

Select Tale.

A NIGHT'S ADVENTURE.

Notwithstanding my anxious desire to reach the Ngami—the goal of my wishes—I determined, before finally leaving Kobis, to devote one more day, or rather night, to the destruction of the denizens of the forest. But the adventure nearly terminated fatally; and the night of the 15th of July, will ever be remembered by me as one of the most eventful epochs of my life; for, in the course of it, I was three several times in the very jaws of death, and only escaped destruction by a miracle.

From the constant persecution to which the large game had of late been subjected at Kobis, it had become not only scarce, but wary; and hearing that elephants and rhinoceroses still continued to resort to Abegham, I forthwith proceeded there on the night in question. Somewhat incautiously, I took up my position—alone, as usual—on a narrow neck of land dividing two small pools; the space on either side of my "skarm" being only sufficient for a large animal to stand between me and the water. I was provided with a blanket, and two or three spare guns.

It was one of those magnificent tropical moonlight nights, when an indescribably soft and enchanting light is shed over the slumbering landscape; the moon was so bright and clear that I could discern even a small animal at a considerable distance.

I had just completed my arrangements, when a noise, that I can liken only to the passage of a train of artillery, broke the stillness of the air; it evidently came from the direction of one of the numerous stony paths, or rather tracks, leading to the water, and I imagined it was caused by some wagons that might have crossed the Kalahari.—Raising myself partially from my recumbent posture, I fixed my eyes steadily on the part of the bush whence the strange sounds proceeded; but for some time I was unable to make out the cause.—All at once, however, the mystery was explained by the appearance of an immense elephant, immediately followed by others, amounting to eighteen.—Their towering forms told me at a glance that they were all males. It was a splendid sight to behold so many huge creatures approaching with a free sweeping, unsuspecting and stately step. The somewhat elevated ground whence they emerged, and which gradually sloped towards the water, together with the misty night-air, gave an increased appearance of bulk and mightiness to their naturally giant structures.

Crouching down as low as possible in the "skarm," I waited with beating heart and ready rifle the approach of the leading male, who, unconscious of peril, was making straight for my hiding-place. The position of his body, however, was unfavorable for a shot; and, knowing from experience that I had little chance of obtaining more than a single good one, I waited for an opportunity to fire at his shoulder, which, as before said, is preferable to any other part when shooting at night. But this chance, unfortunately, was not afforded till his enormous bulk towered about my head.—The consequence was, that, while in the act of rising the muzzle of my rifle over the "skarm," my body caught his eye, and, before I could place the piece to his shoulder, he swung himself round, and, with trunk elevated and ears spread, desperately charged me. It was now too late to think of flight, much less of slaying the savage beast. My own life was in imminent jeopardy; and seeing that, if I remained partially erect, he would inevitably seize me with his proboscis, I threw myself on my back with some violence; in which position, and without shouldering the rifle, I fired upwards at random towards his chest, uttering, at the same time, the most piercing shouts and cries. The change of position, in all human probability, saved my life; for, at the same instant, the trunk of the enraged animal descended precisely on the spot where I had been previously crouching, sweeping away the stones (many of a large size) that formed the fore part of my "skarm," like so many pebbles. In another moment his broad fore-feet passed directly over my face.

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

Immediately after the elephant had left me I was on my legs, and snatching up a spare rifle laying at hand, I pointed at him, as he was retreating, and pulled the trigger; but to my intense mortifi-

cation the piece missed fire. It was a matter of thankfulness to me, however, that a similar mishap had not occurred when the animal charged; for, had my gun not then exploded, nothing, as I conceive, could have saved me from destruction.

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

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

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

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

In heading back to my "skarm," I accidentally took a turn in the direction pursued by the black rhinoceros, and by ill luck, as the event proved, at once encountered her. She was still on her legs, but her position, as before, was unfavorable.—Hoping however, to make her change it for a better, and thus enable me to destroy her at once, I took up a stone and hurled it at her with all my force; when, snorting horribly, erecting her tail, keeping her head close to the ground, and raising clouds of dust by her feet, she rushed at me with fearful fury. I had just time to level my rifle and fire before she was upon me—and the next instant, while instinctively turning round for the purpose of retreating, laid me prostrate. The shock was so violent as to send my rifle, powder-flask, and ball pouch, as also my cap, spinning in the air; the gun, indeed, as afterwards ascertained, to a distance of fully ten feet.

On the beast charging me, it crossed my mind that, unless gored at once by her horn, her impetus would be such (after knocking me down, which I took for granted would be the case) as to carry her beyond me, and I might thus be afforded a chance of escape. So, indeed, it happened, for, having tumbled me over (in doing which head and the fore-part of her body, owing to the violence of the charge, was half buried in the sand), and trampled on me with great violence, her fore quarter passed over my body. Struggling for life, I seized my opportunity, and as she was recovering herself for a renewal of a charge, I scrambled out from between her hind legs.

But the enraged beast had not yet done with me! Scarcely had I regained my feet before she struck me down a second time, and with her horn ripped up my right thigh (though not very deeply), from near the knee to the hip, with her fore-foot; moreover, she hit me a terrific blow on the left shoulder, near the back of the neck. My ribs bent under the enormous weight and pressure, and for a moment, I must, as I believe, have lost consciousness—I have at least very indistinct notions of what afterwards took place. All I remember is, that when I raised my hand I heard a furious snorting and plunging among the neighboring bushes.

I now arose, though with great difficulty, and made my way, in the best manner I was able, towards a large tree near at hand, for shelter; but this precaution was needless; the beast, for the time at least, showed no inclination further to molest me. Either in the *mole*, or owing to the confusion caused by her wounds, she had lost sight of me, or she felt satisfied with the revenge she had taken. Be that as it may, I escaped with my life,

though sadly wounded and severely bruised, in which disabled state I had great difficulty in getting back to my "skarm."

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

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

I afterwards directed him to take one of the guns and proceed in search of the wounded rhinoceros, cautioning him to be careful in approaching the beast, which I had reason to believe was not yet dead. He had only been gone about ten minutes when I heard a cry of distress. Striking my hand against my forehead, I exclaimed—

"Good God! the brute has attacked the lad also!"

Seizing hold of my rifle, I scrambled through the bushes as fast as my crippled condition would permit; and when I had proceeded two or three hundred yards, a scene suddenly presented itself that I shall vividly remember to the last days of my existence. Among some bushes, and within a couple of yards of each other, stood the rhinoceros and the young savage; the former supported herself on three legs, covered with blood and froth, and snorting in the most furious manner; the latter, petrified with fear, spell-bound, as it were, and riveted to the spot. Creeping, therefore, to the side of the rhinoceros opposite to that on which the beast charged wildly to and fro without any distinct object. Whilst she was thus occupied, I poured in shot after shot, but thought she would never fall. At length, however, she sank slowly to the ground; and, imagining that she was in her death agonies, and that all danger was over, I walked unhesitatingly close up to her, and was on the point of placing the muzzle of my gun to her ear to give her the *coup de grace*, when, to my horror, she once more rose on her legs.

Taking a hurried aim, I pulled the trigger, and instantly retreated, with the beast in full pursuit. The race, however, was a short one; for, just as I threw myself behind a bush for safety, she fell dead at my feet, so near me, indeed, that I could have touched her with the muzzle of my rifle! Another moment, and I should probably have been impaled on her murderous horn, which, though short, was sharp as a razor.

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

Miscellaneous.

THE BIBLE.—Place yourself, in imagination, by the side of an Australian gold-digger, and observe the earth that is drawn up from its bottom. It is likely that your unpractised eye will see nothing in the heap but rubbish, and dirt, and stones. And yet that very heap of earth may prove, on washing, to be full of particles of the purest gold. It is just the same with the Bible. We see but little of it now. We shall find hereafter that every verse of it contained gold! Place yourself, in imagination, on the top of some highland mountain. Look at the minute mass of lichen which clings to the side of that mass of rock. Tell me, if you can, what use and purpose that lichen serves. The birds of the air, the beasts, the very insects leave it alone; grouse and ptarmigan, and red deer, draw no sustenance from it. The rock does not require its covering. And yet that minute lichen is as truly a part of God's creation as the cedars of Lebanon or the Victoria Regia of the South American rivers. Place it under a microscope, and you will see that it is like all other works of God, it is "very good," and full of beautiful design. Settle it down in your mind, as it is with the book of nature, so it is with the book of revelation, the written Word of God. There is not a chapter or verse, from first to last, which is not in some way profitable. If you and I do not see its use, it is because we have not eyes to see it yet. But all, we may rest assured, is precious. All is "very good."—Well said Bishop Jewell, "There is no sentence, no clause, no word, no syllable, no letter, but it is written for thy instruction. There is not one jot, but it is signed and sealed with the blood of the Lamb."

THE PORT AND TRADE OF CANTON.—Canton was an emporium of commerce to Eastern nations many centuries before European navigators had penetrated into the East. The first attempts on the part of Europeans to establish a trade with China were made by the Portuguese, between whose Sovereign, Emmanuel, and his Celestial Majesty a treaty of commerce was concluded in 1517. In 1634 some British ships touched at Canton, but very little intercourse took place with the natives. It was not until 1680 that direct trading commenced between the English and Chinese—a trade, which soon after became the monopoly of the East India Company down to the expiry of its charter in 1834. The tea trade became one of some magnitude during the period of the Company's monopoly; but since the throwing open of the trade, we believe we are under the mark when we state that of 80,000,000 lbs. exported annually from Canton, Great Britain takes upwards of 50,000,000 lbs., the United States being the next greatest customer. Altogether the trade of this country with China has expanded to something of great importance, and promises still greater results, if protested and fostered by our authorities.

But, although the English merchants have the largest interests at stake, it is not them alone who complain of the exclusion from direct communication with the inhabitants and officials. The merchants of every power of any note—even Austria—have their *hongs*, or factories, in the extra-mural shrub, and all have similar complaints of the annoyances and delays to commerce arising from persistence in the monstrously absurd policy of exclusion. On this subject our Government have a charge almost amounting to bad faith, to make against the Chinese authorities. It was arranged with only some slight reservation, under the treaty of 1842, that Canton should be opened, as well as the ports of Amoy, Foo-Choo-Foo, Ningpo, and Shanghai, while the island of Hong-Kong, in the estuary of the Canton river was also ceded. But we now presume we have heard the last of the pretexts against throwing open to the world the greatest commercial port of China.

The most recent authorities estimates the population at 750,000, and that of Boat Town—so called from the inhabitants living entirely upon the water—at 70,000. The last named population are not allowed to land. The boats, about 5,000 in number, are all lashed alongside each other in tiers. The rearing of pigs, fowls, and the cultivation of kitchen vegetables in these craft are quite common.

The circumference of the wall of Canton Proper is nine miles; but three-fourths of the enclosed space consists of the pleasure-grounds and gardens of the great and wealthy.

THE EDUCATION OF THE EYE.—We may not be called upon to hunt white foxes in the snow; or, like William Tell, to save our own life and our child's by splitting with an arrow an apple on its head; or to identify a stolen sheep by looking in its face and swearing to its portrait; but we must do every day many things essential to our welfare, which we would do a great deal better if we had an eye as trained as readily as we might have. For example it is not every man that can hit a nail upon the head, or drive it straight in with a hammer.—Very few persons can draw a straight line, or cut a piece of cloth or paper even, still fewer can use a pencil as draughtsman; and fewer still can paint with colors. Yet assuredly there is not a calling in which an educated eye, nice in distinguishing form, colour, size, distance and the like, will not be of inestimable service. For although it is not to be denied that some eyes can be educated to a much greater extent than others, that can be no excuse for any one neglecting to educate the eye. The worse it is, the more it needs education; the better it is the more it will repay it.—*The Free Gateways of Knowledge, by Professor G. Wilson.*

AFFLICTIONS OF CHRISTIANS.—They have frequently more of these sufferings than others. The husbandman does not prune the bramble but the vine. The stones designed for the temple above require more cutting and polishing than those which are for the common wall. Correction is not for strangers but children. The Christian mourns over those infirmities which are not viewed by others as sins, such as wandering thoughts and cold affection in duty. It is said of that beautiful bird, the bird of Paradise, that when it is caught and caged, it never ceases to sigh till it is free. Just such is the Christian. Nothing will satisfy him but the glorious liberty of the sons of God.—*Jay.*

THEORY OF THE EYES.—Dark blue eyes are most common in persons of delicate, refined, or effeminate nature; light blue, and much more gray eyes, in the hardy and active. Greenish eyes have generally the same meaning as the gray. Hazel eyes are the more usual indications of a mind masculine, vigorous and profound.—*Quarterly Review.*