I did not bleed him, as it seemed to be of no avail. Heavy rain continued falling throughout the night, and next morning the ground where we had outspanned was a mass of deep mud. At an early hour all hands were busy in again unloading the broken waggon, and before night I had finished another axletree and fixed it in its place. The day throughout was dark and gloomy—heavy clouds hung low on the mountain of the eagles, reminding me of the mist I was wont to see in the distant country of the Gael, and our ears were repeatedly saluted with the subdued voices of a troop of lions which were moaning in concert around its base. In the evening the horse called "Hutton" died, and scarcely had night set in when his doleful coronach

was wildly re-echoed by the shrill voices of a score of jackals, which the lions hearing soon came to their assistance, and presently we heard them feasting on his remains.

On the morning of the 19th we resumed our march, and at a late hour on the evening of the 20th we reached the missionary station at Bakatla, where I was kindly received by Dr. Livingstone and his amiable lady. They had been anxious concerning my fate, and entertained great apprehensions for my safety. Mrs. Livingstone had seen my Hottentots as they passed through Bakatla, where they remained only one day; and that lady represented them as bearing the appearance of men who had been guilty of crime. She had endeavoured, but without success, to prevail upon them to rejoin their master and return to their duty. Dr. Livingstone at the time was absent on a visit to Sichely, superintending the erection of a dwelling-house and place of public worship at that chief's kraal, named "Chouaney," whither he intended shortly to remove, there being another missionary, named Mr. Edwards, already stationed at Bakatla, who was then absent on a visit to the colony. Dr. Livingstone informed me that at present there was war between the Baquaines, of whom Sichely is chief, and the Bakatlas, and that the latter were in daily expectation of an attack.

The 23rd was Sunday, when Dr. Livingstone showed me, on comparing notes, that I had lost a day during my

sojourn in the far interior. I attended Divine service, and had considerable difficulty to maintain my gravity as sundry members of the congregation entered the church clad in the most unique apparel. Some of these wore extraordinary old hats ornamented with fragments of women's clothes and ostrich-feathers. These fine hats they were very reluctant to take off, and one man sat with his beaver on immediately before the minister until the doorkeeper went up to him and ordered him to remove it. At dinner we had a variety of excellent vegetables, the garden producing almost every sort in great perfection; the potatoes in particular were very fine. To-day another of my stud, named Yarborough (so called in honour of a gallant major of the 91st from whom I purchased him), died of the distemper, and was immediately consumed by the starving curs of the Bakatlas. Being anxious to visit Sichely and his tribe, Dr. Livingstone and I resolved to leave Bakatla and march upon Chouaney with one of my waggons on the ensuing day; the Doctor's object being to establish peace between the two tribes, and mine to enrich myself with ivory and karosses and other objects of interest.

On the morning of the 24th I off-loaded the baggage waggon, and stowed its contents in Dr. Livingstone's premises, after which the Doctor and I started for Chouaney, which bore a little to the east of north. Our road lay through the most perfect country. On

some time previous to my arrival, and it was reported that disease had overtaken them at the missionary station of Campbellsdorp, where they were now all four stretched upon a bed of sickness, and in a state of the most abject want and misery. Isaac had likewise made his appearance in due course, and he now came boldly forward to claim his wages, which I honestly paid him. I left in Mr. Moffat's kind keeping one of the waggons with its contents (which we stowed away in a room obligingly lent me by Mr. Moffat for the purpose), and also the whole of my oxen, with the exception of one span, with which, on the evening of the 7th, I set out for Koning, which I reached at an early hour on the following morning, having marched during the greater portion of the night.

Leaving Koning on the afternoon of the 8th, I resumed my march for Daniel's-kuil. Between Koning and Daniel's-kuil occur two interesting caves, long famous as affording a residence and protection to hordes of marauding Bushmen. The larger of these caves is situated on the west side of the waggon-track ; it is of great size, and contains a perpetual fountain of delicious water, and its sides have been adorned by its Lilliputian inhabitants with correct likenesses of most of the game quadrupeds of Africa, as also unicorns, which of course they never saw, and must therefore have heard spoken of by other men. From this cave the Bushmen were wont to sally

forth not very long since and lift fat cattle from the sleek herds of their more industrious neighbours the Griquas and Bechuanas. Returning with these cattle, their custom was to drive them all into the cave, whence, being well supplied with water, they did not again proceed until the flesh was either rotten or consumed. It was in vain that the exasperated owners of the cattle followed on their traces to the Bushman-cave, for here they well knew it was madness to follow farther, as inevitable death would be the result, by the poisoned arrows of their subtle foes within. At length the Bushmen became so frequent and daring in their attacks, that a number of the Bechuanas held "a great talk" on the subject (as they say in America), and ended by resolving to attack the Bushmen, and accomplish their destruction at whatever cost.

Accordingly, when the next robbery was committed, the Bechuanas marched upon the Bushman-cave, armed with large oval shields and battle-axes; and, entering the cave, they steadily advanced under cover of their shields, while the Bushmen's arrows rattled thick upon them like a storm of hail. The Bechuanas thus continued to advance until they came to close quarters, when they cut them down with their battle-axes. The other cave is situated to the eastward of the waggon-track; here, on a similar occasion, fire was made use of to smoke out the Bushmen, when those who escaped death by suffocation fell by the battle-axes and assagais of their foes without.

and trade with him. I halted for an hour after sunset, and then inspanned and trekked on till the moon went down, when I halted near my old outspanning-place, having performed a very long and difficult march.

On the 6th, a very cold morning, we trekked at dawn of day, and in about three hours reached Lesausau, a bold and romantic gorge in the Bamangwato mountains, in the depths of which was a strong fountain. Sicomy soon made his appearance, and bothered all day; but he did not produce any ivory. At night I watched the fountain in the bold ravine, and shot two old black rhinoceroses, bull and cow, with my smooth bore carrying six to the pound. Both of these ran considerable distances, but were found by the natives. Along with the cow *borèlé* were two other old bulls, who fought together for three hours alongside of me.

On the 7th Sicomy made his appearance early, and towards evening bought powder and lead with seven elephants' teeth. Soon after this bargain was concluded he ordered men to take away the teeth, and he threw me back the powder; but on my kicking back the powder, and swearing I would shoot the first man who touched the ivory, he relinquished the idea.

On the succeeding day Sicomy prowled about the waggons all day, and bothered me so that I at last lost my temper, and swore at him. The natives held a consultation for a few minutes, which ended by their

saying that they were all going to leave me. I said that I was happy to hear it. They then decamped to a man; but in an hour four of my old acquaintances appeared, and said that the captain wished me to come and see him; but I replied that I was sick, and going to sleep. In another hour he made his appearance; and on asking him what I had done that he had called all his men away, he replied that they had gone away to have a sleep. Presently Arkwright and Christie rode up to my waggons: theirs were at hand. On the march they had lost one ox and two horses in pitfalls, and their "butler," while running to the assistance of the steeds, had been himself engulfed in another pitfall, which, fortunately, however, lacked the usual sharp-pointed stake for impaling the game, which the probabilities are that he would have converted into a "rump steak." At night Arkwright and I watched the water, but did not get a shot.

On the 9th Sicomy brought me ivory. He asked me to go to my hunting-ground, saying that he would trade with me there. He was very anxious to separate the two parties. As soon as possible, therefore, I inspanned, and trekked down the broad strath, steering south, although the natives asserted that I should find no water, and tried to guide me north. After trekking about eight miles, much to the annoyance of the Bamangwatos I discovered the residence of the Bakaas, where I halted for the night,

having sent a message to Schooey, the old chief, that I would trade with him next day.

The next day the old chief, with his wives and nobility, appeared at an early hour, and by midday I had purchased several tusks of elephants; also two very fine karosses of leopard-skin, &c. I then inspanned, and in two hours I got clear of the Bamangwato mountains, when I held about east, through thick forest, halting for the night beside a small fount, where the horses could not drink. On the march pallah were abundant and very tame.

On the morning of the 12th Sicomy came to my fire-side, and said he was going to trade with me. A party of Bakalabari had arrived a little before, bearing twenty-nine elephants' teeth. After some trouble we set the trading agoing, and in about three hours I had purchased ten bull and ten cow elephants' teeth for ten muskets, and seven other cow elephants' teeth for powder, lead, and flints. I then bought two kobaoba knobkerries. At this moment natives came in, and reported elephants to have drunk within a mile during the night. This caused an immense bustle: in twenty minutes I was under way, with two after-riders and a party of good spoorers, followed by about a hundred and fifty starving natives. We took up the spoor a mile to the south, and followed it due east until the sun went down, when we halted for the night. While spooring we found the country in flames far and wide, but we crossed the fire, and took

up the spoor beyond. We saw a troop of eight fat male elands, and a troop of eight giraffes.

Next day we followed the spoor for several miles in an easterly course, when it took a turn to the north-west, through most horrible wait-a-bit thorns. About midday we came up with the elephants. The troop consisted of one mighty old bull, and two bulls three-parts grown. I first shot the best of the two small bulls, and then the old bull. The natives and all my dogs had kept him in view, and one fellow had pricked him in the stern with an assagai. Upon the strength of this the Bechuanas came up and claimed him as theirs when he fell; but on my threatening to leave their country they relinquished the idea.

On the 16th and 17th I bagged two first-rate bull elephants in the level forests to the eastward of Mangmaluky.

On the 18th, after breakfast, I rode to Mangmaluky, to water my horses. One old bull elephant had been there, but the natives had too much flesh, and would not spoor. I rested all day, expecting my waggons, but they did not appear. At night a panther came within ten yards of my fire, and killed Cradock and disabled Wolf, my two best elephant-dogs.

On the 21st I held south, down a beautiful wide valley full of very green trees of various kinds. This was evidently a favourite haunt with the elephants: every tree bore their marks. At the southern end of this valley was

one of the most interesting fountains I ever beheld ; the water came gushing down through the wildest chasms, formed of one succession of huge masses of rock of all shapes and sizes, thrown loosely together in some places, and in others piled high one above another, as if by the hand of some giant. All the ground and rock about the fountain were covered with a layer of elephants' dung about a foot deep. We had proceeded about half-way up the valley when we heard elephants trumpeting ahead of us : it was a very fine troop of cows. There was one cow in the troop larger, I think, than any I had ever before seen. On this occasion I was extremely unfortunate. I began by sending two balls into the shoulder of the fine cow just as they were charging into a dense cover of wait-a-bits. The dogs took after two calves, which I was obliged to shoot ; the natives, in attempting to assagai them, killed Bluma and wounded Alert in the loin. The elephants were hiding in the thorns, and no man knew or seemed to care where they were. At this moment we beheld another fine troop of cow elephants going along the wooded mountain-side opposite to us. I immediately made for them, and had the mortification to see them gain a neck in the mountain just above my head as I got within two hundred yards of them. I now returned to the thorny cover, where we found the cows concealed. The natives eventually drove them out on the wrong side of the cover without warning me, and, to my

extreme vexation, this fine troop of cows got away without my killing one. I was extremely sorry to lose the large cow elephant: she carried a pair of most beautiful and perfect teeth. I slept near the fountain, where I picked up a piece of a tooth of a cow elephant.

On the 29th of June I reached a water called Lotlokane, and hunted in the neighbourhood for several days, bagging some very fine elephants.

On the 13th of July I held west with Mollyeon and about twenty natives on the spoor of bull elephants two days old. In the desert I came upon a troop of about twenty elands, the best of which I rode into and slew. In the evening we took up fresher spoor of three old bull elephants; but night setting in, we halted beneath a shady tree.

Early in the morning we resumed the spoor, which led us due west along the borders of the desert without a check until sundown. We had now spoorred these elephants a very great distance, and the horses had not had water since the morning of the preceding day. I felt compassion for the thirsty steeds, and was on the point of turning, when lo! a string of Bakalahari women were seen half a mile before us, each bearing on her head an immense earthen vase and wooden bowl containing water. They had been to a great distance to draw water at a small fountain, and were now returning to their distant desert home. This was to us a perfect godsend. The

horses and dogs got as much as they could drink, and all our vessels were replenished. The sun being now under, we halted for the night.

At sunrise we resumed the spoor, and after following it for about ten miles, and finding that these elephants had gone clean away into the desert beyond the reach of man, we gave it up, and made for the fountain where the women had drawn the water on the preceding day. On reaching the fountain we found that four bull elephants had drunk there during the night. It was a soft, sandy soil, and the spoor was beautifully visible. I had never seen larger spoor than that of two of these; they had fed slowly away from the fountain, and we followed on with high hopes of seeing them that day.

At length we got into a more densely wooded country, and presently observed the elephants standing in the forest about one hundred yards off. Having succeeded in securing the dogs, I shifted my saddle to Jock, and rode slowly forward to inspect the mighty game. Two of the elephants were but three parts grown; the other two were very large, but one of them was a great deal taller and stouter than the other. This immense elephant, which was, I think, decidedly the largest I had ever seen, had unfortunately both his tusks broken short off close to the lip; I therefore hunted his comrade, who carried a pair of very beautiful and perfect tusks. At the sixth shot he came to a stand and presently fell. I then dismounted

and ran up to him, when he rose to his feet and stood some time, and then walked a few paces and fell again and died. On going up to him I found that he carried the finest teeth I had yet obtained ; they must have weighed one hundred pounds each. He was an extremely old bull, and had been once much wounded with assagais, the blades of two of which were found in his back.

On the 17th I made for camp, and held through a fine open country lying north-west from Corriebely. In following some ostriches I came upon an extremely old and noted black rhinoceros lying fast asleep in some low wait-a-bits, the birds having tried in vain to waken him. I fired from the saddle : the first ball hit him, as he lay, in the shoulder ; the second near his heart, as he gained his feet. In an instant the dogs were round him ; he set off down hill at a steady canter, and led me a chase of a mile, when he came to a stand, his shoulder failing him. At this instant I beheld a troop of about twenty fine elands trotting before me on the open slope ; I therefore quickly finished the black rhinoceros with two more balls, and then gave chase to the elands. I bagged the two best in the troop, a bull and cow, the latter about the fattest I have ever seen. I brought the bull within one hundred yards of the chukuroo.

At dawn next day I shot, from the spot I had slept on, a springbok, running, through the heart, at one hundred yards. After cutting off the horns of the black rhinoc-

CHAPTER XXII.

A Lion shot from my Watching-hole at Midnight — Six Lions drink close beside me — A Lioness slain — A Rhinoceros bites the dust — Moselakose Fountain — My Shooting-hole surrounded with Game — Pallahs, Sassaybys, Zebras, &c. — A Rhooide-Rheebok shot — Extraordinary Circumstance — My fiftieth Elephant bagged — Interesting Fountains on the Hills — Leave my Waggons for the Hills — Struggle with a Boa Constrictor — Lions too numerous to be agreeable — Five Rhinoceroses shot as they came to drink — A venomous Snake.

ON the afternoon of the 3rd of September I watched the fountain. Towards sunset one blue wildebeest, six zebras, and a large herd of pallahs, were all drinking before me. I lay enjoying contemplation for at least fifteen minutes, and, most of them having then slaked their thirst, I sent a ball through the heart of the best headed pallah. I then took a long shot at the blue wildebeest bull, and sent the other ball into his shoulder. I now came to the camp, and ordered the pallah to be placed in front of my hole beside the water, to attract the lions. Having taken my coffee, I returned to the water with Kleinboy and Mollyee. It was bright moonlight. We had scarcely lain down when the terrible voice of a lion

was heard a little to the east ; the jackals were feasting over the remains of the white rhinoceros of yesterday, and only one or two occasionally came and snuffed at the pallah. Presently a herd of zebras, accompanied by elands, approached the water, but were too timid to come in and drink : a troop of wild dogs now came boldly up, and were walking off with the pallah, when I fired into them. They made off, but immediately returning, and again seizing my pallah, I fired again, and wounded one of them.

Soon after we had lain down a thundering clattering of hoofs was heard coming up the vley, and on came an immense herd of blue wildebeest. They were very thirsty, and the leading cow very soon came boldly up and drank before me. I sent a ball through her ; she ran sixty yards up the slope behind me, and fell dead. Her comrades then thundered across the vley, and took up a position on the opposite rising ground. In two minutes the hyænas and jackals had attacked the carcass of this wildebeest. Soon after this a lion gave a most appalling roar on the bushy height close opposite to us, which was succeeded by a deathlike stillness which lasted for nearly a minute. I had then only one shot in my four barrels, and I hastily loaded the other barrel of my Westley Richards, and with breathless attention I kept the strictest watch in front, expecting every moment to see the mighty and terrible king of beasts approaching ; but he was too cun-

ning. He saw all the other game fight shy of the water, so he made a circuit to leeward to get the wind off the fountain. Soon after he roared I heard a number of jackals bothering him, as if telling him to come across the vley to the wildebeest: he growled from side to side, as if playing with them, and after this all was still.

I had listened with intense anxiety for about fifteen minutes longer, when I heard the hyænas and jackals give way on either side behind me from the carcass of the wildebeest, and, turning my head slowly round, I beheld a huge and majestic lion, with a black mane which nearly swept the ground, standing over the carcass. He seemed aware of my proximity, and lowering his head he at once laid hold of the wildebeest and dragged it some distance up the hill. He then halted to take breath, but did not expose a broadside, and in a quarter of a minute he again laid hold of the wildebeest and dragged it about twelve yards farther towards the cover, when he again raised his noble head and halted to take breath.

I had not an instant to lose; he stood with his right side exposed to me in a very slanting position; I stretched my left arm across the grass, and, taking him rather low, I fired: the ball took effect, and the lion sank to the shot. All was still as death for many seconds, when he uttered a deep growl, and slowly gaining his feet he limped toward the cover, roaring mournfully as he went. When he got into the thorny bushes he stumbled

through them as he moved along, and in half a minute I heard him halt and growl fearfully, as if dying. I had now every reason to believe that he was either dead or would die immediately, and if I did not seek him till the morning I knew very well that the hyænas and jackals would destroy him. I accordingly went up to camp, and, having saddled two horses, I and Martin rode to seek him, taking all the dogs, led in strings by the natives. On reaching the carcass of the wildebeest we slipped the dogs, and they went off after the hyænas and jackals : we listened in vain for the deep growl of the lion, but I was persuaded that he was dead, and rode forward to the spot where I had last heard him growl. Lassie, now coming up, commenced barking at a bush in front of me, and, riding round, I had the immense satisfaction to behold the most magnificent old black-maned lion stretched out before me.

The ball had entered his belly a little before the flank, and traversed the length and breadth of his body, crippling him in the opposite shoulder. No description could give a correct idea of the surpassing beauty of this most majestic animal, as he lay still warm before me. I lighted a fire and gazed with delight upon his lovely mane, his massive arms, his sharp yellow nails, his hard and terrible head, his immense and powerful teeth, his perfect beauty and symmetry throughout ; and I felt that I had won the noblest prize that this wide world could yield to a sports-

man. Having about fifteen natives with me, I sent for rheims and the lechteruit, and we bore the lion to camp.

On my way from the water to get the horses and dogs, I shot an extremely old bull black rhinoceros with a single ball: he dropped to the shot. His horns were quite worn down and amalgamated, resembling the stump of an old oak-tree.

On the afternoon of the 4th I deepened my hole and watched the water. As the sun went down two graceful springboks and a herd of pallah came and drank, when I shot the best pallah in the troop. At night I watched the water with Kleinboy: very soon a cow black rhinoceros came and drank, and got off for the present with two balls in her. A little afterwards two black rhinoceroses and two white ones came to the water-side. We both fired together at the finest of the two black rhinoceroses; she ran three hundred yards, and fell dead. Soon after this the other black rhinoceros came up again and stood at the water-side; I gave her one ball after the shoulder; she ran a hundred yards and fell dead. In half an hour a third old borèlé appeared, and, having inspected the two dead ones, he came up to the water-side. We fired together; he ran two hundred yards and fell dead. I felt satisfied with our success, and gave it up for the night.

By the following evening the natives had cleared away the greater part of two of the rhinoceroses which

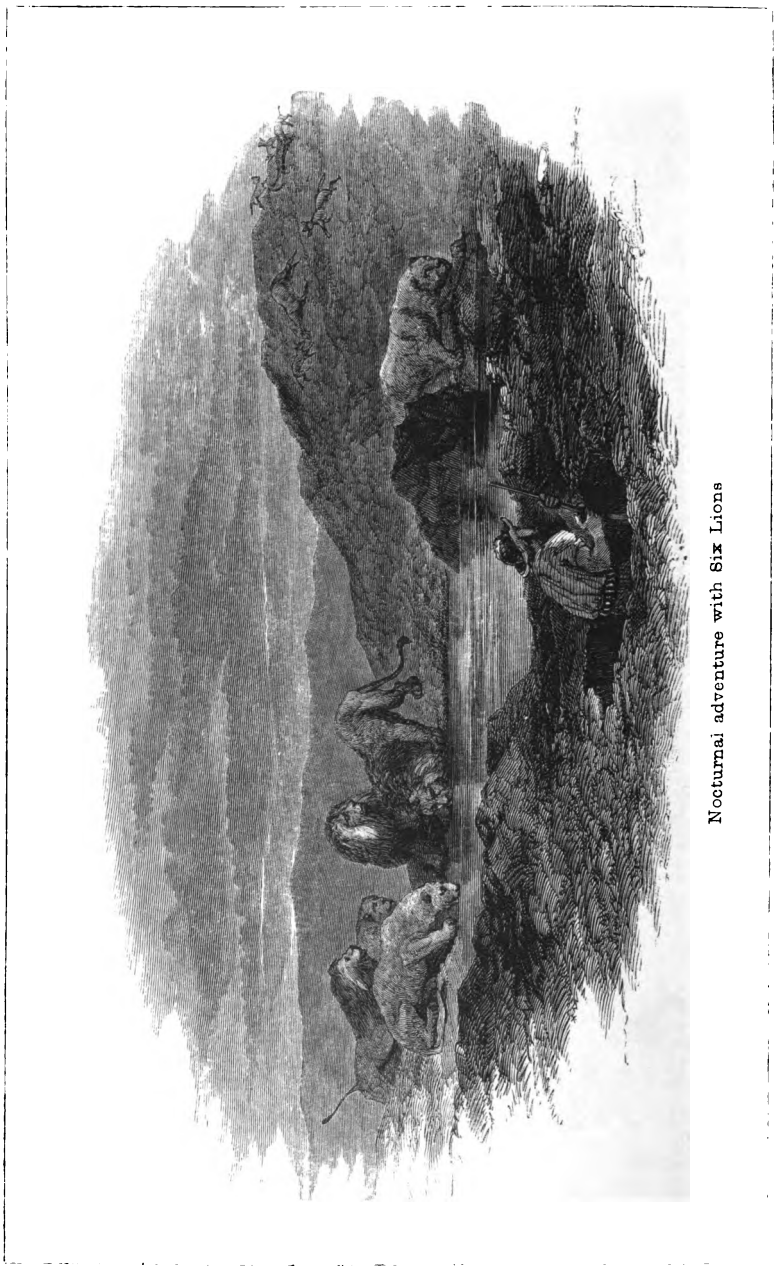
lay right in the way of the game approaching the water ; I, however, enforced their leaving the third rhinoceros, which had fallen on the bare rising ground, almost opposite to my hiding-place, in the hope of attracting a lion, as I intended to watch the water at night. Soon after the twilight had died away, I went down to my hole with Kleinboy and two natives, who lay concealed in another hole, with Wolf and Boxer ready to slip, in the event of wounding a lion.

On reaching the water I looked towards the carcass of the rhinoceros, and, to my astonishment, I beheld the ground alive with large creatures, as though a troop of zebras were approaching the fountain to drink. Kleinboy remarked to me that a troop of zebras were standing on the height. I answered, "Yes :—" but I knew very well that zebras would not be capering around the carcass of a rhinoceros. I quickly arranged my blankets, pillow, and guns in the hole, and then lay down to feast my eyes on the interesting sight before me. It was bright moonlight, as clear as I need wish, and within one night of being full moon. There were six large lions, about twelve or fifteen hyænas, and from twenty to thirty jackals, feasting on and around the carcasses of the three rhinoceroses. The lions feasted peacefully, but the hyænas and jackals fought over every mouthful, and chased one another round and round the carcasses, growling, laughing, screeching, chattering, and howling

without any intermission. The hyænas did not seem afraid of the lions, although they always gave way before them ; for I observed that they followed them in the most disrespectful manner, and stood laughing, one or two on either side, when any lions came after their comrades to examine pieces of skin or bones which they were dragging away. I had lain watching this banquet for about three hours, in the strong hope that, when the lions had feasted, they would come and drink. Two black and two white rhinoceroses had made their appearance, but, scared by the smell of the blood, they had made off.

At length the lions seemed satisfied. They all walked about with their heads up, and seemed to be thinking about the water ; and in two minutes one of them turned his face towards me, and came on ; he was immediately followed by a second lion, and in half a minute by the remaining four. It was a decided and general move, they were all coming to drink right bang in my face, within fifteen yards of me.

I charged the unfortunate, pale, and panting Kleinboy to convert himself into a stone, and knowing, from old spoor, exactly where they would drink, I cocked my left barrel, and placed myself and gun in position. The six lions came steadily on along the stony ridge, until within sixty yards of me, when they halted for a minute to reconnoitre. One of them stretched out his massive arms on the rock and lay down ; the others then came



Nocturnal adventure with Six Lions

on, and he rose and brought up the rear. They walked, as I had anticipated, to the old drinking-place, and three of them had put down their heads and were lapping the water loudly, when Kleinboy thought it necessary to shove up his ugly head. I turned my head slowly to rebuke him, and again turning to the lions I found myself discovered.

An old lioness, who seemed to take the lead, had detected me, and, with her head high and her eyes fixed full upon me, she was coming slowly round the corner of the little vley to cultivate further my acquaintance! This unfortunate proceeding put a stop at once to all further contemplation. I thought, in my haste, that it was perhaps most prudent to shoot this lioness, especially as none of the others had noticed me. I accordingly moved my arm and covered her: she saw me move and halted, exposing a full broadside. I fired; the ball entered one shoulder and passed out behind the other. She bounded forward with repeated growls, and was followed by her five comrades all enveloped in a cloud of dust; nor did they stop until they had reached the cover behind me, except one old gentleman, who halted and looked back for a few seconds, when I fired, but the ball went high. I listened anxiously for some sound to denote the approaching end of the lioness; nor listened in vain. I heard her growling and stationary, as if dying. In one minute her comrades crossed the vley a little below me,

and made towards the rhinoceros. I then slipped Wolf and Boxer on her scent, and, following them into the cover, I found her lying dead within twenty yards of where the old lion had lain two nights before. This was a fine old lioness, with perfect teeth, and was certainly a noble prize ; but I felt dissatisfied at not having rather shot a lion, which I had most certainly done if my Hottentot had not destroyed my contemplation.

On the 8th, as I and Kleinboy watched the under water about midnight, we heard a black rhinoceros blowing beside the upper water. We very rashly walked up within about eighteen yards of him, with no other shelter than a small bush. On perceiving us the borèlé at once turned his head to me and advanced slowly : Kleinboy, who was on my right and had a good chance, fortunately fired without orders, and the ball entered the shoulder with a fine direction. Borèlé then charged madly and furiously, through trees and bushes, right towards camp, making the most tremendous blowing noise, and halting in a stony open flat close to the wag-gons : he stood, and staggered about for a minute or two, and then fell. On coming up to him I found him a magnificent specimen, carrying three distinct horns.

After breakfast on the 10th, the oxen having drunk, we inspanned and marched to Boötlonamy, which we reached at sunset.

After a march of three days, during which the cattle

and horses nearly died of thirst, we reached Moselakose, a retired fountain in a bold glen, or gorge, in the first mountain chain before us. As we approached this fine fountain, the poor, thirsty, loose cattle rushed ahead to the water, not a little gratified by the sight.

I found the spoor of game abundant at the water; accordingly I outspanned at a considerable distance from it, and at once set about making a hole from which to shoot the game as they came up to drink.

After breakfast on the 16th I rode to the water and again lay in my hole. There were large herds of game standing within a few hundred yards of me when I lay down, and soon after the horses had disappeared they came on from all sides and completely surrounded me. It was of no consequence that they got my wind, and frequent alarms were sounded—the thirsty game to windward would not heed the alarm, and, standing their ground fearlessly, they gave the others confidence. There were standing within shot of me at once about three hundred pallahs, about twelve sassaybys, and twenty zebras. I could only make out two very fair heads in all that vast herd of pallahs, and these were not to be compared with my best Soobie heads; I, therefore, amused myself by watching the game, and did not fire, having resolved to wait quietly, in the hope of some rarer game appearing, such as koodoo, sable antelope, or wild boar, &c. At length I observed three shy, strange-looking antelopes approach

the water, with large bushy tails and furry-looking reddish-grey hair. They were three rhoode-rheeboks, a buck and two does. I had never before heard that either of the rheeboks frequented these parts; being anxious to certify that this antelope did so, I shot the buck through the heart.

The next day I again rode to the water and lay down, with large herds of pallahs, &c., in view: soon after the horses were gone they came in and surrounded me, the same as the day before. It was a fine show of game: there were about two hundred pallahs, about fifty blue wildebeests, thirty zebras, and thirty sassaybys—all at once drinking and standing within easy shot of me. After watching them for a short time I selected a fine old cow blue wildebeest, and fired, when this vast body of game thundered, panic-stricken, away on every side. As the dust cleared away the gnoo was to be seen standing alone, and in about ten minutes she staggered, fell, and died. Fifteen minutes afterwards two herds of pallahs approached from different directions. I was overhauling them, when up came two tearing wild boars and stood broadside before me, with their long tails stuck right up. I took the best behind the shoulder; he ran off with his comrade up a very rocky hill above the fountain, leaving the stones red in his wake, and, feeling himself unable to proceed farther, he charged and staggered violently about the stones, and, at last, gave in, having broken both his under-teeth;

like any other pig, he also squealed violently when the struggles of death came over him.

A singular circumstance occurred as I watched the waters on the 20th. Having shot a sassayby, he immediately commenced choking from the blood, and his body began to swell in a most extraordinary manner; it continued swelling, with the animal still alive, until it literally resembled a fisherman's float, when the sassayby died of suffocation. It was not only his body that swelled in this extraordinary manner, but even his head and legs, down to his knees.

The 21st was a bitter cold morning, with a strong wind from the south-west. I rode to my hole at the fountain before the morning star appeared. Shortly, becoming impatient of lying still, I rose from my hole to examine what game had drunk during the night, and, to my astonishment, I at once discovered the spoor of a mighty bull elephant, which must have drunk there not many hours before. I went in haste to camp, and, having made all ready for a three-days' trip, I took up the spoor with two after-riders and six natives. It led us in an easterly course—first, through a neck in the mountains, and then skirting them for about five miles through thick cover and over hard adamantine rocks and sharp stones. The elephant had fed as he went along, and we soon came up with him standing in a thicket. When we first caught sight of him he was within twenty

yards of us, a bushy tree nearly concealing him from our view. I first observed one of his tusks, and then I had to despatch Kleinboy to catch the cowardly natives, who were making off at top speed with my dogs on strings. The dogs fought well with him: it was very rocky ground, and I gave him one deadly shot before he was aware of our presence. I then hunted him into softer ground and slew him with the tenth shot.

This fellow made up my fiftieth elephant bagged in Africa; not to mention numbers lost.

On our way to camp, while following an old established elephant and rhinoceros footpath, I observed a grey mass beneath a bush, with something which looked like a shining black horn stuck out on one side; it was within about eighteen yards of our path. When I got alongside of it I saw that it was a princely old bull buffalo, with a very remarkably fine head. He had lain his head flat on the ground and was crouching, in the hope that we should ride past without observing him, just as an old stag or a roebuck does in Scotland. I gave the dogs the signal of the presence of game, when, as dogs invariably will do, they dashed off in the wrong direction. The buffalo sprang to his feet, and in one instant he was lost in the thicket.

From the quantity of buffalo's spoor on the north side of this mountain range, I made up my mind that there must be some strong water on that side of the hills, as

only one or two buffaloes occasionally came to drink at the fountain where I was encamped; the natives all declared that there was none. I, however, on the 22nd, determined to ride thither to explore, and accordingly started with Kleinboy and the Bushman. We held first about west, and then crossed the mountains by a succession of very rocky valleys and ravines. When we had gained the highest part of the rock, which opened to us the forests to the north, a troop of seven doe koodoos and three rhooze-rheeboks started on the opposite side of the ravine. The dogs, observing the koodoos, gave immediate chase; and after a very fine and bold course they brought one to bay far in the valley below, which Kleinboy shot.

I had, in the mean time, ridden ahead, following an old established game footpath, and after proceeding two or three miles I had the satisfaction to discover a beautiful fountain in a deep rocky ravine on the north side of the mountains. Here was fresh spoor of black and white rhinoceros, buffalo, wildebeest, sassayby, koodoo, klip-springer, &c. A little after this I was met by my after-riders, who had likewise discovered a ravine containing water a little to the east. There they had started two bull buffaloes, three buck koodoos, and a troop of rheebok. I then rode to inspect this water, and took up the spoor of the buffaloes, in the hope of bringing them to bay with the dogs. I held up the hollow on their spoor,

and presently observed one of them standing among some trees to my left. The dogs were snuffing about close under his nose ; nevertheless they failed to observe him, but set off at top speed on some other scent ; nor did they return for about ten minutes. The buffalo did not seem startled by the dogs, but walked slowly over the rocky ridge. I was following briskly after him, when I observed his comrade lying right in our path ; we squatted instantly, but he got our wind and was off. I followed, and got a shot across the ravine, wounding him behind the shoulder. When the dogs came up I tried to put them on this spoor, but they dashed up the ravine and started three other buffaloes, which they failed in bringing to bay, nor did I again see the dogs till I had been two hours in camp. I nearly killed myself by running after them, for I was on foot, the ground being too bad for the horses.

On reaching the steeds I rode hard for camp, as the day was far spent. Passing the mouth of another bold ravine, we crossed very well-beaten paths, which led me to suspect that this ravine also contained a fountain. We had ridden about half-way to camp when a fine old bull eland came charging up to leeward, having got our wind. I sprang from the back of Mazeppa, and gave him both barrels as he passed me. We then gave him chase through very thick cover, and after a sharp burst of about a mile I shot him from the saddle : he carried a very fine

head, and was, notwithstanding the lateness of the season, in very good condition.

On the 23rd, in the forenoon, I rode to explore the suspected ravine of the day before, and having crossed the mountain chain I came upon the fresh spoor of a very large troop of cow elephants leading towards the spot. I at once determined to follow it, and despatched the Bushman to camp for the dogs and Kleinboy's gun, &c. I rode slowly ahead on the spoor, imagining the elephants at a great distance, when, on gaining a ridge, I came full upon the troop drawn up within twenty-five yards of me. There were perhaps from twenty-five to thirty of them. The instant I came upon them they got my wind, and, rumbling, away they went in three divisions into the impenetrable cover.

The ground that I had now reached was one solid mass of sharp adamantine blocks of rock, so that a horse could with difficulty walk on it. I held along the ridge above the cover, and in half a minute I heard one division of the elephants crashing through the cover after me. They came on a little above me, and another troop held the same course a little before me, so that I had considerable difficulty in getting clear of them, and when I did so I held for the level ground beneath the dense cover. Here I fell in with one elephant with a calf: she had only one tooth. I gave her a shot behind the shoulder; and next minute, while trying to head her in the dense

cover, she very nearly ran me down in her charge, and being without dogs I lost her immediately.

I then gave up the elephants in vexation with the ground, and rode to explore the ravine. My wounded elephant, however, happened to take the same course above me in the cover, and I once more fell in with her. She was going slowly along the hill-sides, keeping in the thickest cover, with a rocky ground, where my horse would be of no service to me. I might now have got her, but as she had only one tooth I was not anxious about her, so I held up the bold ravine.

Here, as I expected, I found a strong fountain in a solid rocky basin not more than ten feet wide: it was a very interesting spot, approachable by three different rugged passes, the sides of which were furrowed by broad footpaths established there through ages. The large stones and masses of rock were either kicked to the side or packed into a level "like a pavement;" even the solid adamantine rock was worn hollow by the feet of the mighty game which most probably for a thousand years had passed over it. Here I found fresh spoor of most of the larger game, and, resolving to play havoc by light of the coming moon, I left the glen and rode for camp.

On the 25th, after breakfast, I started with bedding and provisions to hunt for a few days on the other side of the hills. We visited the first water and established a

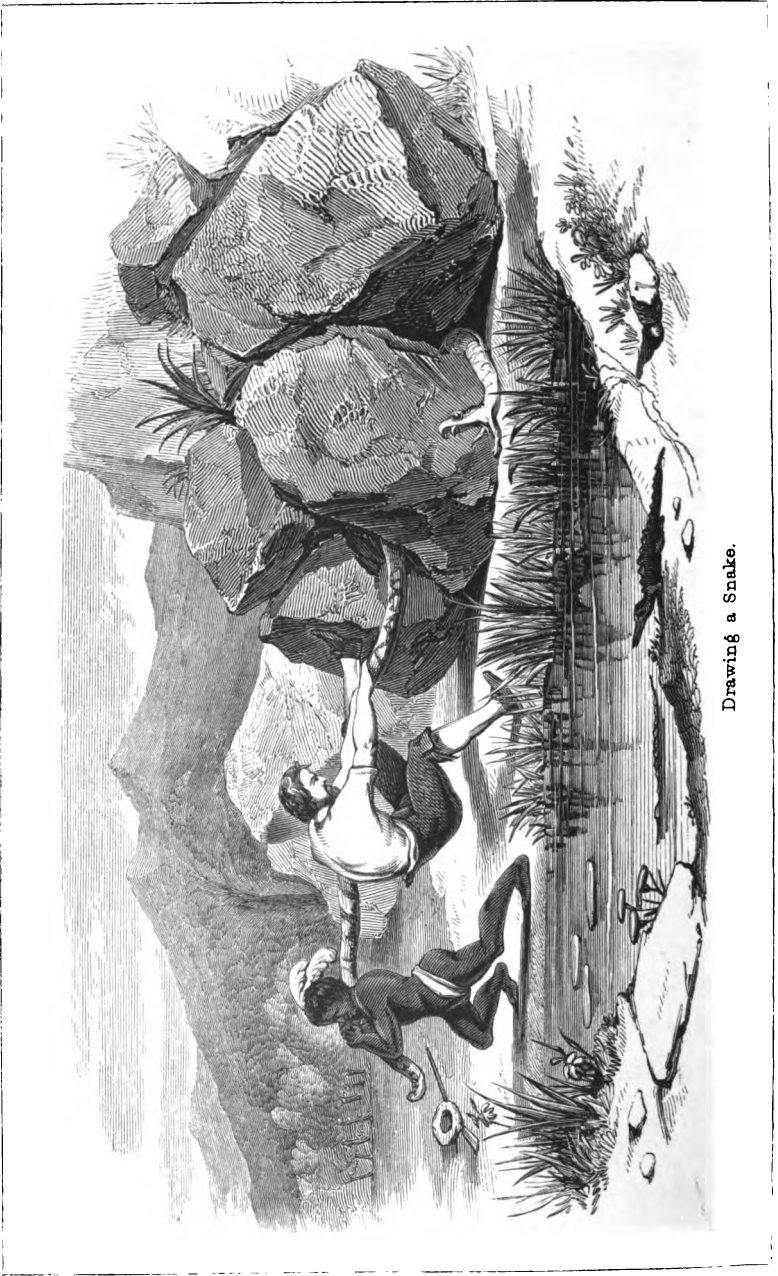
place of concealment with rocks and green boughs on the rock. While we were making this bothy a wild boar hove in view, but, observing us, he escaped. We then held on to the farther ravine, and on my way thither I nearly rode down a fine old bastard gemsbok, which got away among the rocks. I repaired an old hiding-hole at this water, building it up with fragments of rock. I then sent the steeds to a proper distance, put out my fire, and lay down to watch for the night.

First came a pallah, closely followed by a wild dog. The pallah escaped, the wild dog presently returned, and observing my retreating men he barked loudly; ten minutes after, about eight wild dogs came up the glen and drank. Night now set in, and the moonlight was very faint. Presently an occasional loud displacement of rock and stone announced the approach of large game: it was two old bull buffaloes; they came and drank, and went away without approaching within shot. Soon after fourteen buffaloes came; but before these had finished drinking they got an alarm and charged panic-stricken up the rugged mountain side. They had winded two lions, which came up to the fountain-head, and drank within eighteen yards of me, where they lay lapping loudly and occasionally halting for four or five minutes, but, from their light colour and the masses of rock that surrounded them, I could not see to fire. About ten minutes after they had drunk I fancied that they were still lingering,

and on throwing a stone their step was heard retreating among the dry leaves and stones.

Soon after this six old bull buffaloes approached from a glen behind us : they walked very slowly, standing long to listen. When the leader came up within twenty yards of us, Kleinboy and I fired together ; it ran thirty yards and in two minutes fell. His comrades, after considering the matter for five minutes, came on once more : we again took the leader, and he also dropped. His comrades, as before, retreated, but soon returning we wounded a third, which we did not get. The moon was now under and it was very dark ; the buffaloes however were determined to try it on once more, and coming up a fourth and last time we shot another old bull. In about ten minutes lions were very busy on the carcass of the first buffalo, where they feasted till morning, taking another drink before they went away. Towards daybreak we wounded a white rhinoceros, and soon after two black rhinoceroses fought beside us, but I was too sleepy to rise.

On the 26th I rose at earliest dawn to inspect the heads of the three old buffaloes ; they were all enormous old bulls, and one of them carried a most splendid head. The lions had cleaned out all his entrails : their spoor was immense. Having taken some buffalo breast and liver for breakfast, I despatched Ruyter to the waggons to call the natives to remove the carcasses, whilst I and Kleinboy held through the hills to see what game might



Drawing a Snake.

be in the next glen which contained water. On our way thither we started a fine old buck koodoo, which I shot, putting both barrels into him at one hundred yards. As I was examining the spoor of the game by the fountain I suddenly detected an enormous old rock-snake stealing in beneath a mass of rock beside me. He was truly an enormous snake, and, having never before dealt with this species of game, I did not exactly know how to set about capturing him. Being very anxious to preserve his skin entire, and not wishing to have recourse to my rifle, I cut a stout and tough stick about eight feet long, and having lightened myself of my shooting-belt I commenced the attack. Seizing him by the tail I tried to get him out of his place of refuge; but I hauled in vain, he only drew his large folds firmer together; I could not move him. At length I got a rheim round one of his folds about the middle of his body, and Kleinboy and I commenced hauling away in good earnest.

The snake, finding the ground too hot for him, relaxed his coils, and, suddenly bringing round his head to the front, he sprang out at us like an arrow, with his immense and hideous mouth opened to its largest dimensions, and before I could get out of his way he was clean out of his hole, and made a second spring, throwing himself forward about eight or ten feet and snapping his horrid fangs within a foot of my naked legs. I sprang out of his way, and getting a hold of the green bough I

had cut I returned to the charge. The snake now glided along at top speed: he knew the ground well, and was making for a mass of broken rocks where he would have been beyond my reach, but before he could gain this place of refuge I caught him two or three tremendous whacks on the head. He however held on, and gained a pool of muddy water, which he was rapidly crossing when I again belaboured him, and at length reduced his pace to a stand. We then hanged him by the neck to a bough of a tree, and in about fifteen minutes he seemed dead, but he again became very troublesome during the operation of skinning, twisting his body in all manner of ways. This serpent measured fourteen feet.

At night no game visited the water, being scared by the strong smell of the carrion. Lions however were so numerous that we deemed it safe to shift a position we had taken down the glen, for they trotted past within twenty yards of us, growling fearfully. We fired off the big gun to scare them for the moment while we shifted to our baggage at the fountain-head, where we instantly lighted a large fire. The lions, for a short time after this, kept quiet, when they again returned, and the fire being low they soon commenced upon the buffalo the natives had left within fifty yards of us, and before morning two of them came up and looked into our bothy, when Boxer giving a sharp bark, and I suddenly awaking and popping up my head, they bounded off.

In the evening of the 28th I shot an old bull koodoo. At night I watched the water near my camp with Klein-boy. After a long time had elapsed an enormous old bull muchocho or white rhinoceros came slowly on, and commenced drinking within fifteen yards of us, and next minute a large herd of zebras and blue wildebeest. It was long before the muchocho would turn his side; when he did, we fired together, and away he went with zebras and wildebeests concealed in a cloud of dust. Next came an old bull borèlé; we fired together, and he made off, blowing loudly, after charging round and round, seeking some object on which to wreak his vengeance. Next came another borèlé, and he got two bullets into his person. The fourth that came was another old bull muchocho; he ran forty yards and fell. And fifth came a cow borèlé; she fell dead to the shots. Three other rhinoceroses came about me, but I was too drowsy to watch any longer, and fell asleep.

When day dawned I rose to see if the wounded chukuroos had gone far, and how like were their horns. We got the two old bull muchochos and a bull and a cow borèlé: both the muchochos and the bull borèlé carried very fine horns; the two former were very fat. I immediately set all the natives to work to clear away the flesh and bring a supply to camp. The heat in the middle of the day was very oppressive; in the evening I lay by the fountain. Two troops of pallahs and a herd of sassaybys

came up, when I shot the best stag sassayby in the troop : he got a raking shot at a hundred yards, and, after galloping after his comrades a couple of hundred yards at top speed, he fell violently over in the dust. Wishing to give my man Martin some diversion, I told him to come up to the water at sunset with Kleinboy and the two big guns to watch all night for rhinoceros. As we were making our beds ready we suddenly observed a superb old bull buffalo coming briskly on to drink : he was already in full sight of us ; there was no time to get the horses out of the way, and there they stood saddled and bridled beside the water. In an instant we were out of sight in the hole. On came the buffalo, but, detecting the saddlery, he eyed the steeds with great suspicion ; one of these was fortunately "the pony," who entertained a great dislike to buffaloes, having been once furiously charged by one ; accordingly, when the pony beheld the buffalo he cocked his ears at him, and, turning right about face, he held away for his comrades : then the old buffalo came on ; he was going to make a cast to leeward, but to this I objected, and, taking him a raking shot at eighty yards, I shot him in the heart ; he ran forty-six yards and fell dead. But little game appeared during the night, scared by the blood of last night's carnage. About midnight I put a ball through a hyæna. A little before the moon was under a fine old borèlé stood within fifteen yards of us. Directing Martin and Kleinboy to present,

and await my signal to fire, I covered Borèlé, but before I had given any signal Martin thought proper to fire with the borèlé standing almost tail on end to us; we of course lost him, and, after consigning Martin and the borèlé to the shades below, I lay down to rest in anything but a smooth temper.

These fountains afforded me excellent shooting for about a fortnight longer, during the whole of which time I watched nightly in my different hiding-holes, and bagged buffaloes, rhinoceros, koodoos, zebras, and other game. One night, while so engaged, a horrid snake which Kleinboy had tried to kill with his loading-rod flew up at my eye, and spat poison into it. Immediately I washed it well out at the fountain. I endured great pain all night, but next day the eye came all right.



for ammunition. I then presented him with a whipstick and two pounds of powder, and walked down to the missionary's house, ordering my men to inspan. Mahura promised to come thither and take leave of me, but did not keep his word. About midday I marched, holding a spoor of three waggons some months old, said to lead me into my old course at Great Chooi.

On the 20th we reached the bank of the Meritsane, two miles below my old spoor. On the march we saw for the first time spoor of the black rhinoceros, also pallah and koodoo on the mountain, and hartebeests on the open country.

On the 22nd we marched at early dawn, and, having proceeded about four miles, left the main road to Bakatla, and held across-country to our right for my old outspanning-place at Lotlokane ; two hours more brought us thither. I did not find the vast herds of game congregated here as usual, water being everywhere abundant : the grass over the whole country was remarkable, being much higher than my oxen.

On the 23rd, when within two miles of the Molopo, the dogs took up the scent of lions. I then halted my waggons, and, having saddled up two horses, I rode with Ruyter in quest of them, accompanied by ten of my dogs, who kept the scent for a short distance, and at last lost it altogether, and went off on the scent of some hartebeests. I now rode forward to the Molopo, which I

made about one mile lower down than the drift. This darling little river is here completely concealed by lofty reeds and long grass which densely clothe its margin to a distance of at least a hundred yards. On each side reitbuck were very abundant. On making the river we started one of these. I rode up the river side, and immediately observed two old lions come slowly out from the adjoining cover and slant off toward the reeds. I galloped forward to endeavour to get between them and the reeds; in this I succeeded. The lions, imagining that we were some species of game, did not attempt to retreat, but stood looking in wonder until I was within fifty yards of them, and right between the last lion and the reeds. I was struck with wonder and admiration at the majestic and truly awful appearance which these two noble old lions presented.

They were both very large; the first, a "schwart fore-life," or black-maned lion,—the last, which was the finest and the oldest, a "chiell fore-life," or yellow-maned lion. The black-maned lion, after looking at me for half a minute, walked slowly forward and bounded into the reeds; the dark-brown lion would fain have done the same, but I was now right between him and his retreat. He seemed not at all to like my appearance, but he did not yet feel certain what I was, and, fancying that I had not observed him, he lay down in the long grass. Ruyter now came up with my rifle. Having loaded in the saddle,

CHAPTER XXVII.

We trek down the Limpopo — Abundance of Sea-cows — The Lotsane River — An immense Herd of Elephants — Combat with a first-rate old Bull — Rheumatic Fever attacks me, which determines our course homewards — Elephants smashing Forest-trees — A Lion carries off one of my men from the fireside — The Beast occupied consuming him all night — The man-eating Lion slain — Three Hippopotami shot — One of the Dogs eaten by a Crocodile — The fatal "Tsetse" fly — The Fountain of Seboono — An old Bull-Elephant held in check without Gun or Dogs.

I RESOLVED now to cease for a time hunting sea-cows, and to trek ahead in good earnest. I accordingly took considerable trouble in stowing the waggons properly. We then trekked down the river until sundown. I rode ahead of the waggons to explore, and was struck with astonishment at the number of the hippopotami. They seemed to increase the farther I trekked down the river; every pool had its herd; they were extremely fearless, allowing me to approach within fifteen yards of them. In the morning I found myself minus my hired natives: these ruffians, fearing to receive a chastisement similar to that of the chief of the Bakalahari, which they felt they deserved, thought it best to get out of the way in time, and had cut the service. The chief Matsaca brought

me ivory, which I obtained in barter for muskets and some ammunition.

On the 8th we trekked at dawn of day, and after proceeding a few miles came upon the Lotsane, one of those gravelly-bedded rivers, with only water in occasional spots, such as are met with in the Bamangwato country. Here was much spoor of elephant; and the natives pressing me to halt and hunt, I outspanned and got everything ready for a trip from the waggons.

The next morning I started with a party of natives to seek elephants. We held along the banks of the Lotsane for several miles, holding a north-westerly course; after which we left the river and held south-west; and, at last, followed down to the Limpopo, and so home to camp, without finding a single fresh spoor. Here I found my old friends from Bamangwato, Mollyeon and Kapain, with a party. I was glad to see these men, as I knew they would assist me in my hunting, and they could also converse with me.

On the 10th, at dawn of day, I rode down the river, and ordered my waggons to follow. I found sea-cows more and more abundant; every pool had its herd: the margin of the river on each side was trampled down by elephants, rhinoceroses, buffaloes, &c. Having ridden about six miles, I found the fresh spoor of a troop of bull elephants. I off-saddled, and in an hour the waggons came up, when I took up the spoor, accompanied by Carey,

Hendrick, and Ruyter. After following the spoor for some miles, the natives lost it. A little distance ahead of us was a rocky hill, to the summit of which I ascended. This spot commanded a good view of the adjacent forest. I at once detected an immense herd of elephants. They were drinking in a wide open spot on a gravelly-bedded river which falls into the Limpopo, called by the natives Sukung.

We then made a turn to leeward and came in upon this fine herd ; it was the largest I had ever seen ; there must have been upwards of one hundred elephants before my eye at once. The troop consisted chiefly of cows and calves ; I however detected one fine well-grown bull, carrying very fair tusks. I rode slowly towards him, followed by my men, and the natives leading the dogs. We advanced unobserved until we were within twenty yards of some of the outside cows. Here I enjoyed a fine view of the herd ; they stood drinking on a vast surface of granite rock, and, though no trees intervened between us and them, they took not the slightest notice of us.

At length I gave the bull a shot in the shoulder and then followed him up. He stumbled, and fell once upon the slippery rock, but, recovering his feet, went off at a pace which I could hardly equal on the dangerous ground. By good luck, most of my dogs came to my assistance, and I slew him in a few minutes with eight or ten shots. I had directed Hendrick and Carey to try to

hold some of the cows for me until I was ready with the bull ; accordingly, these doughty Nimrods followed and turned four cows for a short time, and then left them, without even firing a shot to advise me of their course ; the consequence of which was, that I knocked up myself, my dogs, and horses, in chasing the retreating herd to a great distance, to no purpose.

On the following day I shot another bull elephant and a white rhinoceros ; and on the afternoon of the 12th, returning to camp weary and worn, I came unexpectedly upon a bull elephant of unusual size, standing in the shade on the margin of the Limpopo. He took refuge in an extensive jungle of impracticable wait-a-bits, where it was impossible to do anything on horseback, and I was therefore obliged to hunt him on foot. I slew him with thirty bullets after an extremely severe and dangerous combat of about two hours. I afterwards felt much the worse for this severe exertion.

On the 14th I despatched Hendrick to bring on the waggons, which came up in the afternoon. Night set in warm, calm, and still, with a good moonlight. Elephants, sea-cows, and panthers kept up a continued music above and below us along the river until I fell asleep.

On the 15th I felt very ill, but in the forenoon I went down to the river, where I shot two sea-cows. In the evening, feeling worse, I bled myself, but strong fever was on me all night.

Next morning I marched, halting at sundown on the Mokojay, a gravelly-bedded periodical river, where elephants occasionally drank.

On the 18th at dawn of day I took leave of Mollyeon and Kapain of Bamangwato, as they would not follow me farther. We then inspanned, and held down the Limpopo. I regretted to observe that the spoor of elephants did not seem to increase in the same ratio as I had allowed myself to imagine. We were in an extremely remote and secluded corner of the world, quite uninhabited; yet the elephants, though frequenting it, were decidedly scarce. I felt extremely weak and nervous from the fever and the quantity of blood which I had lost, in so much that I started at my own shadow, and several times sprang to one side when the leaves rustled in the bushes. I walked along the bank of the river with my gun loaded with small shot, intending to shoot a partridge for my breakfast. Presently I came upon the fresh dung of bull elephants, and at the same moment my people at the waggons saw two old bull elephants within two hundred yards of them; and the wind being favourable, they walked unsuspectingly away.

A singular piece of good luck here occurred; on beholding the elephants my weakness (brought on by bleeding) and my nervousness of mind immediately left me.

Having caught and saddled steeds, I attacked these

two noble elephants, and had the good fortune to secure them both, while my oxen were standing close by in their yokes, and my people were looking on. I was enabled to do this by the assistance of my dogs, who kept one of the elephants in play until his comrade was mortally wounded, when I galloped hard to their assistance, and secured him before the first had fallen to the ground.

On the 20th, early in the morning, I rode some distance down the river, with one after-rider, to explore. I found the country here not much frequented by elephants; I, however, found the fresh spoor of one troop, but I was much too weak to follow it. Following an elephant path in very rocky ground, I came suddenly within ten yards of an old bull buffalo, who instantly charged me most fiercely, and had not my horse been most particularly active I could not have escaped him: so headlong was his charge that he lost his footing in the rocky ground, and fell with amazing violence, getting up and retreating quite crippled with the fall. A little after this I had ascended to the summit of a tree to obtain a view of the surrounding forest, when two white rhinoceroses came trotting up, despite my shouting, and stood within fifteen yards of my already terrified steeds.

My fever still continuing on me, and the natives having deserted, I determined upon turning my face homewards. Accordingly, on the 21st, I ordered my men to inspan and retrace their spoor. A troop of lions had killed

some game within a few hundred yards of us, and had been roaring very loudly all the morning: these gave us a parting salute as we were inspanning. Their voices sounded to me ominous, perhaps from the nervous state of my health. I thought they said, "Yes, you do well to retrace your rash steps; you have just come far enough." I must acknowledge that I felt a little anxious as to the safety of proceeding farther on several accounts. First, the natives had spoken of Moselekatse, now resident not very far in advance, as one who would most unquestionably murder me, and seize all my property. They also told me that I should lose all my cattle by the fly called "Tsetse;" and I had also reason to believe the country in advance not very healthy for man.

My followers received my orders to turn homewards with sincere gratification: we trekked till sundown, halting on the march for a sick ox, which we eventually left behind a prey to the lions, and slept on the Mokojay, where the Bamangwato men had left me.

On the 29th we arrived at a small village of Bakalahari. These natives told me that elephants were abundant on the opposite side of the river. I accordingly resolved to halt here and hunt, and drew my waggons up on the river's bank, within thirty yards of the water and about one hundred yards from the native village. Having outspanned, we at once set about making for the cattle a kraal of the worst description of thorn-trees. Of this I

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Paapaa Fountain — Watch by Moonlight from a Shooting-hole — Remarkable Sport with Elephants — Four bagged and eight mortally wounded in one night — Elephant-hunting with Horse and Dogs by Moonlight — A Troop of Lions — The Vultures with the shadowy Wings — Another Dog snapped up by a Crocodile — The Skeleton of an Elephant shot by me discovered — The Tusks being gone, strong measures are adopted for their recovery.

ON the 17th of September I resolved to leave the fountain of Seboono, as it was much disturbed, and to proceed with a few Bakalahari to a small yet famous water about six miles to the south-east. We accordingly saddled up and held thither. On reaching this fountain, which is called by the natives "Paapaa," I found the numerous footpaths leading to it covered, as I had anticipated, with fresh spoor of elephant and rhinoceros. I then at once proceeded to study the best spot on which to make our shooting-hole for the night. It would be impossible to prevent some of the game from getting our wind, for the footpaths led to it from every side. The prevailing wind was from the east, so I pitched upon the south-west corner of the fountain. The water was not more than twenty yards long and ten yards broad.

The west side was bounded by tufous rock which rose abruptly from the water about five feet high. The top of this rock was level with the surrounding vley, and here all the elephants drank as if suspicious of treading on the muddy margin on the other three sides of the fountain. I made our shooting-box within six or eight yards of the water, constructing it in a circular form, of bushes packed together so as to form a hedge about three feet high. On the top of the hedge I placed heavy dead old branches of trees, so as to form a fine clear rest for our rifles ; these clean old branches were all lashed firmly together with strips of thorn bark. All being completed, I took the Bakalahari and our steeds to a shady tree, about a quarter of a mile to leeward of the fountain, where we formed a kraal and off-saddled. This day was particularly adapted to bring game to the water, the sun being extremely powerful, and a hot dry wind prevailing all the afternoon. I told Carey that we were certain of having a good night's sport, and I was right, for we undoubtedly had about the finest night's sport and the most wonderful that was ever enjoyed by man.

A little before the sun went down, leaving our kraal, we held to the fountain, having with us our heavy-metalled rifles, karosses, and two Bakalahari. We also had two small guns, my double-barrelled Westley Richards, and Carey's single-barrelled gun. As we approached the fountain a stately bull giraffe stood

before us ; the heat of the day had brought him thither, but he feared to go in and drink ; on observing us he walked slowly away. Two jackals were next detected. Guinea fowl, partridges, two or three sorts of pigeon and turtle-dove, and small birds in countless thousands, were pouring in to drink from every airt, as we walked up to our hiding-place and lay down. In a few minutes the sun was under ; but the moon was strong and high (it being within three nights of the full), and the sky was clear, with scarcely a cloud. Very soon a step was heard approaching from the east ; it was a presuming black rhinoceros. He came up within ten yards of the hiding-hole, and, observing us with his sharp prying eye, he at once came slowly forward for a nearer inspection. I then shouted to him ; but this he did not heed in the slightest. I then sprang up and waved my large kaross, shouting at the same time. This, however, only seemed to amuse Borèlé, for he stood within four yards of us, with his horn threatening our momentary destruction, nor would he wheel about until I threw a log of wood at him. Black rhinoceroses are very difficult to scare when they do not get the wind ; the best way to do so is to hit them with a stone,—that is, in the event of the sportsman not wishing to fire off his gun.

Soon after Borèlé departed four old bull elephants drew near from the south. They were coming right on for the spot where we lay, and they seemed very likely

to walk over the top of us. We therefore placed our two big rifles in position, and awaited their forward movement with intense interest. On they came with a slow and stately step, until within twenty yards of us, when the leading elephant took it into his head to pass to leeward. We let him come on until he got our wind; he was then within ten yards of the muzzles of our heavy-metalled rifles; on winding us he tossed his trunk aloft, and we instantly fired together. I caught him somewhere about the heart, and my big six-pound rifle burst in Carey's hands, very nearly killing us both. The elephant on being fired at wheeled about, and retreated to the forest at top speed. I now directed "Stick-in-the-mud" to make use of his single-barrelled twelve to the pound, in the event of more elephants coming up; and thanking my stars that the old Dutch rifle had not sent us both to the land of the leal, I sat down and watched the dark masses of trees that cut the sky on every side, in the hope of seeing a mass as high and wide come towering forward into the open space that surrounded the fountain.

Nor did I watch long in vain, for very soon three princely bull elephants appeared exactly where the first came on, and holding exactly the same course. They approached just as the first had done. When the leading elephant came within ten yards of us he got our wind, and tossed up his trunk, and was wheeling round to retreat, when we fired together and sent our bullets some-



Elephant-Shooting by Moonlight

where about his heart. He ran two hundred yards and then stood, being evidently dying. His comrades halted likewise, but one of them, the finest of the three, almost immediately turned his head once more to the fountain, and very slowly and warily came on. We now heard the wounded elephant utter the cry of death, and fall heavily on the earth. Carey, whose ears were damaged by the bursting of the big rifle, did not catch this sound, but swore that the elephant which now so stealthily approached the water was the one at which we had fired.

It was interesting to observe this grand old bull approach the fountain: he seemed to mistrust the very earth on which he stood, and smelt and examined with his trunk every yard of the ground before he trod on it, and sometimes stood five minutes on one spot without moving. At length, having gone round three sides of the fountain, and being apparently satisfied as to the correctness of everything, he stepped boldly forward on to the rock on the west, and, walking up within six or seven yards of the muzzles of our rifles, he turned his broadside, and, lowering his trunk into the water, drew up a volume of water, which he threw over his back and shoulders to cool his person. This operation he repeated two or three times, after which he commenced drinking, by drawing the water into his trunk and then pouring it into his mouth. I determined to break his leg if possible, so, covering the limb about level

with the lower line of his body, I fired, Carey firing for his heart. I made a lucky shot; and as the elephant turned and attempted to make away, his leg broke with a loud crack, and he stood upon his three sound ones. At once disabled and utterly incapable of escaping, he stood statue-like beside the fountain, within a few yards of where he had got the shot, and only occasionally made an attempt at locomotion.

The patch of my rifle fired at this elephant's comrade had ignited a large ball of dry old dung, about eight yards to leeward of our kraal, and, fanned by the breeze, it was now burning away very brightly, the sparks flying in the wind. Presently, on looking about me, I beheld two bull elephants approaching by the selfsame footpath which the others had held. The first of these was a half-grown bull, the last was an out-and-out old fellow with enormous tusks. They came on as the first had done, but seemed inclined to pass to windward of us. The young bull however observed the fire; he at once walked up to it, and smelling at it with his trunk he seemed extremely amused, and in a gambolling humour threw his trunk about, as if not knowing what to think of it. The larger bull now came up, and exposed a fine broadside: we took him behind the shoulder and fired together: on receiving the shots he wheeled about and held west with drooping ears, evidently mortally wounded.

Some time after this I detected an enormous old bull elephant approaching from the west. If we lay still where we were, he must in a few minutes get our wind, so we jumped up and ran forward out of his line of march. Here a borèlé opposed our farther progress, and we had to stone him out of our way. The elephant came on, and presently got the wind of where we had been lying. This at once seemed to awake his suspicions, for he stood still among the trees, stretching his trunk from side to side to catch the scent, and doubtful whether he should advance or retreat. We then ran towards him, and stalked in within forty yards of where he stood, and taking up a position behind a bush awaited his forward movement. The elephant came slowly forward, and I thought would pass to windward of us, when he suddenly altered his course, and walked boldly forward right for where we stood. He came on until within seven or eight yards, when I coughed loudly to turn him. He tossed up his trunk and turned quickly round to fly; as he turned, however, we fired together, when the elephant uttered a shrill cry of distress, and crashed away evidently hard hit. When this bull was standing before us, we both remarked that he was the finest we had seen that night: his tusks were extremely long, thick, and very unusually wide set.

We now returned to the fountain, and once more lay down to watch. Rhinoceroses, both black and white, were parad-

ing around us all night in every direction. We had lain but a short time when I detected a single old bull elephant approaching from the south by the same path which all the others had held. This elephant must have been very thirsty, for he came boldly on without any hesitation, and, keeping to windward, he walked past within about eight yards of us. We fired at the same moment; the elephant wheeled about, and after running a hundred yards reduced his pace to a slow walk. I clapped Carey on the shoulder, and said, "We have him." I had hardly uttered the words when he fell over on his side; he rose however again to his feet. At this moment the same presuming borèlé who had troubled us in the early part of the night came up to us again, and, declining as before to depart by gentle hints, I thought it a fitting moment to put an end to his intrusion, and accordingly gave him a ball behind the shoulder. On receiving it he galloped off in tremendous consternation, and passed close under the dying elephant, who at the moment fell dead with a heavy crash, and broke one of his hind legs under him in the fall.

About an hour after two more elephants came towering on from the east. When they came up they stood for a long time motionless within forty yards of the water; and at length the finer of the two, which was a very first-rate old bull, and carrying immense tusks, walked boldly forward, and, passing round the north side of the fountain, com-

menced drinking on the rock just as the crippled bull had done. We both fired together, holding for his heart ; the bullets must have gone nearly through him, for we had double charges of powder in our weapons. On receiving the shots he dropped a volume of water from his trunk, and, tossing it aloft, uttered a loud cry and made off, steering north ; but before he was out of our sight he reduced his pace to a slow walk, and I could quite plainly hear, by the loud painful breathing through his trunk, that he was mortally wounded ; but whether the natives were too lazy to seek him, or having found him would not tell me, I know not, but I never got him. We shot another bull elephant shortly after this ; he too uttered a shrill cry, and went off holding the same course the last one did ; that was, however, all that I ever saw of him.

It was now wearing on towards morning : the moon was low and the sky was cloudy ; and feeling very sleepy, I set the two Bakalahari to watch whilst I lay down to rest. Carey was already enjoying a sound sleep, and snoring loudly. I had lain nearly an hour, and was neither waking nor sleeping, when the Bakalahari whispered " Clou toona, macoa," which signifies " Bull elephants, white man." I sat up on my kaross, and beheld three old bulls approaching from the west. At this moment there was a death-like calm in the atmosphere, and the sky looked very threatening all along the mountain range which bounds this favourite elephant district on the south-west. I

greatly feared a thunderstorm. Suddenly a breeze came whistling from the mountains, and gave these three elephants our wind. We then left the fountain and held to our saddles, where we slept till the sun rose.

When the sun rose I proceeded with the Bakalahari to inspect the spoors of the wounded elephants. I was struck with astonishment when I thought over our night's sport: nine times had first-rate old bull elephants come up to drink, and we had fired at eight of these at distances of from six to ten yards, with cool steady rests. Two of them lay dead beside the fountain; another had a broken leg, and could not escape; and the only one which we imagined had escaped was the bull with the wide-set tusks, which we both felt certain was wounded too far back in the body. The event, however, proved that our expectations were incorrect, for that afternoon we found this princely elephant lying dead very near our kraal. Both our shots were very far back, wounding him somewhere about the kidneys. We never saw anything of the four other elephants shot by us. The bull with the broken leg had gone nearly a mile from the fountain when we came up to him. At first he made vain attempts to escape, and then to charge; but finding he could neither escape nor catch any of us, he stood at bay beside a tree, and my after-riders began to assail him. It was curious to watch his movements as the boys, at about twenty yards distance, pelted him with sticks, &c. Each

thing as it was thrown he took up and hurled back at them. When, however, dry balls of elephants' dung were pitched at him, he contented himself with smelling at them with his trunk. At length, wishing to put an end to his existence, I gave him four shots behind the shoulder, when he at once exhibited signs of distress; water ran from his eyes, and he could barely keep them open; presently his gigantic form quivered, and, falling over, he expired. At night we again watched the fountain. Only one elephant appeared; late in the night he came up to leeward, and got our wind. I, however, shot two fine old muchocho, or white rhinoceroses, and wounded two or three borèlé, which were found by the natives.

On the 19th I proceeded with Carey and Piet, and a few Bakalahiri, to a small fountain lying one mile to the south: here we made two shooting-boxes of boughs of trees. There were three pools at which the game drank, the largest not being more than twelve feet in breadth. I and Carey at night shot one fine bull elephant and four rhinoceroses, wounding two others, which escaped. On the night following we also wounded two elephants, which got away.

On the next night, on looking up the open vley to the south of the fountain, I beheld an unusually vast bull elephant coming freshly on to drink; but scared by a shot which I fired at other game, and hearing his courier crashing through the forest, he turned out of his course,

and walked into the jungle. Presently, however, he again appeared a little to leeward of the dead elephant—this scared him a second time; again, a third time, he came on; but on this occasion he got a puff of our wind, and a third time he retreated into the forest. It was now after midnight, the sky was clear and cloudless, and the moon was full.

I had long entertained an idea that elephants might be hunted in the saddle by moonlight with dogs, as in the day; but I thought it very probable that a man might get his eyes torn out by the wait-a-bits; I had also a notion that the elephants might prove more active, and perhaps more vicious. This night, however, I resolved to put the question to trial; I had horses and some of my best dogs in couples beside the fire, within two hundred yards of where we lay. When this mighty elephant retreated for the third time into the forest, the idea of hunting them in this manner again recurred to me, being very much annoyed at uselessly wounding and losing in the last week no less than ten first-rate old bull elephants. I communicated my idea to "Stick-in-the-mud," and we hastily proceeded to saddle my steed. I led my dogs, eight in number, through the forest to leeward of where a bull who had come to the fountain to drink had gone in, and when I saw that they had got his wind I slipped them. They dashed forward, and next minute was heard

the baying of the dogs and the crash and the trumpet of the elephant. He rushed away at first without halting, and held right for the mountains to the south-west. When, however, he found that his speed did not avail, and that he could not get away from his pursuers, he began to turn and dodge about in the thickest of the cover, occasionally making charges after the dogs. I followed on as best I could, shouting with all my might to encourage my good hounds. These, hearing their master's voice beside them, stuck well by the elephant, and fought him better than in the day. I gave him my first two shots from the saddle; after which I rode close up to him, and, running in on foot, I gave him some deadly shots at distances of from fifteen to twenty yards.

The elephant very soon evinced signs of distress, and ceased to make away from us. Taking up positions in the densest parts of the cover, he caught up the red dust with his trunk, and, throwing it over his head and back, endeavoured to conceal himself in a cloud. This was a fine opportunity to pour in my deadly shafts, and I took care to avail myself of it. When he had received about twelve shots he walked slowly forward in a dying state, the blood streaming from his trunk. I rode close up to him, and gave him a sharp right and left from the saddle: he turned and walked a few yards, then suddenly came down with tremendous violence on his

vast stern, pitching his head and trunk aloft to a prodigious height, and, falling heavily over on his side, he expired. This was an extremely large and handsome elephant, decidedly the finest bull I had shot this year. Afraid of taking cold or rheumatism, for I was in a most profuse perspiration, I hastened back to my fireside, having first secured all the dogs in their couples. Here I divested myself of my leather trousers, shooting-belt, and veldtschoens, and, stretched on my kaross, I took tea, and wondered at the facility with which I had captured this mighty elephant.

Feeling fatigued, I intended to lie down and rest till morning. Just, however, as I was arranging my saddles for a pillow, I beheld another first-rate old bull elephant advancing up the vley from the south. I at once resolved that he, too, should run the gauntlet with the dogs. In immense haste, therefore, I once more pulled on my old leathers, and buckled on my shooting-belt; and ran down into the rank long grass beside the fountain to meet him, armed with the large two-grooved rifle, having directed Carey and Piet to come slowly up with the dogs and my horse and gun as soon as they were ready. The elephant came on, and stood drinking within thirty yards of me. When I saw Carey coming on with the dogs and steed I fired, but my rifle hung fire. The shot, however, gave the dogs good courage, and they fought well. The elephant took away at a rapid pace

toward the other fountain where the Bechuanas lay, and at first led me through very bad wait-a-bit thorn cover, which once or twice nearly swept me out of the saddle. Presently he inclined to the west, and got into better country; I then rode close to him, and bowled him over with four shots. I also wounded a fine old black rhinoceros.

The next morning, my ammunition being expended, or very nearly so, I despatched Carey to camp for fresh supplies. When he was gone I walked through the forest around the fountain to seek for my wounded game. I first came upon the black rhinoceros of last night, and a little farther on I observed "Frachum" snuff up the wind and go ahead. I soon saw him returning, with two jackals trotting behind him, so I at once knew that there was some game lying dead in advance. When I had proceeded a little farther the dogs ran forward, and next moment a rush of many feet was heard charging towards where I stood. It was a troop of half-grown lions, with a lioness; which dashed past me, followed by the dogs. They had been feasting on a white rhinoceros, shot by me two nights previously, which I found lying a little in advance. Beside the carcase stood a fine fat calf—the poor thing, no doubt, fancying that its mother slept; heedless of lions, and all the other creatures that had trodden there, it had remained beside its dead mother for a day and two nights. Rhinoceroses' calves always stick

to their mothers long after they are dead. The next night I was again successful in a night-hunt, and bagged a very fine bull elephant. This wound up my elephant night-shooting for that moon, for next day there was a most awful thunderstorm, which filled the forest with large pools of water.

While reviewing my extraordinary good fortune during the last week's hunting, I could not help deeply regretting that I had not earlier thought of pursuing the elephants at night with dogs and horses: if I had commenced with the dogs only a week sooner, I might have bagged eight or ten first-rate bulls, which I knew were mortally wounded, but were, nevertheless, not forthcoming. The ivory of these elephants would have brought me in upwards of 200*l.*; and it was vexing to think that many, if not all of them, were lying rotting in the surrounding forest. My only chance of finding them was by watching the vultures; but these birds, knowing that they cannot break the skin of the larger game, preferred remaining above and around the Bechuanas, where the butchering was going briskly forward. They perched in groups upon the old branches of the larger trees, or darkened the sky in hundreds with their broad and shadowy wings.

While, however, I mourned the loss of these wounded elephants, I reckoned that I had been favoured with immense good fortune in many instances during the past week. Ever intent upon embellishing and increasing

my princely collection of African hunting-trophies, I placed great value upon any specimen I happened to shoot which I thought worth adorning it. Thus I neglected my real interest; and instead of devoting my attention to rendering my expedition profitable, I allowed this very necessary part of the business to remain quite a secondary consideration. Thus, when I shot an ordinary bull elephant, I was accustomed to say to myself, "Ah! a good bull; tusks at least fifty pounds each; 4*s.* 6*d.* a pound; bring me in 22*l.* 10*s.* Capital day's work; help to pay for the two horses that died last week, or the four that are bitten with 'tsetse,' and must die in a week or two." But if, on the other hand, I shot an elephant with a pair of tusks of unusual size, perfection, or beauty, I at once devoted them to my collection, and valued them at a tenfold price. This, then, was one thing in which I reckoned I had been extremely fortunate—I had secured the finest tusks in all that nest of patriarchal old bulls which I had so sadly cut up in one short week, and which perhaps the summers of a century had seen roaming through these boundless forests in peaceful security.

The night-shooting being at an end, on the 23rd I retraced my steps to the dead elephants, to assist Carey in superintending the cutting out of the ivory, and in escorting the same along with our supply of fat and flesh to the waggons. Early in the afternoon we had got all

the oryx. Unluckily, a wild dog sprang up right in their path, to which they at once gave chase, and thus I lost this most splendid antelope.

I walked ahead of the waggons with my rifle, and soon started two pairs of ostriches. I was going down wind, and kept starting the game. I next sent away a herd of zebras and brindled gnoos; next a sounder of wild boar; next a troop of giraffes; and, close to the vley where I intended to halt, I wounded a koodoo, which left a bloody spoor, that I did not choose to follow. The vley to which I had been trusting proved dry. We outspanned here for an hour, however, and then held round the western extremity of this fine mountain-range; and as the sun went down I halted my waggons on its south side, opposite the mouth of a bold and well-wooded ravine, which contained a strong fountain. On the march I rode ahead of my waggons on the spoor of two old bull buffaloes, which our waggon-whips had started; these had gone out of my course, so I did not follow far. Returning, I came to a black rhinoceros, which I wounded, but did not get. As I neared the ravine where I intended to halt, I stalked in close upon a second black rhinoceros, which on receiving two deadly shots charged madly forward and subsided in the dust. A few minutes after firing at Borèlé I was following a troop of pallahs close under the green rocky mountain, when, lo! a herd of the lovely sable antelope caught my

attention. These were quietly browsing on a shoulder of the mountain among the green trees far, far above me. I instantly threw off my leathers, and proceeded to stalk in upon them. An old doe detected me, however, and, instantly sounding the alarm, the herd, which consisted of eight—three coal-black bucks and five does—dashed off, and took through a wild rocky ravine.

As it was too late in the day to follow them farther, I turned my face towards my horses, which I had left at the base of the mountain; and straining my eyes along the level forest beneath me to seek my waggons, which were now due, I detected them far out from the mountain, steering to go past the fountain. I then fired a signal shot, which brought them up. This unlucky shot started away two bull elephants which were feeding in the thorn cover close beneath me. I drew up my waggons in an open spot more than half a mile from the fountain, wait-a-bit thorns forbidding our nearer approach.

The 17th was a very cool and cloudy day; I took an early breakfast, and then held north-east, close in under the mountain-range, accompanied by Kapain and a party of Bakalahari, to seek elephants.

We fell in with immense herds of zebras and buffaloes numbering between three and five hundred in each herd, and towards evening with a numerous herd of elephants, when I killed one of the finest after an easy chase.

CHAPTER XXX.

Leave the Potaquaine Country — Absurd Ceremony — My Cattle fail me — Send to the Missionary Station for Aid — Encamp near the Limpopo — Indescribable Fish — A young Secretary — Nearly all my Oxen die — Assistance arrives from Mr. Livingstone — We reach the Residence of Sichely — A Hunter's Monument — We continue our March through a beautiful Country — An Adventure with two savage Lionesses — A violent Tempest — Mahura — Bakalahari driving Game towards their Pitfalls — We cross the Orange River and reach Colesberg.

ON the 15th of November we inspanned, and left the mountains of Linguapa. Kapain and his Bechuanas held for Bamangwato; Seleka's Bechuanas held for their chief; and we held a south-westerly course for the Limpopo, which we reached in less than three hours.

Next day we trekked at dawn, and having marched a few miles we were joined by Bakalahari, who reported having seen elephants on the preceding day. A little after this I shot a waterbuck close to the river, when I outspanned.

During the day "Matsaca," chief of the Bamalette visited me with a retinue: he brought a kaross for me, for which I was to cut him on the arm and shoulder and anoint him with medicine to make him shoot well with the gun which he had bought of me. In the even-

ing I walked a short distance down the river's bank, and shot a lovely fawn of the serolomootlooque, and a buck pallah with a very handsome head.

On the 17th I went in quest of elephants, accompanied by the Bamalette men. We continued along the bank of the river for several miles, when we took up the spoor of three or four enormous old bulls. On our way I wounded a white rhinoceros, which I did not follow to secure. The elephants had fed very slowly away from the river, and before we had followed the spoor an hour we were close upon them. The Bechuanas chose to leave the spoor, and making a cast to windward they started the elephants. My dogs being much distressed with the sun, and I not being aware that the game were started, we at this very moment unfortunately sat down and rested for half an hour, which of course lost me the day. When I discovered that the elephants had moved off, I turned my face for camp, and before proceeding far I started an ostrich off her nest; the nest contained twenty eggs, which I directed the Bechuanas to bring to camp.

As we held up the side of the river I detected a very fine old black rhinoceros standing among some wait-a-bit thorn. Directing Piet, my dismounted after-rider (for my stud of fifteen was now reduced to one), to watch my movements, I commenced a stalk upon Borèlé, and, having got within about sixty yards of where he stood in dense cover, I signed to Piet to get on the other side and

start him towards me ; this plan succeeded, for he charged out of the cover, and, holding for the bush behind which I was concealed, he passed within twelve yards. My first shot was a very deadly one. It set him charging round and round in a circle, when I gave him a second, and he made off mortally wounded. I then ran to my little mare, and, mounting her, I gave him chase, and presently dropped him with a shot behind the shoulder. Loud thunder was rumbling to windward of my camp, so I hastened to cut off Borèlé's horn, after which I rode home.

In the course of the day I saw the fresh spoor of about twenty varieties of large game, and most of the animals themselves, viz. elephant, black, white, and long-horned rhinoceros, hippopotamus, camelopard, buffalo, blue wildebeest, zebra, waterbuck, sassayby, koodoo, pallah, springbok, serolomootlooque, wild boar, duiker, steinbok, lion, leopard. This district of Africa contains a larger variety of game than any other in the whole of this vast tract of the globe, and perhaps more than any district throughout the world ; for besides the game which I have just noted, the following are not uncommon, viz. keilton, or two-horned black rhinoceros, eland, oryx, roan antelope, sable antelope, hartebeest, klipspringer, and grys steinbuck : the reitbuck is also to be found, but not abundantly.

We inspanned on the 18th before it was day, and trekked

up the Limpopo for about three hours. In the forenoon Matsaca arrived from the carcass of the borèlé: he brought with him a very fine leopard's skin kaross, and an elephant's tooth; these were for me, in return for which I was to cut him to make him shoot well. This I did in the following manner: opening a large book of natural history, containing prints of all the chief quadrupeds, I placed his forefinger successively on several of the prints of the commonest of the South African quadrupeds, and as I placed his finger on each I repeated some absurd sentence and anointed him with turpentine. When this was accomplished I made four cuts on his arm with a lancet, and then, anointing the bleeding wounds with gunpowder and turpentine, I told him that his gun had power over each of the animals which his finger had touched, provided he held it straight. Matsaca and his retinue seemed highly gratified, and presently took leave and departed: I afterwards trekked up the river till sundown.

On the succeeding day we marched with the dawn, and held up the river. In the forenoon Bechuanas from Seleka visited me, bearing a tooth of a bull-elephant, for which they wanted a gun; the tooth, however, being small, I would not give them one for it, although I might have done so at a fair profit. I found the game extremely abundant, counting no less than twenty-two rhinoceroses, nine of which were in one herd, feeding on the open plain. The wind was as foul as it could blow,

and kept continually starting the game. At length, late in the afternoon, I got within shot of four white rhinoceroses. The old bull stood next to me, so, resting my six-pound rifle on the trunk of a tree which an elephant had overthrown, I took him on the shoulder and smashed his fore-arm; he ran for thirty yards, and then rolled over on his back. He however regained his legs and ran a hundred yards farther, when his leg failed him, and coming up on his spoor I finished him in a few minutes. The waggons now came up, and I halted them on the river's bank, opposite to the rhinoceros.

On the 21st much rain fell throughout the day, rendering the country unfit for trekking. A birth and a death occurred among my cattle. In the afternoon a loud rushing noise was heard coming on like a hurricane: this was a large troop of pallah pursued by a pack of about twenty wild dogs; they passed our camp in fine style within a hundred yards of us, and in two minutes the wild dogs had caught two of the pallahs, which my Bechuanas ran up and secured. A pallah in passing my camp cleared a distance of fifty feet in two successive bounds, and this on unfavourable ground, it being very soft and slippery.

I left the sable antelopes' mountain mainly in consequence of a general falling off amongst my cattle. I did not then know to what cause to attribute this sad and to me all-important change in their condition, which only a

few weeks before had been a source of admiration to us. Alas! it was now too evident that nearly all of them were dying, having been bitten by the fly "tsetse" at the mountain. The rains of the last three days had made this melancholy truth more strongly manifest; the cattle presented a most woful appearance. Listless and powerless, they cared not to feed, and, though the grass covered the country with the richest and most luxuriant pasturage, their sides remained hollow, and their whole bodies became daily more emaciated; the eyes also of many of them were closed and swollen. The next morning being fair, I inspanned, although the country was very unfit for trekking; my heavily laden waggons sinking deep in the soft rich soil which lies along the banks of the Limpopo. My poor oxen, as I expected, became knocked up on the march before they had proceeded three miles, many of them lying down and refusing to proceed farther, or even to stand up. I was obliged in consequence to outspan one waggon and leave it behind, and to bring on the other waggon with the able oxen, and then send them back to assist their dying comrades in bringing up the second. I performed a short march, and halted on a fine open sandy spot, where I made a strong thorn kraal for the cattle. Soon after we had outspanned the second waggon heavy rain set in, which continued at intervals throughout the night.

Light rains continued to fall throughout the 24th. I

evening, I rode thither, and, to my utter horror, I found poor Spikbard fearfully mangled by a troop of ruthless lions: the ground presented a fearful spectacle, being covered for yards by his blood and hair; the lions had chased others of the dogs, but had failed to capture them.

On the 7th we reached the village of Bakalahari where I had lain so long last year, where poor Hendrick had been dragged from the fire and killed by a lion. I found the village deserted, and the spoor and dung of elephants where last season the natives were wont to hold their parliament. We halted, and formed our camp a little below the deserted village, beside a wide-spreading green tree.

On the 8th I held for the fine fountain called Seboono to watch for elephants by moonlight. As we made the fountain a magnificent troop of twenty-two giraffes were drawn up by the edge of the forest on the opposite side, and a troop of seven or eight wild boars trotted away from the water with tails erect. In the evening the same troop of giraffes revisited the fountain, reinforced by another troop of bull giraffes: koodoos, zebras, and a princely old bull eland, also came to drink. I was surprised to see this eland come in and drink, having always been led to believe that elands never did drink. About an hour after night set in, several parties of rhinoceros made their appearance, and presently a low rumbling noise announced the approach of an elephant; on he

came, a mighty old bull, carrying only one tusk. When the dogs were slipped nearly all of them dashed off after a white rhinoceros, to which they most pertinaciously adhered for about two hours. I had extremely hard work with the elephant, the forest being dense and consisting chiefly of thorn-trees, and the sky overcast with clouds: at length, however, I vanquished him, and he fell, having received about twenty-five balls. The dogs being still engaged with the rhinoceros, I rode thither and found a huge old muchocho standing at bay in a grove, which was either sulky or completely knocked up, for, on my coming up, he neither attempted to charge nor retreat, and allowed me to flog off the dogs unmolested, which I did and left him.

Next day I bent my steps for the fountain Pepe, where, in the preceding year, I had enjoyed such excellent night hunting. Here I hunted the elephants with dogs and horses, as before, and was particularly successful, as also with rhinoceros and camelopard, &c. Some of these elephants were killed on very dark nights, when there was no moon, and the stars themselves were overcast by heavy banks of clouds. To illustrate this it may not be uninteresting to transcribe a few lines from my journal of the 15th:—

The moon rising late, at night I kept the first watch, and presently heard black and white rhinoceros blowing round the fountain; it was much too dark to see. Amid

the noise of the rhinoceroses I fancied that I heard the sweeping step of an elephant in the water, and Carey and I accordingly went down and crept close in to the edge of the fountain. A huge dark mass was detected on the opposite side of the water, but so dark was the night that Carey pronounced it to be a black rhinoceros. He however presently turned his broadside, when I saw that it was an elephant, and directed Carey to fly and bring the dogs with all speed : both black and white rhinoceros of course stood right in the way of the dogs. I led these past the rhinoceroses, and in utter darkness I slipped one couple of dogs where I supposed the elephant to have been ; these took up his scent, and presently my anxious ear was greeted by a bark, instantly followed by the shrill trumpet of a mighty bull elephant. I then slipped the remainder of the dogs ; and after some difficult and dangerous work, owing to the pitchy darkness and the denseness of the wait-a-bits, I laid him low with about twenty bullets. While I was fighting with him the moon rose, and when the natives came up to catch the dogs her silvery horn was blinking through the trees.

By the 24th of August I had the satisfaction of making up my bag to a hundred and five select elephants killed in South Africa. We now found the district to be much deserted by the elephants, and accordingly on the 3rd of September we inspanned the waggons and

marched down the Limpopo towards the district frequented by hippopotami.

On the 4th I rode up the river to shoot hippopotami. Of these I found three troops, and bagged one first-rate bull and wounded others. I saw several crocodiles of unusual vastness. Some of them must have been sixteen feet in length, with bodies as large as that of an ox. Returning to the waggons in the evening, I heard Mr. O. engaged with a huge invincible old bull-hippopotamus. On going to his assistance, and finding that he had expended his ammunition, I attacked the hippopotamus, which I barely finished with six or eight more shots.

On the 5th I rode down the river, accompanied by Mr. Orpen, to shoot hippopotami. We bagged seven very fine old specimens, two of which were bulls: one of these monsters of the river received sixteen bullets in the head before I could finish him. In the heat of the conflict a huge crocodile, attracted by the blood, suddenly made its appearance, and kept swimming round the hippopotamus in a state of great excitement, regardless of his struggles, which reminded me of a whale, and so agitated the broad river that considerable waves lashed the shores on either side. I slew the crocodile with a single ball, which crashed through the centre of his skull. On receiving the shot he turned over on his side, and remained motionless in that position for some minutes on the surface of the water, with one fore and one hind leg

stretched and quivering in the air like a dying frog : after which, having emitted a smell of musk so powerful as to cause the little Bushman to run shrieking from the bank, he gently sank into his watery grave.

We rode down the river for several mornings hunting after hippopotami, a great number of which we killed. As the tusks of some of these were very fine, we chopped them out of the jaw-bones, a work of considerable difficulty. On the 17th I was attacked with acute rheumatic fever, which kept me to my bed, and gave me excruciating pain. Whilst I lay in this helpless state Mr. Orpen and Present, who had gone up the river to shoot sea-cows, fell in with an immense male leopard, which the latter wounded very badly. They then sent natives to camp to ask me for dogs, of which I sent them a pair. In about an hour the natives came running to camp and said that Orpen was killed by the leopard. On further inquiry, however, I found that he was not really killed, but fearfully torn and bitten about the arms and head. They had rashly taken up the spoor on foot, the dogs following behind them, instead of going in advance. The consequence of this was, that they came right upon the leopard before they were aware of him, when Orpen fired and missed him. The leopard then sprang on his shoulders, and, dashing him to the ground, lay upon him growling and lacerating his hands, arms, and head most fearfully. In a few minutes

the leopard's strength failed him, being faint from loss of blood, and, rolling over, he permitted Orpen to rise and come away. Where were the gallant Present and all the natives, that not a man of them moved to assist the unfortunate Orpen? According to an established custom among all colonial servants, the instant the leopard sprang Present discharged his piece in the air, and then, dashing it to the ground, he rushed down the bank and jumped into the river, along which he swam some hundred yards before he would venture on terra firma. The natives, though numerous and armed, had likewise fled in another direction.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Mr. Orpen and myself in a helpless condition — We leave the low-lying Limpopo for the Mountains — Trading with Seleka — Ceremony to impart the power of successful Shooting — March to the Ngotwani and retrace our steps to the Limpopo — Enormous Herds of Buffaloes — An exciting Lion-hunt — Three of my Dogs killed — The noble Beast takes the water, followed by a Dog and a Crocodile — A bold Mountain-range — Abundance of Game — A brilliant Lion-hunt — Two killed out of a troop of four — Rhinoceros-hunting — Leave the Mariqua River — Sublime Scenery — Another Lion-hunt — A Buffalo rips up my After-rider's Horse — Camelopard-chase — Sudden encounter with two huge Lions — Arrival at Sichely's Kraal.

BOTH Orpen and myself were now reduced to a state of utter helplessness—he from his wounds, which were many and dangerous, and I from the fever, though I was slowly recovering. It was of no use therefore to remain longer in the low-lying district about the Limpopo, so I resolved to march on steadily to Sichely's country. We accordingly marched on the 27th of September, and on the 2nd of October I encamped on the bank of the Limpopo, a little above its junction with the Lepalala. Here Seleka's men requested me to halt a day, as their chief wished to trade with me, which I agreed to do.

Next morning Seleka arrived with a considerable retinue, bringing some good specimens of Bechuana arms to barter for muskets and ammunition. He made me a present of some Bechuana beer, and a sort of fermented porridge ; this, he said, he considered as a gift, but he expected that I, in return, would give him some gunpowder. This is the usual style of *presents* in Southern Africa.

In the afternoon I exchanged a musket for nine very handsome assagais, a battle-axe, and two shields of buffalo-hide. I also exchanged some assagais for ammunition ; and obtained other articles of native manufacture in payment for cutting the arms of two or three of the nobility, and rubbing medicine into the incisions, to enable them to shoot well. Whilst performing this absurd ceremony, in which the Bechuanas have unbounded faith, I held before the eyes of the initiated sportsman prints of each of the game quadrupeds of the country ; at the same time anointing him with the medicine (which was common turpentine), and looking him most seriously in the face, I said, in his own language, "Slay the game well ; let the course of thy bullet be through the hearts of the wild beasts, thine hand and heart be strong against the lion, against the great elephant, against the rhinoceros, against the buffalo," &c.

On the 5th we marched at sunrise, and, trekking steadily along, arrived on the 8th at the drift on the Limpopo where, on the former occasion, I had crossed the

river. The game was very abundant in our course, but Carey and Present were rarely successful in killing, and I was obliged, at length, weak as I was, to take the field, as we were sadly in want of flesh. On the 13th we made the banks of the Ngotwani, up which we proceeded for several days; but finding that, owing to the long protracted droughts, its waters were dried up, and that it would be impossible to reach Sichel's country by this route, I determined to retrace my steps. We accordingly marched for the Limpopo, which I fell in with once more on the 23rd, having killed a noble old lion in my way.

We trekked up along the banks of the river for the Mariqua, and a little before sundown fell in with two enormous herds of buffaloes, one of which, consisting chiefly of bulls, stood under the shady trees on one side of the bank, whilst the other, composed chiefly of cows and calves, stood on the opposite side, a little higher up the river. In all there were at least three hundred. Thinking it probable that if I hunted them I might kill some old bull with a head perhaps worthy of my collection, I ordered my men to outspan, and, having saddled steeds, I gave chase to the herd of bulls, accompanied by Booi and my dogs. After a short burst they took through the river, whereby I lost sight of an old bull which carried the finest head in the herd. My dogs, however, brought a cow to bay as they crossed the river, which I shot standing in the water, but not before

she had killed a particularly favourite bull-dog, named Pompey. I then continued the chase, and again came up with the herd, which was now considerably scattered; and after a sharp chase, part of which was through thick wait-a-bit thorn cover, I brought eight or nine fine bulls to bay in lofty reeds at the river's margin, exactly opposite to my camp: of these I singled out the two best heads, one of which I shot with five balls, and wounded the other badly, but he made off while I was engaged with his comrade.

In the morning I instructed four of my people to cross the river, and bring over a supply of buffalo beef. These men were very reluctant to go, fearing a lion might have taken possession of the carcase. On proceeding to reconnoitre from our side, they beheld the majestic beast they dreaded walk slowly up the opposite bank from the dead buffalo, and take up a position on the top of the bank under some shady thorn-trees. I resolved to give him battle, and rode forth with my double-barrelled Westley Richards rifle, followed by men leading the dogs. Present, who was one of the party, carried his *roer*, no doubt to perform wonders. The wind blew up the river; I accordingly held up to seek a drift, and crossed a short distance above where the buffalo lay. As we drew near the spot, I observed the lion sitting on the top of the bank, exactly where he had last been seen by my people. On my right, and within two hundred yards of me, was a

very extensive troop of pallahs, which antelope invariably manages to be in the way when it is not at all wanted. On this occasion, however, I succeeded in preventing my dogs from observing them. When the lion saw us coming, he overhauled us for a moment, and then slunk down the bank for concealment; being well to leeward of him, I ordered the dogs to be slipped, and galloped forward.

On finding that he was attacked, the lion at first made a most determined bolt for it, followed by all the dogs at a racing pace; and when they came up with him he would not bay, but continued his course down the bank of the river, keeping close in beside the reeds, growling terribly at the dogs, which kept up an incessant angry barking. The bank of the river was intersected by deep watercourses, and, the ground being extremely slippery from the rain which had fallen during the night, I was unable to overtake him until he came to bay in a patch of lofty dense reeds which grew on the lower bank, immediately adjacent to the river's margin. I had brought out eleven of my dogs, and before I could come up three of them were killed. On reaching the spot I found it impossible to obtain the smallest glimpse of the lion, although the ground favoured me, I having the upper bank to stand upon; so, dismounting from my horse, I tried to guess, from his horrid growling, his exact position, and fired several shots on chance, but none of these hit

him. I then commenced pelting him with lumps of earth and sticks, there being no stones at hand. This had the effect of making him shift his position, but he still kept in the densest part of the reeds, where I could do nothing with him.

Presently my followers came up, who, as a matter of course, at once established themselves safely in the tops of thorn-trees. After about ten minutes' bullying, the lion seemed to consider his quarters too hot for him, and suddenly made a rush to escape from his persecutors, continuing his course down along the edge of the river. The dogs, however, again gave him chase, and soon brought him to bay in another dense patch of reeds, just as bad as the last. Out of this in a few minutes I managed to start him, when he bolted up the river, and came to bay in a narrow strip of reeds. Here he lay so close that for a long time I could not ascertain his whereabouts; at length, however, he made a charge among the dogs, and, coming forward, took up a position near the outside of the reeds, where for the first time I was enabled to give him a shot. My ball entered his body a little behind the shoulder. On receiving it he charged growling after the dogs, but not farther than the edge of the reeds, out of which he was extremely reluctant to move. I gave him a second shot, firing for his head; my ball entered at the edge of his eye, and passed through the back of the roof of his mouth.

The lion then sprang up, and, facing about, dashed through the reeds, and plunged into the river, across which he swam, dyeing the waters with his blood ; one black dog, named "Schwart," alone pursued him. A huge crocodile, attracted by the blood, followed in their wake, but fortunately did not take my dog, which I much feared he would do. Present fired at the lion as he swam, and missed him ; both my barrels were empty. Before, however, the lion could make the opposite bank, I had one loaded without patch, and just as his feet gained the ground I made a fine shot at his neck, and turned him over dead on the spot. Present, Carollus, and Adonis then swam in and brought him through. We landed him by an old hippopotamus footpath, and, the day being damp and cold, we kindled a fire, beside which we skinned him. While this was going forward I had a painful duty to perform, viz. to load one barrel, and blow out Rascality's brains, whom the lion had utterly disabled in his after-quarters. Thus ended this protracted and all but unsuccessful hunt ; for when I at length managed to shoot him, the dogs were quite tired of it, and, the reeds being green, I could not have set them on fire to force him out.

The lion proved to be a first-rate one ; he was in the prime of life, and had an exquisitely beautiful coat of hair. His mane was not very rank ; his awful teeth were quite perfect, a thing which in lions of his age is rather unusual ; and he had the finest tuft of hair on the end of his tail that

I had ever seen in a lion. In the chase my after-rider, who fortunately did not carry my rifle, got a tremendous capsizé from bad riding, a common occurrence with most after-riders who have been employed in my service. The afternoon was spent in drying the wet mane of the lion, skinning out the feet, and preserving the skin with alum and arsenical soap.

On the 27th we reached the junction of the Mariqua with the Limpopo, when we once more bade farewell to the latter, and held up the northern bank of the Mariqua. This fine little river averages here about five or six yards in width, and meanders along in a very serpentine course through a very broad open vley, its banks being in many places destitute of cover, excepting reeds, and in others is densely clad with groves of thorn and willow trees, &c. Here I found reitbuck, which do not frequent the Limpopo in those parts which I have visited. The country looked fresh and green, and all the usual varieties of game were abundant. Elephants had been frequenting the district some months previously, but had now deserted it. About fifty miles to the south and east a very bold and rocky extensive blue mountain-chain towered in grand relief above the intervening level forest. The length of this mountain chain seemed to be about a hundred miles, its course about north-east, and it gradually became loftier and more rugged towards the north-eastern extremity. I believe the Limpopo rises somewhere to the east of this

chain, and I felt a strong desire to follow it to its source, but under existing circumstances this measure was not advisable. On the march we passed a small village of Bakalahari, which was surrounded with heaps of bones and skulls of game.

Next day we marched about eight miles up the river, and outspanned in a wide open vley. On the march I shot one sassayby, and wounded two black rhinoceroses. In the afternoon I rode up the edge of the river with Ruyter, in quest of reitbuck, of which I saw several small troops, but did not kill any, not getting a chance of the old bucks, which I hunted for their heads. I, however, shot one enormous crocodile, which we discovered fast asleep on the grassy bank of the river. He got two balls, one in the head, and the other behind the shoulder, yet nevertheless in the struggles of death he managed to roll into the water, and disappeared. I was extremely surprised to see so enormous a crocodile in so small a stream; his length was considerably greater than the width of the river at the spot where I shot him.

Marched again at sunrise, and I and Ruyter rode ahead to seek reitbuck. I detected one of these squatting beside the river to shun observation, and I shot him dead on the spot. He proved to be an old buck, but, both of his horns being broken in fighting, I did not keep the head. A little after this, two packs of wild dogs kept trotting and cantering slowly along before us,

one on either side of the river ; we had started them from two pallahs, which they had caught and were consuming. More reitbuck were seen, and presently an old buck, carrying unusually fine horns, started up before us in company with four does. By taking up a position in a hollow in the vley, and sending Ruyter to drive them towards me, I had the satisfaction to succeed in bowling over this fine old buck, which proved to be a princely specimen. I shot him running, and broke his back.

The waggons being opposite to us, we crossed the river, and deposited the head on my cardell ; and having proceeded a short distance farther up, we discovered the fresh spoor of an immense herd of elephants, consisting mostly of old bulls. I drew up my waggons on a peninsular well-wooded spot, and proceeded to take up the spoor. These elephants had at first fed for many hours among thorns in the vicinity of the river, and then marched in a long string right away out of the country. After following the spoor for a great many miles I became annoyed, and gave it up.

On the 31st, as I was riding along the river's bank, about two miles below the spot where some days before I had fired at a large crocodile, I came upon a similar reptile lying asleep on the opposite side, which I shot dead on the spot, putting the ball through the spine close into the back of the head. On receiving the ball,

he only made a slight convulsive movement, and then remained still and motionless as if still asleep, not having in the slightest degree altered his position: a copious stream of blood issued from the wound, and coloured the shallow water in which he lay. Having crossed the river at a drift about a mile below, I rode up to inspect this hideous monster of the river, which, to my surprise, I found to be the same one at which, on the 28th, I had fired, and as I supposed killed. He bore the marks of both my bullets, one of which had fractured a part of his skull. This crocodile was a very old fellow, and a fine specimen, its length being upwards of twelve feet. I resolved, therefore, to preserve the skin, and with this intention, in the forenoon, I marched down six men, who were occupied until sundown in the novel work of flaying the crocodile. When, however, they had accomplished their undertaking, I made up my mind that there was no room in the waggons for the entire skin, and determined only to keep the head, which we brought to camp. The night set in with a heavy storm of wind, accompanied with rain. Returning from skinning the crocodile to camp, I found the vley before me black with an immense herd of buffaloes, two of which I wounded, but did not follow till the ensuing day.

A few days after this, just as Swint had milked the cows, and was driving them from the wooded peninsula in which we lay, athwart the open ground, to graze with

my other cattle in the forest beyond, he beheld four majestic lions walk slowly across the vley, a few hundred yards below my camp, and disappear over the river's bank, at a favourite drinking-place. These mighty monarchs of the waste had been holding a prolonged repast over the carcasses of some zebras killed by Present, and had now come down to the river to slake their thirst. This being reported, I instantly saddled up two horses, and, directing my boys to lead after me as quickly as possible my small remaining pack of sore-footed dogs, I rode forth, accompanied by Carey carrying a spare gun, to give battle to the four grim lions. As I rode out of the peninsula, they showed themselves on the bank of the river, and, guessing that their first move would be a disgraceful retreat, I determined to ride so as to make them think that I had not observed them, until I should be able to cut off their retreat from the river, across the open vley, to the endless forest beyond. That point being gained, I knew that they, still doubtful of my having observed them, would hold their ground on the river's bank until my dogs came up, when I could more advantageously make the attack.

I cantered along, holding as if I meant to pass the lions at a distance of a quarter of a mile, until I was opposite to them, when I altered my course, and inclined a little nearer. The lions then showed symptoms of uneasiness; they rose to their feet, and,

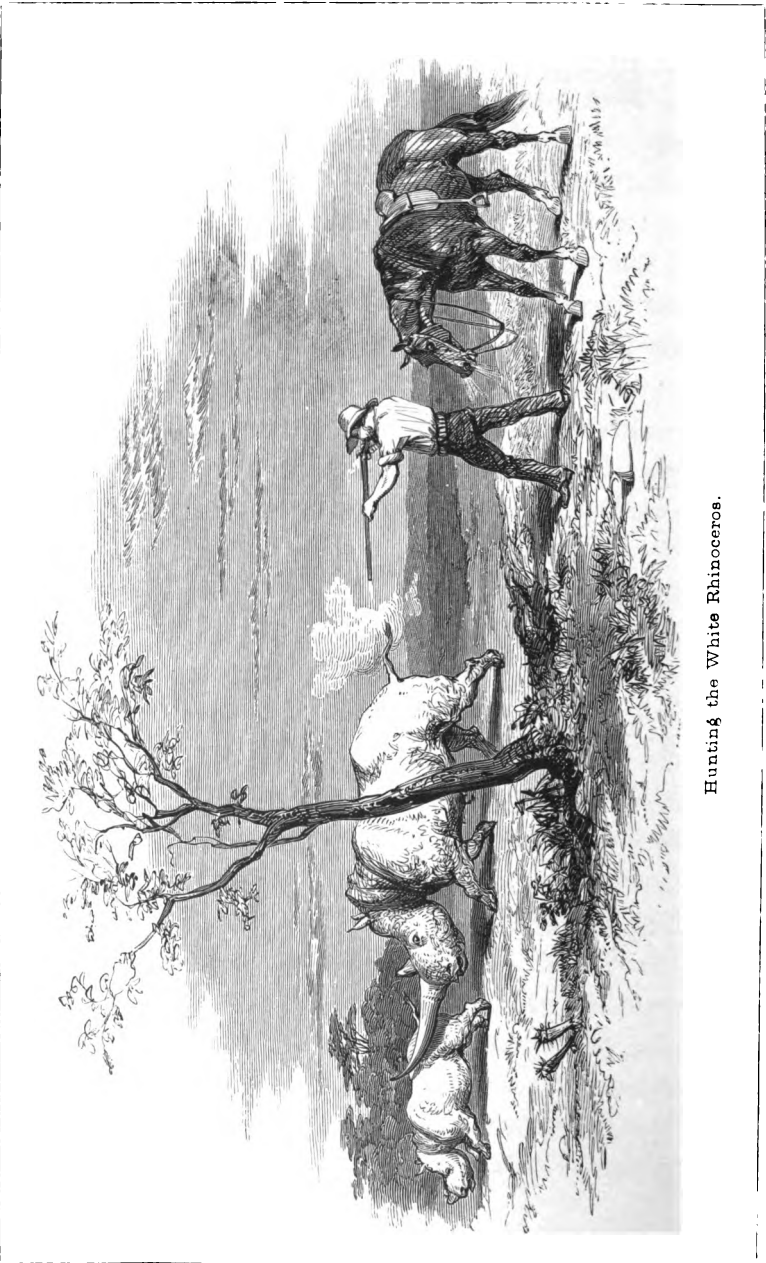
overhauling us for half a minute, disappeared over the bank. They reappeared, however, directly, a little farther down; and finding that their present position was bare, they walked majestically along the top of the bank to a spot a few hundred yards lower, where the bank was well wooded. Here they seemed half inclined to await my attack; two stretched out their massive arms, and lay down in the grass, and the other two sat up like dogs upon their haunches. Deeming it probable that when my dogs came up and I approached they would still retreat and make a bolt across the open vley, I directed Carey to canter forward and take up the ground in the centre of the vley about four hundred yards in advance; whereby the lions would be compelled either to give us battle or swim the river, which, although narrow, I knew they would be very reluctant to do.

I now sat in my saddle, anxiously awaiting the arrival of the dogs; and whilst thus momentarily disengaged, I was much struck with the majestic and truly appalling appearance which these four noble lions exhibited. They were all full-grown immense males; and I felt, I must confess, a little nervous, and very uncertain as to what might be the issue of the attack. When the dogs came up I rode right in towards the lions. They sprang to their feet, and trotted slowly down along the bank of the river, once or twice halting and facing about for half a minute. Immediately below them there was

a small determined bend in the stream, forming a sort of peninsula. Into this bend they disappeared, and next moment I was upon them with my dogs. They had taken shelter in a dense angle of the peninsula, well sheltered by high trees and reeds. Into this retreat the dogs at once boldly followed them, making a loud barking, which was instantly followed by the terrible voices of the lions, which turned about and charged to the edge of the cover. Next moment, however, I heard them plunge into the river, when I sprang from my horse, and, running to the top of the bank, I saw three of them ascending the opposite bank, the dogs following. One of them bounded away across the open plain at top speed, but the other two, finding themselves followed by the dogs, immediately turned to bay. It was now my turn, so, taking them coolly right and left with my little rifle, I made the most glorious double shot that a sportsman's heart could desire, disabling them both in the shoulder before they were even aware of my position. Then snatching my other gun from Carey, who that moment had ridden up to my assistance, I finished the first lion with a shot about the heart, and brought the second to a standstill by disabling him in his hind quarters. He quickly crept into a dense, wide, dark green bush, in which for a long time it was impossible to obtain a glimpse of him. At length, a clod of earth falling near his hiding-place, he made a move which disclosed to

me his position, when I finished him with three more shots, all along the middle of his back. Carey swam across the river to flog off the dogs; and when these came through to me, I beat up the peninsula in quest of the fourth lion, which had, however, made off. We then crossed the river a little higher up, and proceeded to inspect the noble prizes I had won. Both lions were well up in their years; I kept the skin and skull of the finest specimen, and only the nails and tail of the other, one of whose canine teeth was worn down to the socket with caries, which seemed to have affected his general condition.

On the 9th it rained unceasingly throughout the day, converting the rich soil on which we were encamped into one mass of soft sticky clay. In the forenoon, fearing the rain would continue so as to render the vley (through which we must pass to gain the firmer ground) impassable, I ordered my men to prepare to march, and leave the tent with its contents standing, the point which I wished to gain being distant only about five hundred yards. When the oxen were inspanned, however, and we attempted to move, we found my tackle, which was old, so rotten from the effects of the rain, that something gave way at every strain. Owing to this and to the softness of the vley, we laboured on till sundown, and only succeeded in bringing one waggon to its destination, the other two remaining fast in the mud in the middle of the



Hunting the White Rhinoceros.

vley. Next morning, luckily, the weather cleared up, when my men brought over the tent, and in the afternoon the other two waggons.

We followed up the banks of the river for several days with the usual allowance of sport. On the 16th we came suddenly upon an immense old bull muchocho rolling in mud. He sprang to his feet immediately he saw me, and, charging up the bank, so frightened our horses, that before I could get my rifle from my after-rider he was past us. I then gave him chase; and after a hard gallop of about a mile I sprang from my horse and gave him a good shot behind the shoulder. At this moment a cow rhinoceros of the same species, with her calf, charged out of some wait-a-bit thorn-cover, and stood right in my path. Observing that she carried an unusually long horn, I turned my attention from the bull to her; and after a very long and severe chase I dropped her at the sixth shot. I carried one of my rifles, which gave me much trouble, that not being the tool required for this sort of work, where quick loading is indispensable.

After breakfast I sent men to cut off the head of this rhinoceros, and proceeded with Ruyter to take up the spoor of the bull wounded in the morning. We found that he was very severely hit, and, having followed the spoor for about a mile through very dense thorn-cover, he suddenly rustled out of the bushes close ahead of us, accompanied by a whole host of rhinoceros birds. I

mounted my horse and gave him chase, and in a few minutes he had received four severe shots. I managed to turn his course towards camp, when I ceased firing, as he seemed to be nearly done up, and Ruyter and I rode slowly behind him, occasionally shouting to guide his course. Presently, however, Chukuroo ceased taking any notice of us, and held leisurely on for the river, into a shallow part of which he walked, and after panting there and turning about for a quarter of an hour he fell over and expired. This was a remarkably fine old bull, and from his dentition it was not improbable that a hundred summers had seen him roaming a peaceful denizen of the forests and open glades along the fair banks of the secluded Mariqua.

During our march on the 19th we had to cross a range of very rocky hills, covered with large loose stones; and all hands were required to be actively employed for about an hour in clearing them out of the way to permit the waggons to pass. The work went on fast and furious, and the quantity of stones cleared was immense. We had now reached the spot where we were obliged to bid adieu to the Mariqua, and hold a westerly course across country for Sichely. At sundown we halted under a lofty mountain, the highest in the district, called "Lynché a Chény," or the Monkey's Mountain.

Next day at an early hour I rode out with Ruyter to hunt; my camp being entirely without flesh, and we having

been rationed upon very tough old rhinoceros for several days past. It was a cloudy morning, and soon after starting it came on to rain heavily. I however held on, skirting a fine well-wooded range of mountains, and after riding several miles I shot a zebra. Having covered the carcase well over with branches to protect it from the vultures, I returned to camp, and, inspanning my wag-gons, took it up on the march. We continued trekking on until sundown, when we started an immense herd of buffaloes, into which I stalked and shot a huge old bull.

Our march this evening was through the most beautiful country I had ever seen in Africa. We skirted along an endless range of well-wooded stony mountains lying on our left, whilst to our right the country at first sloped gently off, and then stretched away into a level green forest (occasionally interspersed with open glades), boundless as the ocean. This green forest was, however, relieved in one direction by a chain of excessively bold, detached, well-wooded, rocky, pyramidal mountains, which stood forth in grand relief. In advance the picture was bounded by forest and mountain; one bold acclivity, in shape a dome, standing prominent among its fellows. It was a lovely evening: the sky, overcast and gloomy, threw an interesting, wild, mysterious colouring over the landscape. I gazed forth upon the romantic scene before me with intense delight, and felt melancholy and sorrowful at passing so fleetingly through it, and I could not

help shouting out as I marched along, "Where is the coward who would not dare to die for such a land?"

In the morning we held for a fountain some miles ahead in a gorge in the mountains. As we approached the fountain, and were passing close in under a steep rocky hill side, well wooded to its summit, I unexpectedly beheld a lion stealing up the rocky face, and, halting behind a tree, he stood overhauling us for some minutes. I resolved to give him battle, and seizing my rifle marched against him, followed by Carey carrying a spare gun, and by three men leading my dogs, now reduced to eight. When we got close in to the base of the mountain, we found ourselves enveloped in dense jungle, which extended half way to its summit, and entirely obscured from our eyes objects which were quite apparent from the waggons. I slipped my dogs, however, which, after snuffing about, took right up the steep face on the spoor of the lions, for there was a troop of them—a lion and three lionesses.

The people at the waggons saw the chase in perfection. When the lions observed the dogs coming on, they took right up, and three of them crossed over the sky ridge. The dogs, however, turned one rattling old lioness, which came rumbling down through the cover, close past me. I ran to meet her, and she came to bay in an open spot near the base of the mountain, whither I quickly followed; and coming up within thirty yards, bowled her over with

my first shot, which broke her back. My second entered her shoulder ; and fearing that she might hurt any of the dogs, as she still evinced signs of life, I finished her with a third in the breast. The bellies of all the four lions were much distended by some game they had been gorging, no doubt a buffalo, as a large herd started out of the jungle immediately under the spot where the noble beasts were first disturbed.

Showers of rain fell every hour throughout the 24th, and my men were employed in making feldtschoens, or in other words African brogues, for me. These shoes were worthy of a sportsman, being light, yet strong, and were entirely composed of the skins of game of my shooting. The soles were made of either buffalo or camelopard ; the front part perhaps of koodoo, or hartebeest, or bushbuck ; and the back of the shoe of lion, or hyæna, or sable antelope ; while the rheimpy or thread with which the whole was sewn consisted of a thin strip of the skin of a steinbok.

On the forenoon of the 26th I rode forth to hunt, accompanied by Ruyter ; we held west, skirting the wooded stony mountains. The natives had here many years before waged successful war with elephants, four of whose skulls I found. Presently I came across two sassaybys, one of which I knocked over ; but while I was loading he regained his legs, and made off. We crossed a level stretch of forest, holding a northerly

course for an opposite range of green well-wooded hills and valleys. I came upon a troop of six fine old bull buffaloes, into which I stalked, and wounded one princely fellow very severely behind the shoulder, bringing blood from his mouth ; he, however, made off with his comrades, and, the ground being very rough, we failed to overtake him. After following the spoor for a couple of miles we dropped it, as it led right away from camp.

Returning from this chase, we had an adventure with another old bull buffalo, which shows the extreme danger of hunting buffaloes without dogs. We started him in a green hollow among the hills, and, his course inclining for camp, I gave him chase. He crossed the level broad strath and made for the opposite densely wooded range of mountains. Along the base of these, we followed him, sometimes in view, sometimes on the spoor, keeping the old fellow at a pace which made him pant. At length, finding himself much distressed, he had recourse to a singular stratagem. Doubling round some thick bushes which obscured him from our view, he found himself beside a small pool of rain-water, just deep enough to cover his body ; into this he walked, and, facing about, lay gently down and awaited our on-coming, with nothing but his old grey face and massive horns above the water, and these concealed from view by rank overhanging herbage.

Our attention was entirely engrossed with the spoor,



Furious Charge of a Buffalo.

and thus we rode boldly on until within a few feet of him, when, springing to his feet, he made a desperate charge after Ruyter, uttering a low stifed roar peculiar to buffaloes (somewhat similar to the growl of a lion), and hurled horse and rider to the earth with fearful violence. His horn laid the poor horse's haunch open to the bone, making the most fearful rugged wound. In an instant Ruyter regained his feet, and ran for his life; which the buffalo observing, gave chase, but most fortunately came down with a tremendous somersault in the mud, his feet slipping from under him: thus the Bushman escaped certain destruction. The buffalo rose much discomfited, and, the wounded horse first catching his eye, he went a second time after him, but he got out of the way. At this moment I managed to send one of my patent pacificating pills into his shoulder, when he instantly quitted the field of action, and sought shelter in the dense cover on the mountain side, whither I deemed it imprudent to follow him. During my stay here I enjoyed excellent sport with buffaloes, koodoos, and other varieties of game.

On the 28th we marched at sunrise, when one of my waggon-drivers chose to turn his waggon too short, in opposition to my orders, whereby it was very nearly upset, for which I flogged him with a jambok, and then knocked him down. This man's name was Adonis: he was a determined old sinner on whom words had no effect.

Our course lay through a wide, well-wooded strath, beautifully varied with open glades. As we proceeded, fresh spoor of buffalo and camelopard became abundant, and about breakfast-time, as we were crossing an elevated slope in the vicinity of the Ngotwani, I had the felicity to detect a magnificent herd of the latter browsing in the middle of the strath about half a mile to our left.

As I had enjoyed very little sport with camelopard either in this or in last expedition, my time and attention having always been engrossed with elephants, I resolved to avail myself of this opportunity, and accordingly, having caught a couple of my mares, I rode for them, accompanied by Booi as after-rider. I had directed my men to outspan, and my intention was, if possible, to hunt one of the camelopards to my camp, but in this I failed. On disturbing the herd they separated into two divisions, one of which took right away down wind, being a tail-on-end chase from my camp; the finest bull went with this division, and him I followed. After a sharp burst of about a mile I headed and laid him low with two shots behind the shoulder. Having cut off his tail, we were returning to camp, and had proceeded about half way, when we came upon the other division of the herd. They were browsing quietly in company with a large herd of zebras; and observing amongst them another princely old bull, nothing short of the one I had already

killed, I was tempted once more to give chase, and, directing Booi to go home with the tail, I spurred my little mare, and dashed after the lofty giraffe. In vain he sought the thickest depths of cover which the strath afforded, and put out the very utmost speed which he could muster. I followed close in his wake, and, after a hard chase of about a mile over very rough ground, we gained a piece of hard level. Here I pressed my mare, and, getting close in under his stern, I fired at the gallop, and sent a bullet into him, and then passed; in doing which I tried to fire a second shot, but my gun snapped. I had now headed the camelopard, so he altered his course and held away at a right angle across the level strath. A fresh cap was soon placed upon the nipple, when, pressing my mare, I once more rode past him. In passing I held my stock to my waist and fired: the ball entered behind the shoulder and ended the career of this gigantic and exquisitely beautiful habitant of the forest. Having run a few yards farther, his lofty frame tottered for a moment, when he came down with a crash which made the earth tremble.

On the 4th of December we inspanned at sunrise and marched to the Ngotwani, which we crossed after an hour of hard work in making a road; having to remove some immense masses of rock, to cut down the banks with spades, and to throw some thorn-trees. In the afternoon I again marched, and halted at sundown within a few miles

of my old spoor near the Poort or Pass of God. As the waggons were drawing up for the night a borèlé was detected, which Present and Carey stalked, and got within thirty yards, and then both fired and returned, stating that they had broken his shoulder.

Accordingly, on the following morning, I proceeded to take up the spoor of the wounded borèlé of the preceding evening, accompanied by Ruyter, and I very soon found that he was very little the worse for his wound. The spoor led me for several miles close along under the mountain-range to my right, and at length up into a long well-wooded basin in the mountains. Here I observed that two lions, having detected the blood, were spooring up the borèlé; they had followed him up and driven him away from his lair, and had then lain down for the day.

When I came up I was within twenty yards of the lions before I was aware of their proximity. Observing me, they sprang to their feet, and, growling sulkily, trotted up the mountain-side. I only saw one of them at first, and ran forward for a shot. Having ascended the steep a short distance, the lion halted to have a look, giving me a fine broadside, when I shot him through the heart. On receiving the ball he bounded forward, and was instantly obscured by the trees. I advanced cautiously, and next moment the other lion sprang up with a growl, and marched with an air of most consummate independence up the mountain-side. I imagined that

this lion was the one I had fired at, and I sent two more shots at him, both of which were too high ; after which he disappeared over a ridge immediately above. On proceeding to inspect the spot where the lion had been lying, I found that there were two beds, consequently that there must have been two lions, and I conjectured that I had killed one of them. In case, however, he should be only wounded, I deemed it prudent to ride down to the waggons, which were then passing below me, to obtain some dogs to pioneer. Having procured these, I and Ruyter returned to the spot, and found the lion lying dead on the mountain-side. We then proceeded to skin him, and returned to the waggons with the spoils. The other lion had decamped ; the dogs could not find him. Both of these were first-rate old lions, but the one that escaped was the larger of the two. In the afternoon I rode on to Sichel's kraal on the Kouloubeng, having directed my men to follow with the waggons.

On arriving at the station I found that Mr. Livingstone had left that morning to visit a tribe to the east of the Limpopo. I waited upon Mrs. Livingstone, who regaled me with tea and bread and butter, and gave me all the news. I remained a week in the station, and on the 12th I inspanned. At sundown we halted near the Pass of God, intending to hunt sable antelope, having seen a small troop of them in the month of May on a steep mountain-side, beneath which I formed my camp.