WHAT WE DID
IN
SOUTH AFRICA
IN 1873.

EDMUND BYRON.

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As several of our friends have shewn a kindly interest in our trip last year to South Africa, and expressed a wish for an account of what we did and where we went, I have printed a few copies of the Journal which we kept during our travels. The following pages are a plain account of our daily life and doings, and would be of no interest to the general public; but as they are only intended for private circulation, I may hope that due allowance will be made for the want of style and the numerous faults, both of omission and commission, which, as "a book," I know that they contain.

For some time past I had been desirous of making a short excursion into the interior of South Africa, partly with a view to see something of the country, but principally for the sake of the excellent sport afforded by the numerous varieties of both large and small game which are to be found there; but the convenient season for such a long absence from home never seemed to arrive till, in the Winter of 1872, after much consultation, we determined to make a start in the following Spring. I say we, for my wife, with great spirit, agreed to accompany me, and learn by experience whether the anticipated pleasure and

excitement of a life in the wilds would make amends for the absence of the comforts and luxury of life at home.

I am afraid that many of our friends and relations were rather shocked and alarmed at my wife undertaking such an expedition ; some dreading the long sea voyages, others the wagon travelling, the proposed excursion on foot into the game district, the fever, the natives, the absence of a doctor, the distance from letters, and other rather imaginary terrors ; but though sometimes we were a little staggered by the alarming prophesies as to our probable fate, we persisted in our plan, and began to make the necessary preparations. The result will shew how far the forebodings on the one side, and the anticipated pleasure on the other, were realized ; but I can only say I wish the trip was in the future instead of the past.

Coulsdon,

September, 1874.

JOURNAL.

FOLLOWING the suggestion of a friend in Natal, who had been some distance into the interior from the east coast, we settled on Pieter-Maritzburg as our starting point, leaving our route beyond this to be guided by circumstances and further advice. I also obtained a list of what we ought to take out from England from the same source, and fortunately his advice in this respect was sensible, and the list of articles short, and confined either to what we could not obtain in the Colony, or else what, from an economical point of view, it was desirable to take with us.

First in importance were the rifles, as those only can be bought in the Colony which are inferior both in quality and finish to those of a good London make, owing to there being no demand for the first class and, therefore, more expensive weapons.

If breech-loaders are to be used, the cases to fit the various bores should be taken also; the ordinary 12-bore cases can be generally got now in Cape Town and Natal, and sometimes other bores, but the shops are often out of them, and not to be depended on for any quantity; and for such weapons as the Express or Martini rifle, it would be absolutely necessary to take cases. Also canvas or leather cases to fit each rifle, as, without this protection, the barrels are soon rusted from the perspiration of the Caffre bearers; canvas is much better than india-rubber for this purpose, as it is almost waterproof and much more durable, the latter, when in constant use, soon wearing into holes. As to the sized bore, opinions vary so much upon this and other points, such as efficacy of shells,

hardened bullets, amount of charge, &c., that I shall offer no remarks upon the subject, except to say that I found the following weapons sufficient for all my shooting, and though, perhaps, if I had been able to get more large game shooting, I might have preferred a larger bore, I rather came to the conclusion, that more depended on hitting the game in the right place than the size of the bullet. I took out a double 12-bore c.f.; a ditto Express, .500-bore; a Martini-Henry; and two fowling pieces, one of which was a muzzle-loader. I also took two revolvers for myself and manservant, and a small toy six-shooter for my wife, but we never even fired them off, being too cumbersome to carry when out hunting, and not required for personal defence. Next, a few of the principal medicines required, in case of fever or dysentery, especially quinine, which sometimes costs a fabulous price in Natal.

Then as to clothes. The best material for general wear and tear, and for resisting the thorns, which are truly awful, is flax cloth, being both strong and light. Veldt shoes are the best covering for the feet, both for hunting and general use in the bush, as they are very light and easy, and what I found was of the chief importance, are almost noiseless when stalking game. These are, of course, to be got in the Colony.

Saddles and bridles should be taken, old ones answer the purpose as well as new, and both are very dear in the Colony.

All india-rubber materials, such as waterproof sheets, mackintoshes, &c. We took out a small folding india-rubber bath from Edmiston's, Charing Cross, and found it of the greatest use and comfort on board ship, in the hotels, and when travelling in the wagons. One or two pocket filters should be taken, as, after a storm, the water in the streams is rapidly converted into pea soup, and never seems to clear again after the rainy season has

commenced; and besides, we often had to use water from what might have been springs, but were in reality little better than mud holes. These were the principal items of our outfit, besides the usual luggage; and though a hundred other things might be added, according to the fancy of each individual, it is a great convenience not to be bothered with a pile of unnecessary packages. I would, in addition to the above, recommend a trochiameter and pedometer, as the distances, even in the Transvaal and many parts of Natal, are unknown from place to place, and it is satisfactory at the end of the day's march to know how far one has travelled. A sextant, artificial horizon, &c., should be taken by anyone intending to take observations; and I often regretted I had not got them when away in the bush, as the rivers and hills are very imperfectly laid down in any maps of the country beyond civilization.

In due time the last box was packed, the last day at home arrived, the final good-byes were said, and on March the 4th, 1873, we left for Southampton, having previously sent on our heavy luggage, under the care of Kemp, a servant, who had been eleven years with the family, and was going out with us, being anxious to see something of the world. I may here mention he proved invaluable, and throughout the trip, especially during our bush life, proved the right man in the right place. I now give the remainder of our experiences in the form of a journal, which was often written under difficulties, but which I hope may prove interesting to anyone who cares to follow us on our travels.

1873, *March 5th*. Went on board the Union Company's S. Ship "African" about mid-day, and punctually at two o'clock we slowly steered out of the Southampton dock into the Channel, only now realizing the fact that we were actually off. We spent the afternoon, while in smooth water,

in putting things to-rights in our cabin, and trying to make ourselves comfortable before the inevitable sea-sickness (for we are both bad sailors) overtook us. Soon after getting into the Channel, we came into a thick fog, and were obliged to anchor till nine o'clock, when it cleared off and allowed us to proceed. The cabin accommodation was tolerable, but the cuisine very moderate, and the stewards quite incapable. There was a capital smoking room, which proved a comfortable lounge, especially in the hot weather, where one could read, play whist, or otherwise amuse oneself, and as it was placed in front of the engine-room, it was cooler than the saloon.

March 6th. Came in for a breeze and a nasty chopping sea—a good many vacancies at meals in consequence, for the ship rolled abominably, and took in plenty of water. I was ill, of course, but kept on knocking about, which is the best thing to do, and after about forty-eight hours I got all right, and remained so till the end of the voyage. E. took to her bed, and was consequently much longer in getting over her troubles.

March 7th. “In the Bay of Biscay, oh!” A heavy sea on, and ship rolling awfully. During the night the smashes amongst the glass and crockery were continual and considerable, as they were badly secured. Ship’s run (the best of the voyage) 200 miles, with a strong fair wind.

March 8th. Sunday. Service in the saloon; all correct, as we had a clergyman on board with his wife and family, going out partly for a change, on his wife’s account, to a warmer climate, and partly, I suppose, to try and convert the unfortunate black man. I hope he may succeed, but I think it is more than doubtful. During service we had a hard struggle to keep our legs, and the clergyman in vain tried to keep his book and his cushion from flying in different directions, and remain on his legs at the same time. We are beginning to ‘shake down’ with the other

passengers, about forty-two in number, who, on the whole, were fortunately a very decent lot, a good sprinkling returning to their work at the diamond fields. I was glad to find an old Oxford acquaintance on board, F. Oates, who, with his brother and a Cambridge man, Buckley, were bound on the same errand as myself, and intended also to make Pieter-Maritzburg their starting point. There were also two or three ladies on board, which made it pleasant for E.

March 9th. One day much like another on board ship, and not much to break the monotony of our existence.

March 11th. Passed Madeira, having a good view of the back of the island. I was much surprised to find we did not stop, as we had been entrusted with a small box of good things from Fortnum & Mason's to take out for the benefit of a lady staying there, but we had to carry it on, and ultimately, when the weather got warmer, had to pitch most of the contents overboard. The weather growing very mild and pleasant. Porpoises jumping about, flying fish, whales, &c., formed an occasional excitement, and were all new to us.

March 12th. Passed and sighted islands of Teneriffe and Palma, and others of the Canary group. A long stoppage in the middle of the day, something having gone wrong with the engines. Enjoying the weather which was truly delicious after the English winter, left behind only about four or five days ago. Saw swarms of the little Portuguese men-of-war floating about. Another day or two, and we find it getting very hot as we enter the tropics. I was much disappointed with the first view of the Southern Cross, which now became visible to us, as, after all I had heard about it, I expected something finer.

March 15th. *Sunday* again; and service in the saloon after muster—a more decorous performance than last time. We stopped and communicated with a small steamer, the

“Namaqua,” also bound for Cape Town, and intended to run up and down the west coast, and bring ore from the copper mines to Cape Town, to be trans-shipped to the ocean steamers. The heat was overpowering in the cabins and saloons, and many of the passengers preferred sleeping on deck, but they had to turn out at such an early hour in the morning for the crew to swab the decks, that I preferred the heat and my bunk. We sighted Cape Verd, our first view of Africa, on the 16th, but did not pass near enough to see at all what the shore was like. Some enterprising spirits tried to get up theatricals, but they fell through, owing to the ladies declining to take the parts allotted to them. Thermometer 87 in the cabins. Felt very thankful I wasn’t a stoker. Since crossing the line, we have been steaming against a strong south-east trade, and the ship’s run has considerably diminished, so that our chances of a quick passage are small, especially as we had almost a calm north of the line, instead of getting the benefit of a north-east trade wind. The “fire bell” sounding to-day, caused a little excitement amongst some of the passengers, who thought it was rung in earnest, but their alarm soon disappeared, as it was merely rung to practice the crew in falling in rapidly at their proper stations by the boats, &c.

March 25th. Arrived at St. Helena, where we stopped for some hours. Went ashore with E., and enjoyed stretching our legs on land again. We found a difficulty in getting a carriage to take us to the Tomb and Longwood, as some other ship had arrived before us, and secured the few traps the town can boast of; so E. sat down by the road side, while I and Kemp walked out to the Tomb, about three miles off. Time was short, and the sun very hot, so I did not reach Longwood, but was contented with a distant view of it from the opposite hill. The island wretchedly barren and poor looking, with a population that seemed to be composed of individuals from

all nations. Amongst the rocks and stones there were quantities of geraniums growing wild; and we saw the prickly pear, banana, and palm, for the first time. Plenty of fruit in the little market place, figs, peaches, pears, grenadilloes, bananas, water melons, and other kinds, but only the figs were worth eating, and E. took a large supply on board. Left the island about sunset. E. in much trouble on finding that her supply of night-lights had dissolved themselves into a very greasy liquid owing to the heat, and made a considerable mess in her box. They are almost necessary, as the Company will not give passengers a light, I suppose on account of economy, as there can be no danger from them in their glass cases; but unless in bed by 10-30 you must turn in in the dark. A poor fellow on board, in the last stage of consumption, and vainly hoping to get better in the climate of Natal, is rapidly getting worse, and hardly will last out the voyage to Cape Town.

March 30th. Sunday. Another week got through somehow, and we are now getting near enough to calculate when we shall reach the Cape. We have been indebted to a young lady on board for a little amusement. She is just fresh from school, and has fallen in love with a fellow passenger, and, in spite of the remonstrances of her chaperone, persists in making a fool of herself, it being evident the man is not in earnest, though amusing himself with the flirtation.

April 2nd. Everyone busy packing up, and looking forward to our arrival at Cape Town, which we hope to see to-morrow morning. After the lights had been put out in the saloon as usual, some genial but noisy spirits thought fit to celebrate the last evening on board by consuming large supplies of brandies and sodas, singing songs, and lastly, by rolling the empty bottles up and down the floor of the saloon, to the intense aggravation of those

passengers who wanted to go to sleep. At last the captain, after several vain expostulations, summoned the watch and cleared the saloon.

April 3rd. Arrived in Table Bay, and went into the new docks, after a voyage of twenty-nine days. We got our things together and went ashore, taking up our quarters at the Royal Hotel, kept by the butler of an ex-governor. Rooms very inferior, but the cuisine was good. We were rather disappointed in our first impressions of Cape Town, as we found the dust and glare most trying, and the houses, shops, and buildings generally, much inferior to what we had expected to see in such an important place, and the capital of so large and prosperous a Colony. The vegetation, too, was completely burnt up, and owing to this, and the want of trees, the surrounding landscape looked as barren as a desert, the only redeeming feature in the view being Table Mountain, which towered up grandly in the background above the town. Dr. Bleek kindly came to call upon us at the hotel, and in the afternoon we went out to see him and our cousins at Mowbray, a village on the local railway to Wynberg, the favourite neighbourhood for the villas and homes of the merchants in Cape Town. Next day we did the museum, where there is a good collection of South African birds, and several stuffed animals, but the latter are very badly set up. The botanical gardens and the public library are also some of the lions of the place. We enjoy living on shore again after our long voyage, though the screw of the steamer, with its unceasing revolution, still seems to be rumbling and vibrating in our ears. We found some letters from my friend St. Vincent Erskine, in Natal, who, I was in hopes, would go with us up the country. Following his advice to buy some large-bore rifles, I went to Messrs. Rawlone, the gunmaker of the town, and bought a single 6, and a double-barrelled 8-bore, both muzzle-

loaders, and such a weight that I inwardly hoped I might never have to carry them far. This afternoon I was busy with Kemp in getting our heavy luggage trans-shipped from the "African" to the "Zulu," the coasting steamer, advertised to sail on the 8th for Natal.

April 5th. We went to Wynberg by rail, and then drove to Constantia to see the vineyard, where the wine of that name is manufactured. The proprietor very civil, and shewed us all over the place. We have arrived at the plentiful season for grapes, and enjoy them immensely. Magnificent muscatels, and as cheap as dirt.

April 6th. Sunday. Went to service at the cathedral, so called, a building more like a barn or a corn warehouse than our idea of a cathedral. Much excitement caused by one of the congregation going off into a fit during service; and I noticed many others leaving the church overcome by the heat, which the colonials seemed to feel more than we new comers. Went out to Mowbray to dine, and spend the afternoon with the Bleeks. Saw two bushmen there, great curiosities, more like baboons than men; perhaps the connecting link in Darwin's chain between man and the ape. Dr. Bleek had got them, through the government, to assist him in compiling his dictionary of their most extraordinary language. The poor fellow on board ship, I mentioned before, died yesterday in the hospital, to which he had been removed on our arrival, as he had not a friend in the Colony, and only a few shillings in his pocket; so he was buried by the Union Company, who saved his passage-money to Durban. As we heard some alarming accounts of the wrecks along the sea coast, I insured our things, and had to pay double the rate charged from England to the Cape, shewing there was some foundation for the reports we heard.

April 8th. Went on board the "Zulu." The change

from the "African" was decidedly for the worse, the coaster being very small, old, and dirty. Couldn't leave the dock this afternoon as a heavy sea was running outside; but we got away at daylight the next morning. We had lost our sea legs during the week on shore, and had to go through the unpleasant operation of regaining them, and to get used to the totally different motion of the small steamer. Several of our old fellow passengers were on board. Reached Mossel Bay the next day, a small place, and only of importance as being one of the few places where vessels can lie to discharge cargo along this miserable coast. There are no harbours along this coast; at the best an open roadstead, sheltered perhaps a little on one side; and there is always a surf breaking on the beach, making it often impossible to land either passengers or cargo. The weather now became fine, and sea smooth, and leaving this place about two o'clock, we reached Algoa Bay, or Port Elizabeth, the following afternoon. Passed the still visible wreck of the steamship "Fidela," which we had half thought of going by to Durban. The captain had tried a short cut between the land and the well-known Roman rock, but missed the channel and ran ashore; luckily no lives were lost.

April 13th. Easter Sunday. Went ashore at Port Elizabeth (the sea was a dead calm, so the ladies were able to go too) to church, and afterwards to luncheon at the hotel. This is the largest town between the Cape and Natal, and one of the ports for the diamond fields. We found the "African" lying here and discharging cargo, the ocean steamers generally coming on to this port from Cape Town before returning to England. Finished discharging cargo on Monday, and off again for East London, which we reached next day, and for which we had a large quantity of cargo, it being the nearest point to the diamond fields, but oh! such a

wretched hole for ships to lie at, the everlasting bar preventing their going up the river, and a heavy surf always breaking. There was a small sea running, and nothing but the life-boat could live, which came off for the mails, &c. Sailing vessels are often detained here for weeks before they can get an opportunity of discharging cargo, and very frequently drive ashore if it comes on to blow from seaward; and steamers are obliged to keep their steam up ready to go a-head at any moment when lying here; they are only induced to call at all by the enormous rates paid for carriage of the cargo, which the merchants can afford, as the wagon transport is so much shorter to the fields from this point than from Port Elizabeth. Next morning, one of the cargo boats came off; they are built expressly for this place, very strong, and hold about ten tons, and costing about £1000 a-piece. They are warped out from shore by the crew by a hawser made fast to a buoy in the roadstead, and thence to the steamer by another line; the cargo is all battened down when loaded, and the boats are warped back again through the surf. Sometimes after loading the wind rises, and the boats have to lie out all night, unable to cross the bar, and only the scum of the population can be got to work them, and at enormous wages. Next day no cargo boat would come off, not even the life-boat, so the captain, to our delight, as it was not pleasant pitching about at anchor, declined to wait, hoping to land his cargo on the return journey. Sometimes passengers and goods are carried up and down more than once before they can be landed. This afternoon, E. was lying on the sofa berth in our cabin, and in came a wave at the port-hole, which nearly drowned her, and swamped the cabin with a foot or two of water, running underneath the partitions, and deluging our portmanteaus; and as all the cabins on the weather side, which had their ports open, took in an equal quantity

of water, there was a considerable amount of grumbling amongst the stewards and passengers, and a very varied collection of all kinds of garments spread out on every available rope or rail to dry. From East London to Durban we kept close in shore, but there was not much to look at, the scenery being unattractive, and little or no signs of life.

April 19th. Reached Port Natal about five o'clock a.m., and luckily being able to cross the bar without trouble or delay, came to an anchor in the beautiful bay inside, truly thankful that our travelling by sea was for some time at an end. The bay is very fine, shut in from the sea by a high and well wooded hill, the town of Durban lying on the opposite side. It is perfectly sheltered on all sides, but unfortunately only a small portion is deep enough for vessels even as small as our steamer. The temperature much warmer than before, and a pleasant change. Rather startled at the first sight of the niggers in their scanty garments, but one soon gets accustomed to it. Went on shore with some of our goods, and a short railway took us from the landing place to the town. Put up at the Royal Hotel, where our friends had secured some rooms for us; but the accommodation was very poor, though the best in the place. Durban is a small straggling place, ankle-deep in sand, and very relaxing, and, to my mind, not at all a pleasant place to live in, though with some very pretty scenery towards the Berea, a high and luxuriantly wooded hill at the back of it. Found Erskine and his wife here, but were much disappointed to hear he could not go with us up the country, as he had half promised to do.

April 20th. Sunday. Went to church and heard a very good sermon from Bishop Colenso. Though unfortunately unable to go with us, Erskine kindly offered to assist me in every way; and after some consultation as

to the line we should take, it was settled that we should fit out at Pieter-Maritzburg, and then travel in wagons through Natal and the Transvaal Republic to Leydenburg, a small town on the edge of the Drachensburg range, close to which the new gold fields had just been opened. Then we were to proceed a few days further to the point where the Oliphant river leaves the hills, and descending by a pass at this point into the low country, follow the course of this river on foot, leaving our wagons and oxen in some sheltered nook near the head of the pass. Erskine had come out by this route two years before, and declared that he had seen plenty of game down the Oliphant and Tabi rivers, and that it was quite practicable for E. to go with me; but the wagons and oxen could neither descend by the pass, and if they could would find themselves in the "Tsetse" fly country at starting, so that he recommended me to buy some donkeys, which alone, of any beasts of burden, were supposed to be able to live in the "fly;" and also he assured me it would be quite possible to take a small cart for donkeys to draw, and in which E. could travel, when not inclined to walk or ride. As he could not go himself he strongly recommended his friend, Mr. R. Dubois, as a substitute, who would undertake the general management of the expedition, being an old hunter, a first-rate hand at the Caffre languages, and used to oxen and travelling generally. The next day I got the rifles and cartridges, &c., through the custom house, after some trouble, the regulations as to importation of fire-arms being rather stringent. A permit from the governor to land them had first to be obtained, a tax of ten shillings a barrel on the fire-arms to be paid, and then all the weapons had to be stamped and registered. A permit is also required to land gunpowder, of which I had fortunately brought very little, as a good deal of time, trouble, and expense (there being a considerable tax

imposed on its importation) is entailed in getting any quantity through the customs. It is a government monopoly, and can be bought in Natal quite as cheaply and as good as in England. In the afternoon I bought a "Berea" cart for E. to travel in up the country, and also some Salempore and glass beads for payment of Caffre bearers. It is very essential to get the right bead, as the natives are very particular in this respect, and wont look at any that they do not fancy as the right thing; each tribe has its own fancy, and the fashions in beads are often changing amongst them.

April 22nd. Left Durban in the omnibus for Pieter-Maritzburg with Erskine and his wife. We took the 'bus special, as it is a long day's journey of fifty-four miles over abominable roads, in a still more abominable machine, with no room to move a leg if full of passengers, and scarcely any luggage allowed. We left at 6-0, and reached our destination at 5-30. After leaving the wooded slopes of the "Berea," we emerged into a hilly grass country, which reminded me somewhat of the American prairies, only more broken; not a tree to be seen, except where occasionally planted round the farm houses, which were very few and far between. We stopped for breakfast, luncheon, and five o'clock tea, at the appointed posting houses, and arrived at the Crown Hotel at Pieter-Maritzburg in time for dinner; the air gradually becoming more bracing and fresher than at Durban, which is two thousand feet lower than Pieter-Maritzburg. The Crown Hotel the best in the place, but no great things. The attendance, owing to the difficulty in obtaining white servants, was bad, and the food very moderate, and the cost of living quite equal to an ordinary English hotel. The company at the table-d'hôte a queer lot, but all are "ladies" and "gentlemen" out here; the tailor next door, and the housemaid of the hotel dined at table, the latter

got up within an inch of her life. The town is laid out in square blocks, containing lots about a quarter of an acre each, with streets running at right angles, as in American cities. The houses are very scattered, poorly built, and mostly roofed with corrugated iron. The roads are very fairly kept, but the side-walks are full of ups and downs, and are consequently dangerous at night without great care, as the lighting is insufficient, consisting of a few miserable oil lamps. The Caffres are by law obliged to wear garments in the towns, and extraordinary objects some of them turn out, their tastes being very varied—a soldier's tunic being the favourite dress; the guards, the line, the metropolitan police, the volunteers, &c., all having their representatives, as shewn by the buttons on the niggers' coats. Some wear a sack, with a hole for the head cut in the bottom, and arm holes at the sides; some support a tall hat, most none at all. One fellow I saw in a very short drummer's tunic, a tall hat, and not another rag on him. I was much amused to see all the women with their chignons, and as these were evidently the fashion all up the country, I presume that London ladies must have originally got the idea from the niggers, who piled up the small amount of hair they possess on the top of their heads in the most approved fashion, but did not apparently make use of other people's to eke out their own. The men are also great hair-dressers; and I often saw the fellows doing each other's hair, the operation taking much time and care, as not a hair was allowed to remain out of place. The natives of these parts are fine specimens of the human race, quite equal in physique to any Europeans, and, to my mind, look much less repulsive when in their natural state, and free from European clothes. I suppose it is owing to the dark colour of their skins, but one's feelings of modesty are not shocked as they would be by the want of clothing on a white man;

and all the tribes, at least that we saw, even far up the country, always wore something—the women, a wide piece of Salempore, like a very short petticoat, round the loins; and the men, a “Mouchie,” that is, a strap round the waist, from which hangs a piece of skin, or, perhaps, a cluster of cats’ tails, much in effect like a kilt. The next day Dubois arrived, and, after an interview with him, it was settled that he should go with us, and undertake the management of the trip, receiving £15 a month, and all found. I liked him extremely, but had my doubts as to his being strong enough for the work, as he was hardly recovered from an attack of fever he had had while in the interior the previous year; but he vowed he was all right, and so the bargain was struck.

We were very busy the next few days enquiring after oxen, wagons, ponies, and other necessities. Owing to the prevalence of the redwater and lung sickness amongst the cattle, oxen were comparatively scarce and dear. I bought thirty, averaging about £7 10s. a head. Next I bought two buck wagons, one entirely covered with a canvas tent for ourselves to travel in; the other was to be covered about half way, for Kemp and Dubois to sleep in. Cost £80 each. I found afterwards I had made a great mistake in buying “buck” instead of “cap tent” wagons, as the former are much the heavier of the two, and therefore not so suited to the tracks called roads, along which we had to travel; but being much wider, are far more comfortable to live in, and, of course, this was a consideration. Horses and ponies were plentiful enough, and animals for £9 or £10 could be got easily, quite good enough for our work; and even cheaper nags would have answered the purpose, for I lost every one of them, as it turned out. The better the class of horse, the cheaper he seemed to be, in that animals worth about £10 to £15 at home, would be worth about the same out here; but, on

the other hand, here one could buy a horse for £25, that would be worth perhaps £60 or £70 at home. I had great trouble in getting hold of any donkeys; they seemed very scarce, and at last I had to give the great price of £8 a head for four wretched-looking mokes, that would have been dear at 10s. at Brighton or Ramsgate; and none of the four ever arrived at Leydenburg. I got one capital donkey for £6, which turned out a most invaluable beast afterwards. We had agreed to spend Saturday and Sunday with an old friend, C. Woodroffe, who had left the navy, and settled on a farm about twelve miles from Pieter-Maritzburg, but were rather puzzled how E. was to get there, as the road was too bad for a trap; and she had neither horse nor riding habit, but the landlady most kindly offered the loan of both these indispensable articles. E. had not ridden for so long, that she was thoroughly knocked up at the end of her journey, and glad to retire early in the evening.

Next day, *Sunday*, we had a look round our friend's quarters, which were far more comfortable than the usual run of Natal farmers. A fair house, nicely furnished, and more like home than anything we had yet seen. The farm was about four thousand acres, with lots of wood on it, a very valuable article of produce so near Pieter-Maritzburg. It seemed strange to us to see such a variety of plants, oranges, lemons, cabbages, coffee, sugar, oats, aloes, grenadilloes, roses, and I don't know what else, growing within a hundred yards of each other, shewing what the climate and soil are capable of. A Caffre and boy formed the in-doors establishment. The Caffres that worked on the farm, about twenty of them, lived in a large hut a little way from the house; they work for six months, and then go back to their kraals or villages for six months. We were anxious to persuade Woodroffe to go with us up the country, and after some discussion of

pros and cons he consented to join us, leaving his farm in charge of his white overseer, a very nice fellow, who, with his wife, lived in a cottage in the garden. We went back to Pieter-Maritzburg on Monday morning, and continued our preparations. During our absence Dubois had managed to secure two drivers, at £2 10s. a-piece and their food; also five other Caffres, as forelopers and general servants, who were anxious to return to their homes beyond the Transvaal, and were glad of the chance of working their passage back. E. very busy seeing after our supplies of groceries and such like, and generally making arrangements for our comfort. I had to buy four rifles, two of 4 and two of 6-bore, for the Caffre hunters to kill meat for our party when in the game country: the barrels were very thin, and I should not have cared to fire them off, but they didn't burst after all. Meantime the wagons were being fitted up with lockers, little bedsteads, &c.; Woodroffe having a small piece in the front part of our wagon for his den, divided from us by a canvas partition.

April 30th. Went out to have a look at the hounds, which are kept principally by the officers quartered here to hunt the small buck, which are found on the hills round the town. Had to turn out before daylight, as the scent disappears after the sun is well up. They often get a good gallop, but we were unlucky and had no sport. Bishop Colenso had kindly asked us to dine and sleep at Bishopstone, about five miles from Pieter-Maritzburg. This time we could drive, though in many places the road was merely a track across the grass; a picturesque house on the top of a hill, and splendid views all round; a large tract of land, and gradually improving, attached to the bishopric. We spent a very pleasant evening. I was very glad to see a very good collection of the insects

and beetles of Natal, made by one of the Miss Colensos. Returned next day to Pieter-Maritzburg.

Sunday, May 4th. We attended morning service at the "cathedral," so called, a plain small stone building, where Bishop Colenso did the duty, and in the evening we went to hear Dr. Macrorie preach at the other "cathedral," a wooden structure, but more pretending in its interior decoration and furniture than the other. It seems a great pity that there should be such strong feelings of opposition upon the subject of religious opinions between the partizans of the rival bishops in Natal, which, in many cases, have destroyed long established friendships, and caused a considerable amount of unnecessary expenditure in the erection of opposition churches, and maintenance of double establishments, in a Colony where there are many places up the country beyond the reach of any church at all.

May 7th. At last we are beginning to see the end of our preparations, but fresh items for our outfit are continually cropping up. To-day I obtained the necessary government permits, first to buy the powder I wanted, and secondly, to take it out of the Colony; and, further, I was obliged to enter into a bond for £50, and obtain a surety for a like sum, which, as far as I could understand, was intended to prevent my selling the powder to the natives in Natal; as, under a liability to the above penalty, I was supposed to produce the permit to the Transvaal authorities, who were again supposed to see that I had in my possession the quantity of powder the permit entitled me to; and by endorsing the same, notify that fact to the Natal authorities, to whom I was supposed to return the valuable document, and free myself from the bond I had entered into; but the whole thing was a farce, as the authorities at Leydenburg never ascertained whether I had the quantity of powder or not, and the permit was lost in the post on its way back to Natal, but I never

heard anything more of my bond. All ready for a start to-morrow.

May 8th. Kemp and Dubois very busy all the morning packing the wagons, an operation which lasted till luncheon, after which our oxen were to be inspanned. And now our troubles began. The five Caffres who had agreed to go with us suddenly changed their minds and said they wouldn't come. But I determined to make a start, and got two or three Caffres just to help us out of the town to the first outspan place. The oxen arrived, and, to our horror, one of the spans Dubois had bought at a sale turned out unbroken, and were as wild as hawks, and I thought our men never would get the brutes into the yokes. However, with patience and perseverance, and with much assistance, we succeeded in getting enough into each wagon to make a start, though a most unsatisfactory one. Some of the oxen had got away, and two of them which had been tied together by the horns managed to get their reims round a lamp post, and tugged away, first one side and then the other, till I cut them loose, fearing they would pull it down; off they set at full gallop. Oates and I started off after one on our ponies, and a precious dance he led us in and out of gardens, paddocks, &c., until at last I was pounded in the cemetery, and saw the bullock and Oates disappearing out into the plains beyond the town; but the latter turned him at last, and ultimately brought him back. We camped for the night about a mile outside the town, and though not a very brilliant one, I felt it was a start. The following is a list of the principal items of our outfit:—2 "buck" wagons, 30 oxen, 5 ponies, 5 donkeys; a table and 2 little chairs and camp stools, a large and small tent, 2 large cases of beads, a lot of brass wire, a bale of salem-pore, 30 blue and 25 pairs of cotton blankets (the goods were for payment of Caffres), a heap of pots and

pans; 400-lbs. of flour, 150-lbs. of sugar, 56-lbs. of coffee, 150-lbs. of lead, a lot of shot (various sizes), several jars of jam, a keg of treacle, preserved soups and vegetables, 2 gallons of lime-juice (which proved a pleasant drink in the hot weather), 2 gallons of vinegar, salt, &c.; 50-lbs. of coarse powder, at 1s. 7d. per lb., and 20-lbs. of fine gunpowder, at 3s. 6d. per lb.; but the cheaper turned out quite good enough for all purposes. We had mattresses to sleep on, pillows and sheets for our bed, as E. declared she couldn't sleep between blankets.

Our first night in the wagons rather strange, but we managed to make ourselves comfortable, and soon got used to the life; Kemp already making himself very useful, and acting as cook, which post he continued to fill for the rest of the trip, besides acting in various other capacities. The next day I went back with Dubois into the town, to try and get some Caffres to go with us as far as Greytown, a place about fifty miles off through which we had to pass, and where we were more likely to get some permanent servants. After some trouble we got four fellows to go so far for 5s. a-piece, and these, with a queer little old fellow who arrived at our camp this morning, enabled us to move on again. This latter individual remained with us all through the trip, and turned out a great character. He had come out of the country to which we were going, about three years before with Erskine, who had happened to see him working at a sugar mill in Durban, and, finding he was anxious to go back and see his wife and friends, sent him after us. He was supposed to be a swell, a near relation of a chief in his own country, and a queer piece of royalty he made; as ugly as sin, strongly marked with the small-pox, got up in an extraordinary rig, and withal very comical in appearance. He was told off to fetch water, mind the fire, wash up, and generally assist Kemp, who, unable to master the click in

his Caffre name of Klangilan, turned it into "Slangey," as short and easy to pronounce. The old fellow was a perpetual joke amongst us, but he was no fool, liked all he could get, and was not over fond of work, but a very good nigger on the whole. With much trouble we inspanned again next morning, and camped at "Cremers," about twelve miles from Pieter-Maritzburg, where Woodroffe was to join us. E. and I rode on a-head, and found him there waiting for us at the roadside inn. The wagons didn't turn up till dark, after a long and tedious journey, owing to the span of unbroken oxen being so troublesome. Dubois ought to have known better than buy them. An ox had been left behind, having strayed at Pieter-Maritzburg, and one of the drivers had remained to look for him. We were glad to get some dinner and turn in.

May 11th. Sunday. Didn't move again to-day, as we had made a rule not to travel on Sundays. Our camp was on the Umgeni river, just below the lower falls. I was much annoyed to find that two of the finest oxen were already sick with the "redwater," and would be unable to go on, so there were three short out of the thirty already. E. much better and stronger already than when we arrived in Africa, and all of us in good trim, and determined to enjoy the trip. Put things straight about the wagons, and rigged up a bed for Woodroffe in his compartment. We found it necessary to secure most firmly everything that was not fixed in the wagons, as the jolting was tremendous, and, in spite of precautions, we often found our things all of a heap at the bottom of the wagon after a bit of stony road, and now and then they would jump clean out. We dosed our sick oxen with Epsom salts and soap, but there seems no certain cure for the disease. It is very partial in its appearance, the northern parts of Natal being entirely free from it; and the cause

seems as uncertain as the remedy. Here I may give a short description of our wagons and their fittings. To begin with ours.—A “buck” wagon, 18-ft. long and 3-ft-10 wide in the floor; a strong plank fixed on its narrow end forms the side, and to this is fixed the rails, or “buck,” which projects over the wheels $1\frac{1}{2}$ -ft. Woodroffe had a den 6-ft. taken off this in the front, leaving us 12-ft. by 3-ft-10. Our house is 4-ft. from the ground, and is reached by a little step-ladder, which hooks on to some staples at the back of the wagon, and when we move is put inside; our bedstead is fixed, raised on iron supports, and is 6-ft. by 3-ft-6, and partly projects over the near hind wheel, thus leaving us just room for a passage on the other side into the interior of the wagon. Two large lockers are fixed on the “buck,” so that they don’t interfere with the standing room, and also serve as tables or seats; one is filled with E.’s sundries and small stores, the other is given up to the rifles, cartridges, &c. I was glad now I had all the weapons in their canvas covers, and not packed in the ordinary gun cases, as they would have been in the way and sadly knocked about. Our personal luggage is lashed tightly under the bed, and small holland bags are fitted up round the canvas walls. The wagon is covered from end to end with a double ply of canvas stretched over iron bows, which were always breaking, and are not so good as wooden ones nor so neat looking. The back and front of the wagons are closed at night by canvas flaps, fastening inside and out with hooks and eyes, and cannot be made too secure against such windy weather as we encountered on the higher lands. The other wagon much the same size was covered in about 8-ft. over the hind part, where Kemp and Dubois lived, and some of the perishable stores were stowed. A large tarpaulin being used as a cover for the front of the wagon, and reaching down to the ground, served as a shelter for

the Caffres to sleep under. The "buck" wagons are much more roomy and, therefore, more comfortable than "cap tents" for travelling in, but the latter are much lighter and better for a long trek and bad roads. About sixteen oxen are required for a loaded wagon; and they have a foreloper who "leads" the two front oxen by a reim tied to their horns, and a driver to look after them.

The front oxen are the most important of the span, as, at a hard pull, they must be steady, ready to start at once when told, and good pullers, or else, if they are wild and unsteady, they upset the whole span. Next in importance are the two hindmost oxen. Going up a steep hill the span requires to stop every few yards, and, in fact, it is always slow and tedious travelling with bullocks, but then they will live and work where horses would starve and die. A well-trained span in good condition, and perhaps all matched as to colour and size, is a pretty sight. A good or bad driver makes so much difference in the comfort or difficulties of wagon travelling. We were not very fortunate in this respect, but were glad to get any men, as, for various reasons, drivers were in great demand and very scarce.

May 12th. Started at eight o'clock, and after another twelve miles journey, arrived at the next station, where we got some breakfast, as there are accommodation houses at intervals along the road for the first fifty or sixty miles. Were delayed here till late, as a blacksmith had to be sent for from some distance to tighten the bands of the naves of the new wagon with wedges. A good opening for men of his trade in this neighbourhood, as I had to pay this chap £1 for about four hours' time, but I found this nothing to what I had to pay higher up the country. Trekking on late in the evening by moonlight. Next morning we managed to get off at 7-15, which we at first thought early, but gradually got accustomed to start by

daylight as a matter of course. Getting into more open country, I do not mean as to trees, for there are none, but the houses are more scattered and further apart. While breakfast was cooking, I walked out with a gun, and found some snipe and quail, and started two orebi, a beautiful but tiny species of antelope, which were lying in the long grass, but failed to shoot one. Woodroffe has brought his pointer, "Bravo" by name, who seems a first-rate hand at partridges, quail, &c., and promises to be of great use. Pointers and other smooth-coated dogs are best suited for the climate. Another ox taken ill and died this morning. We were to camp on the Umvoti river, and hurried over the last mile or so to escape, or rather get encamped, before a thunderstorm, evidently brewing, should burst over us. We just got the oxen outspanned at dark, when down it came in torrents, and we could get no fire to cook by; so the collared tongue, part of the contents of the hamper, that was to have been left for the lady at Madeira, came in very handy for dinner, with some bread and cheese and a glass of grog. We found a spirit lamp very useful in the wagons, enabling us to get a little hot water quickly, and often when we either had no time or were unable to make a fire. The oxen still give a good deal of trouble, the wild ones worrying and harrassing those that will work; one ox in particular always breaks away if he gets the chance, and has given me many a gallop to bring him back, and when we get him into the yokes he often refuses to pull an ounce, whack him as much as you please.

May 14th. Next day we arrived at Greytown early, and after breakfast went into the place to try and get some Caffres to go on with us. Dubois got hold of an old chief sitting in the enclosure or fort, where a sort of assembly of Caffres is held every morning while the magistrate is sitting, and promised him a bottle of grog if he would

help us. We also applied to the magistrate who knew Woodroffe, and kindly sent off a messenger into the country to try and get some men. Another ox died to-day, and others are sick of the disease. Had to spend all the next day at Greytown, and the delay was very aggravating, but there was no help for it, as the Caffres had not come in. It was a dull, foggy day, and rained all the evening. We had an addition to our party in the shape of a large dog given to Woodroffe to take up country, named "Lion," half greyhound and deerhound, and supposed to be able to catch the antelope. We have much felt the want of wood, which is very scarce along the road, in fact, we have seen none; and the never-ending plains of grass, unbroken by any trees, become monotonous to look at. Another ox died, and now there are only twenty-five left.

May 16th. Still at Greytown. Very windy and boisterous weather. The Caffres that came with us from Pieter-Maritzburg left us to return home, resisting all our persuasions to induce them to go on. Next day we were much pleased to find that the magistrate had succeeded in getting us the required men, and we at once prepared to set off. Engaged a Dutchman to lend us a span of oxen for the day, to help us up the hill above Greytown, as another ox had died, and we were considerably short of the right number for the wagons. Passed through Greytown, and after a four hours' trek we camped on the edge of the "thorns," a large tract of country covered thickly with thorn bushes. Found a wagon outspanned close by us, and, after a considerable talk, managed to buy four oxen from the span, which turned out a good purchase. The Caffres came to us here, but were rather old men, and asked to be allowed to return to their kraals and get some others in their stead, who they promised should join us that evening. While camped here two men with a horse and sleigh came up, on their road to the new

gold fields, and offered to work their passage by making themselves generally useful if we would carry their traps, as their nags were nearly done up; but we declined, as the wagons had quite enough on them, and I didn't want any more white men. Some native beaux passed our wagons on a courting expedition, dressed, according to their notions, in the height of fashion, with ostrich feathers, beads, and fancy skins, half running and half dancing to some monotonous kind of chant as they went along the road. The new dog "Lion" has distinguished himself already, by gnawing nearly all the tent ropes in two during the night, having been tied up to one of the pegs; but Woodroffe, with a sailor's neatness, soon spliced them together again. Had a great physicking of sick oxen, mixing up a pleasant compound of sulphur, resin, and nitre for their benefit, and dosed six of the wretched animals. Were glad of some fresh meat which we got at Greytown, and after an early dinner we moved on again, and camped for the night in the middle of the "thorns," where we proposed to spend *Sunday 18th*. Sent back to see after an ox which had been left behind in the last trek, and found him dead, and the skin already taken away by some passing Caffres. As we now had plenty of wood for fires, Kemp made his first attempt at baking a batch of bread, but it turned out decidedly heavy, the "baking pot" being difficult to manage unless well used to it. After breakfast I took my gun out, and shot a large species of wild duck, and several small birds, for our intended collection. Our thermometer unfortunately came to grief in the jolting over a bad road yesterday, and we cannot replace it. It seems impossible to secure anything unless packed up in a box. A small troop of young girls and women came into our camp this morning, attended by an old hag; they evidently were very curious to see our things, but yet very shy, and were decidedly alarmed

when Woodroffe "dazzled" them with the sun reflected on to their faces from his looking glass. At last we have got our permanent staff of Caffres, as the young men have arrived in the place of the old ones; two forelopers (boys that lead the oxen and generally look after them, and assist the drivers), by name Jonas and Quayban; Jim and old "Slangey" as general servants; and Manzine to look after the horses and donkeys—all at 15s. a month and their food, which was mealie meal. Two drivers, Jacob and Christian, at £2 10s. a month and their food, complete the party. We had five ponies, out of which there was one very good one, the "grey mare." E. rode upon "Dumpling," a little black animal, and exactly described by his name. Then there was one capital donkey, and three more wretched looking mokes that no one ever noticed; the fifth had given up at starting, and was sent back to Woodroffe's farm.

May 19th. Left early in the morning, and after a rest or two, and coming down a hill fearfully steep, and with literally great steps of rock down which the wagons bumped frightfully, we camped for the night on the Tugela river; at least they all did except my unfortunate self, who had to make a night of it in the bush as best I could. I had left the road when riding a-head of the wagons to look for guinea-fowl, small buck, or anything I could find, and at last got amongst a succession of ridges, or terraces of rock, when, it beginning to get late, I tried to return, but it grew dark before I could find my way back to the road or down the rocky slopes towards the point where I guessed the wagons were, and where after dark I could see the camp fires. I heard them firing guns for me all round, but knew they could not get to me or I to them, so after firing off a few cartridges in answer to their signals (which it turned out they never heard), and after getting together all the dead wood I could

find, I made a good fire, roasted and ate a pigeon I happened to have in my pocket, tied the horse up, and laid down to sleep as best I could. Was very glad to see daylight break; and after some trouble found a track down the rocks, and then soon reached the wagons, and very glad to get some hot coffee. A double shot soon brought back the party which E. had started off the first thing to search for me. Saw several small buck about here — the prettiest bit of country we have yet seen. After breakfast we inspanned the oxen, and prepared to cross the Tugela by the ford. We had considerable trouble, the oxen behaving badly as usual; but at last, by putting both spans into one wagon, we managed to get them across. E. and I went over in the ferry boat. On the other side we had a tremendous hill to ascend, and didn't get to the top with both wagons till dark.—A bad day's work as regards distance done. Could find no oxen to hire or buy; and another of the small span died.

May 21st. Started again at 8-30. Another ox had died in the night. Camped for breakfast at Sand river, having left the "thorn" district behind us, and got back into the open country. We did not find the change pleasant, as plenty of wood was a luxury, and the nights in the "thorns" much warmer for ourselves and the animals. Dubois left us about mid-day to ride on to his home, on the Biggarsberg, which we were to reach the next night. One was very glad of warm clothing in the evenings which were decidedly cold, canvas not being much protection against frost. One of the men brought us a scorpion which he had caught, and the horrid-looking beast was immediately bottled. We carried a bottle with a wide mouth, about three parts filled with sawdust, slightly saturated with benzine, to put insects in; but we lost a great many of the specimens we caught owing to

our keeping them in the bottle too long. After a week or so they should be taken out and pinned to a cork. Next morning we made an early start, and stuck fast in a rocky "spruit," or stream. I thought we never should get out, as the oxen were more obstinate than ever. Tried to get some oxen from a Caffre to help us up the last slope of the Biggarsberg, but no go; and so we had to take the wagons up singly as usual, and only just reached the top by nightfall. Next day on again, and reached Dubois' farm about mid-day. The Caffre he had sent out to meet us and show us the way, was attracted by a dead ox at some distance off, and quietly departed, leaving us to find the road as best we might. Dubois' farm was a very bare, wretched-looking place, according to our English ideas of habitation; not a stick near it of any kind. The house built of sun-dried bricks, with a thatch roof and mud floor; windows stopped with rags, &c., was not picturesque; and the whole surroundings rough and untidy; no garden or any pleasant sight except the stream of water running just in front of the house. We arrived ravenously hungry, it being nearly noon, and were truly thankful for the breakfast Mrs. Dubois had kindly provided for us. They were very hospitable, gave us some dinner, and pressed E. to sleep there, but we both preferred to stick to the wagons, to which we returned by dark. No fresh signs of sickness have appeared amongst the oxen the last day or two, and therefore we are hoping we have passed by the country infected with it; but many of them are very poor, and hardly fit to work. Shot a few partridges, and are hoping to find some antelope in a day or two, as we get further on. We have now travelled one hundred and twenty miles, and taken nine days' trekking to do it, out of the fifteen days we have been on the road, giving an average of about thirteen miles for each day's journey; and we can't expect to do more than this on a long journey, and

at this time of year when the grass is very scant and poor.

May 24th. E. paid another visit to Mrs. Dubois, who gave her some useful hints as to cooking with our menage, and kindly started us off with a sheep, pumpkins, bread, eggs, a tub of butter, and other comforts. Dubois also put his span into one of our wagons, which was a great assistance, and took us a clean stretch of fifteen miles to a "spruit" called "Blesbok Lafter," where we camped for Sunday. I had a race after a "reet" buck on the road, but found myself nowhere, especially as the buck took to some rocky ground. I use the word "Buck" as the common term out here for any herd of antelope, taken from the Dutch word "Bok;" but, properly speaking, there are no deer in this country. I was fortunate in shooting a "pau," at about one hundred yards, with a bullet, an enormous bird that weighed seventeen pounds, and turned out, after keeping him a week, remarkably good eating; very rich and brown meat. Found one of our donkeys dead this morning before leaving Dubois' farm; so a dead moke is not an impossible sight after all.

May 25th. Sunday. Did not trek, but very busy all day, washing, baking, and generally putting things to-rights.—A lovely day and very hot. Woodroffe and Kemp both rather seedy, and required some of the never-failing "Cockles." We had a capital dinner off roast lamb and plum pudding. The next morning we inspanned, and on again. Another ox died. Wind very high and boisterous. Camped at "Cafusalem" spruit. I saw several bucks near our road, but couldn't get within shot. E. now travels in the little Berea cart, tied to the back of the goods wagon, as it is on springs, and is more comfortable for her than the wagons or riding; it is also used as the saddle room, and for many odd purposes. We saw to-day large quantities of "red-hot pokers," which blow in the

winter season. The wind last night was so tremendous, that I thought every minute the wagon cover would be carried away, as it flapped and creaked over us in a most uncomfortable manner as we lay in bed; but it fortunately held on to its moorings. The gale continued all day, so that we found much difficulty in cooking our dinner of partridge and pumpkin. The partridges here are rather larger than those at home, of different varieties, and very good eating. "Lion" has had several gallops after the small buck we have seen along the road, but he is always left far behind. Next day our second trek brought us to the flat country, which we pass through before reaching Newcastle. Managed to kill a "Vaal Rea Buck," by a lucky shot, as he was running, and most acceptable it was, as we were out of meat. It was a small buck about the size of a "roe," with little horns about six or eight inches long. Saw the secretary bird for the first time, which preys on snakes, and is protected by the law of Natal, as being such a useful member of society; but being very anxious for a specimen I risked the fine, though I did not succeed in my attempt to shoot the bird. Another donkey died. The donkey and cart are evidently a failure for the purpose for which I bought them. We camped to-day within sight of the Drachensburg range, the future scene of many a struggle with our unfortunate oxen, up and down its steep and rugged spurs, and at the other side of which lay our "promised land" of sport.

May 28th. On again by daylight, and had to leave the last donkey but one by the side of a "spruit," as all "Slangey's" persuasions could not get him along. Passed an outlying farm belonging to a Scotchman, who I asked to look after him, and to whom I offered him cheap; but we never heard anything more about it, and I daresay the poor brute died the following night. We have nothing in

the donkey line now but independent "Jack," who appears to be a very knowing and sociable donkey, and fortunately shows no signs of giving in like the others; he evidently despised his weaker brethren, for he utterly eschewed their company, and always kept with the ponies. The "pau" was cooked to-day for our dinner, and very good it was; and we were only sorry we had not got another in reserve. Although we have lately passed several farm houses, we have been unable to buy any milk, butter, potatoes, bread, or, in fact, anything we want, and are much puzzled to know how the people live.

May 29th. Arrived at Newcastle in the first trek, and immediately took our wagon to a blacksmith to have the iron bows that support the cover repaired, as they were broken in several places with the jolting. The man civilly set to work at once, but when I saw the cover off and the work to be done, I was much alarmed lest we should not get our house again in time to sleep in, but it was finished just at dark. Newcastle contains about twenty or thirty houses and stores—a poor place and very desolate looking. No eatables to be got here except meat, and that was cheap enough at fourpence a pound. As we could buy no bread we took our flour, &c., to a good-natured Scotch woman in the town, who made a batch of bread for us. One of our drivers bad with a severe cold, and very doleful over it. The Caffres always think they are going off the hooks at the slightest sign of illness, and will take any amount of physic that a white man will give them, the nastier the better. Weather very cold, and thin ice every morning, with a sharp white frost. Left Newcastle next morning, and ascended the first spur of the Drachensburg range in the afternoon, getting close on the boundaries of three countries, viz., Natal, Free State, and Transvaal. I have tried in vain to buy more oxen, and consequently the few we have are obliged to do double work, as at every steep

hill we have to put both spans to each wagon, and consequently make slow progress. Continued rising up the Berg, and, after travelling a day or two, camped under the last steep ascent. The game has disappeared since we left Newcastle, as just here the country is more populated; but nearly all the farms we pass are deserted, as at this time of year the farmers migrate with their families, cattle, and sheep, to the warmer districts below the Berg, where they remain until the warm weather and fresh grass come round again on the high lands. A great part of the country through which we are now passing has been burnt off to kill the old grass, and has a very dismal appearance, besides the occasional difficulty of finding grass for the oxen.

June 1st. Whitsunday. Did not travel, and felt seedy for the first time since I landed in Africa; but E. doctored me up, and I was all right again in a day or two. The wind in the night was perfectly terrific, blowing a hurricane, and we found afterwards it was a famous spot for gales. Dubois went back from here to see about some oxen we had heard of for sale at a neighbouring farm. Next day we reached the top of the Berg, and looked forward to a pleasant change of down, instead of the everlasting up hill we had been struggling over. "Lion" has taken a strong fancy for pigs, and worries any that we have come across; but to-day he found his match, and was severely bitten by an old sow he found near a farm and gave chase to. Another ox died from the cold and exhaustion. We passed some Caffre kraals to-day, and having sent up word to them that we wanted mealies for our horses, the women came trooping down to the wagons with large baskets of this corn on their heads, and we had great fun in dealing with them.

June 3rd. Passed a farm inhabited by the best fellow we have seen in these parts, and living more comfortably

than the usual run of farmers here, who very kindly took charge of a lame ox for us, and allowed him to run with his cattle till we returned. We slept last night on the stream that forms the boundary between the Transvaal Republic and Natal, so are now out of British territory. Dubois caught us up again this afternoon, bringing with him six oxen for which I had to pay £9 a-piece, but was thankful to get them even at that price. We found here, at Sand "spruit," we were about ten or fifteen days from Leydenburg, which was pleasant news, as it was nearer than we had thought for. Distances are unknown in these parts and are reckoned by so many days' trek, which is really little or no guide, as, of course, a day's trek varies considerably with different travellers, some doing twice as far as others. The game has appeared again, and to-day we have seen quantities of blesbok, springbok, and other antelopes. We do three treks a day now as there is a bright moon, and find that the oxen travel so much better at night than in the daytime. Had my first spill on horseback to-day, my pony blundering into a hole, but luckily no damage done to the Express rifle I was carrying. Woodroffe got a blesbok and springbok, and I bagged one of the latter after a patient stalk; so we are well supplied with meat, and able to give the Caffres a blow out at no expense. The buck are capital eating when in decent condition, and the amount we consume at dinner would rather alarm an English housekeeper. One feels one can't eat enough. We get up at daylight, or rather before, have a cup of coffee a-piece, inspan the oxen, and trek till nine or ten, as we find grass and water for them; then breakfast, which we do justice to. On again about twelve till perhaps two o'clock, then perhaps go out after game, and dinner at six. Trek on again from seven till ten, and then, after a glass of whiskey turn in, glad of our night's rest — a glorious life for health, though not perhaps

so intellectual as it might be. While travelling to-day a great lump of dough which E. had carefully prepared after breakfast, and placed in a large iron dish upon the bed in our wagon to rise, ready for baking when we stopped, was jolted clean into the middle of the road to her great disgust, but we could not help laughing at the catastrophe. Left an ox behind too much exhausted to come on, but we had no time to wait, and there was no sign of human being to leave him with. The cold nights and scanty food are telling painfully on both spans. We are now reduced to ten in one and twelve in the other wagon, instead of sixteen and eighteen as they ought to be.

June 6th. Our early trek took us to the Vaal river, where we breakfasted. One of the wagons stuck fast in a sand drift just beyond the river, and delayed us a considerable time, as the oxen were cold and would not pull. Managed to get two blesbok after a long stalk, literally crawling over the ground, as the grass having been burnt off there was not a particle of cover. The herds of this antelope are very large about here, and are racing about all round us, looking very quaint in their gallop, from the peculiar way they hold their heads. Passed the bed of a lake about a mile square quite dried up. Have been much surprised not to see more water in a hilly country like this, and with plenty of streams and springs. Were unable to do our night trek, as the next day was Sunday, and we did not know whether we should be able to find grass and water at night, especially as we have found the latter rather scarce near the road the last two or three days. Saw some gnu, or, as the Dutch call them, the vildebeest, for the first time to-day. Sent Kemp round on horseback to try and drive them for me and Woodroffe to get a shot, but they would not come near us, and our nags were not good enough to catch them—queer looking brutes and not handsome.

June 8th. Sunday. Very glad of a day's rest and a lie in bed. E. busy at baking and cooking a Sunday dinner. Our fire is now made entirely of dried ox dung, which does fairly well if you can get plenty of it, though, of course, not so pleasant as wood. It is punishing work having much to do with cold water in the frosty mornings when we get up early, and consequently we are rather inclined to cut short the washing; but we generally get a dip in a stream during the middle of the day when the sun always comes out bright and strong, and we enjoy the luxury of a hot tub on Sunday mornings. Some wagons passed us to-day going back to Natal, and told us we were camped on the edge of a burn of grass that extended along the road for fifteen miles, so we were obliged to break through our rule of not trekking on Sunday, as we hoped the night and early morning trek would just carry us through to grass again. Still very cold. The first trek next morning brought us to a patch of grass, but the whole country looked very desolate and bare, not a stick of any kind to be seen; and one felt glad we were getting towards our journey's end, as far as the Drachensburg was concerned. To save time and get off earlier we have given up our morning cup of coffee, which we miss much, and by breakfast time are just ravenous. Old "Slangey" turns out more comical than ever in his 'get up' these cold mornings, and would make a very good Guy Fawkes. Woodroffe generally is up first, and we hear him stirring up the Caffres, who appear to find it very hard to leave their beds; they are all huddled together, and so rolled up in the wagon cover that it is sometimes difficult to find them in the morning. Our three treks a day are helping us over the ground gloriously, but the packing and re-packing is everlasting. Came to a mud hole where the first wagon stuck fast, sinking down in the mud over the naves of the wheels; the oxen could

not pull it out, so we had to unload and set to work with the spade to dig away the earth round the wheels, and at last the two spans managed to pull the wagon through. The next had to come, and laying down some large stones in the worst place, and keeping both spans going at a good pace, with an extra amount of yelling and whipping, we got it over without sinking in. E.'s cart parted from the wagon it is tied to during the operation, and had to be bound up with reims before it could travel farther. At least ten degrees of frost again this morning, and the whole country round as white as a sheet; but the sun is soon up and warms us again. The weather in the day-time is perfection. We are often passing and repassing a caravan of four Dutch wagons bound for the gold fields, containing whole families, and we wonder how they manage to stow away, for their wagons are much smaller than ours, and we have none too much room. E. thinks they look very untidy and must pig it considerably. We thought the roads in Natal bad enough, but, oh! those in the Transvaal are awful, really almost impassable at some points. The Dutchmen are a lazy race, and without any energy of body or mind; they have no means of locomotion but by wagons, and their country is full of mud holes and bogs, and yet they will rather stick fast and have to dig out a wagon, than spend a few hours in making a solid bottom for the road, though there is any quantity of material lying round the place. They are content to live in a miserable mud house, with not a sign of cleanliness or comfort about them, and what they eat was often a puzzle to us. Schnaps is their drink, and, with bad tobacco, their only comfort. I thought how different it would all have been if the Yankees had got the country. Saw several grass fires in our night trek, and very pretty they look, covering the country with regular lines of flame. Found some Caffres burning the grass round the

place where we intended to outspan for the night, which rather riled us, but after a little trouble we succeeded in putting it out. "Dumpling" gave Kemp rather an awkward fall over some rocky ground to-day while he was carrying my rifle, but luckily no harm done. Saw a small herd of the beautiful little steinbok; but missed an easy shot in a most disgraceful manner. Still trying in vain to buy oxen wherever there is a chance.

June 11th. A very misty morning which delayed our starting so soon as usual, as we could not see a yard, and the oxen can't travel when it is wet, as the yokes wring their necks. At last it cleared up a little and we started, but the wagon running up against a great stone in a stream, E.'s cart was jerked off behind, and had to be tied together again; and I am rather doubtful if it will hang together till Leydenburg, and half wish I had never seen it. Crossed the Cromarty river, having safely got over a nasty bit of ground which was full of mud holes. The weather is now getting milder as we descend, which is a comfort for ourselves and still more so for the oxen, which are terribly cut up and nearly worn out. One of my leather gun covers was jerked out of the wagon this afternoon, but though a Caffre was sent back to our last halting place, it couldn't be found; unfortunately it is a loss that cannot be replaced.

June 13th. Still descending; and to-day we camped in the valley of the Crocodile river, the pleasantest spot we have seen for a long time—more vegetation and plenty of wood. Not more than eighteen miles from Leydenburg we are told, which is comforting. I shot another pau here; a pair of these birds getting up quite close under my horse's feet as I was riding through the long grass. As we saw several farms dotted about the valley, Dubois went off again to try and buy oxen; he only, however, managed to hire a span to take one of our wagons into

Leydenburg; but this was something, and afterwards we persuaded the owner to sell one of the oxen. A very steep hill to ascend after leaving the valley, and, to our disgust, the Dutchman's span which had nearly run away with the wagon along the bottom, and was quite fresh, actually gave in, and, after all, our tired bullocks had to take both wagons up the hill. Didn't we whack the fat bullocks of the Boer! but it was no use. We arrived at the top after dark, and there was no water where it was expected we should find it; but "Slangey" started off to search, and after some time the old fellow reappeared with his pails full, and was rewarded with a basin of rum for his energy. The oxen had to go without altogether. Looking forward to reaching Leydenburg to-morrow, feeling as if we were really at last approaching the end of our journey in the wagons.

June 15th. Sunday. We were almost obliged to trek on, on account of the tired oxen, and, besides, it was too tantalizing to be so near Leydenburg and remain idle, so on we went; but it was a day of trouble and mishap. First of all, in the morning, all our oxen had disappeared, probably searching for water, and this detained us some hours. Next, in our second trek, the Dutchman's oxen stuck fast in a mud hole because they wouldn't pull, and while taking them out to put ours in, one got away, and gave me a long gallop before I could head him, and then he would not go back to the wagons till the rest of the span were brought up to keep him company. Next, the ashes of my pipe set the grass on fire, and we had a tremendous fright, and could only put it out after most severe exertions, as it was very high and dry. At last we inspanned again, and just before dusk reached a level bit of ground outside Leydenburg, where we camped for the night on the banks of a small river, the name of which I have forgotten. Went to bed feeling we should have a

few days' rest at last, and thankful to be free from the endless packing up for a time. We had been five weeks and two days on the road from Pieter-Maritzburg, and, as near as we could guess, had travelled about four hundred miles; not so bad after all, considering our delays, through various causes on the road.

June 16th. At Leydenburg; what we should call a small village, composed of a few mud houses and a läger, or fort, but soon to become an important place if the gold fields prove a success; they are about thirty miles off, and are all the rage for the time being. We found that Mr. McLachlan, to whom we had letters of introduction, and from whom we expected assistance in many little ways, was away at the fields, and that our letters were also there, which was tiresome. E.'s cart just managed to hang together up to this point, so I put it into the hands of the blacksmith to be tackled up before starting with it in the "fly" country, which I had still hopes of doing. Out of forty-three oxen I have only twenty-seven left, and many of these are unfit to work, but we hope they will pick up during their two or three months' rest. Next day Dubois went off to the fields to find McLachlan and get our letters. Woodroffe also went, and I should much like to have gone with them, but we could not have taken our wagons, and there was no other way for E. to go, as even if she had ridden, there would not have been any decent place for her to sleep, and we couldn't take a tent as no sort of conveyance could be got. In the evening a black girl, Sara by name, came to our camp, and made us understand, by means of one of our drivers, who could talk Dutch and a little English, that she wanted to be taken into our service. She was Hottentot, or Bush, or, perhaps, a little of both—very short and ugly; but thinking it would be the very thing for E., we agreed to let her remain, as she was willing to go with us on the

walking trip and sleep and live as she could. It appeared she had been sixteen years in a Dutchman's family, and, not being well treated, had bolted, and turned up at our wagons; but this we didn't know till afterwards. As Dubois could not be back under three days, we spent the time in preparation for our next move. Put together little sacks to hold 40-lbs. of flour or rice a-piece, and soaked the outer covers in a composition of resin and fat to make them waterproof; and made up sundry other loads of various articles to the proper weight. Shot a secretary bird at last, which came quite close to the camp in the long grass, through which I crawled out to meet it. We find it is impossible to get anything in the way of butter, milk, or other provisions that we want, as it is all snapped up for the gold fields.

June 20th. Soon after breakfast this morning a Dutchman appeared on horseback, and after asking me some questions which I couldn't understand the drift of, he suddenly discovered our new lady's maid, and calmly saying, "Come along, Sara!" he wished me good-bye and rode off towards the town. Sara made no more ado, said good-bye to E. and went after him. He turned out to be her master, and had been hunting for her far and wide, and after finding her at our wagons took her before the magistrate, who declined to punish her, but ordered her to return to her old service; and the old fellow who claimed her wouldn't listen to anything I had to say. I tried to strike a bargain with him, and make it worth his while to let the girl go, but it was no use, the fact being she was as good as a slave till twenty-two years of age, when she became independent; but the Dutch law allows the farmers, if they save any children alive in their raids against the Bushmen, to keep them as their property till they are twenty-two; and so it was with Sara. I called upon the German missionary, Herr Nachtigal, who was

exceedingly kind, and offered to assist me in any way he could to obtain bearers, &c. He got a Caffre to go on in advance, and let the different kraals know we were coming and wanted men; gave us some butter and honey, and, with his wife, made us welcome. Dubois and Woodroffe returned in the evening with our letters, but McLachlan too busy to help us, and had no Caffres to spare to lend us as guides, &c. Spent a pleasant evening in reading our letters from home. The next day we continued our preparations by packing up loads for Caffres' heads, and who should turn up again, soon after dark, but our friend Sara, who, being determined to go with us, having taken a fancy to E., ran away again to our camp. We gave her some food and allowed her to sleep there for that night, but told her she must be off before morning, and not be about our camp by day, as we were afraid of getting into trouble with the Dutchman, for abetting his handmaids in running away. In the morning she went off, and laid herself up in the rushes by the river all day, and reappeared again in the evening; this was repeated till we were three or four days beyond Leydenburg, and out of the reach of her master.

June 22nd. Sunday. An ox which had just managed to struggle on to Leydenburg, got into the river, and, unable to help himself, we had to drag him out, but he was thoroughly chilled, and died the next morning. Sent off some letters to England, but the postal arrangements are said to be most uncertain in these parts. We hope the cart will be done to-morrow, and so enable us to start again, as the season is rapidly drawing on. Next morning, on getting up to breakfast, we found the four Caffres who came to us at Greytown had bolted in the night, and I had no time to go after them, as they were probably many miles on the road back to Natal before daylight; unfortunately I had paid them their wages a few days

before, as they wanted to buy clothes, &c., in Leydenburg. We fancied they were alarmed at the idea of going into another country and amongst other tribes. I went off to the missionary to see if he could help us to some fresh Caffres to act as forelopers, and he most kindly lent us the only boy he had, and also managed to get us another by mid-day. He also cured a toothache from which E. was suffering, and gave us some stopping to carry on with us, so we were greatly indebted to him in many ways. I bought four more oxen, which, though small, turned out very good. Managed to get off in the afternoon, though the cart was not quite finished, but Dubois remained behind till it was done, and arrived with it at our camp shortly after dark. A fine opening for a blacksmith or carpenter at this place, there being plenty of work and no hands to do it, except at most exorbitant prices and after much supplication. I had to pay £5 for the repairs of the cart, which would, perhaps, have cost £1 or £2 at home.

June 24th. On the trek again. Crossed the Specboom river, and on the road met Mr. McLachlan, who was returning from the gold fields, and gave us some more letters from home. Bought a lot of oranges from a farmer near our evening camp, which E. made into some capital marmalade, and was most acceptable, as our tub of salt butter was nearly all gone. The next day we began to get amongst trees again, and were fast approaching the end of the Transvaal settlements and the edge of the Drachensburg range. Going down hill now, and the weather growing considerably warmer both in the daytime and at night. Shot several specimens of small birds, of which the bush was full. The next day we reached the end of all things, and were unable to take our wagons any further, already having pushed through the bush where no "buck" wagons had been taken before, and even the apology for a road had now disappeared. We camped for the night of

the 26th on the Umthlazingwan river, and the wagons remained here till we started homeward again. A capital place for the oxen to recover their strength and condition, being in a warm and sheltered valley with plenty of grass. On the road from Leydenburg a Caffre hunter, named La Mule, joined us, having heard that we wanted men, and knowing Dubois by name. He turned out a most invaluable ally afterwards, being a man of considerable influence amongst the Caffres in this neighbourhood. The Caffre we had sent on a-head joined us here, and brought unwelcome news, as he had not been able to get any of the Mapulani tribe (to whom he had been sent) to come as bearers. We now sent off in all directions for Caffres, and a considerable number turned up, but so many would only go as hunters, of which we only required three or four, that they were dismissed as useless. Our two drivers were to remain in charge of the wagons and horses during our absence; and we got a Caffre from a neighbouring kraal to take care of the oxen and put them into an enclosure every night. I thought it rather a risk leaving all our things to the Caffres, but Dubois said it was quite safe to do so, and so it proved.

June 28th. About fifteen men and boys have now turned up, who are willing to go as bearers, but I want forty or fifty. Sent back to Leydenburg for some meal, as we were afraid of our flour running short. Making general preparations for a start—casting bullets, putting up packages for the bearers, &c. As I can get no more donkeys I have settled to chance the oxen dying, and intend to take four of them to draw the cart in the “fly” country, hoping that two of them will live to bring it out again; but it now seems doubtful if we can get the cart down the pass to the foot of the mountains, and the Caffres declare if we get it down, it will not be able to

travel along with us, as the country is very broken, but being so anxious to take it I decline to believe them.

June 29th. Sunday. Still at the Umthlazingwan. Have been out to try and get a shot at the koodoo and other buck amongst the hills round here, but unsuccessful. It was useless waiting for more Caffres to come, so next day Dubois started off with La Mule and another to go down the Berg and forage for bearers amongst the kraals under the mountain. As he had to go by the pass, down which we hoped to take the cart, I went with him so far to reconnoitre, and see if it was practicable, as, if so, we might make a start before he returned, and meet him below. After riding for about sixteen miles we reached the pass, and from the edge of the mountain range, which here terminated very abruptly, a splendid view met our eyes as we looked down upon what appeared an endless and gently undulating plain covered with wood, and unbroken, as far as the eye could reach, in every direction, except where three odd-looking isolated hills suddenly rose from the ground about half-way between us and the horizon, and we could also see the Oliphant river, which here flows out of the Drachensburg, winding away like a silver streak through the plain below, and whose course, where the water was lost sight of, could be distinctly traced for miles by a line of enormous evergreen forest trees which only grew directly by the water—the friendly Oliphant which, during the two months we spent upon its banks, was our guide, and afforded us the one great necessary and comfort of our life, without any trouble on our part, namely, a plentiful supply of delicious water. The game country was really reached at last, and one felt the delay in getting bearers more irksome and tedious than ever.

The first glance at the almost precipitous path, with great boulders sticking up on all sides, shewed us the

impossibility of the cart travelling down, or any other wheeled trap, and the country below didn't seem very likely to afford a passage, as there was evidently no road in these parts; and a troop of huge baboons, which I now saw for the first time, kept shrieking at us, as they hopped about the rocks, as much as to say, "No road for a cart about here!" but I still hoped to find another pass less impracticable, and leaving Dubois to descend the mountain on his search for bearers, I hastened back, and reached the camp just before dark, and reported the result of my exploration.

July 1st. Being quite out of meat, Woodroffe and I climbed about the hills round the camp in the hope of getting a buck of some kind, but without success; and next day I started with two or three Caffres to spend the night near the pass I had been to with Dubois, on the chance of finding better sport in that locality, and also thinking I might, perhaps, meet Dubois who, we thought, ought soon to be returning. Hunted all the evening and early morning, but got nothing, and didn't even have a shot. Dubois not turning up, I returned to camp in the afternoon, and we dined again on rice and dried vegetables. Next day we managed to get a small bit of mutton from a Dutchman, who had brought his family and cattle into this warm spot for the winter. Saw some koodoo to-day, but could not get a shot. We are getting very impatient to be moving on, but still no tidings of Dubois, and we began to wonder what had become of him.

July 6th. Sunday. Ten days now since we arrived at this camp, and, therefore, ten days wasted. One of the weakly oxen got stuck in the mud yesterday evening by the water, and died this morning from the chill. Old "Slangey" had a stiff neck, and declared he was very ill; gave him a good dose of Epsom salts and cured him. The next day we heard from some passing Caffres the

unpleasant news that Dubois was laid up below the Berg with a bad knee, and had built himself a hut. We couldn't at all understand neither seeing or hearing from him, so determined to make a move to the top of the pass, and try if we could carry the cart piecemeal down the path and go and find Dubois. There were now about seventeen men in the camp who were ready to go as bearers, so we called them up, shewed them the goods, and they all agreed to a certain payment; so the next day we packed the cart, inspanned four of the hardiest bullocks, and having given the Caffres their loads we started, reaching my old camp, at the head of the pass, about an hour after dark, and were very glad to get some supper and turn in, as we had had a long walk and a great deal of hard work in getting the cart up a steep hill with no road. Christian was to come with us, the other driver being left in charge of the wagons. Early the next morning we took the cart to pieces, and tried to get the Caffres to help us in carrying down the body to begin with, which they were most unwilling to do; so it ended in I and Kemp and Christian having to go in front, and the Caffres were supposed to hold the hind part of the body. Woodroffe went in front to cut away the bush where necessary. It was very hard work. Sometimes we had to lift the whole thing from one step of rock to the next, and the Caffres worked most unwillingly, declaring it was of no use, for if we got it down it could not travel through the country under the Berg. At last, after about three hours' toil, and when we were within an hour of the river, they all declared they would go back to their kraals if we persisted with the cart, and so, afraid of losing them, I had to give in, and there the body of the cart remained at the bottom, the pole and wheels at the top, never more to be united; all the trouble and expense connected with this confounded delusion thrown away, and, worse than all, the idea of enabling E.

to travel comfortably by means of wheels entirely dispelled. Scrambled up the pass again and thought over our next move. Sent back a Caffre with the four oxen to the wagons; saving the bullocks from certain death, being my only consolation under our failure. Then it was settled that I should go down the Berg to search for Dubois. So the next morning early I started off with Christian, who was the only one amongst us able to talk Caffre and English. I also took one of the ponies to see whether it could get down the pass, and two or three men to carry my blankets and some food. Woodroffe went back to the wagons, as he wished to send off some letters to Natal, having almost decided to leave us at this place, as, owing to our numerous delays, the holiday he had allowed himself from his farm work was nearly run out. I reached the Oliphant river in about two hours and a half, which I waded across, and, from information received from some Caffres, we struck into a footpath which brought us to some kraals, where we were told we should hear of Dubois, and sure enough, by great good luck, I found him late in the afternoon surrounded by natives who were telling him the story of our attempt to get the cart down the hill, much to his and their own astonishment; but fortunately his bad knee was all a myth as he was all right, only rather tired from hard walking and short commons for the last four or five days. I found that he had sent off the two men he took with him to some still more distant kraals to seek for bearers, and not being able to persuade any other man to face the pass he was unable to communicate with us. I was much relieved to find him well, but equally disgusted to find also that he had not been able to get a single bearer, the fact being that the diamond fields were the attraction to any Caffres that cared to work, as they not only could get very high wages there, but could also manage to pick up a good deal in other ways. I

offered them their own price in money or goods, but all vain; they declined to come with us. Dubois was on his road back to us, and we arranged to start for our camp next morning, passing the night at the kraal where we were. As Dubois had seen giraffe and other game already, I went out for an hour or two in the evening and had a shot at some hartebeest and harrisebuk, but failed to kill either. The night was very mild, and we preferred to sleep under a tree to the Caffre hut, which was probably full of unpleasant and rest-disturbing inmates. The Caffres are, on the whole, a very hospitable set of fellows; they are quite ready to make you welcome at their huts and provide you with anything they have got, fetch your water, light a fire, and do what they can for you. Next morning after breakfast we started for the camp, and after another climb up the pass, which I was now getting used to, we rejoined E. and the rest, and settled to start next day with the few men we had, and take down the two ponies besides E.'s donkey.

July 12th. Packed up as we thought finally and were ready to start, when suddenly all the Caffres declared they wouldn't go, and were really preparing to go back, when fortunately the hunter La Mule arrived from below the Berg with three men and a small boy whom he had persuaded to come with him. Thereupon there ensued a vast amount of talking—Dubois talked, La Mule talked, till they were tired, to the obstinate and aggravating niggers, but for some time they would not yield; at last about half consented to go on, but required the payment agreed upon to be doubled, and as I didn't care what they wanted so long as they would go, this part of the talk was soon settled. We now had to reduce our goods again to smaller dimensions as there were only eleven bearers, and when we came to put out eleven loads for the men and four for the ponies, our supply of necessaries, not to say

luxuries, seemed very small, and I proposed that E. should return to the wagons while I went down for a week or a fortnight's hunting, and take my chance of finding any game near the Berg; but no, E. most pluckily determined to go on, and though I confess I thought it looked awkward, and wondered how we should get on, still we could but come back, so again we said we were ready. Again the Caffres grumbled, and said they wouldn't carry boxes of any kind, as they would hurt their heads and shoulders; it was no use remonstrating, so we just huddled our things into some sacks we happened to have, and at last the men took up their loads and started. Dubois had to return to the wagons to see after the oxen, &c., and was to rejoin us next day. We now had to say good-bye to Woodroffe, which we were very sorry for, as one felt that if we were to get any shooting at all the time had now arrived; but he did not think it worth his while to go down the Berg for a few days only, and he could not spare time for a longer stay; so we parted, leaving a quantity of our goods in his care lying about the camp, and which he kindly promised to see were got back somehow to the wagons. So off we set at last:—self, E., Kemp, the black girl Sara, who carried a basket of E.'s things on her head; two ponies and "Jack," the donkey, the dog "Lion;" eleven men as bearers, and a very small boy who led the first pony, and three hunters, composing the party. We reached the Oliphant about dusk, and prepared for our first night in the "fly" country. E. accomplished the descent wonderfully, and we both felt in first-rate trim for walking, and in really exuberant health and spirits, only so sorry to leave behind so much that I had intended to carry with us for our comfort. I had brought up goods sufficient to pay nearly one hundred men, and here we were with only eleven. We had the little tent for E. and me to sleep in, and a

canvas sheet for Kemp and Dubois just hung over some rough sticks at night for shelter from the dews. We could only take 80-lbs. of flour, a little tea and coffee, some rice, our blankets, rifles, ammunition, some pots and pans, and a few clothes; but I hadn't even a spare coat, and, what I regretted more, no liquor, only one precious bottle of brandy which we kept sacred in case of illness—it was too provoking when we had such plenty at the wagons. Fortunately we had got a little “bell tongue,” *i.e.* dried meat, with us, which we determined to eke out as long as possible till we got some game.

July 13th. Sunday. I thought it better to move on a little way just to keep the men going, so we cut across a bend in the river, and after a walk of about three hours we camped again, and hourly expected Dubois to arrive. The Caffres were now out of food, having eaten the few mealies they had brought down with them, so I and La Mule went out to look for game, but neither of us had any luck. By careful management we reckoned we Europeans might each have a piece of damper or a little rice per day, and, of course, trusted to get plenty of meat by the help of our rifles. Our first day's experience in this country proved the Caffres were right, and that it was impossible to take anything on wheels, owing to the rocky and broken ground, and the continual steep and narrow gullies we had to scramble down and up again, and at each of which the cart would have to be taken to pieces and carried over. E. rode “Jack,” and got along very well. The reeds on the edge of the river are the first of the kind we have seen so high; they are quite fifteen feet, with a long feathery flower at the top, and are very graceful and ornamental. The Caffres evidently wanted some grub, and I was very anxious for Dubois to turn up, as not being used to them I didn't know whether they

expected us to give them any of our precious and small store of flour or rice.

July 14th. Our small supply of meat gone and no food for the men; and I am much afraid of their refusing to stop with us. I and Kemp and La Mule hunted early, but we got nothing, though I saw the impala for the first time, a beautiful antelope, reddish in colour, and about the size of a large fallow deer; they are often found in large herds, and it is a beautiful sight to see them scamper off, bounding and leaping to a great height, apparently through mere exuberance of spirits. I never saw any buck jump like them. In the evening I fortunately shot a little buck called a duiker, which gave us a meal, and just a mouthful for the men. Dubois returned in the afternoon with the other two hunters, who were to use the large rifles (a 6 and 8-bore) that I had bought at Capetown, and thus they would be available in case I wanted them myself, otherwise I could not have got them carried; as it was I had to carry the Express myself, and Kemp the 12-bore during the march. Next day we all turned out again early, but with no success; the fact being that so close under the Berg game was very scarce, and we found we made a great mistake in not pushing on instead of waiting for a dinner. Dubois came across a dead carcass of a koodoo which the lions had killed, and though the meat was half rotten and smelt horribly, the Caffres ate it readily and were thankful for it. In the afternoon we moved our camp about five miles lower down the river. One of the hunters saw a lion, but forbore to shoot—I wished I had had the chance.

July 16th. Wednesday. Our wedding day. A poorish dinner for the occasion—not even a pudding, much less a bottle of champagne. One really longed for the chance of ten minutes in a pastrycook's shop. Hunted early and shot another duiker; but what was that among so many. One of the men was sick, and though we made an attempt

to get him on by putting his load on a pony it was no use, and we had to stop after going about half a mile. I was getting very disgusted at the small distance we had accomplished since we left the mountain. In the afternoon I hoped to change the luck by trying for game on the other side of the river, and succeeded in killing a water-buck, one of the large species of antelope, and thereby was much relieved in my mind on the score of food for the present. One of the Caffres with me went back for assistance, and the meat was soon cut up and carried into camp. It certainly was not to be called good, but we were glad of anything that was eatable. I cut the head off as it was a male, and after skinning and cleaning it thoroughly we put it up in a tree, hoping to be able to pick it up on our road home. The weather was perfect—warm nights, and thermometer about 70 Fahrenheit, as near as I could guess, in the shade during the day. The sun rose about six and set at seven o'clock. We have seen a good deal of spoor of game about, but not yet any of the larger kinds. I have already experienced the strength of the thorns, especially the "wait a bit," which is almost sure to bring you up with a round turn if you go within its reach, and has repeatedly lifted my hat off when passing under them. The branches have a straight sharp thorn on one side, and on the other a second enemy in the shape of a crescent, which holds tight while the other pricks you. The whole country is one large grove of thorn trees of different kinds, varying in size from a little bush to a good-sized white-thorn. A great deal of the ground is very stony and broken by an endless roll of ridges, a flat piece of ground of any size being very scarce; in fact, it was rather a fatiguing country to travel through, as, if we kept close to the river, we continually met with steep though narrow gullies hollowed out by the water, which the ponies and "Jack" found some difficulty in struggling in and out of

as well as the humans; and if we left the river bank the ground was stony, and the ridges almost as bad as the gullies. We miss our wagons very much already, with all our small comforts and plenty of room to stow our odds and ends; but in one way we are the gainers by having brought so little, as the packing and unpacking of every small article is troublesome, and takes up much time. A box for small things to travel in safely and without packing would be very useful, but the Caffres are our masters and they object to boxes. We find it difficult to make the ground a comfortable seat and table too, and often think with regret of our flour, spirits, and other good things left in the wagons, but nothing will much matter as long as we keep well and can kill plenty of game. I find the necessity of providing food for our party with the rifle makes one hunt very keenly and perseveringly. Monkeys seem very numerous of all sizes. The Caffres had a hunt to-day amongst the reeds, and managed to kill a huge cane rat which they ate with relish.

July 17th. The sick man better this morning and able to march again, though the ponies had to carry his load. On the march I saw the "blue" vildebeest (gnu), a larger species than that we saw on the high lands, besides zebra and koodoo, which were all fresh kinds of game to me. I find it difficult enough to see the animals when pointed out to me amongst the trees, much less get a shot at them, but I suppose one will improve by practice. "Lion" managed to nobble a bushbuck this afternoon, which was an acceptable addition to the larder, the meat being excellent. On the march we passed through some deserted huts, in the midst of large gardens sown with a kind of bird seed called, in Caffre, inyout, but the crop had failed, and the natives had been obliged to seek food elsewhere. Camped again about 4 p.m.

July 18th. Started by way of a change before break-

fast, but didn't attempt it again, as a kind of track we had hitherto found by the river suddenly ceased, and we were obliged to make a *détour* to avoid some impassable rocks by the river; and finding we could cut off a deep bend we struck inland, till our walk lasted about four hours instead of one as we had intended, and we were much in want of our breakfast when we struck the river again and camped; and preferred on future occasions to eat before starting. We were now literally in the pathless bush. Passed some grand forest trees and many tracks of the hippopotamus. We found ourselves, when we halted to camp, in the angle formed by junction of the Oliphant and Umtlatsi rivers; and a fine piece of wild scenery our camping ground was. Some buffalo spoor shewing quite fresh near our tents, I started after breakfast to follow on it with two or three men, but finding the game had crossed the Umtlatsi, and not knowing where to find a ford, I turned back to camp, and we sent out some men in the afternoon to explore the river and ascertain where we could cross over next morning. Shot my first impala. Have walked nine hours to-day; a fair day's work and makes one glad to go to bed. On the march I am generally a little a-head with a hunter or two, looking out for a chance at the game; then comes the small boy, about ten years old, leading one of the ponies carrying a load; the next follows by himself, and then comes E. on "Jack," with Sara and Kemp bringing up the rear; behind, at various intervals, are the bearers, who walk a short distance at a great pace and then sit down for a rest, so we see little of them on the march. I always carry the Express rifle, partly because there is no one else to carry it for me, and partly because it is a very handy weapon in case of coming across game. As we walk along we often hear the beautiful and ringing note of the "bellbird" as it is called out here, but whether this is the correct

name I don't know. The lid of our small mustard tin came off to-day on the Caffre's head, so we are now minus this condiment, which was one of the few extras we had. Dubois, not strong at the best of times, unfortunately has wrung his heel with new boots, so we are not able to get over the ground as fast as we could wish. Caffres short of food again, in fact have not yet had what they call sufficient for twenty-four hours. We eat an enormous amount of meat ourselves, as it is our principal, in fact almost our sole food, for the flour is only produced about twice a week, and then in very small allowances. Our scouts had been some way up the river, but reported there was no good crossing, so we had to make the best of a ford close to the camp; it was rather deep, but the ponies could just walk through if they kept in the right channel; so E. mounted the biggest and I the other, and in we went. My pony lost its footing and took to swimming at once, so I was obliged to let go E.'s bridle, but La Mule had got hold of it on the other side and led the pony over safely. I didn't envy the bearers having to carry their loads, and one fellow dropped his—the rice bag—into the middle of the water, but it was quickly fished out and none the worse. Sara didn't like the look of it at all, and remained on the wrong side after we were all over; but La Mule went back, and, after almost dragging her into the river, got her across with the water just up to her chin. We marched about nine miles and camped again. Hunted in the afternoon and shot a waterbuck. Our camp was high above the river in a pretty spot, and a nice place to spend Sunday. We were looking forward to our day's rest, and were never sorry when Sunday came round. I find it a great comfort always having the river to run down to for a bath, after coming in hot and tired, just before dinner. Shot a specimen of the "bellbird," and E. skinned it carefully.

July 20th. Sunday. Crossed the river on a pony in the afternoon to reconnoitre, but found no difference in the ground, so determined to keep our own side. E. tried to make a plum pudding, using the fat of the waterbuck as suet, but the latter was cold in one's mouth before we could eat it, though anything in the pudding line was most acceptable. We have now been travelling about a week, but, owing to one reason and another, we have got over very little ground. Our course has been east by a little north, at least the river has led us in that direction, and this is our only guide, for none of our Caffres know the country.

July 21st. Started at 8-30, and struck away into the bush to cut off a bend in the river. Shot a bushbuck on the march, and after getting into camp I hunted again, and coming across two buck koodoos I killed them both with a right and left from the Express. Was much pleased, and hastened back to camp to send out the Caffres for the meat before it grew dark. I also had a shot at some zebra, but couldn't kill one. The Caffres gave us a specimen of their eating powers at last, as the koodoo meat was excellent; and though they had a good deal of lost time to make up, they ate enough to carry them on a good bit further as well as clear off old scores. I have been much astonished at the (what to me is almost miraculous) instinct the Caffres possess, enabling them invariably to hit off the camp. I never think of stirring without one, or I should be always lost, as, even if I could find the river, I should not know if the camp were up or down; but these fellows literally walk straight on the tents when one gives the word to go to camp, although they may have only arrived at the place two or three hours previously, and never been in the country before; and I never knew them make a mistake. One ridge to me was exactly like another, and we could seldom see any distance;

there were no striking landmarks to guide us, and yet, after hunting first one way and then another, following game, twisting and turning in all directions, a Caffre was never at a loss for the direction in which the camp lay. We tried a roast joint of venison this evening, with three sticks and a string to spin it with in front of a huge wood fire, and it turned out a complete success, and a pleasant change from our everlasting frying-pan, besides saving our precious stock of very bad butter and fat. Our camp at night is very picturesque: we have a huge fire for ourselves, round which we sit and talk after dinner; E. knitting by the firelight seated on a cartridge case, our only apology for a chair; the meat hanging up in a bush close by; the white tents shewing brightly on each side of the fire; and at a little distance from us six or seven small fires are flickering probably under a big tree where the Caffres have taken up their quarters, jabbering and eating incessantly, their naked and swarthy forms gleaming in the firelight. The donkey and ponies are tied up as close as possible to the fires for safety from any stray lion or panther that might take a fancy to them. We are much amused at the extraordinary way the Caffres enjoy their smoke; one fellow takes a huge draw at the pipe, and swallowing a lot of the smoke immediately begins to cough with all his might, and this seems to be their idea of pleasure, coughing repeatedly with such violence that it is a wonder they do not break a blood vessel. We often hear the plaintive scream of the "night baby" as it moves amongst the boughs of the trees, and the occasional howl of the jackal and wolf. We are much disgusted to find that the composition with which we rubbed the outer coverings of our two little flour bags to make them water-proof has, owing to the heat, gradually soaked through into the flour; and, as resin was used in making the

composition, we frequently get a mouthful of scone tasting strongly of that most unpalatable ingredient.

July 22nd. Off again early this morning, and as the river here took an almost straight course for some miles, we kept close along its banks. We are hoping to reach some kraals to-morrow, where possibly something eatable may be got, or perhaps another bearer or two. The Caffres are always following the "honey bird" when they see it, as it leads them on from tree to tree to the bees' nest, and when successful in finding honey they always leave a share for the bird. It has often taken our men to bees, but no honey, so I conclude it is the wrong time of year to find it. One can't help thinking of the green peas, strawberries, and cream, and the other good things at home, when we should be thankful even for a turnip. I shot a buck impala, and we put his head, after cleaning it, up in a tree to wait till called for. Had a delicious bathe in the river, but afraid to go in for a swim of any distance as there are so many alligators about, and they are very fond of catching the unfortunate niggers by the legs, who naturally stand in great awe of the monsters.

July 23rd. Heard the lions "roaring after their prey" last night for the first time, and one was very close to our camp. The dog was terrified, and crouched in between Dubois and Kemp. On the march the hunters had kept close along the banks of the river on the look out for hippopotami, and found some in a deep pool; but we had cut off a bend as usual where we could, and consequently left them behind; the men did not disturb them, and we shall be almost certain to find them in the same place to-morrow. We saw some natives on the opposite bank of the river, and called to them for information about the village which we knew was not far off, but could get nothing out of them as they were evidently much alarmed. In the evening I went out and shot another koodoo which

the Caffres had a long chase after, but ultimately secured; they are in great spirits at the idea of hippopotamus meat to-morrow, as it is very fat and rich, and their favourite food. I begin to find the three or four hours' march in the morning, and another turn for about the same time in the afternoon after game, is quite as much as one can do every day, especially as we have no stimulants, and a diet that we are not used to. A schoolboy couldn't revel in a pastry cook's more than we should if we could get a chance. We put another head in a tree to-day and smeared it well with wood ashes to help dry it, and also make it less tempting to the vultures.

July 24th. After despatching a couple of men to hunt up the kraals and see if they could buy us any eatables, we started off to the sea-cow pool, E. going with us on the donkey. Sara and Klangilan were the only two left in the camp, all the others turning out for the day's sport. We reached the pool after an hour's walk, and took up our position on some rocks to watch for the hippo's. After waiting some time the Caffres reported them a little lower down, so off we ran, and there sure enough, in a deep but small pool, we saw them repeatedly coming up to the surface with a snort and a blow, throwing up the water in two small jets through their nostrils; they are extremely curious, and like to see anything that excites them, besides trying to detect the presence of an enemy by sniffing the wind. I sat down with my rifle, and with my first shot I hit one. I had several more shots, sometimes hitting and sometimes missing, but found it very difficult shooting, as they only give one such a short time, perhaps two or three seconds, to take aim, coming up first on one side and then the other, and unless the bullet enters the brain the shot is not fatal—just above the eye, or under the ear, is the best place to aim at. They kept moving up and down the river from one pool to another,

and suddenly I heard a great shouting from the Caffres a little distance above me. I ran up as fast as I could to the upper pool, and was just in time to see an old bull hippo trotting over some sand and shingle towards the water; he had evidently found his quarters in the river uncomfortable, and was anxious to get ashore, but was headed by the Caffres who yelled at him from the rocks. He had come out close to E., who had a capital view of him, and was calmly surveying him through her eye-glass. Dubois and I blazed away at him, but though we found a quantity of blood he blundered back again into the water before we could stop him, and we saw him no more. It was great luck our seeing one on land as they will not often break cover. We waited on till nearly dark with the hope of seeing a dead one come up, but none appeared, and we had to leave for the camp. After being mortally wounded they sink, and in about two hours, becoming inflated with gas, they rise to the surface and float. It was a most exciting though unsuccessful day's sport. We reached camp ravenous as usual, and found, to our disgust, the officious Sara had spoilt our dinner by roasting the joint to a cinder. The two Caffres had returned, having found the kraal, but reported they could get nothing to eat there, in fact the people themselves were hard up for food; and no bearers to be got.

July 25th. It came on to rain about daylight, so there was no moving the camp, and we found it rather uncomfortable, besides which a most peculiar and unpleasant odour came up from the ground, the air being generally most oppressive. One could understand the unhealthiness of this country during the rainy season—the smell was almost as bad as a drain. Everything perishable was huddled under our tents; and Kemp and Dubois came into our apartment for breakfast, which we had some difficulty in cooking. The unfortunate Sara was thoroughly

drenched. Some of the Caffres went off early to look again for any dead hippo's, but found none. They had scarcely a bite for breakfast yesterday; nothing last night or this morning, so, as the rain ceased about mid-day, we hunted for meat, but both Dubois and myself were unsuccessful (the Caffre hunters never seem to kill anything), and again the men went supperless to bed. The fact was we were in a district unfrequented by game. Next morning the Caffres had no breakfast, and had now been more than forty-eight hours without food; but we thought it better to push on in the hope of coming amongst game again. It rained a little in the early morning, but cleared up to allow us to start about eight o'clock. We passed two or three temporary huts which some Caffres had rigged up to live in while they were engaged in smelting ironstone, and forging their picks or hoes. The furnace was rather ingeniously contrived, made of clay baked in the sun, and the whole place was covered with heaps of charcoal which they had collected from a considerable distance. I saw lots of the ironstone which seems abundant hereabouts, and there seemed to be a very large per centage of ore in it. On the march I killed two waterbucks and Swartboy a third, so there was plenty of meat; but the men, after having a meal, declined to carry any for their supper. I had now become rather callous about their running out of meat, as they had so often left it behind rather than carry any on for the next meal; but in the afternoon I killed another waterbuck, so in this instance they didn't suffer for their laziness. A new Caffre turned up as a bearer, and two or three others were willing to go on with us a few days for the sake of some food, so we are well off for hands just now. The time these fellows go without food and make no complaint is astonishing; and I really believe I was far more anxious about the matter than they were. Our chance of reaching

the Limpopo, of which the Oliphant is a tributary, seems very small, judging by the time we have already taken to do so short a distance; and Dubois does not hurry the Caffres as much as he might.

We have been much struck by the enormous mounds thrown up by the white ants; we saw many of them ten or fifteen feet high, and measuring perhaps fifty yards round the base, tapering up to a peak at the top; and in some parts, I believe, they are found much larger. These ants are most destructive little brutes, travelling in all directions under ground, and we find it necessary repeatedly to move our flour sacks, or they would soon work a hole into them; they always commence operations by plastering the object of attack with mud, and passing through the earth eat their way in without ever shewing themselves. My watch came to grief to-day which is a great bore, but fortunately E. has one still going. We calculate that we have now done about eighty-four miles travelling, but at least half this must be deducted for our windings, thus leaving only the other half to be reckoned as distance made from point to point. Fortunately the ponies and "Jack" are still well, and able to travel in spite of the "fly," which has been most numerous all through the country we have travelled. Our clothes are beginning to look rather shaky from their contact with the thorns, but fortunately E. is the best off in this respect. This afternoon some men were despatched to a neighbouring kraal to try again for some grain or other food, and also for bearers.

July 27th. Sunday. Dubois in the afternoon went out on a pony to reconnoitre, and fell in with a herd of buffalo which nearly ran over him, but not wishing to alarm them he didn't shoot, and I am hoping for a chance to-morrow. Some Caffres turned up from the kraals we had sent to, and brought some meal made from the inyout or birdseed,

and also a huge water melon which was a great treat, being most delicious and refreshing; and they also produced some nuts, the kernels of a small fruit called umganu which the elephants are particularly fond of, and which is supposed to intoxicate them when they eat too much of it. These welcome supplies we bought for a few beads, the water melon alone being worth a fiver. Swartboy shot a fine specimen of a koodoo, the head of which I persuaded a strange Caffre to carry back to the wagons for a few rings of brass wire. We also bought some juala, or Caffre beer, but Dubois said it was badly made, and certainly was to my taste undrinkable. Our old friend the sun, with a clear blue sky, appeared again about mid-day as bright as ever—a pleasant change after three days of damp and gloomy weather. I often see partridges and rabbits as well as other winged game, but, never carrying my fowling piece except for a stroll on Sunday afternoons after small birds, I have little opportunity of shooting them. We have heard of some sea-cow down the river, and are looking forward to another turn at them. There are some curious isolated hills dotted about at long intervals composed entirely of rock, but to what cause they owe their formation I am not sufficiently a geologist to tell. I often wonder, not that there are so few inhabitants in this district, but what with the Tsetse “fly,” fever, barrenness of soil, and such frequent bad harvests, I am surprised to find any people at all. Caffres picks are the principal medium of exchange amongst the people; not used as one would suppose for tilling the ground, but for purchasing wives, sixty picks being the usual price for a better half; and as a man by selling his daughters can buy fresh wives, the former are looked upon as valuable additions to a family, while the sons are comparatively worthless. It is odd, too, that though the natives prefer the European-made picks for tilling the

ground, yet, according to Dubois' account, only those of native manufacture are accepted as the price of a wife.

July 28th. Dubois and I started early to hunt up the buffalo spoor, leaving E., with Kemp and the bearers, to follow at their leisure; but we might have saved ourselves the trouble, as we found the herd had crossed the river in the night, followed by two or three lions. The chances of coming up with them were small, so we gave up the chase and went back to join the others. We did a good day's march, walking from nine o'clock till past two; E. hugging the remains of the water melon as she sat upon "Jack," thinking it too precious to leave behind. Crossed another stream called the Umtasena, which was nearly dry, and pitched our camp at its junction with the Oliphant. In the night there was a considerable alarm caused by the unwelcome appearance of some lions, who, regardless of the fires, came right into our camp, evidently having evil designs against poor old "Jack" and the ponies. Fortunately a Caffre saw them and fired a gun which frightened them off. I slept so soundly that I knew nothing of it till the next morning; but there plainly to be seen was the spoor of three lions, who had crept up the bank from the river and passed close by our tent. Shot an enormous vulture measuring seven feet from tip to tip of the wings. We passed close by some deserted huts, which had been vacated two years before, the king of the country having sent a party of armed men to kill off all the people of the kraal. An old man, one of the few that escaped alive, has lately come to our camp on the look out for any spare meat that we may kill. In this case the village had incurred the royal displeasure by declining to send the number of picks demanded as tribute, perhaps through inability; but the anger of the chief or one of his great men is easily incurred, and consequently a massacre of this kind is not an uncommon occurrence in

these parts, though it seemed to us a severe punishment for the offence; and we passed a body of men, though I did not happen to see them, who were bound upon a similar errand of slaughter.

Next morning on the tramp again, and crossed the Oliphant to cut off a large bend and avoid some almost impassable rocks, which "Slangey" warned us against, as he had a lively recollection of the struggle the Caffres had with their loads at that spot when coming out by this route with Erskine. Coming suddenly upon some fresh buffalo spoor after going about two hours, we pitched the tent, and, after seeing E. settled for the night, I and Dubois started to follow up the buffalo with hunters and Caffres. They led us across the river, and we had to swim where they had crossed which rather delayed us; but hitting off the spoor again on the other side we followed on, and after being led a long way into the bush we ultimately came up with them, and I saw my first buffalo. I got a shot at a cow wounding it badly, and then there was a general skurry of the whole herd, shouts from the men, and some wild shots at the retreating buffaloes; but the wounded one lagged behind, and after a few more shots we finished it off. I was sorry it turned out a cow instead of a bull, as the latter has a finer head; but we had the pull in another way, as the cow's meat is much the best, and this proved excellent and in capital condition. It being almost dark by the time we killed it, I settled to sleep where we were, and sent off two Caffres with a note to reassure E., and also a bit of beef for her supper. We then skinned the animal and cut off the head. We made our dinner off the heart, cooking it as best we could. A little water would have been acceptable as we were thirsty after such a long hunt, but we were a long way from the river. The Caffres cut some grass for our beds with their useful assegais, and I was soon sound asleep curled up

close to the fire. We started off at daylight next morning and were glad to reach our camp again, and enjoyed a cup of hot coffee. Remained stationary, as it was some distance for the men to bring the meat in, and spent the afternoon in cleaning the head which was stowed away as usual in a tree. These buffaloes are very poor creatures compared to the North American bison, both in appearance, size, and speed, though, according to Dubois, they often show fight when wounded. We got a good supply of fat from the cow when the men came in which was most acceptable, and carefully melted down and preserved. We had long been looking out for a supply of suet to enable us to get another plum pudding, which, with a sirloin of beef and some excellent marrow bones, gave us an extra good dinner. Shot a partridge very like a "Frenchman," with similar red legs and plumage.

July 30th. Moved camp again the next morning, but were soon brought to a standstill by the Caffres reporting a hippopotamus close by. It was a solitary old bull, and Dubois and I fired a few shots at him, but he was too cunning to show much of his head above the water; and after waiting an hour or two we left him to follow E. and the Caffres, who had gone on to find a camping ground. "Lion" succeeded in pulling down a young harrisbuck close to the camp before I arrived, and being anxious to get a specimen of this buck I went out to hunt them up, but was unable to find the herd again; I was glad, however, to run across another of the endless variety of the antelope tribe, a single eland; but he caught sight of us first, and I couldn't get near him for a shot. While following the eland I suddenly heard a shot, followed by a great scuffling of hoofs, and almost immediately a small troop of bull buffaloes rushed past me. I blazed both barrels, but apparently without effect, as they all kept on till we could see them no longer. We then went to see

what was going on in the direction of the shot, and found La Mule had wounded an old bull who had got amongst the reeds by the river, and was consequently an awkward customer to approach as it was very difficult to see him, and at any moment he might bolt out upon us; but after using great caution he was despatched, and we returned to camp, where I found Dubois knocked up with a slight attack of ague. I often have to go out without him, and feel the want of a white companion, especially as I can't understand the Caffres. Next day we moved on as usual, and E. was taken to see the dead bull as we passed by. It was a good specimen, but, thinking I should be sure to get another, we did not trouble about the head. Saw several alligators sunning themselves on the sandy shallows in the river, and shot at two of them; but though I killed one the brute was so close to the edge that he rolled over into the water and disappeared—unless hit just behind the forearm they are comparatively invulnerable. Passed several plants of the vegetable ivory, and saw some small birds with most beautiful plumage, blue and green with yellow wings; but, as usual, I hadn't got my fowling piece when I wanted it. A panther crossed the path just in front of E. and Kemp while on the march, but unluckily I was off the road, and did not get the chance of a shot. The Caffres, as usual, declined to carry on any meat from the buffalo and went supperless to bed, as I was unsuccessful in my afternoon's hunt. Next morning we finished our last bit of meat for breakfast, and we had a long and tiring day's march over some very broken ground, our passage by the river being barred by some precipitous rocks that ran down to the water's edge. Though the country round our camp looked very dreary and uninviting, Dubois and I both turned out in the afternoon to hunt, our own meat being done, and the Caffres as usual on starvation diet. I came across a herd

of zebras and succeeded in bagging two, one luckily being quite young; and Dubois shot another, so that we had enough meat to last over Sunday. I did not much fancy zebra for dinner, but it really turned out very good, being quite white and not unlike veal to the taste. Dubois declined to eat it, and preferred to go without—a strong measure, I thought, if there was anything eatable to be had. The zebras are beautiful creatures in their wild state, so quick and graceful; and I almost was sorry to shoot them, especially as they screamed so piercingly when wounded. I saved the head of the best specimen, and after taking the skin off and cleaning it, we put it with the skull in a tree, to take their chance with the rest till we come back. In the evening two of our men brought us a couple of ostrich eggs which they had found in a small ravine near the camp, and very good-naturedly handed them over to us—a most unexpected treat.

August 3rd. Sunday. E. made a capital omelette for our breakfast with one of the ostrich eggs, equal in bulk to about two dozen hen's eggs and quite sweet and good; it was a good meal for us four Europeans. Saddle of zebra and plum pudding for dinner. Very hot to-day, and little or no shade to be had outside the tent. E., as usual on Sundays, patching up my unfortunate garments which are generally rather ragged at the end of a week; and as I hadn't a spare suit it seemed doubtful if I should have any to walk back in. We are hoping to reach the Tabi in a day or two, a small river running into the Oliphant, and near which I expect to find plenty of game. I forgot to say I saw an ostrich yesterday, but did not at once recognise it as it was feeding when I first saw it, and looked in the bush like a beast with a long tail, and before I could get a shot it winded me and ran off. I find the Express an invaluable weapon carrying point blank for 150 yards, and thus generally enabling one to

take a shot without having to judge the distance. The hollow bullet it carries also inflicts a considerable wound, and is quite heavy enough for all except the large game. The Caffres have had a good feed, and are visibly larger than yesterday in consequence.

August 4th. Moved our camp again down the river, and came upon fresh spoor of the elephant, a small herd having evidently been down this morning to drink at the river. Of course we were all much excited at the chance of seeing the great game which I had quite given up all hopes of. We pitched the camp again at once, and I started off on the spoor with Dubois, the hunters, and some of the men; but we had not gone above a mile or two, when the Caffres suddenly called our attention to a rhinoceros about 100 yards off in some low scrub. A council of war was held to decide whether I should go after him and run the risk of disturbing the elephants with a shot, but a bird in the hand being worth two in a bush, and this being the first rhinoceros I had seen, and decidedly large game, I went towards him with Swartboy (the hunter I always took with me), and walking up to within 60 yards of him I fired, unfortunately not getting a very clear shot. I hit him somewhere in the shoulder, and instead of charging, as I fully expected, he shuffled off on three legs, and I fired again hitting him with the second barrel; but on he went much faster than we could run, and though we found traces of blood on the ground and bushes in several places, we couldn't come up with him though we followed the spoor for three or four miles, hoping he would come to a standstill. Finding I could not catch him we cast back again, and after a long trudge came up with Dubois who had kept to the elephant spoor, but as it was now getting late, and we had lost so much time, we thought it useless to go on, and made our way back to camp. It was fortunate we did so, as it turned

out afterwards that some Basuto Caffres had crossed the spoor a-head of us, followed it up and killed an elephant, so there was no chance for us, and we should have had a tremendous walk only to be disappointed at last. We shot two impalas close to camp to replenish the larder. Both kinds of rhinoceros, the "black" and "white," are found about here, the former being the smaller species, but much more pugnacious, and often attacking man without any provocation, which made us still more surprised at our friend turning tail after being wounded, as he was one of the "black" sort. They are difficult to kill, especially as the brain is well protected, and the hide is very tough over the vital parts of the body. The way the large game, and even the antelopes, run off when badly wounded is astonishing, and makes it very difficult to get them. I was much interested in the chase after the rhinoceros at seeing the, to me, almost marvellous manner in which Swartboy followed the spoor, tracking it over hard ground where I couldn't see an impression much less a footmark; but, like their power of finding their way in the bush, it is, I suppose, an instinct. A hard day's work, and very tired, but much encouraged at seeing signs of big game in our neighbourhood. "Lion," the dog, very seedy, and I am afraid cannot last long, poor fellow; but he has been of very little use to us, though one day he afforded us a most exciting scene by chasing a waterbuck into the river, and going in after him held on to his haunches, both dog and buck swimming. The river was very wide, with shallows at intervals; the combatants occasionally got on them, and then the dog tried to pull his game down; the next minute they were in deep water, and so they fought on for nearly half an hour, when ultimately the buck got ashore on the opposite bank, and both disappeared into the bush, when we lost sight of them, "Lion" turning up in the evening dead beat.

August 5th. Moved our camp again down the river, and on the way I came across a herd of gnus. While following up one of these that I had wounded, we fell in with some buffalo and killed one, which delayed us some time, and made us later than usual in pitching our tent. Seeing so much sign of game in the neighbourhood, and guessing we were in the angle formed by the Tabi and Oliphant rivers, or very near it, we determined to stop a few days and hunt up the game. In the afternoon I went out again, and found some more buffalo and also giraffe—the first of the latter I had seen, but could not get near them. Enjoyed some capital marrow bones from the buffalo for supper. Off out hunting early the next morning, and after walking some distance started some lions in the long grass, who were feasting on a buffalo they had killed the previous evening; but as I only just caught a glimpse of them running through the bush, I could not get a shot, nor should I have known what they were except for the excitement of some of the Caffres. We tried to follow up the spoor, but it was quite useless. Found another herd of buffalo and bagged one, but unfortunately I cannot get a bull. Sent back to the camp for more men to carry home the meat, and walked homewards. On the road I killed an impala, at least 300 yards, with the Express. We have now seen every kind of game to be met with in these parts except the elephant, including koodoo, eland, waterbuck, impala, harrisbuck, sessabie, gnu (two kinds), bushbuck, steinbuck, cracebuck, duiker, roan antelope, besides the blesbok and springbok in the Transvaal. It seems odd that there should not be one variety of the deer tribe proper amongst this list, but they all belong to the antelope class, and none have any branches to their horns. Then we have seen lion, rhinoceros, buffalo, giraffe, panther, wild boar, ostrich, zebra, hippopotamus, and alligator, making about twenty-five varieties in one

district. We told old "Slangey" this morning that as the chances were not in favour of our reaching his kraal, which was considerably further down the river, he had better start off at once while we were stationary, spend a day or two with his wife, and return to us as soon as he could. I sent a present of a blanket by him to his chief, and the promise of a bag of powder if he would send us back some bearers to help carry, as I am afraid the ponies will not last to go home, having grown very poor and feeble the last few days. "Slangey" was afraid to go alone, so we sent Bachi, one of the hunters, to accompany him, and if necessary shoot some game to supply them with food. The old fellow had brought a lot of odds and ends all the way from Maritzburg for his wife: cloth, cotton, needles, and other sundries, so I could not refuse to let him go though we half thought he would not return. We also gave him a piece of soap he asked for for his wife, and doubtless the use of it improved her appearance while it lasted. E. justly proud of an excellent pie of buffalo steak and kidney which she had cooked for our dinner; but as we had no covered pot the crust was first baked in the bottom of our tin dish, and then put over the meat which was then baked in the same way.

August 7th. Camp remained stationary, and I again was off directly after breakfast after game. While following up a wounded gnu I caught sight of a troop of giraffe, and immediately turned all my attention to them. After great difficulty I managed to creep up to within 200 yards and fired, hitting one on the shoulder, but they all started off and disappeared, the herd dividing into three parts, so when we got up to the place where they had been I did not know which to follow; but Dubois took one spoor, two Caffres another, and myself the third with Swartboy. In a little while we found by the spoor that the herd had united again, and after running and walking

some distance we caught sight of them, but could not see the wounded one; however, I got another shot, and this time wounded one so badly that we quickly caught it up and brought it to a standstill. Swartboy was eager to finish it off, but seeing it could not get away I enjoyed a good look, being within a few feet of the splendid creature, and then tried to drive it towards the camp for E. to see alive; but it refused to move, and so I dropped it with a bullet in the chest, and sent off a Caffre to bring E. on "Jack" to see it before the men touched the skin, &c. Lying down with my head against the body my feet just reached the hoofs, and from the head to the feet it measured seventeen feet. It proved to be a female giving suck, so we milked it into a calabash, and enjoyed a drink of really sweet and delicious milk. E. arrived in due time, and then we tried the marrow bones which are generally very good and contain an enormous quantity of marrow; but this one was so poor there was nothing to get from it. I cut off two or three round pieces of the beautifully marked skin, but, owing to its enormous thickness, we could only take a very little of it with us. In my absence a herd of buffalo had been down to the river to drink, and on returning had almost walked through our camp, apparently taking no notice of E. and Kemp who were standing by the fire watching them file leisurely by.—A pretty sight. Two Caffres arrived to-day from some kraals close to the Tabi, and told us we were within a short walk of that river, and also that there were some hippopotami in a pool a little way further down the Oliphant. They were old men, half starved in appearance, who had seen "Slangey," and been induced to come to us with the hope of getting some meat. They were the first Caffres I had seen with bows and arrows, and possessed even less than the usual amount of clothing. In consequence of their information we crossed the river next morning to avoid

some very broken and rocky ground, and pitched our tent near to the pool they pointed out as containing the sea-cows. Dubois was suffering from a slight attack of fever, and so I went down to the water with the Caffres, and there we found five or six of the hippopotami standing in some shallow water at the head of the pool, but they soon disappeared into the deep holes as we approached, and then commenced rising and blowing as usual. I had several shots, and succeeded in killing one at last. He came to the surface dead in about two hours, but we could not go in after him as one of his companions continued snorting round him, and would strongly have resented any attempt we might make to obtain possession of our prey; so we left him in the river for the night to give the survivors time to clear out of the pool. The evenings are deliciously cool, and I used to thoroughly enjoy the hour or two after dinner by the firelight with that inestimable comfort a pipe of good tobacco, talking over the events of the day, and arranging plans for the morrow. We used often to speculate whether "Jack" would last out to carry E. back again, and how long we might remain amongst the game so as to get back to the wagons before "Jack" should give in, or the rainy and unhealthy season overtake us. It was now one especially realized the value of a chair, as it is difficult to find an attitude of perfect repose upon the ground until we turned into our bed in the tent, composed of cut grass, a waterproof sheet, two or three blankets, a cotton sheet, which E. considered indispensable, and a diminutive pillow.

Next morning we were all down at the water-side, and found our friend floating under the opposite bank, so in we jumped, and after swimming him across we soon rolled him up high and dry on the sand and proceeded to cut him up. He proved a fine young bull in fair condition, but the hippopotamus is always fat under the belly. The skin in

several places was $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thick, and I cut off some strips to carry home to be made into "shamboks" or riding whips. The Caffres highly delighted with their prize, and carried nearly every scrap of the meat into camp. Kemp busy all day in running down the fat, of which we were much in want for frying purposes. The meat of the hippopotamus rather hard, but excellent in flavour and extremely rich, and made a really first-rate curry. I went out hunting during the afternoon, but found no big game on this side the river, and returned just in time to see the operation of cooking the foot of a hippopotamus for our Sunday breakfast to-morrow. The foot measures at the tread about 18 inches in diameter, and was cut off at about the knee joint. A hole was dug in the ground about 2 feet deep and 2 feet 6 inches across, and a huge fire piled over it; when this was burnt down a layer of green boughs was placed on the ashes, on them was laid the foot (the skin tied up tightly where cut off the leg), then another layer of boughs, the earth put back in the hole, and another large fire lighted on the top of all which was kept going for about six hours, and then allowed to die away, the heat of the ashes lasting all night. I found two natives had come into camp during my absence, and were willing to go on with us as bearers which was good news, as it made us easy about one pony's load. They told us of two or three parties of natives hunting the neighbourhood carefully for elephants, so that there is little chance of my seeing any.

August 10th. Sunday. Went down to the river for an early bath, and came back as Dubois was taking the sea-cow's foot out of the oven for breakfast; it turned out remarkably good eating, a little like calf's head. Sunday our day of rest as usual from travelling or hunting. E. busy mending, and cooking our Sunday dinner which was generally rather better than on week-days. One of the

old men I mentioned before, came back to our camp this morning, bringing with him some of his womenkind, who looked upon E. as something most uncommon, as no white woman had been seen in these parts before, and they were speculating whether such a portent signified a famine or a good harvest the following year. After breakfast some Caffres were sent to bring up the skull of the hippopotamus, and we cut the tusks out which are ivory, and the hippo seems to be the only beast besides the elephant which carries that valuable article. E. went over the supplies with Kemp, and found that she could allow us a little more flour than hitherto, owing to our having used it as sparingly as possible; the scones she makes for us are a great treat, only there is so little of them. Dubois had another attack of ague to-day, and evidently is not up to very much work, never having thoroughly recovered passing two unhealthy seasons in the fever country; but he is very useful as an interpreter, possessing a thorough knowledge both of the language and habits of the Caffres. It is most fortunate that our attempts to obtain a lady companion for E. came to nought, as there would not only have been another European to provide for out of our already too scanty supplies, but the presence of another lady would have been an additional cause of anxiety to me, and materially have increased the difficulties and discomforts we already have to contend with. The small amount each Caffre carries as a load entails a large number of bearers in a trip of this kind, and if comfort is an object I would recommend anyone to stick to the wagons, and choose their hunting grounds in those parts where wagons can travel. 40-lbs. is supposed to be a fair load for a Caffre, and he will not object to a long journey with this weight if it is not of a bulky or unwieldy shape. It is amusing to see them trying in every way to compress their loads into the smallest possible compass before starting for

the day's march. Though often extremely tiresome and aggravating, the Caffres are not, after all, much worse than their neighbours, and one cannot help being often amused at many quaint little traits in their character. They always give any European with whom they may be thrown a name of their own concoction, usually signifying some physical or mental peculiarity which they fancy they have detected in the individual. E. is called Quāsi Quāsi, *i.e.* "always on the look out;" Dubois is Mathala, or "ever ready to stop;" I rejoice in Mat-tat-tan, meaning "always on the go;" Kemp is Methlu-endöd "manly eyes;" and Woodroffe's name is Chinga, or "thick neck." As we cannot find out that there is any quantity of big game to be found within a few days' walk lower down the river, this will probably be our farthest point, as it will be better to spend all the spare time we have in hunting in this neighbourhood where we have found game, than in travelling on in search of fresh hunting grounds.

August 11th. I was out hunting all day with no success, getting only one shot at a gnu. I saw a troop of giraffe, but could not get near them. La Mule was more fortunate as, coming home, he separated from the rest, and met with a solitary bull buffalo which he bowled over. Finding there are wolves about the camp attracted by the smell of the hippopotamus meat, we put out a piece poisoned with strychnine, but though it was taken away we didn't succeed in finding the wolf; it is the only way to get these animals as they are very rarely seen in the daytime. The next morning, after sending a Caffre to reconnoitre on the Tabi river, where hippopotami were said to have been seen, I again went out with the hunters. I managed at last to kill a gnu, and sent his head back to camp, the meat not being worth eating. On my way home, after a most patient stalk, I crept within range of another herd of these animals, and bowled over a right and left with the

Express; as we ran up one recovered and went off with the herd, and we went after him, passing close by the other lying to all appearance dead: failing to catch the former we returned, and, to my chagrin, I found the latter had disappeared. Some of the Caffres had seen him lying down, and were walking towards him, when up he jumped and started off as lively as ever; they gave chase, but in vain, and we saw him no more. The last few days have been much hotter with the approaching spring. Poor Dubois ill again with a feverish attack. I managed, after much talking on his part, to buy a bow and arrows from one of the natives for four yards of salemore, a blue cloth that the women wear for a covering round their waists; but the man was most unwilling to sell them. Poor "Lion" has now gone blind with both eyes, and is in a most miserable plight, wasting away to a skeleton and refusing his food.

August 13th. Two more Caffres turned up who were willing to carry, and this enabled us to take the loads off the other pony, so that now we are much more independent of the animals, and we shall be saved from the trouble of fixing our awkward bundle of bedding on the saddle for the future. Out hunting again inland, as the Caffres could not find any traces of the hippopotami in the Tabi. Another bad day, only getting three impalas which we wanted for food, though I saw giraffe, wild boar, and gnu, so we settled to return to our old camp on the other side of the river to-morrow, though sorry to leave the spot we were living on, as it commanded a beautiful view of the Oliphant both up and down, and on the opposite bank an enormous mass of rocks, rising very abruptly from the river, formed a fine feature in the scenery round our camp.

August 14th. Turned our faces homewards, and camped again at our old resting place where we had arrived on the 5th. Kemp took charge of "Lion," and had considerable

trouble in getting the poor beast across the river. In the afternoon I hunted again over the old ground, but without success, as I saw nothing but two old buffalo bulls, and owing to a badly planted bullet failed in getting either. Dubois again unwell and obliged to remain in camp, and is evidently unfit for much exertion. I am glad to say Kemp keeps in excellent health and spirits, and being extremely handy and willing has contributed immensely to our comfort, seeing after all the camp arrangements and taking care of everything, and, more than all, by his being always at hand in case E. requires assistance either in camp or travelling, I am enabled to go out hunting without feeling uneasy on her account. Our camp furniture is not extensive, and of the commonest description, consisting of a few plates, mugs, knives and forks, with a frying pan, kettle, and a little tin dish for baking scones in; our table cloth is a piece of canvas sacking, and has lately become hardly distinguishable in its colour from the ground, but it serves to keep the plates, &c., out of the sand at our meals. Our china consists of an old jam pot, which is kept for E.'s especial benefit, as she objects to the metal cups for drinking out of. We have been let down by such gradual stages to our present life in the bush that it now seems quite natural to us. First the "African," then the coasting steamer to Natal, and then the wagon travelling; and in the same way I suppose we shall ascend the scale until, in our home life, the present trip will appear more like a dream than the reality it is now.

The sun has now become so hot that I have made the Caffres rig up an arbour of reeds from the river for E. to sit in during the day, as the tent is almost unbearable in the blazing sun. The new Caffre bearers seem most satisfactory, and less cantankerous than our old hands, and have made no difficulty about carrying the loads assigned to them. This is our first step homewards after

five months' travelling steadily outwards, and we are already trying to calculate the probable date of our reaching England. Next morning I again scoured the country after game, Dubois still too unwell to go with me. We found a herd of giraffe and, as usual, wounded one, but could not catch him up; it was most aggravating, as I followed this herd most patiently for hours until I could get a shot, and, as so often happened when stalking one particular kind of game, we were repeatedly within pistol shot of other animals which I didn't want. La Mule had rather a narrow escape when chasing the wounded giraffe, being suddenly charged by a rhinoceros whom he had not seen in the scrub, but he managed to get up a tree in time to save himself, as he expressed it, from being kissed by the brute. Going home I saw another herd of giraffe, and this time took a chest shot, but apparently without effect. I often wonder what the game I find out here are made of, as I generally hit the animal, but find it so difficult to stop him, and this not only with large but even with the small game. Reached camp about dusk, very tired after nine hours' hard work. Dubois had strolled out in the afternoon and luckily shot a koodoo, as the larder was almost empty. We find that the buffalo which were so plentiful here a few days ago have moved off up the river, so on Monday we shall move again to the camp higher up where we saw the elephant spoor—a few days there, and then we shall start in earnest for the wagons. The next day I went out to shoot for the pot, Dubois going in a second direction, and one of the hunters in a third. I killed nothing, but Dubois was more fortunate, and bagged another koodoo. My feet are beginning to complain, and I feel very footsore at the end of a day's hunting; and I am sorry to say my only pair of veldt shoes are rapidly coming to pieces.

August 17th. Sunday. Enjoyed a quiet day; and E.

had a bathe in the river, but was in a great fear of alligators. Poor old "Lion" was despatched with a charge of buck shot in the afternoon, as we could not have taken him on, and it was a kindness to put an end to his life. Swartboy went out on his own hook, and came back with the news that he had seen the buffalo again in their old quarters. Another Caffre turned up as a bearer, so we shall soon have enough to carry the heads we stowed away in trees on the road down. Old "Slangey" hasn't yet returned, but Dubois seems to think he is sure to turn up before we start. The ponies have lately become very weak, and scarcely able to travel any distance. "Jack" is in better case, but he is evidently sickly and falling away in strength and size.

August 18th. After an early breakfast I left E. and the rest of the party to make their way to the next camp a short distance off, and, with two or three Caffres, took another direction through the bush in search of game. We suddenly came across a rhinoceros, and creeping up within shooting distance, I fired, but, as in the former case, I found it difficult to get a good shot at the animal on account of the brushwood. The brute started off directly I fired evidently wounded, and followed by a young one about three parts grown, which I had not previously seen. I fired again at the latter and hit that also, but both kept on going at their best pace. Swartboy started after them as usual, and I was following him, when suddenly the Caffres in the rear began to holloa most vigorously, and, looking round, I saw another rhinoceros, evidently the paterfamilias, coming full tilt towards us; there was no time to run, so I blazed at him with both barrels at about forty or fifty yards, and was considerably relieved when he sheered off and disappeared into the bush—whether wounded or not I didn't know or care. We then went on after the other two, but though

we found traces of blood upon the ground and bushes, we never saw them again. It was most provoking, as I was extremely anxious to kill one of these enormous and extraordinary looking beasts, and this apparently was the only district they frequented, as it was the only place where we had seen fresh spoor. Shot an impala on the road home to camp, where I found E. safely arrived and ensconced in our old quarters. Dubois went out in the afternoon to kill something for the pot, but was unsuccessful.

August 19th. I again went out to look for rhinoceros, feeling it was my only chance; Dubois going in another direction, as the Caffres were on short commons. I saw two giraffes, but they saw us first, and were too much on the look out to allow me to approach them. They are splendid looking creatures until they begin to run, when they appear most ridiculous and ungainly, owing to their peculiar and awkward gait—a horse would easily catch them. After some further rambling we found a herd of buffalo, and, as usual, the one I wounded ran away by himself; but the Caffres instead of following him up went after the main body, hoping to kill one with a random shot, and we consequently got none at all. Followed the spoor of the herd, and suddenly came across La Mule who was out by himself, and had shot one out of the herd we were after. I was truly thankful for his luck, as the men would get a good feed again. Leaving them to cut up the meat I went on to camp with Swartboy, and coming across some wild boar I bagged one, the first I had killed, though we had seen them occasionally in the bush. I was much distressed on reaching camp to find I had lost the front sight of my heavy rifle, but with a little patience I succeeded in fitting in a piece of wood with which I made very fair practice at a mark. It is surprising to me how it happens that though I can hit almost a sheet of note

paper when practising at a mark, I cannot apparently hit the game in the right spot, or else, as I sometimes think, they go away and we lose them though mortally wounded. I have seen the impala shot through the heart and yet go away, and give us trouble to find him though stone dead. Enjoyed our buffalo marrow bones for supper. The Caffres roast and lay open the bones in a most artistic way, and seldom spoil any of the marrow in the operation, though they only have a blunt axe to work with. The fireflies appeared this evening in numbers, and were a pretty sight as they darted about the reeds and bushes by the water. Next day I settled to have one more try for the rhinoceros, though I felt we ought to be moving on homewards; and in the morning we found poor "Charger," Woodroffe's pony, lying dead near the camp, a warning to us not to delay too long; but E. wouldn't hear of going away till I had at least hunted here once more, and wished to remain for another week at this camp. A terribly hot day for walking, and I didn't see any rhinoceros. An unsuccessful skirmish with some buffalo, in which I got separated from Dubois and the hunters, being left with two of the new Caffres who couldn't understand a word I said; so gave up the chase, and very tired and footsore returned to camp feeling regularly done up, and that the hard work, the sun, bad living, and sore feet, were beginning to tell on our powers of walking.

August 21st. Moved the camp soon after daylight, intending to get over the ground in the cool. I was a-head as usual, and saw some hippopotami blowing in a pool of the river, and going down to the water I fired two or three shots at them. Presently Dubois and the hunters came up, and after a few more shots we succeeded in bagging a splendid bull specimen with a fine set of tusks: after coming up and floating dead, he sank again under a large rock, and we made several attempts to stir him up

by diving, but in vain ; and I was getting rather alarmed lest he should have got jammed amongst the rocks in some way, when he reappeared, and we pulled him out on a shelving bank of sand : just at this moment old "Slangey" and the hunter appeared upon the scene. We were glad to find the old fellow had kept his word and returned to us again. He brought a few mealie cobs as a present, and two men as bearers, being all he could get at his kraal in the way of eatables or men, the king having, shortly before his arrival, sent down for bearers to carry his ivory, and the messenger had levied black mail upon all the people round. We asked "Slangey" after the "missus," and he told us she was well, but very ugly, and had given him no "juāla," or beer, which he had been looking forward to ; and he also found an addition to the family had arrived in his absence. He brought me a letter from Erskine, who had gone into the interior from Delagoa Bay, and finding some Caffres coming into this district, sent a letter to me on the chance of their seeing us ; the men happened to arrive at "Slangey's" kraal while he was there, and passed the letter on by him, concluding rightly we must be the white men it was intended for. It seemed odd to receive a letter in such a place, and, of course, it was the merest chance I ever got it. It was an odd coincidence, but I have no reason to doubt the fact, as the Caffres believe in witchcraft and spiritualism, that the soothsayer at Klangilan's kraal told him he would catch us up, and arrive at the death of an elephant or hippopotamus. The chief sent his thanks for the blanket, and expressed his regret at being unable to send us more men. The quarrelling and row over cutting up the hippo amongst the Caffres for the best morsels was tremendous, so I retired from the scene, not without a shiver at seeing the alligators pulling under some of the entrails the Caffres happened to throw into the river, and unpleasantly near

the spot where we had been diving half an hour before. I was glad to lie down, as we had plenty of food now, my feet being much swollen and very painful. My veldt shoes were worn out, and Kemp had been trying to make them up again with a piece of raw hide, which, of course, would not keep soft, and I found it impossible to get into a pair of ordinary boots, as they were far too tight, and were unbearable in the hot sun upon the rocks and sand; so I had to make shift with some sandals cut out of a piece of buffalo hide, and fastened to the feet with thin strips of skin like the Caffres, and which are fairly comfortable when they have taken the shape of the foot. We white men have been much troubled the last few days with some nasty festers on our hands, caused by the prick of a thorn or the slightest abrasion of the skin, and which obstinately refuse to heal, owing, I suppose, to the poverty of the blood from want of proper food and stimulants, as up till the present time we had not suffered from anything of the kind. Fortunately E. has been free from them. The old hippopotamus proved to have a fine set of tusks, which the Caffres, with a good deal of labour, hacked out of the jaws with our little axe. E. contrived to make herself a pair of gaiters out of some koodoo skin, as a protection against the thorns, and as she had a pair of strong gloves I hope she will not get the fester I spoke of. She had to cut off part of the cuffs of her jacket yesterday to patch my unfortunate pants with, which, with my coat, are on their last legs.

August 22nd. The Caffres very busy drying the hippo meat, by cutting it up into strips and hanging it on the bushes in the sun till it became almost as hard as a board; and partly because they like this meat extremely, and partly that I have told them we must push on, and not spend more time than can be helped in looking for game, they appear willing to carry on a supply with them. In

the afternoon we made a short march to our old camp, where we found the ostrich eggs; their shells which we had hidden in the sand were all safe, but the skull of the zebra which we had placed in a tree was gone, though the skin was still there. We had to leave the saddle and bridle that the dead pony carried at our last camp, as the heads, &c., were of more consequence to carry on. Next morning we were up early for another march, and I had been looking forward to a lift on our remaining pony, "Dumpling," but the poor beast had done his last day's work, and we found him unable even to get up from the ground though still alive. I did not like to kill him, though perhaps it would have been kinder, and so we left him to his fate, probably a passing lion or panther. Poor old "Jack," too, was evidently very weak, and in a deplorable condition, and I felt his turn might come any day, and that every day's march was of consequence while he could still struggle on with E. Left another saddle and bridle behind. I found some difficulty in walking, but like an old screw managed to keep going after making a start. Passed by one of our old camps. While on the march Dubois and I, who were a little a-head of the rest, came suddenly upon two lions huddled up together under a tree in such an extraordinary looking mass, that at first we could not make out what they were; and as I could not get a satisfactory shot I waited till they got up, which they did upon perceiving us, but trotted off at once, and never stopped to give me a chance until they were out of sight. I was much disappointed at not having a shot, as this was my only chance during the trip; but it, perhaps, was as well I did not fire, as E. and the rest of the cavalcade were coming on close behind, and a wounded lion and his mate might have been ugly customers amongst us. We walked to-day for six hours and a half, and the sun being very hot were glad to rest on getting into camp. Spring-

time is now commencing in these lowlands, and both day and night are considerably hotter than when we first started. Dubois went out in the afternoon to hunt, but was unsuccessful, only getting a long shot at a waterbuck.

August 24th. Sunday. As usual didn't move our camp, though rather tempted to do so, the day being cloudy and cool for walking. In the afternoon I strolled out with my gun, and shot a few specimens of the small birds in the neighbourhood, Swartboy carrying my rifle in case of seeing game. We were walking along, when the Caffre suddenly stopped, and pointed to an object lying about thirty yards off in the grass, and declared it was a lion; I thought not, but Swartboy was so decided that I took the rifle and fired; the object never stirred, and feeling sure it was no lion I went up (Swartboy still in doubt and unwilling to go too near) and found a dead waterbuck, evidently the one Dubois had fired at the day before—rather a ridiculous finale, and Swartboy was much chaffed by the other Caffres in the evening. E.'s small supply of raisins still holding out, so we had our welcome Sunday pudding, and a curry of hippo meat.

August 25th. E. had been rather unwell in the night, which we laid to living too much on hippopotamus meat, which is extremely rich and rather indigestible; but we got off about 8 o'clock, and passing another old camp pitched our tent where I killed the first buffalo. We looked out for hippopotamus in a pool where we had found them before, but they were not at home. While trudging along this morning I noticed a panther sitting on a sand-bank by the river, cleaning his face like a cat, and tried hard for a shot, but the brute slipped into the reeds before I could get near enough. Found much difficulty in walking to-day, as my feet are still much swollen, and a fester on each ankle; both of us were rather done up at the end of the day, so we took a good dose of quinine, and opened

our precious bottle of brandy, untouched till now. Went to bed at dark, and had a long night's rest. The hunters went out to look for game, and shot an impala and duiker, not much amongst the twenty-four men after keeping our portion. Next morning E. and I much better, and we started off about 9 o'clock, first picking up the buffalo's head which we found all safe in the tree. We cut off a deep bend in the river, and crossed to the opposite bank, far above our resting place on the Umtazena, where the lions had come into camp after the ponies. Fortunately we had picked out a very shallow crossing, for "Jack" had hardly got into the water when he laid down, and E. had to jump off and wade across on foot. We camped close to the deserted kraal we had passed coming down. The Caffres were out of food again, so I crawled out with the rest to try for game, but we were all unsuccessful. In the afternoon we sent on two of the men to the Caffre kraal to try and induce the people to meet us at the next camp, and bring some more ground inyout or another water melon. We see signs of the approaching spring in the appearance of several sorts of flowers, and large masses of a beautiful scarlet creeper that evidently grows to a great size, besides little white convolvuluses twining up the reeds. It must be a sight to see the vegetation during the hot and rainy season in this part of the country.

August 27th. Last night we were much bothered by a tremendous wind that seemed to rise quite suddenly, and blew with gusts of considerable violence, threatening to carry away our tent in spite of pegs and ropes; it lasted about an hour, and then as suddenly died away again. Kemp's covering, insecurely fastened, was carried away at once, but he seems to have been quite indifferent as he slept on undisturbed. A dull heavy day which was pleasant for our walk to the next camp. The distances seem so much less on our return journey than when we

were going down the river. Reached camp about 12-30, and found our Caffres and some men from the kraals, who had brought us another water melon, of which we were very glad; but unfortunately they had none of the meal ground, though they offered to return and set their women folk to work if we would wait for it; so I agreed to wait till 10 o'clock the next morning before moving on. I hunted in the afternoon, but didn't get a shot: my old luck seems to have departed. Dubois, more fortunate, killed a koodoo. We are now about half-way back to the Drachensburg, and all the excitement being over we are looking forward to getting back to the wagons and their comforts.

August 28th. One of my brothers' birthday, and we drank his health in a little brandy and water. We waited till 10 o'clock as agreed, but the men from the kraal did not turn up, so we started on again: of course the Caffres didn't understand "10 o'clock," but they could roughly guess at the time of day by the height of the sun.—Another five hours' walk to-day, and "Jack" still going, though E. has to get off at any ravine or bad bit of ground. We camped for the night close to the pool where we first saw the hippopotami, but none were visible to-day, till just before dusk La Mule crossed the river, and going along the bank he found five of them all of a heap and fast asleep in the reeds—a sight I should have been very glad to see; he did not shoot as he thought it might drive them away from the place, and we expected to have a turn at them on the morrow. I shot an impala on the march, Dubois a waterbuck, and Swartboy a bushbuck—a most acceptable supply of meat. Bought a specimen of Caffre carving from the men at work at the iron smelting establishment which we passed this afternoon; they had rigged up a bellows since we saw them made of skins, and a horn which communicated again with a long pipe made

of clay conducting the air to the fire. We found the Caffre who had engaged to carry back two of the antelope heads still here, but ready to start with us on the morrow.

August 29th. Went down to the pool in the morning to look up the hippopotami, but though we waited till 11 o'clock they did not show; perhaps alarmed by our proximity had moved off in the night further down the river. We made a short march of three hours in the afternoon, passing another of our old camps, where an impala's and koodoo's head had been put up in a tree; but the men, on going to look, found only a part of the impala, and from the marks upon the back concluded that an inquisitive panther had been after the rest; he might have left them alone, as I am sure there was nothing to eat left on the skulls. On the road to-day, I and Dubois were walking alone along the river bank which happened to be rather high, and looking down we saw a herd of perhaps fifty or sixty impalas on the sand; we commenced firing, and they seemed quite bewildered and let us fire several shots at them; then they came up the bank about 100 yards from us, and again stood stock still though we kept popping at them: there were several wounded, but not one dropped, and having no Caffres with us we did not care to follow them up, when at last they went off. The air already seems fresher even at this distance from the mountains, which are now well in sight. The Caffres are out of food again, and E. does not like to feel they see us eating when they are minus, but it can't be helped.

August 30th. An early start. I shot an impala on the road, and we stopped for the men to eat it as they had had no food for twenty-four hours. Passed another old camp, and went on till 1 o'clock. E. walked the greater part of the way to save poor "Jack." Saw a large quantity of game in the neighbourhood. I shot a koodoo, and Baichi, a hunter, got another. La Mule reported this evening

that he had seen three hippopotami down the river, which he had closely followed instead of cutting off corners as we had done. Saved my koodoo's head and cleaned it. Passed through a large tract of burnt country to-day.

August 31st. Sunday. After breakfast I strolled down with Dubois and La Mule to the place where he had seen the hippos, but they did not show, though we did all we could to attract their attention and stir them up, by sticking up a handkerchief on a high stick, throwing stones into the pool, and setting the reeds on fire; but they were either obstinate or absent. A very windy day, and the dust in camp rather unpleasant, as it would blow over our food and everything else. E. has taken to making a composition of dough called by courtesy a bun, and very good they are, though no milk or sugar, or baking apparatus; and I often ask if there is a bun handy in the night when I wake up and feel peckish, to E.'s great amusement. We have put up twenty-four hours' walking this week, not counting Sunday, which is pretty good considering we are not fresh and have done a good bit of hunting, &c.; besides, the ground takes it out of one so, with the rocks and steep ravines to clamber up and down nearly every ten minutes. Started off the hunter Baichi, or Bargee, as I called him, with four men carrying heads and anything we didn't want, with instructions to hurry on to the wagons and tell Christian to bring any horses there were left to the top of the pass, and also some mealies for the men, as we guessed they would probably go short the last day or two under the Berg. Went on a little way late in the afternoon to break the long march we had settled to do next day.

September 1st. "Partridge shooting begins," and makes one think of the difference between coming back after a hard day's walking at home to a good dinner and comfortable bed, and out here to bad grub and the ground

to sleep on. Started early before breakfast at 6-40, and then stopped for a couple of hours; on again at 11-0; crossed the river, E. on foot, and camped for the night at 3-35.—A punishing day, and perhaps the worst bit of walking we had come across, for wishing to avoid the deep crossing of the Umtlatzi river for E.'s sake, as "Jack" was utterly unable to carry her through, and it was almost too deep for her to wade, we settled to cross the Oliphant twice; and to-day as we were approaching the junction of the two rivers, we looked out for a good crossing, and getting over all right we went on, thinking we had done a very sharp thing, till we came upon a tract of nothing but huge boulders along the bank of the river, and apparently stretching away inland for a considerable distance; and E. was already very tired after a long day's walk; but she manfully scrambled on over the rocks till at last we emerged into some open spaces with a little grass, where we at once camped, as E.'s clothes were still wringing wet from wading across the river. Fortunately we have not much farther to go, as her only pair of thick boots show signs of giving out, what with the water first and hot sun afterwards. Sara, the black girl, has been minus any boots for some time, and required much persuasion to wear sandals, preferring to go bare-footed; but fearing her feet would "come through," I insisted on her wearing a pair the Caffres made for her. We all turned out this evening to hunt, as the men were short as usual, and Dubois luckily killed a waterbuck, which will give them one more meal at all events.

September 2nd. Off again before breakfast, and after scrambling over some more rocks that rose some 200 feet above the river we breakfasted, and having passed the mouth of the Umtlatzi we walked on till we came to a wide and consequently shallow crossing, and E. getting over all right we were again on our old side of the river,

and camped at 4-0 in the afternoon near where I shot the first waterbuck. Poor old "Jack" succumbed at last; just before we crossed the river he laid down, and though Kemp and the small boy waited a long time with him and tried to get him up it was all in vain, and they had to leave him for the night. La Mule shot an impala. My feet much worse to-day, and swollen to almost double their size, and still festering: could not move after getting into camp. E. has walked marvellously well for her, and is good for another day or two, if her boots will only last. We hope, if all goes well, to reach the foot of the pass to-morrow. The Caffres caught us some fish in the river, a kind of barbel, but with flat heads; some of them run to a very large size. The natives declined to eat them, though we found them a pleasant change from the everlasting meat.

September 3rd. Sent La Mule back early to see if "Jack" was alive, but he found him lying where we had left him quite dead. Poor fellow! we were all so sorry to leave him behind after his carrying E. so well, and struggling on within two days of the wagons. I had hoped we might have got him back to Natal, and left him to enjoy an easy existence at Woodroffe's farm; but it was no use wishing, so we put E.'s side-saddle on a Caffre's head and started off again, on, as it turned out, our last day's walk below the Berg. We had the comfort of a track again, and tolerably smooth ground to walk over; but it was very hot, and E. found the sun excessively trying. We passed the remains of the unfortunate cart where we had left it; and saying good-bye to our old friend the Oliphant, who had proved most useful as a guide and water supply, we entered into the thick bush at the foot of the pass, and went on till we came to a ravine with a stream running down it, where we camped for the night—a cool and shady spot, though scarcely enough

grass on which to pitch our tent. We now began to eat up the rest of the flour, drank the remainder of the brandy, ate the arrowroot, which we thought a great treat though only made with water and no sugar; and so well had E. judged, that our supplies of rice and flour just held out. The next thing was to get up the hill, and this I rather dreaded for E. The Caffres without any grub, and as I had expected, we found very little game during the last three or four days.

September 4th. Started before the sun was up, after a cup of coffee and a bit of cold meat. Left the bottom of the pass at 7-15, and reached the top after about two hours' climb; E. getting on famously, and, as usual, able to do more than I had expected. After resting an hour or so, E. thought she could go on to the Caffre kraals in the valley where the wagons and oxen had remained; so we set off again, and met Christian and one or two Caffres coming to meet us with the grey mare, the only one of our horses that was left alive, and also bringing some mealies for the men. We had come so quickly after the Caffres we had sent on to the wagons, that Christian, though he started at once, had not been able to get any farther on the road to meet us. He was very glad to see us, as hearing nothing for so long had almost given us up for lost. The other ponies had all died of the "horse sickness," and the grey mare had nearly succumbed, but just struggled through. Woodroffe, it turned out, had ridden her back to Leydenburg, and she had the sickness there, and had not been back at the wagons above a week; however, there she was, and we put the saddle on at once, and E. rode to the kraal—the men preferred to keep on also as they were so near the kraal, instead of waiting to eat the mealies at once. The kraal was about seven miles from the wagons, and after another rest I thought, as E. was anxious to go on, it would be most pleasant to reach the

wagons that evening; so off I set again with E. and Kemp, and with much difficulty managed to struggle to the end, but my feet would hardly carry me. We had topped up a fortnight's hard going with a good day's work—sixteen miles besides the ascent up the hill. We were truly thankful to be at our wagons again, and feel that there was no more of the daily packing and unpacking, and that we were to be carried for the future instead of having to walk. Dubois stopped behind with the Caffres, glad, I think, to rest, but was to come on in the evening if the men were willing to move again. I called at the Dutchman's near the wagons, and succeeded in getting a loaf of bread and some butter and milk. We had a warm bath soon after our arrival, and enjoyed some oranges and lime juice, and, above all, a change of clothes; and then to sit in a chair, with our food, &c., on a table, with the feeling of being clean and wearing clean clothes, was indescribable luxury to us; and how we did enjoy some bread and butter and our whiskey toddy in the evening; and then to turn in and lie down on a mattress in a tolerably comfortable bed, with plenty of room for all our things. I couldn't have believed we should ever come to look upon the wagons as such a luxurious home. Dubois and the men turned up about 8 o'clock.

It had taken us just fourteen days to do the same distance on our return journey, that we had taken three weeks to get over on the road down. I reckoned that, during the fifty-four days below the hill, I had walked, on an average, at least six hours a day; and this, at say three miles an hour, would have made about something under 1000 miles. We were glad to hear a good account of the oxen from the driver: two had died in our absence, but the remainder had picked up wonderfully, the valley being warm and sheltered. Next morning E. breakfasted in bed, and how we revelled in our hot rolls and jam.

Spent the morning in putting things a little straight in the wagons. We were glad to find Woodroffe had succeeded in getting everything back safely from the head of the pass where we left him, as Caffres were continually passing, and were willing to carry a load to the wagons for a few beads or a bit of wire. After this we summoned the bearers, and gave each man what was agreed upon, much to their delight, and, I fancied, a little to their surprise, as, from odd bits of conversation Dubois had heard during our trip below, the question of being paid was evidently a matter of doubt, and this, perhaps, partly accounted for their unwillingness to come to work when we first engaged them; and it also shewed that some blackguard of a white man had cheated them before—a practice that is, I am sorry to say, not uncommon with the white traders, and, of course, tends to make the Caffres distrust all white men; whereas, until they have been deceived, their faith in a white man's word is great. I gave the two or three men who had helped us down with the cart something extra for their trouble; and E. gave her little donkey boy a whole heap of beads besides his pay, which elicited great signs of approval from all the other men and boys. Some chose beads, some wire, some salempore, and some blankets. La Mule, who had really been the means of our getting any men at all, received a bag of powder and two or three bars of lead, and a blanket, and went off in great glee therewith. The other men each received goods that were worth about £1, not much after all for their walk and labour, but yet double what they ought to have been paid for such a trip. After the payment was over we bought a few odds and ends from them, such as their pillows, assegais, and other things we fancied; and they also began to buy from us, taking beads, blankets, cloth, &c., and apparently quite indifferent to what money they paid for them. They then

said good-bye and departed. In the afternoon I had to lie up, and could hardly put my feet to the ground for two or three days, they were in such a wretched plight; but that was of no consequence now, as there was no more walking to be done. Considering the unfavourable circumstances under which we started, our trip was, I think, a success, as I saw nearly every kind of game, and succeeded in killing most of the varieties; and when we started I had never dreamt we could keep going on such small supplies for two months. E. came out most wonderfully, shewing much greater powers of endurance than I had given her slight frame credit for, and when "Jack" was tired out walked wonderfully well. The African shooting must have been much easier of access and more plentiful a few years ago; but now, to make a really large bag, one must go a long way, and stay out a long time, especially to get elephants. The Zulu country, by all accounts, has been shot out; but Dubois declared, after our trip was over (he generally told us his information rather late), that he could have taken us into the Ama Swasi country, of which he knows every inch, having hunted there annually for a long time, and shewn us all the game we had seen in the infernal place Erskine had sent us to; and, further, that we could have taken in our wagons, and run down such game as buffalo and giraffe on horseback; and, further, that he could have shewn me a troop of elephants though without tusks. This was rather aggravating to one's feelings, as I had said so much about "doing" the easiest part of the country for E.'s sake; but I would rather go to the Zambesi than any other place, if I had time to make the trip. We often wonder how Buckley and the Oates' have fared, and how far they have succeeded in getting towards the Victoria Falls. The great charm of the shooting here is, in my opinion, its very wonderful variety, and the sport to be

had is certainly very good ; but beyond this I do not see much in the country, either looking at its resources or its appearance, to tempt people to settle in it, especially if much is like the district we have been travelling through : barren, unhealthy for man, and fatal to any beast of burden, being infested with the "Tsetse fly" in all directions. All this mortality amongst domestic animals is attributed to the bites of this fly, which is not much larger, though a little longer than the house fly, and of the same colour. It seems to me extraordinary that this fly, which bit us most energetically and the Caffres too, should be able to kill a horse, or ox, or donkey ; and, further, we see the buffalo, eland, zebra, gnu, and other kinds of game, akin to the domestic animals, flourishing in the midst of the "fly country." I believe some travellers have been of late rather shaken in the hitherto general belief in the destructiveness of this fly, and have inclined to think, which seems more reasonable, that domestic animals cannot live in the country where the fly abounds, owing to the climate, or a malaria, which is indeed suitable to the fly, but of an unhealthy nature for animals unacclimatized to it, though not so for the wild animals living under different conditions, and thoroughly inured to the climate.

The Caffres also, even in the more civilized portions of Natal and the Transvaal, seem incapable of much improvement. The farmers experience great difficulty in getting hands to till their farms ; and a Caffre labourer requires the most constant supervision, as, if left to himself, he is sure to choose the wrong, if there be two ways of doing a job. These Caffres are a very odd mixture, both in disposition, morality, and physical powers. Those, for instance, who went with us possessed the quality of honesty, in my opinion, to a great degree ; they had endless chances of pilfering small things, but nothing was

ever missed. Our wagons, too, containing a wonderful medley, were left under the care of our drivers, surrounded by Caffre villages, and on our return we found everything exactly as we had left it; and yet there was liquor, sugar, powder, lead, blankets, and all that a Caffre considers worth having. Yet, on the other hand, they were an ungrateful, unwilling, and obstinate lot of fellows, glad enough to get anything given them, but much aggrieved and ready to grumble immediately they were told to do anything that they did not consider contained in their agreement. They were particularly decent in their habits, whether amongst themselves or with a white man; they were fairly clean, for they repeatedly bathed in the river, and yet sometimes the sight of what they ate would nearly make me sick. Again, no one could endure more hunger, or walk a greater distance with less nourishment, than a Caffre; but yet they seemed so unwilling and almost unable to do any really hard work. When they go out to earn some money, say on a farm, they generally work for six months only at a time, and then return home, where they lie about the kraal while their wives do all the labour, tilling and planting the ground, cutting wood, drawing water, and in fact are the slaves of the man their master and husband; and consequently the more wives a man can purchase, the richer and more comfortable in circumstances he grows. They are terribly afraid of corporal chastisement; and sometimes a white man, with a quick temper and given to whack them, cannot induce a Caffre for any wages to work for him. Amongst themselves they never use their fists in a quarrel, which I thought a bad sign; but they will shout and rage at one another upon a difference of opinion in a most vehement manner, and if the quarrel grows beyond words, which is seldom the case, they probably take to a knife or an assegais. They do not appear to have any religion, or to

worship any kind of God, either visible or invisible; but they are very superstitious about sorcery and medicine, the doctors being a body of men held in great respect. Often upon the death of a big chief, a number of these sorcerers, supposed to have been instrumental in killing him by their evil influences, are put to death.

September 6th. Wrote letters all day and sent off a Caffre in the evening to post them in Leydenburg, and bring out any that might have arrived there during our absence. A great change in the temperature from what we had been in lately, the air being so much fresher and cooler, and a slight frost at night. The Caffres bring in heaps of eggs and chickens, and we are able to get milk and butter from the neighbouring Dutchman.

September 7th. Sunday. We have not succeeded in getting any more Caffres to act as forelopers, and replace those that ran away from us at Leydenburg, so the two men that old "Slangey" got from his kraal, and who are going back with us to Natal, are to lead the oxen till we can pick up a Caffre that is used to the work. The oxen were all brought up this evening, and tied up to the yokes preparatory to a start to-morrow, and they were rather wild and troublesome after their long rest. As we had no animal for E. to ride, and no cart for her to sit in, we turned Woodroffe's old den in the front of the wagon into our sitting room, and found it so much pleasanter and easier sitting in the front part of the wagon than the back, as the jolting was so much less; and with a stretcher laid athwart the wagon with a mattress on it, we made ourselves very comfortable. Next morning we inspanned, and crossing the Umhlazingwan we took the Leydenburg track, but had not gone far before smash went the dessel-boom of the second wagon, so we had to outspan again till it could be replaced or repaired. Dubois rode off in search of assistance, and two young Dutchmen most kindly

came with their tools to the rescue, and after cutting down a small tree in the bush, began to work it into the proper shape. Before we left our old camp, an enterprising Dutchman bought the cart for £2, but how he ever expected to get the body up again to replace it on the wheels was a puzzle to me, and I have often wondered whether he ever managed it. While waiting for the desselboom to be mended, the Caffres returned from Leydenburg, bringing a most welcome budget of letters and newspapers from England. We hadn't seen an English paper for about five months, and eagerly read the news as may be supposed. Caffres still keep bringing eggs and fowls in exchange for beads; an egg is about $\frac{1}{4}d.$, and a fowl $3d.$, reckoning their value in beads. We have rigged up a box, which travels on the wagon, containing some live fowls which lay regularly when let out in the morning as soon as we outspan for breakfast. Next day the Dutchmen returned and finished their job, but would take nothing in payment for their trouble except a little coffee. Made a trek in the afternoon, and had our first stick-fast, the oxen not yet being thoroughly used to their work. However, we persevered, and made each span at last pull their wagon over the difficulty; and we never had another hitch all the way back to Natal.

September 10th. Inspanned, as of old, at daylight, and stopped for breakfast. A deliciously cool day, and we think this most luxurious travelling after our late experiences. The peach blossoms are out and in great profusion all along the road sides. We saw to-day enormous flights of locusts almost darkening the sky, they were in such masses; they have done a great deal of damage to the crops, and are, of course, obnoxious to the farmers, though an extraordinary sight to us. Camped for the night at Lemūn Place, one of our old resting places, and overtook a traveller on foot returning from the gold fields, who told

me the whole thing was a failure and played out, but he had evidently done no good there; on the other hand, we heard at Leydenburg most flourishing accounts of the fields, and of the nuggets that had been found by lucky diggers.

September 11th. Made three treks, and reached Leydenburg about 5 o'clock in the afternoon. I rode off to see our old friend the missionary and his wife, who welcomed me most kindly, and were much interested in hearing of our trip and E.'s adventures and hardships. Next day E. went into the solitary shop to make some small purchases, and we made enquiries as to the state of the grass along the road. We found there had been little or no rain, and consequently there was no fresh grass on the high veldt; but as people seldom travel at this time of year, owing to the scarcity of grass, we could not get any very satisfactory information. Dubois rather inclined to wait for rain, declaring we should have even more trouble in finding grass than we experienced coming up, and that every blade would have been burnt off; but I determined to try and push on, as, of course, we were anxious to lose no time in getting down to the coast. I sold off all the surplus stock of Caffre goods which was considerable, as I had not used a quarter of what we had bought up. The missionary and his wife came in to see us, and promised to come and dine after the Caffre service the next day. Sara had now to disappear by day as before, as we thought her master would probably hear of our return, and hunt her up again; but luckily he never came to bother us, and it appeared had made no further search for her when she ran away the second time.

September 14th. Sunday. E. had made her best preparations for the missionary and his wife, who turned up about 2-30, and they seemed to appreciate the plum pudding. It is quite a pleasure to speak to some one

who is not employed in money grubbing, which is the engrossing occupation of the few people in Leydenburg. Our friends departed when their wagon called to take them home again, and we wished them good-bye, with many thanks for their extreme civility, and many good wishes on both sides. In the evening I went to the "hotel," which had been started since we were here, and picked up "Bravo," and some other things Woodroffe had left behind for us to bring on in the wagons. We also managed to get a couple of Caffre boys to lead the oxen. Next morning we left Leydenburg, and pushing on, camped that evening in the valley of the Crocodile. I shot two dickop on the road, a bird about the size of a pheasant. In the evening when the Caffres went to tie up the grey mare, she had disappeared, and there was no chance of finding her in the darkness. Next morning the Caffres started off in different directions to find the mare, Christian going back towards Leydenburg. To add to our annoyance the two Caffres we had picked up in Leydenburg had also run away already, though there was no apparent reason for their doing so. In the evening all the Caffres except Christian returned from their search which had been fruitless.

September 17th. I thought it better not to wait any longer for the driver, who could easily catch us up, so we inspanned after breakfast, and I drove the wagon myself. On the road we kept a good look out for the mare, and at last espied her in some enclosed ground near a farm, to which she had strayed, and broken into the farmer's oats, for which I had to pay him 5s. before he would give her up. Soon after we had outspanned for the night, Christian turned up, bringing back one of the men who had run away, and whom he found in Leydenburg. I longed to thrash him, and only desisted as I thought he would be sure to run away again if I did, and he promised

faithfully to remain with us. In the afternoon Dubois went out to forage amongst the farms in the valley, and succeeded in buying a tolerably good sheep for a sovereign. Next morning we inspanned, and ascended the really tremendous hill out of the valley without any difficulty with the oxen, who were now working capitally; consequently we do a great deal more distance in the same number of hours than we did coming up, besides saving the oxen from doing double work at each steep hill. With the assistance of "Bravo," who works very well and steadily, I got some partridges for the pot, which were acceptable. Our poultry yard still travels on, and the hens lay every day; one always comes up into our wagon directly we stop, after the early trek, and will persist in laying her eggs on our bed, and another has chosen the orange box for the same purpose — drive them out as often as we will, they always keep coming back till they have laid. The weather looks very threatening, but we hope the rain will now keep off till we get over the worst of the high veldt, as the early rains here are always bitterly cold.

September 20th. Crossed the Cromartie river where I killed some wild duck, and we managed to get a bottle of milk which is unusual, though we pass many farms, and try at nearly all for butter, &c.

September 21st. To-day being the Sabbath we did not trek, and E., as usual on Sunday morning, much occupied with preparations for our plum pudding. We have found tolerable grass as yet, in spite of Dubois' forebodings. A slight shower this afternoon, but it soon cleared again. Next morning off again over these interminable plains, and as we are now in a country without a stick of timber, we are again dependent on the dried ox dung for fuel, which old "Slangey" diligently collects in a sack or even his hat whenever we stop. We saw such swarms of the

vildebeest, or gnu, as well as quantities of blesbok and springbok on all sides, being attracted to this part of the country by the new grass which is just sprouting up, and is generally earlier here than elsewhere. It was a sight to see: every hill was literally alive with these animals, but I tried in vain to get a shot, as there was not a bit of cover to conceal one's self in. I longed for a good horse, as running them down and shooting them from horseback would have been capital sport. I tried the grey mare, but she was nowhere. Our reclaimed foreloper ran away again this morning, and I felt sorry I had foregone the satisfaction of licking him when I had the chance. Passed the mud hole, where the big wagon had sunk in before, without any trouble, having put on both spans and gone at it with a run. Camped near a solitary Dutchman's farm close to a large lake that was alive with wild fowl, but having no boat I could not get at them.

September 23rd. The Dutchman came to see us, and hearing I wanted to run the vildebeest kindly offered to lend me his pony, which he said was fast enough for the purpose; so he and I and Dubois started off about mid-day, but I found the pony could not get within 100 yards or so of the game, and then one had to jump off and blaze into the "brown of 'em." I hit several, and broke one's leg, but then even I couldn't catch him—they seemed to be as hard to kill as their brethren down below the Berg. Trekked on in the evening from 5 till 8 o'clock. We exchanged some soap (of which the Dutchman and his wife and family seemed much in need, judging from their appearance) for a sheep, and also a goose which we wanted for our approaching Michaelmas dinner. Next morning we inspanned very early, and made a short trek before breakfast, and about 10 o'clock we started again, when we had to trek five hours and more before we came to old grass, and any patch we could find was generally of very

small extent. One of the weakly oxen walking behind the wagons refused to come on, and laid down in the road, but Dubois waited behind, and managed to get him into camp before dark. Water is scarce, and it is with great difficulty we can find water and grass for the oxen near together. Shot a blesbok, having taken several random and long shots as we went along the road whenever a chance offered. The whole country still swarming with game. Next day we waited till the afternoon before trekking, to give the oxen a rest. I managed to get a zebra and another blesbok—both very long and random shots. I had a long chase on the grey mare after the zebra, although its off hind leg was broken. A wild windy night with a little rain. Still on the high veldt; but we have been fortunate in not being detained by rain, and two more days' travelling will take us over the worst of it.

September 26th. A very miserable morning, with a nasty cold drizzling rain. The sick tired out oxen were as usual not tied up to the wagons at night, that they might rest more comfortably and feed if they would; but this morning they had disappeared, seeking shelter I suppose from the cold rains. We also found there was not a blade of grass to be seen where we had camped in the dark last night, and our trek oxen looked very miserable. After breakfast, Dubois started off to look for the missing bullocks, though owing to the mist he could not see any distance, and he had no clue to the direction they had taken, and the country being very broken, I thought there was very little chance of his finding them again. We were obliged to move on for grass, and the day clearing after 1 o'clock, we made a second trek which landed us at the Vaal river, where we found some better grass. Thank goodness we are at last off the highest part of the Drachensburg. Dubois turned up in the evening, and had

found the oxen and brought them back to us—a piece of great good luck. In the afternoon I went for a stroll up the river to see if I could get a duck or other game, but failed to bag anything eatable, though I shot an enormous owl, which I carried back to camp and carefully skinned. I have in vain tried to get a shot at the Caffre cranes, that we see occasionally stalking over the plains. It was cold all day, and a great contrast to the weather we had had a fortnight before.

September 27th. Inspanned early and crossed the Vaal river, and outspanned for breakfast near a Dutchman's shanty, the first inhabited dwelling we had seen for some days. Before moving on again, we asked the farmer to let us leave two of the poorest oxen on his farm, as I felt sure they would not go much farther with the wagons, and were almost too far gone to recover under any circumstances. In our next trek we caught up three wagons that had left Leydenburg three days before us, and these were the first travellers we had seen on the road. One of the drivers, Jacob by name, was very aggravating on the trek to-day, so I seized him by the shoulders and shook him, till he nearly came out of his clothes, which were not over strong and rather ragged, so he threw down his whip and declined to drive, declaring he was nearly killed, when there was the usual jabberation, after which we went on again as before. We find we are getting over the ground much more rapidly than on the previous journey, though we have no more in the wagons than before, but the oxen are all good and work well together.

September 28th. Sunday. The three wagons arrived after dusk last evening and camped about 300 yards off, like ourselves remaining quiet during to-day. One of the proprietors came over to our camp, and shewed us some diamonds he had picked up at the fields, but I thought

them poor specimens and declined to deal. Started off early the next morning, and had to trek for many hours before reaching any grass. We had our Michaelmas goose for dinner with the apple sauce, but no stuffing. I felt rather seedy which is an unusual sensation, though we have now been five months out of reach of doctors. We are already beginning to calculate upon the boat we may be able to catch at Capetown, and hope to be in time for the mail leaving November 5th.

September 30th. Reached Harrison's farm, where we had met with much civility before, and where we had left a lame ox; on enquiring for him we found he had died, only a few days before our arrival, like many of the cattle in these parts, from the cold and scarcity of food, so another £10 note gone; but I am getting used to it now. Pushed on, and in the evening crossed the boundary stream of the Transvaal, and slept again in Natal. The girl Sara was now safe; but I sometimes should have been glad if her former master had come to claim her while we were still in the Transvaal, as we were obliged to let her sleep in the front part of our wagon, and she was anything but a sweet neighbour. A heavy thunderstorm came down this evening as soon as we had camped, and then turned into a dense mist, which seemed to penetrate into everything, even our bedding.

October 1st. Were roused up once or twice in the night by a drop of water on our faces, and had to stop the leak by stuffing in pocket handkerchiefs; we also could hardly sleep for the wind that howled and blew a strong gale, on and off, all night. This must be a lively place to live in, as we were nearly blown away from here on the road up. Next morning we trekked on, but with difficulty, as the roads were very muddy and soft from the rains, and going down hill the break wouldn't act, and the wagon kept sliding about bodily in rather an uncomfortable and

alarming manner. We reached Newcastle in the afternoon, where we camped for the night, and got our former friend Mrs. Johnson to bake us a batch of bread. Sent off our final budget of letters to England, as we expect to leave Natal by the following mail.—A lovely night, and much milder than before the rain. Next morning I tried to buy some fresh oxen, and at last succeeded in getting four, at the exorbitant price of £9 each, for they were not fat or large; but oxen are getting daily dearer and scarcer. I sold one of my worst, and sent off four more by a Caffre to Dubois' farm, as he kindly offered to take care of them till they recovered, and were fit to sell again. Another heavy storm, after which we inspanned, and left Newcastle about mid-day. We have lately found our filters very useful, as the water in all the "spruits" is now the colour of pea soup, and, from all accounts, remains so till next winter. We managed to buy a little fresh butter from a farm near the town, the first we had tasted since we started in the wagons from the old camp near the mountain pass. We camped near a Caffre kraal in the afternoon, and saw several of the men and women returning from a wedding, the men got up extensively in ostrich feathers and fancy skins, singing and dancing, and some of them very noisy and evidently drunk.

October 4th. Could only make two treks to-day, as we were detained for some time by another heavy storm. We left our old road this afternoon, and took the one that leads us by Ladysmith instead of Greytown; the former we found by experience to be far the better one of the two, less hilly and more attended to; in fact, some parts of it were as hard and smooth as if it had been paved with asphalt, over which the oxen bowled in fine style.

October 5th. Sunday. My birthday. A lie in bed, as usual on Sunday, which is grateful and comforting after turning out between 5 and 6 every morning. We have

just reached the commencement of the Biggarsberg range of hills. There is little or no game to be seen, and, in fact, the rifles may be put by, as the shooting is all over. Our three old hens are still uneaten, though we often want meat, and they reward us with a regular supply of fresh eggs for breakfast. Made a short trek in the evening after dinner. Next morning on again as usual, and, there being a good moon, made our three treks. One day much like another, and nothing to think of but pushing on as fast as possible. I was much annoyed to-day to find that a destructive little grub, called the black jack, had got into my heads and skins, and had eaten some of them very badly; and now Dubois calmly informs us he knew it would be the case, as it is with all skins unless dipped in a preparation of aloes and arsenic. I thought he might have told us of the danger before. I found that arsenical soap was no use, as I had washed them with a strong solution of it some time back. It now rains nearly every day on and off, but after the showers the sun comes out warm and bright. We find it difficult to get a good fire, as our substitute for fuel is of little use when wet.

October 8th. Reached Ladysmith in the afternoon—a small straggling town on the Clip river, and remarkable, as far as I could see, for nothing but its number of churches, which was far beyond the requirements of the inhabitants; but I suppose, as in other places, there were different ideas of the right mode of worshipping. Dubois went about trying to hire a span of oxen to help us over the rest of our journey, but, as usual, failed to get any. On the road to-day I at last managed to shoot a pair of Caffre cranes, by creeping up an empty gully and sending a man round to drive them over my head. We skinned them carefully, and stowed them away in the front chest—beautiful birds, of a French grey colour, and very elegant in their movements. Dubois declared they were tame ones,

and thought we might get into a row; but anyhow I had got them, which was the great point.

October 9th. Started at the unpleasant hour of 5 a.m., and after breakfast went on again, and passing through Colenso, got across the Tugela, which, like the Clip river we crossed yesterday, was fortunately not too much swollen to ford. Some wagons caught us up here, having left Leydenburg about a day after us. We breakfasted at a lively spot called "Murder spruit," from three white men having been killed here by Caffres. Next day we passed through Estcourt, and crossed the Bushman's river by a bridge. There are a great many wagons on the road, going out in all directions, having been waiting, perhaps for weeks or months, until the young grass had got up sufficiently to provide food for the oxen. We have begun to allow ours a little of it by degrees, and they seem to enjoy it amazingly. We passed a farmer to-day migrating back to the high veldt again for the summer, with all his sheep and cattle, and wife and family, but not a single Caffre servant, as none of them will work for him, owing to his proclivity for thrashing them. It was wonderful to see the way his oxen behaved—a very long span, but all beautifully trained, especially the two leaders, who went from left to right according as they were told, and with no foreloper to lead them, taking a sweep at the curves of the road as sensibly as possible. Next day cold and miserable, with intermittent showers, and no sun between whiles; all our clothes seemed damp, and we were glad to put on the warmest we had. We have been lately finding quantities of mushrooms by the road side, which have been a great addition to our breakfast table. The Caffres assured us they were poisonous, and Dubois was half afraid of them. One of the unfortunate Caffres went out to see after the oxen this evening and got lost in the fog; old "Slangey" having the charge of him, as he came from his kraal,

scolded him most vehemently when he turned up. I thought the men would never find him alive again. These two fellows from below the Berg feel the cold dreadfully, and not being sufficiently clad were almost useless, so we had to rig them up in some of our old clothes, to enable them to do their work.

October 12th. Sunday. Wet morning again. Every day now being of importance for catching the steamer, we broke through our rule and trekked on, especially as it was such wretched work living in the wagons in the rainy season. Crossed Mooi river, where there are a few houses and a church. A considerable number of people were assembled here, having come in from far and wide to attend the service, Dr. Macrorie having been advertised to preach at the village church. Next day was E.'s birthday. A wet and windy night; and, in fact, it is rather miserable and forlorn travelling under present circumstances. The whole country round is now clothed with a most lovely green covering, so different to the everlasting black burnt ground we have been used to for so long; and the wagons are literally swarming along the road. In the afternoon the sun appeared, and enabled us to dry our things again.

October 14th. Our last day of wagon life. We crossed the Umgeni river before breakfast, just above some very fine falls, which must be really grand when the river is full. They are said to be 350 feet in height, falling down into a natural well formed by a circle of rocks, with a small outlet in the lower wall. We got some milk near here, the first we had tasted since Newcastle, and yet we have passed plenty of farms and numerous herds of cattle. We then made a short trek in the middle of the day, and being within a short distance of Pieter-Maritzburg, I rode on a-head to get the letters and make arrangements about rooms, &c. It seemed quite odd to put on a collar and

neckcloth again. On arriving in the town I went to the Crown hotel, and there found a welcome budget of letters and papers; and after engaging a photographer to come out the next morning and take ourselves and the wagons, &c., I rode out to meet E., who had started on the last trek, and we camped for the last time on the veldt just outside the town. We left Pieter-Maritzburg on May 8th, and have been just twenty-two weeks and five days on our travels up country. It is pleasant of course, in some ways, to be back in civilization again, but one can't help feeling some regret that a very pleasant trip has come to an end. The travelling down below the Berg already seems like a dream, and I find it difficult to realize the fact of our having been through so much rough life, especially as regards E.; and by the time we get to England I suppose it will be the same with the wagon travelling. We are all in capital case, and, in fact, throughout the trip have, thank God, enjoyed most wonderful health and strength.

Next morning the photographer arrived, and took the wagons with and without the oxen, and also photographed the party that had been in the "fly country," including old "Slangey" and Sara — "Slangey" being the only Caffre that had been through the trip from beginning to end. After the operation we sent the wagons into the market square, and the oxen to feed and enjoy themselves on the neighbouring hills, and took up our quarters at the Crown. Woodroffe came in to see us in the evening, and we had a long and pleasant talk far into the night, and were much surprised to find that since he left us he was engaged to be married. It seemed so odd to sleep in a room again, and we felt quite oppressed by the four walls and comparative scarcity of air. I hardly knew E. again when she appeared in her bettermost clothes. Next day we were busy packing and arranging our goods, and sorting the contents of the wagons, preparatory to the sale of

such things as we had no further use for. The faithful Sara melted into tears at the idea of leaving "Missis," and wanted to go on with us to England, but that was out of the question; so we found a situation for her in Pieter-Maritzburg, where we left her happy and comfortable. Previously to packing the heads and skins, they had to be taken to one of the establishments, where all hides are sent intended for exportation, to be dipped in large vats containing a solution for getting rid of the black jack, which otherwise would inevitably destroy them. The night before the sale of our things the grey mare had disappeared from the wagons where she had been tied up, and though the Caffres searched in all directions she never turned up again, and this was the end of the last of the five horses and five donkeys; we could only suppose she was stolen in the night, and yet the Caffres were sleeping at the wagons. Two ex-army men, who were going up country to the gold fields, bought our travelling wagon and one span of oxen, giving a good price for the latter, oxen being luckily for me exceedingly dear and scarce. The next day the other wagon and oxen, with the camp traps and sundries, were put up to auction and all were disposed of except the wagon, which I left in the auctioneer's hands. It sold about six months after we left. We felt a little sorry to part with some of the things that had been in daily and hourly use, but of course one couldn't drag them back to England. Made two or three calls in the town upon people we had met when we arrived, and did a little shopping, as we were in want of a good many odds and ends in the way of clothes, &c. As we hoped the heads and skins would be ready to pack in time for us to catch the steamer, advertised to leave Natal on the 26th, we chartered the omnibus for the 23rd to take us down to Durban.

October 19th. Sunday. We were very glad once more

to be able to attend the Sunday services in a church, after being so many weeks without an opportunity of doing so.

October 20th. Bishop Colenso came to see us this morning, and after luncheon we drove out to wish the party at Bishopstowe good-bye, hoping to meet them again some day in England. In the evening we went to the Legislative Council then in session, the gallery being open to anyone that choose to walk in. The Council is composed of about sixteen members; and if all their evenings are equally dull, I don't wonder at the strangers' gallery being so little frequented, as to afford admission, without any restrictions, to the general public.

October 21st. Busy making our final arrangements for departure. I settled accounts with Dubois and paid off the Caffres, old "Slangey" of course being very dissatisfied with his share, although I paid him more than he was entitled to, and had given him several things besides. We went to take a last look at the old wagon we had lived in so long, and looked upon as a house in which we had passed a very pleasant holiday, but which seemed very desolate, now that it was emptied of the wonderful medley it used to hold. I spent all the afternoon in stowing away the heads and skins in an enormous case that was made to take them, and left it to be sent after us by the first wagon going to Durban. All our other heavy luggage had been packed and sent off two or three days before, so our preparations were all ready for a start to-morrow. Woodroffe came in to dine with us and say good-bye. We wished him good luck and every happiness in his new life, the wedding being fixed to come off in a few weeks.

October 22nd. Left Pieter-Maritzburg at 6-30 in the 'bus, an opposition machine, that had just begun to run and drawn by mules, several of which were hardly to be called broken, and were most unmanageable; and what with the harness being rotten and the roads abominable,

we felt it was a mercy we didn't capsize before reaching Durban, at 5 o'clock in the afternoon. The driver, too, had never been with the mules before, but he was a good whip, and I think kept the 'bus on its legs by the pace he drove. Put up at the "Royal" as before: a new proprietor had taken it since we were last there, and things were a little more comfortable. On enquiry, we found to our disgust, there was no steamer to catch the mail on November 5th from Capetown, which we had hoped to get away by. It was most annoying, as the coasters had been running regularly according to their advertisements until this date. So here we are, tied by the leg, and must just have patience till some steamer comes to release us; and as no one appears to know, not even the company's agents, when such an event will happen, we are in a happy state of uncertainty. Next day was wet, and we found the tiny room that we had been put into so uncomfortable, that we were glad to move over to a detached building, where we had more space and a sitting room. A parcel followed us from Bishopstowe, containing some cases of Natal beetles and insects, collected and beautifully arranged by one of the Miss Colenso's, who had kindly sent them to E. Went to the Botanical Gardens, about a mile from the town, to see the different specimens of pines and other trees, which were said to be very good, but I was much disappointed, the place being badly kept; and what few good trees and shrubs we saw there, were smothering one another. Twenty years ago, elephants abounded in the hills and bush about these gardens, and now where are they? The weather is very hot, and mosquitoes most troublesome; the air after Pieter-Maritzburg is most oppressive. On the Monday we explored the "Bluff," the hill that shuts in the Bay of Durban from the sea; and by going to the top of the lighthouse on the point, we had a good view of the bay

and the country round Durban. We manage sometimes to have a rubber in the evening; but it is a hard matter to kill time in this dead-alive place, and most trying to be forced to remain here. I went out in the afternoon with a man staying in the hotel, for a few hours' quail shooting on the Umgeni flats, and bagged about twelve brace. There is excellent sport to be had here usually, but we found some other guns had been about the ground all the morning. In the evening we went to the glebe to meet Mr. Baines, a great African traveller, who kindly brought his sketches of African scenery and hunting adventures, which were excellently done, and very interesting; the wild animals being especially good, and very true to life.

October 31st. Great excitement prevailing in the town about a Caffre chief named Langelibalele, who refuses to submit to the order of the Government and give up a large quantity of firearms and ammunition which his people have acquired, and which are forbidden to natives to possess in Natal. He appears inclined to show fight, and some troops have been ordered out to make him listen to reason. I don't wonder at the natives resisting the demands of the Natal Government, as, of course, they don't understand how it is they are free to buy what firearms they please at the diamond fields in the Cape colony, without any hindrance or restriction, and yet directly they come into Natal they find themselves ordered to hand them over to the white men, although they are given to understand that the colonies are governed by the same Queen. When up the country near the Drachensburg, which is partially the boundary of the country held by the whites, we saw quantities of men carrying firearms who had bought them at the diamond fields—to possess a gun being a Caffre's greatest ambition, and for which he is willing to work and save. A steamer arrived in the

bay this morning, but unfortunately going the wrong way for us, being bound for Zanzibar.

November 2nd. Sunday. Wet morning, but went to church; and as it cleared up we had a row on the bay in the afternoon. Bought a live chameleon, which became quite tame and a great pet of E.'s; it lived on a bough, or a nosegay of flowers, and green stuff, and never seemed to wander away. It was most amusing to see it catch any unwary fly that came within its reach—darting out its tongue, which was almost as long as its body, quite $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and seizing the fly with the tip brought it back like lightning into its throat, and after a gulp or two swallowed it down. In its changes of colour it always assimilated itself to the colour of the object it was lying on or clinging to; but though it varied from almost black to the very faintest green, it always, in all its shades, was of a greenish hue. After seeing Mr. Baines's pictures we thought we should like some similar reminiscences, and what with the help of our memory, and some rough sketches of E.'s, we managed to give him a very good idea of the subjects and scenes we wanted, and commissioned him to paint them for us as soon as he could do so.

November 3rd. The steamer "Florence," belonging to Donald Currie's line, running in opposition to the Union Company, came in this morning, and as it seems likely she will be the first boat to start from Capetown, we secured berths on board of her—a beautiful clean little vessel, and well fitted up, but very small. We have no chance now of catching the boat that leaves the Cape on the 15th of this month, so hope to get off by the 25th. We went down to the glebe to see a very mild regatta in the bay: one boat capsized which seems rather a common occurrence, but the water is very shallow in most parts. Our heavy luggage has all arrived now from Pieter-

Maritzburg, and down at the quay ready to go on board the steamer. I went to see a quantity of birds which a young gentleman in the neighbourhood had been commissioned to collect by my friend Oates, who was anxious to take them back to England; and I bought a few duplicates to add to the few I had managed to shoot up country. I was surprised to find the great majority of the birds with such dull plumage, the emerald cuckoo being perhaps the most brilliant of the few exceptions to this rule.

November 7th. Fresh news and increased excitement about the Caffre outbreak: the volunteers and militia drilling in all directions, and knots of people collected about the streets discussing the latest intelligence, which is certainly rather alarming, as it appears that some of the mounted corps sent up from Pieter-Maritzburg to bar the passes through the Berg, came into collision with the natives, and three of the whites were killed. The arrangements appear to have been bad generally on the part of the authorities—no supplies for man or horse, no communication kept up, and embarrassing orders. The outbreak occurred near Estcourt, through which we passed coming down to Pieter-Maritzburg; and as it has been reported that some wagons were stopped on the road, we were glad to be out of the way. It is further reported that the steamer may be detained by the authorities, or sent off to East London for troops, which would not be pleasant for us. However, we were told to go on board on the 8th, as, if not detained, she was to sail early on the next morning. After wishing our friends at the glebe good-bye, we went on board in the evening of the 8th, and dined there; the cuisine was excellent, and much superior to the Union line.

November 9th. Sunday. Steamed out into the tide to clear the bar, and anchored outside, the captain having agreed

to wait till 10 o'clock, when the authorities expected further news from Pieter-Maritzburg. However, the steamer was fortunately not required, and we were soon out of sight of the lighthouse and the hills round the Bay of Natal.

November 10th. Reached East London, and again were detained by the weather preventing the cargo boats from coming off; so we lay tossing about in the everlasting swell, and heartily wishing ourselves ashore again. There was one unfortunate sailing craft which had been lying here six weeks, and had only discharged one boat load of cargo. Both of us have been ill, but are getting over it again.

November 12th. Still at this detestable hole. Took in some additional passengers, in the shape of eleven nigger convicts and their keeper, bound for Capetown, to work on the breakwater there; they were all in irons, but looked harmless enough, and incapable of much violence, but they were all actual or would-be murderers.

November 13th. Thankful were we to get away this afternoon, and next morning reached Port Elizabeth, and the sea being smooth we enjoyed a quiet anchorage. Between East London and Port Elizabeth we passed by enormous tracts of uninhabited forest of almost boundless extent, and here it was that the Duke of Edinburgh killed his elephant, of which game some few still remain here, and are preserved by the Directors of the Government, or, of course, they would be soon destroyed. Went on shore with E., and walked over the gardens, which are certainly very good considering the soil, position, and great want of water which the plants have to contend against. No rain having fallen here for eighteen months, and no springs or natural supply of any kind, the whole place seems burnt up. Next day we finished discharging cargo, and sailed again, a Dutch gentleman, his wife and thirteen children having considerably increased our party in the saloon; but

they gradually disappeared in a most miserable state, and took refuge in their berths. One of the passengers, a queer sort of fellow, asked the Dutchman how many children he had, and when told—"sixteen altogether, and the youngest a year old," he rather astonished the father by enquiring "when he meant to stop;" but he answered good-naturedly, "he thought it was time to think about it."

November 16th. Sunday. Arrived in Mossel Bay, when the paterfamilias departed, with his wife and her following. We had service in the saloon, the captain acting as parson, assisted by the doctor, and an extraordinary performance it was. Went ashore with E. for a walk along the beach in the afternoon. There is an island in the roadstead here, where seals resort in great numbers, and I bought two or three skins from the boatman, who rents the island of the Government; but he took me in, as, in my ignorance, I bought large skins, which are useless for making sealskin jackets such as ladies wear, the "pups" only being fit for this purpose. Finished discharging the cargo for this port on the next afternoon, and started on the last run for Capetown. The sea was rough, and the vessel rolling most uncomfortably. E. was seasick again; but we gradually passed Cape Agullas, Table Bay, Cape of Good Hope, and on the 19th at daylight we were inside the docks at Capetown. We got off to the hotel as soon as possible, glad to have arrived at our last stage on the home journey, and found we had only missed the last homeward steamer by forty-eight hours. The "Anglian" was to sail next on the 25th, and we were glad to find that she was commanded by the same captain who had brought us out in the "African;" but some accident had happened to her screw, though it was hoped she would be repaired in time to start as advertised—a much finer vessel than the "African," and the cabins large and comfortable. As there were very few passengers going, we had a 4-berth

cabin to ourselves, and kept our heavy luggage in the adjoining one which was empty, and thus had plenty of room. E. went this afternoon with Mrs. Bleek to an "at home" at Government House. Coming out from England, Capetown seemed a miserable place; but now to us coming down from so far up country, and having seen no place at all approaching it in size, it seemed quite a grand and imposing town.

Next day we found, to our disgust, that the company's agents had decided not to run a mail as usual on the 25th, and that there was no chance of the "Anglian" going before the end of the month, and then she would call at Cape Coast Castle to carry some fresh beef for the troops' Christmas dinner. It seemed as if we were doomed to disappointment and delay. Dr. Bleek came to see us at the hotel, and brought us a budget of letters, and kindly insisted on our going to take up our quarters at his house at Mowbray, and stay with him and our cousins until we sailed. I ordered an assortment of Cape bulbs from an old gardener who collects them near Mowbray, and who assured me his boxes always gave satisfaction; but I rather doubt that fact after trying them—there are 164 varieties, and some very beautiful flowers amongst them. The old fellow was extremely anxious about his married daughter, who was living in Natal, near Greytown. When he heard I had just come from Natal, he asked me several questions, and could hardly be persuaded that she was a long way from the scene of the Caffre disturbance. On going into Capetown on Monday morning, I was much distressed to find Kemp ill in bed with a feverish attack, and the doctor seemed to think it might develope into something serious. He had been so well all through the "fly country," but I suppose the fever had affected him, though it did not develope itself for so long afterwards. This evening we were much amused at the excuse which

the driver of a fly made for not appearing at the time he was ordered, namely, that he had been delayed by church: whether he had fallen asleep over the sermon, or the service was longer than he expected, I don't know, but he never turned up, and we all had to walk to the Observatory, where we were going to look at the moon through a very powerful telescope, by the kind invitation of the principal astronomer, who was most civil and good-natured in his efforts to interest us. The religious driver came in time to take us home.

November 30th. Sunday. The church at Mowbray, where we went last Sunday, being of a low and depressing nature as regards its services and appearance, we went to a neighbouring parish, which was altogether the opposite in its tendencies. The next morning I went into Capetown to see Kemp again, and found him still very poorly but no worse. There are quantities of little windmills in the neighbourhood of this town, pumping up the water from shallow wells to the tops of their owners' houses. E. much pleased with a large box full of "everlastings," which she was anxious to take back for friends at home, and which our cousins had kindly got together for us during our trip up country. Kemp still no better, but determined to stick to his physie, which I strongly recommended him to drop, having no faith therein.

December 3rd. The "Anglian" was appointed to sail to-day, but it was blowing a gale outside, and so she was put off again till to-morrow.

December 4th. Said good-bye to the party at Mowbray, and after getting the heavy luggage out of the warehouse where it had been laying, I had such things as we wanted for the voyage put in our cabin, and the remainder sent down the hold. E. came later in the afternoon from Mowbray. We had very few passengers with us, as they had nearly all changed over to the "Teuton," which was

considered to have the best chance of arriving the first at Southampton, for though she was not to start till twenty-four hours later, she was going straight home, instead of calling at Cape Coast Castle; but we thought the new ship preferable, and liked the captain whom we knew, so remained in the "Anglian." As it turned out we beat the other vessel by two whole days. Steamed out of dock at 4 p.m., and immediately came in for a heavy swell, and accordingly, as usual, both rapidly succumbed and retired below. A lot of miserable bullocks lashed by their heads to the taffrail on the quarter deck—poor brutes, they rolled and blundered about with every lurch, evidently in great suffering, falling down with great violence on the deck, and then struggling to get up again, it seemed to me great cruelty; however, many were soon out of their misery, for they began to die off rapidly, and I don't think half arrived alive at Cape Coast Castle.

December 5th. Sea less rough, and consequently felt more comfortable. Kemp still very poorly. Luckily the fine weather now set in, or one more such another twenty-four hours as the last would have polished off every bullock, and the chance of Christmas beef for the troops would have been small indeed. We had favourable winds and bowled along at a good pace up the west coast. Everything much more comfortable on board this ship than the one we came out in. There are very few passengers on board, and it is difficult to get up a rubber, or any diversion, to break the monotony of a long sea voyage. We had a slight row in the smoking room last evening, which gave us a topic for conversation for a few hours. One obnoxious individual chose to be facetious, and angered a hot-headed passenger named Pitt, by adding the not inappropriate adjective, "bottomless," to his cognomen; but the latter not appreciating the joke

flew at his tormentor, and was with difficulty restrained from further violent measures by his fellow passengers. A curious and to us an unknown bird, settled on one of the ship's boats this afternoon, and the captain managed to secure it with a noose, saying it would do for the Zoo., it seemed very tame and much exhausted. The weather is now getting sensibly hotter, as we are well into the tropics, and any clothing seems superfluous. It is a hard matter to pass the time, but the day is got through somehow. We breakfast at 9 o'clock, and as I can luckily sleep like a top, I never get up till the last moment. Not having had anything since dinner at 5 o'clock the evening before, and what with the sea air, one appreciates this meal, and does justice to it. After breakfast an adjournment to the deck with a book and a pipe, and E. settles down to her never-failing resource, needle or fancy work. Then one gets tired of reading and strolls forward to the smoking room, where I find two energetic fellows in their shirt sleeves, playing the lively game of cribbage for sixpences; go on further forward to see Kemp and how he is getting on, and find out if he wants anything; back to the smoking room, and find another fellow stretched on the cushions, and trying to get a nap at 11 a.m. Stroll off again, and perhaps meet one of the officers, who one talks to for five minutes, and expects almost prophetic answers to questions about the ship's run, the weather, probable date of arrival at this place and the other, and so forth. Then one watches the captain and his officers taking their sights on the quarter deck. Then the skipper makes it 8 bells, and they return to work out the reckoning. At 12-30 the luncheon bell rings; one doesn't want it after a heavy breakfast at 9-0, but we go down for something to do. Then the ship's run is discussed, and we go on deck again. And much the same way the afternoon goes, except

that more fellows sleep. Perhaps a whale, a shark, a shoal of porpoises or flying fish, or a sail, gives us five minutes' interest. Dinner is ready at the unearthly hour of 5-0, while the sun is still baking the saloon; and how hot the plates are in the tropics, and how cold in the channel, and the same with the soup and other eatables—so much more sensible to have given us a cold feed, if they couldn't manage a hot one, later in the evening. After dinner on deck again, and this is the pleasantest time of the twenty-four hours. At 7 o'clock there is some tea and toast for those that like it in the saloon, and then people try to amuse themselves till bed time. The lights are put out in the saloon at 10-0, and in the cabins half an hour later; and so another day at sea has been got through somehow.

December 13th. We crossed the line, and had a most refreshing downpour of rain—more like a sheet of water falling than rain drops. Next day, Sunday, there was no service again, as I conclude the crew were all supposed to be busy, preparing for our expected arrival at Cape Coast Castle to-morrow; and last Sunday the captain said he had a cold and couldn't read. Engines going at half speed, or we should arrive before daylight, and the place was new to the captain.

December 15th. When we got up in the morning, found the ship at anchor, and close by were lying five or six men-of-war and transports, with provisions and stores for the troops who had arrived; but most of them had been sent off again for a cruise, as arrangements were not forward enough for landing them, the road to the Prah not being quite completed. Several of the officers came on board from the different ships, and both they and the boats' crews looked pale and sickly from the climate. They seemed, too, on short commons, getting little or

nothing but salt pork and biscuit, as there appeared to be no stores from which they could get anything better to eat and drink. They begged for anything the steward could spare from the ship's provisions, thankful for some bread and cheese, and rejoicing over some bottled beer and soda water. There is supposed to be a contractor to provide fresh meat and vegetables from the shore, but the supplies are most uncertain; and since the Ashantee war commenced have almost entirely failed. We found that the evening before we arrived, invalided troops had been sent off to Ascension and St. Helena to be picked up by the Union Company's homeward-bound boats; and we rather chuckled, as one of the chief reasons for the passengers from Capetown preferring to sail in the "Teuton" instead of our ship, was on account of our going round to the Gold Coast to pick up invalids, and now they would be very likely to drop in for the batch we had just missed. The few unfortunate bullocks that still remained alive were lowered into the Government cargo boats, manned by our allies the Fantees, who work the boats by small paddles, sitting in a most uncomfortable position on each gunwale—about sixteen or twenty to a boat. I and three other passengers went ashore to have a look at this famous spot, and were much amused at the niggers' alarm if one of the oxen moved a leg or raised his head; the nearest paddler just rolled overboard, as a matter of course, and sometimes there were two or three in the water at once; the rest paddled on unconcerned, and the others swam up, caught the boat, and scrambled into their places again; they seemed as much in their element in the water as ashore, and, of course, were not afraid of spoiling their clothes. They paddle to the time of a monotonous chant, led by the fellow who steers, and joined in by all the crew. When we arrived they

carried us through the surf, and we took our way up to the Castle, where we found quantities of women engaged as bearers, waiting for their different loads to start up the country. How I wished we had had such a troop of bearers, and willing to carry such loads as these people appeared to be. We saw heaps of old and useless guns lying about in all directions—the cannon of former times, and I suppose not worth the carriage to sell as old metal. We strolled about the town—a collection of mud huts, most of which had fallen in or out during the rainy season, and are apparently not repaired, as few of the places we saw were in a weather-tight state. The only decent buildings were the Castle, a few Government offices, and one or two houses occupied by the governor and the white residents. The heat was truly awful, and most oppressive, and one wondered what there could be to be got out of such a miserable country and such a deadly climate, to compensate for the lives and money annually lavished here by Europeans. The country at the back of the settlement seemed undulating and thickly wooded, looking pleasant enough from the sea; but we had neither time nor inclination to go farther inland, and were glad to get on board again out of the frightful heat—we had thought the ship hot enough, but going back to it seemed like entering an ice house after being on shore. We took on board some mails and despatches, and sailed again at 4 p.m. One fever victim, an officer of a West Indian regiment, came away with us, scarcely able to crawl about, but he picked up wonderfully before we reached Southampton.

December 16th. We are now coasting along to the westward, by the coast of Guinea. Kemp down again with another attack of the fever, and in a very low and desponding state. I managed to get him moved out of the 2nd class berths down below, into one of the cabins on

deck, which is much cooler and less oppressive—the weather still keeping very hot.

December 18th. The ship's head is now turned more to the north, and we may soon expect some cooler temperature. Kemp better again but very weak. Passed Cape Palmas yesterday, well in sight of the land. The sea a most perfect calm, and the weather daily getting more pleasant. At last Christmas-day came, the first I had ever spent at sea; and it seemed unnatural with its hot sun and blue sky, instead of the customary frost and snow. We had an extra good dinner, the company standing champagne *ad libitum*. The next day we anchored off Madeira, but were immediately put into quarantine by the Portuguese officials, as we had been round to Cape Coast Castle, though we had no infectious cases on board. It was most tantalizing, as we had so much wanted to go ashore and take a drive round this beautiful island. A few more passengers came on board at this place for Southampton; after taking in some coal we sailed away, not to stop again before reaching England. On the 29th we passed and sighted Teneriffe. There must have been a heavy gale away in the Atlantic, as we now came into a heavy sea, the ship for two days rolling about in the most aggravating way, and shooting one first to one side, and then the other, otherwise the weather calm and fine. We are now getting into much colder regions, and rapidly passing through the Bay of Biscay are beginning to speculate when we shall reach home. The 30th and 31st crept slowly on; and on the morning of January 1st, 1874, we awoke to find ourselves in the Southampton water, and we slowly steamed into the dock, just as the bell was ringing for breakfast, a capital time to arrive, as it enabled everyone to get away home that same day.

We left the heavy luggage to the care of the shipping

agents, and hurrying off with the light traps we caught a fast morning train to London, which seemed to travel at a lightning pace after the slow rate of locomotion to which we had been for so long accustomed. In the afternoon we started again from Town, and arrived before dark at our home in Surrey, truly thankful to be again amongst its old associations and comforts, realizing that one of the last, though not the least, pleasures of our past trip was—once more getting home.