



CHARGE OF THE BLACK RHINOCEROS.

Life in a South African Colony.—I.

MORE than ten weeks at sea having passed away and the utter idleness of a passenger's life having grown rather more than irksome, myself and fellow-travellers were much pleased when we first sighted the fine bush-clad Bluff, and the beautiful land of Natal. All were soon gathered on deck, gazing eagerly on the land of their adoption, as the sun rose and the bright light gradually broke over Bluff, hill, and plain, and illuminated the long line of breakers which denoted the harbour bar—that greatest of all existing drawbacks to the colony at Port Natal.

Signals were soon hoisted at the Bluff signal-station, announcing that the bar was impassable, and therefore no communication could be held with the shore otherwise than by signal. Making up our minds for another day at sea, we lounged about the decks, admired the great beauties of Natal as seen from the roadstead, and such of us as had the hunting instinct at all developed within us already began to talk of African game, in the knowing manner in which most men discuss subjects of which they are profoundly ignorant. During the day guns, rifles, and revolvers were brought up on deck, and their various beauties and advantages pointed out and explained.

One passenger had brought with him what he called an "elephant gun," carrying a bullet which we unanimously compared to a kitchen-clock weight. Cumbersome long Enfield rifles with sword-bayonets were in great abundance, as well as handy little breech-loading rifled carbines; the excellence of this little weapon has since been thoroughly tested. Many of us had merely brought stout double-barrelled

fowling-pieces of large bore, and most excellent weapons for South African shooting, generally, we found them prove.

Early the next morning a cargo boat came sailing out from the port to our ship, the heavy sea upon the bar having to a great extent subsided during the night, and in little more than an hour we landed upon the quay of Port Natal. Business at the "Point," as the port is called, had already commenced, several wagons having arrived laden with sugar and hides, and while we were inspecting the African wagons, with their long lines of bullocks, twelve or fourteen in number, harnessed, or rather yoked in pairs, and drinking coffee or Bass's beer at the refreshment rooms, the train from Durban, distant about one mile, came puffing into the railway station, bringing a number of business men to the port, who very evidently recognised us as fresh arrivals.

Among other peculiarities of attire, the extraordinary sheath-knives, with which some among us were decorated, certainly do not form part of a colonist's ordinary town costume. By the way, a common butcher's knife in a leathern sheath, worn on a waist-belt, makes a capital hack and hunting knife, light and handy, easily kept sharp, and inexpensive to replace if lost or broken.

Making our way through the bawling, yelling, and singing groups of Kafirs and coolies (large numbers of coolies have been imported from India as labourers) we make for the railway platform, and travel up to the town of Durban by the train. The whole town of Durban is built upon a flat of deep white sand, and is the hottest place I have ever lived in during my stay in South Africa, a period extending over several years.

The sand is also blown along the streets in a most disagreeable manner during windy weather. Having appeared before the resident magistrates, we obtained permits to carry our firearms, going through the usual form of stating that we required them for our own use and protection. Each gun and pistol is stamped by a Government official, with a number and letter corresponding with the number and letter of the permit, and a duty of ten shillings on each gun-barrel has to be paid by the owner. The duty on a revolver is, I think, five shillings. Gunpowder and percussion caps are only to be obtained of those specially licensed by Government to sell ammunition, and upon the production by the buyer of a magistrate's order. The reason, of course, for all these somewhat troublesome precautions is to guard against the natives obtaining firearms and ammunition.

During our first afternoon in Durban we witnessed the most tremendous thunderstorm that those of us who had not been ashore in the tropics had ever beheld. About four o'clock p.m., we observed heavy masses of black clouds gathering and hanging over the Berea and town of Durban, the horizon rapidly darkened, and the lightning flashed out for some time almost continuously, while peal followed peal of thunder in a manner almost deafening. The darkened sky illuminated for an instant by the brilliant forked lightning darting earthwards, with the almost simultaneous roar of the thunder, produced an effect really startling. A fellow-passenger remarked that "it looked like the end of the world."

During the evening we had some conversation with a thorough old South African colonist, who told us that he well remembered a large elephant being killed on the Berea, within a mile of where we sat. A number of Kafirs had hunted and *been hunted by* it for several hours, when it was finally shot by some Dutchmen. Elephants had long since, he told us, left the vicinity of the colony, though within his recollection they were to be met with frequently in the Bluff bush. "Shooting ivory" had become a business of itself, and was not generally considered a lucrative enterprise, the proper equipment for a shooting and trading trip into the elephant country being expensive, the journey long, the travelling rough, and the climate not healthy during a great portion of the year. In some parts of the interior the "Tsetse fly" abounded, the bite of this little insect, hardly larger than a common house-fly, being actually fatal to oxen and horses. A good deal of ivory was bartered for with the natives, who, though they possessed but few guns, evidently contrived to kill elephants. In fact, he said, to hear some of the South African "niggers" talking at night over their fires, of the deeds of valour they had performed in the hunting field, the listener would be led to imagine that such a band of heroes had never before existed. But still the fact remained; their weapons were not apparently very serviceable, and yet they procured, and were ready to barter, ivory with the trader for his goods.

Our time in Durban passed away pleasantly enough, every day bringing with it something fresh to be seen or done.

For some time we took great interest in hearing the cases tried in the Magistrates' Court, the offenders for the most part being coolies or Kafirs. In many cases the coloured people employed English lawyers to conduct their defence. Then there was almost continually a horse to be looked at, as, although there were plenty of horses for sale, it took some time for us all to suit ourselves, out of the extraordinary collection

of animals offered. The Saturday sales by auction afforded a good deal of amusement. These sales were generally attended by a good many of the planters and farmers, as well as by the "Durbanites." A most miscellaneous collection of articles was to be found on sale; furniture, maize, rice, flour, clothing, karosses (rugs made from skins of buck, silver jackal, tiger cat, &c.), ostrich feathers, books, bacon, pictures, and other things too numerous to mention. Later in the day, the horses, oxen, and wagons were brought to the hammer. The horses, as a rule, were ridden up and down before the spectators, and then the saddles were removed to show the state of their backs; a saddle-galled back often rendering a horse unsaleable. I secured a capital journey horse at a moderate price, who turned out very well, free, hardy, and docile, his age rising eight years, a good age for work.

Towards evening we frequently betook ourselves to the Berea bush, where the *spoor* or footprints of the little blue and red bush buck were to be seen in the red sand.

"Still-hunting" for buck is not, according to my taste, at all an exciting kind of sport. The hunter, after making his way into the thick bush, having often to crawl upon his hands and knees until he finds a spot where several runs or passes meet and cross each other, and where the spoor of buck is abundant and looks recent, squats down, concealing himself as best he may behind some thick bush or trunk of a tree, waiting as quietly as possible for the chance of a shot, either at a blue or red buck, or at that handsomest of all the coast bucks, the "bush buck" or *inkonka*. While waiting and watching in this manner a number of puzzling sounds are heard in the bush, which at another time would pass unnoticed, caused by various little birds and small ground vermin, and even by insects, some of them emitting the most singular notes and cries.

A most provoking bird, about the size of an English magpie, makes a noise among the leaves and dry twigs so precisely resembling the sound of the movements of a buck in covert as to deceive almost any ear. This bird is of a light brown and dirty white colour, and is called *ifokwa* by the Kafirs.

For "still-hunting," clothing of a grey, brown, or some dingy colour should be worn—white or any bright colour should be especially avoided. The white puggaree, if worn, should be removed from the hat before entering the bush. Any spot in the bush where a little stream or pool of water is to be found is an excellent place to lie in wait for buck, especially towards sunset. After a hot day the hunter will often find the bush intensely hot.

One of the most enjoyable days during our stay in Durban was passed in fishing and shooting, at Sea Cow Lake. Sea Cow Lake is a large lagoon on the north of the river Umgeni (which river divides Durban county from Victoria county), and about two miles distant from the sea. Sea Cow Lake, though only distant about five miles from the town of Durban, still contains four or five "sea cows" or hippopotami, which although very shy and wary, are occasionally to be seen floating on the lake, the tips of their ears and noses just showing above the surface.

Alligators are very abundant here, as are also coarse fish, "African barbel" (the *Silurus* of the naturalists), eels, and a fish somewhat resembling the English perch, though without the beauty of appearance or delicacy of flavour of the English fish. During favourable weather great numbers of fish are to

be caught in this lagoon with the rod and line, worms being the bait used. We were lucky enough to secure far more fish than we could carry to town with us. Although we had our "barbel" curried by an Indian cook, we afterwards came to the conclusion that they were neither a particularly savoury nor a particularly wholesome fish. We also shot some beautiful specimens of aquatic birds, including a couple of snowy white egrets and a black and white kingfisher, the plumage of this last bird having a gloss upon it of a beauty which it is impossible to describe.

Other days were passed upon the Bluff, wandering about among the thick bush, shooting various birds of brilliant plumage, fishing from the rocks, with but very indifferent success, and gathering and eating oysters; these little oysters are really excellent, rather smaller than the smallest English oysters, and are found so firmly attached to the rocks as to require an iron chisel and hammer to remove them.

Snaring crawfish was another of our amusements, which is pursued after the following method: a number of mussels are detached from the rocks and pounded up into a mass with a hammer or large stone, and this mass is dropped into one of the basins or pools among the rocks. The snare consists of a noose made of thin brass or copper wire (similar to the snare used by poachers in England for rabbits), and is attached to a light stick about three or four feet long, and as the crawfish, attracted by the bait, of which they soon become aware, leave the holes and tunnels in the rock in which they conceal themselves, and make their way towards the mussels, the snare is adroitly and very cautiously—as these crustaceans are quick in their movements while in their own element, and wary to an extent hardly to be believed by those who have only seen them out of water—slipped over them from behind until it has reached to about the middle of the body; a touch of the wire causes the crawfish to draw himself together, thus in a great measure securing his own capture, and with a jerk the noose is tightened and he is brought ashore. This sport, which, of course, can only be pursued at low water, is really rather amusing. It is curious to watch the cautious manner in which the crawfish emerge from their hiding-places, the long feelers sometimes appearing and disappearing many times before the owner ventures to make his appearance in the open pool, and should the snare be felt before it has been slipped far enough up the body to secure the prize, a thick cloud of sand kicked up in the clear water is all that will be seen, under cover of which the intended victim will regain his hiding-place. These crawfish are perfectly wholesome, and their flesh is very similar to that of the English lobster. They are not armed with claws.

After a stay of about a month in the town of Durban, my friend T—and myself agreed upon taking a trip into Zululand with a trader whose acquaintance we had made, and who was about starting on a regular trading trip.

We soon came to terms, and after purchasing a few blankets and beads, which we intended bartering for cattle, under the advice and direction of our trader friend, we set to work providing ourselves with such trifling personal effects as we should require for our journey, not forgetting blankets and surcingles, and head-collars, and "reims" for our horses. "Reims" are strips of hide which are used in place of halters; buffalo, eland, giraffe, and ox hide being used, the two first named being considered by far the best. Our stores

consisted of a bag of flour, another of rice, a little coffee, tea, sugar, spirits, and tobacco.

We also provided ourselves, acting under the advice of our guide, with a small quantity of quinine, as the rainy season was hardly over, and there was some probability of our trading enterprise taking us into the more feverish districts.

The wagon would evidently be comfortable enough as a lodging-place, not being over full, and being chiefly laden with blankets, which would make a good foundation for our sleeping arrangements. Our "span" of oxen consisted of twelve only, but the owner intended adding two to their number as soon as he should succeed in trading a couple of young oxen in Zululand, breaking the fresh cattle into the yoke as we travelled. Our armoury consisted of three double-barrelled large-bore fowling-pieces and a single-barrelled-rifle; we also had a couple of small revolvers, these last weapons certainly of little use on a hunting trip.

Our wagon loaded and dispatched in charge of the Kafir driver and "forelouter" (the leader of the span, who walks before, leading the front oxen by the "reims" attached to their horns), we saddled up and rode on to Pinetown, distant about fifteen miles from Durban, having planned to pass the night at one of the hotels, and await the arrival of our wagon the next morning.

Pinetown is a straggling town through which the Government road passes, lying at a considerable height above the level of the sea. The neighbourhood of Pinetown is generally considered very healthy, and Pinetown is sometimes called the "Cheltenham of Natal."

From here to Pieter-Maritzburg is generally considered a day's journey on horseback; however, wishing to see as much of the country as possible, which I am bound to say is in this part peculiarly uninteresting, we rode easy stages, and arrived in the capital of the colony, with our wagon, after four days of very quiet travelling.

Pieter-Maritzburg is a nice clean town during dry weather, but during and after much rain the mud is simply abominable, a greater nuisance than even the deep sand of Durban. The whole town is supplied with water by means of *sluits* (open watercourses), which run through the streets between the footway and dwelling-houses or stores. A rather pretty public park adjoins the town, and the Australian blue gum and English willow flourish in Pieter-Maritzburg. The leading streets, which run parallel to each other, are wide, and the houses, for the most part, well built. During our short stay in the town we added some "up country" bacon, and a sack of oats for the horses, to our stores.

Leaving Pieter-Maritzburg three days after our arrival, we started *en route* for Greytown, our trader friend having some business to transact there, and we being nothing loth to visit a fresh colonial township. Greytown is the chief town of Unwoti county, and is in the midst of the horse, sheep, and cattle breeding district. The climate in this neighbourhood is considerably cooler than that of the coast. The district is an open *veldt* country, varied by hills, valleys, and *krantses* (a *krants* is a precipitous cliff). On the plains about Greytown we first commenced burning our powder, shooting a few partridges and quail. Here we purchased a couple of dogs, one a rather more than half bred and scarcely half broken pointer, and the other a large and powerful-looking sort of lurcher. Greytown contains but few houses and stores, and is

a small and scattered-looking settlement, the chief object of interest being a row of very fine Australian blue gum-trees, which have been planted on the outskirts. The blue gum-tree, though growing to a great height, is not, unless grouped with other trees, a particularly handsome object; in growth it is something like the English poplar, the leaves are of a bluish green tint, and the trunk at certain seasons has a very ragged appearance, as the tree sheds its bark annually; this bark is said to be a strong tonic and febrifuge.

On the borders of the Tugela thorn country we were hospitably entertained at the house of a Dutch farmer. The house was situated in the midst of a large grove of trees, chiefly orange and lemon. Here we met with a fellow-countryman, who was filling the office of tutor to the Dutchman's numerous

Dutch host that a sea cow (hippopotamus) had been seen for some time past in that part of the Tugela, within a mile or two of Summahash's kraal, and offered to accompany us on the following day to the spot. Soon after our arrival at the kraal we had an interview with the chief, Summahash, and went through the ceremony of drinking the native beer with him; he taking, according to the custom of the Zulu tribe, the first draught, from the black clay pot, thereby showing that he bore us no malice, and that the liquor which he offered to us was wholesome. Summahash is one of the most powerful of the Natal Kafir chiefs, and would be able to bring a great number of men into the field. In person he is a tall and powerfully-built man, but like most of the middle-aged chiefs, too corpulent. His temper is, I suppose, at times violent; one of his



COLLECTING IVORY.

family. This gentleman showed us a large collection of very beautiful birds which he had shot among the neighbouring thorn-trees. Not being a skilful taxidermist, he had adopted the plan of carefully removing the entrails and filling the vacuum with some drying and antiseptic chemical preparation. The brains were removed through the beak, and the specimens were dried in a current of air. Whether the experiment answered according to his expectations (he intended sending his collection to England) I am unable to say, but I certainly did not place much faith in it at the time.

Having sent the wagon and Kafirs on with directions to outspan at the nearest wagon drift across the river Tugela and await our arrival, we proceeded to the *kraal* of Summahash, where we intended seeking shelter for the night.

Our trader friend here met with a Kafir who had previously been in his service, and who manifested great delight at again meeting his old master. This fellow had been much in the service of white men, and confirmed the statement of our

wives informing us that a terrible scar across her breast was caused by the *inkos* (chief) striking her with a brand taken from the fire.

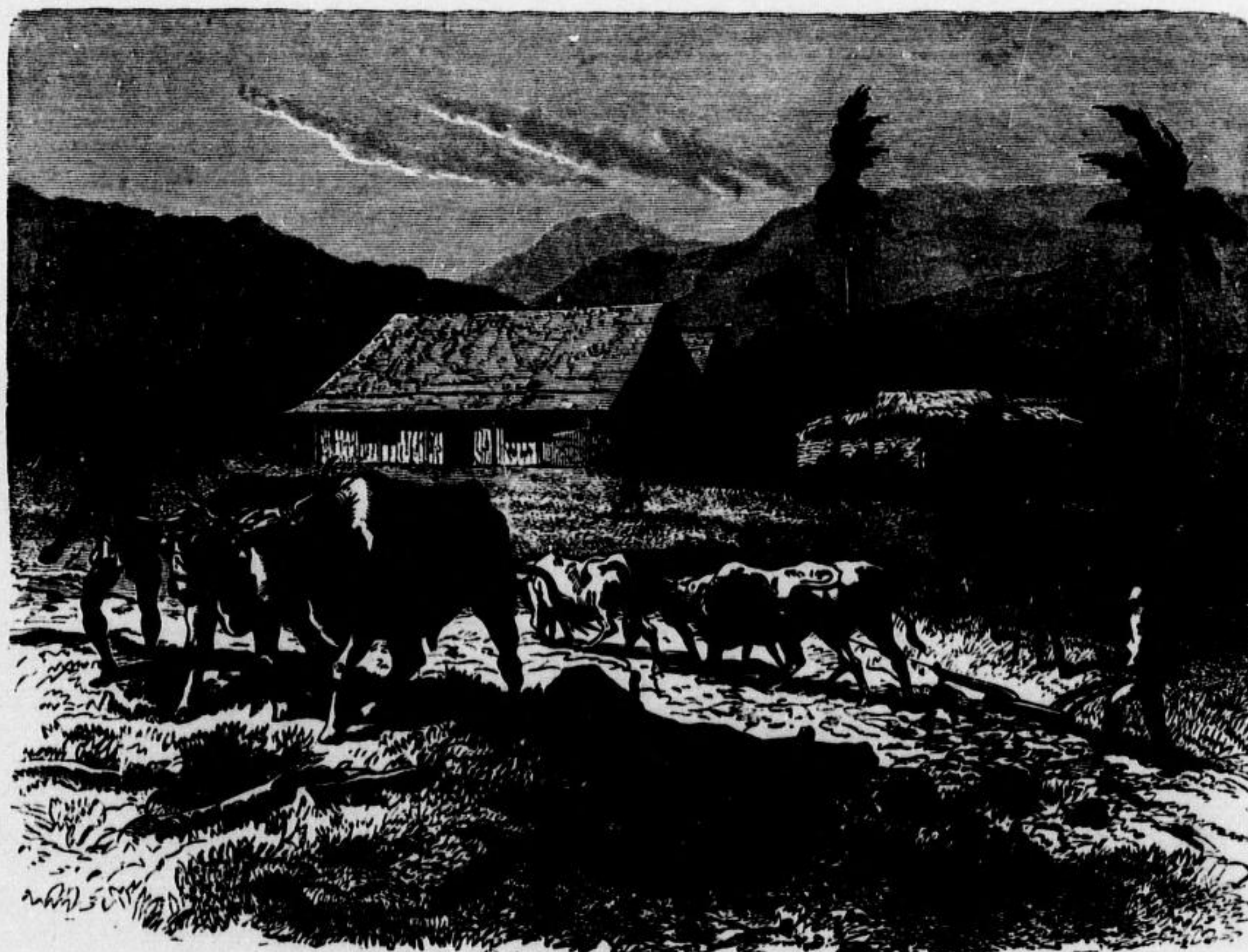
Having agreed to pass the night at this kraal, a hut was swept out and put in order for our accommodation, and old "October" (such was the name by which our new Kafir was generally called by his master) having informed us that there was a regular roosting-place for guinea-fowl within a short distance, we shouldered our guns and started off under his guidance.

Approaching some clumps of tall trees in a deep valley, as the sun was fast sinking, we were soon assured of the presence of our game by repeated shrill cries, much resembling the words "Go back! go back!" Walking quietly under the trees, we continued for some time loading and firing, knocking down the guinea-fowl as they flew in a bewildered manner from tree to tree. These birds resembled the domesticated guinea-fowl of England, but bore a horny crest upon their heads,

which I do not remember to have seen in the English poultry.

Gathering up our game, very soon after sunset, as we have but little twilight in South Africa, we made the best of our way back to the kraal, where "October," after plucking some of the game and splitting them down the back, broiled them upon the embers, and several *intombis* (girls) bringing us supplies of milk, both fresh and clotted, and native beer (*chualla*), we made a most satisfactory meal, after which, spreading our blankets upon the smooth, polished earthen floor of the hut, we lighted our pipes, and conversation naturally

know—I and a mixed breed after-rider, a fellow part white, part Kafir, and part Hottentot, whom I often took with me on my trips, contrived to get a couple of bullets into a black rhinoceros, which we came suddenly upon while riding through a bush path. Our game did not hesitate a moment, but came down upon us at a furious pace; my niggers—all my goods carriers were with me—did not seem to know where to run, and charging among them, he leapt over the nearest, who had presence of mind sufficient to throw himself flat upon the ground, and came blundering along, apparently undecided as to which he should attack first, when my horse, generally



FARM IN THE TUGELA THORNS.

turned upon hunting, and as to which was the most dangerous of large game.

"Well," said our trader, knocking the ashes from his pipe into the circular hollow in the middle of our hut floor, which served the purpose of a fireplace, "buffaloes are dangerous, at times *very* dangerous, and most big game may be made to fight, except perhaps the poor old fat eland, but for a thorough going *skellum** commend me to a *bichan*† (black rhinoceros); when you wish to hunt him, it is more than likely that he will hunt you. He takes a good deal of killing too. I remember once when I was down among the Amatonga tribe—the Amatonga land is the other side of Zululand, you

* *Skellum*, a Dutch term of abuse, much used by the white settlers and Kafirs of the colony. The English terms "villain" or "ruffian" are the nearest interpretation.

† The black rhinoceros is called *bichan* by the natives.

steady and reliable, gave a loud snort, and leaping into the air, went off through the rough thorny bush. Jan, my after-rider, galloped off down the bush path, but I well knew that he would keep with us and be ready in time of need. If I had had the advantage of open ground I felt sure that my horse could have easily distanced the rhinoceros, but we were among tangle and timber and upon rough broken ground, and worse than all, my horse was frightened, and a horse is never so useless as when he is frightened.

"Well, after a very short time—what with the ducking and dodging to avoid the trunks of trees and overhanging boughs, and my efforts to guide my horse with safety to himself and rider, which were becoming momentarily more difficult, and to see as much as possible of the game, who followed grunting and groaning in my tracks, hunting me much as a foxhound hunts a fox—I was beginning to feel uneasy, and anxious to

bring matters to a crisis. The blood was flowing, I could see, from the two bullet-holes; but as the wounds were not near a vital part, I knew they would be of but little consequence to the rhinoceros. Just behind the shoulder is generally to be considered the best mark when shooting big game, and a bullet in the neck often seems quite to paralyse an animal. I can't explain why; but am quite sure that it is so. But it was quite impossible to get a shot with any hope of inflicting a serious wound. Every now and then, after being lost to sight for a time, he would come charging out upon one or other of us with his nose to the ground, making the hard dry earth ring, and kicking up pieces of hardened soil, and crashing through the thick thorny tangle. Seeing that my light-coloured steed only made me a conspicuous object for a charge, and that riding with anything like safety was impossible with a terrified horse in a heavy bush country, I watched my opportunity, slipped from his back and handing him over to one of my Kafirs, hurriedly directed him to get away to the safest spot he could find. Although he afterwards indignantly denied the charge, my own impression is that he fastened the horse up somewhere in the bush and then clambered up into a tree. I hastened to reload the empty barrel of my large-bore gun, and clapping a spare bullet and a percussion-cap or two in my mouth, began to steal cautiously through the bush. While creeping along, almost bent double, I felt a light touch upon the arm, and found that one of my Kafirs had come up with me, who immediately seized my arm to stop me, and pointed to a piece of thick covert on my left, whispering almost under his breath, 'Nanqua! nanqua bichan!' ('There! there is the rhinoceros!') I had no sooner made out the outline of the back, when he went thundering away, apparently in mad pursuit of something, affording me a rapid shot at his shoulder. This made him alter his course, and brought him down upon me; but, leaping on one side, I emptied the other barrel, planting the hard bullet of lead and tin, driven by a tremendous charge of powder, just behind the shoulder. This last shot

brought him to his knees, though he rose again and tried to charge once more. Jan now again arrived upon the scene, and handed me his double-barrel, both barrels of which I discharged at the region of the heart. Even while lying at the point of death, there appeared to be a vicious twinkle, and a look indicative of anything rather than surrender in the eye of the black rhinoceros.

"After a good deal of shouting we collected all hands, and lying down under a tree quite exhausted, I confess that I was oblivious of everything for some time, my only real wish being for utter quiet and rest. Jan's horse had broken away, and had to be spooled for a long distance before he was recovered."

After other similar stories, we began to feel the effects of a long day spent in the open air; and after a last look at our horses, who, closely knee-haltered, were cropping the grass among the stunted mimosa, all were soon in the land of dreams. As the horizon began to redden the following morning, we paid another visit to the guinea-fowl haunt, and succeeded in bagging a few more head; although we found the game far more wary than on the previous evening. Finding a small rivulet, we refreshed ourselves with a bath. Certainly, the greatest of all luxuries in a hot climate is a bath early in the morning, while the water is really cold. Upon our return to the kraal we found October busy cooking our breakfast, and a troop of *intombis* waiting our arrival, with sundry clay-pots filled with clotted milk called *amarsi*. Having paid for as much as we required by presenting them with a number of small black and ruby-coloured beads, both favourite colours with the Zulu tribes, and also handing over some brass-wire for the supplies of the previous night and an implement of iron and wood, facetiously called a knife, for the rent of our hut, we breakfasted; and saddling our horses, amidst vociferous cries of "Hamba gushla! hamba injallo!" ("Go on happily! go on continually!") from men, women, and children, we bade farewell to the kraal of Summahash.

An Autumn Tour in Andalusia.—VII.

BY ULICK RALPH BURKE.

BULL-FIGHTS.

WE promised in our last chapter to say a few words about the *corrida de toros* which was such an important item in the *menu* of the great *fiesta* at Valencia. We do not of course intend to give a detailed account of the horrors which are usually considered to be the only attraction of a bull-fight. A "feast of bulls" is not by any means all "blood and entrails;" and we prefer dwelling upon those parts which interest and excite the spectator, and which keep out of mind, so to speak, the accompanying cruelty—just as the essential charms of pheasant-shooting or fox-hunting draw off our attention in England from the torture we inflict upon the pheasant or the fox.

The outside of a bull-ring is well depicted in the accompanying engraving, when the *picadors*, completely dressed and equipped, are making their entry into the building amid the

applause of the assembled multitude. The dress of the foot combatants (*lidiadores*), who are variously known as *chulos*, *banderilleros*, and *espadas*, or *matadors*, is too well known to need any description; and we will proceed at once to say that we took our seats fashionably *early*, and employed ourselves, according to custom, for nearly an hour in seeing the vast building gradually fill itself with gaily-dressed and excited spectators. The Spanish people are not under any circumstances nearly as grave as they are supposed to be; but if you were to judge of them only by what you saw at a bull-fight, you would set them down as the most mercurial people in Europe. There is a good deal of excitement naturally generated, even before the appearance of the first bull, when 17,000 people get together, especially if the thermometer is standing at 90° Fahrenheit, or thereabouts.