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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE WHITE CHIEF OF THE CAFFRES ***

Major General A.W. Drayson

"The White Chief of the Caffres"

Chapter One.

I was born in the city of Delhi, in Central India, where my father held a command as major in the old East India Company's service. I was an only son, and my mother died shortly after I was born. I resided at Delhi until I was ten years of age. Having been attended as a child by an ayah, and afterwards taught to ride by one of my father's syces, I learned to speak Hindostani before I could speak English, and felt quite at home amongst black people.

My father, Major Peterson, had a brother in England who was a bachelor, and an East Indian merchant, and supposed to be very rich. I was named Julius, after this uncle, who was my godfather, and who was much older than was my father, and who, although he had never seen me, yet took great interest in me, and mentioned me in all his letters.

It was just before my tenth birthday that my father received a letter from my uncle, which caused a great change in my life, and led to those adventures which I relate in this tale. In this letter my uncle wrote, that from his experience of India he was certain that I could not be properly educated in that country; that at my age the climate was very trying; and that consequently he wished my father to send me home, in order that I might be placed at a good school in England, and eventually sent either to Addiscombe or Haileybury, according as I chose the military or civil service of India. The expenses of my education, my uncle stated, would be undertaken by him, so that money need not interfere with the question. Young as I was I saw the advantages of this proposition, and being by nature ambitious and fond of adventure, I was pleased at the prospect of seeing England. After a little hesitation my father consented to part with me, and I and my father commenced our long journey from Delhi to Calcutta. In those early days of my youth there were no railways in India; there was no Suez Canal, and there were no steamers in the world. To reach England we embarked at Calcutta in what was termed one of Green's ships—that is, a fine East Indiaman, a full-rigged ship of about 1,000 tons—and having sailed down the Hoogly river, commenced our four months' voyage, round the Cape, and from thence by Saint Helena to England.

I can remember Delhi as it was in those days—its fine old fort, the fortifications round the town, its long street, in which were the bazaars and jewellers' shops. Many of the little native children to whom I used to talk in my childhood were probably among those who, during the Mutiny, were the murderers of my countrymen. Localities on which I have sat with my ayah, and took my first steps, have since then become famous as the places where our soldiers have fought and conquered against overwhelming numbers. Though I have passed through many strange scenes, I still remember Delhi, for it was my birthplace, and it has ever had a charm for me on that account only.

After a journey of nearly a month we reached Calcutta, and were received as guests by a friend who lived in Fort William. I was astonished at the sight of the ships that were anchored close to the fort, for I had no idea that any vessels could be so large. As the *Madagascar*—the ship in which I was to sail—was ready for sea, we stayed but a few days in Calcutta. I was placed in charge of the captain, bid my father good-bye, promised to be a good boy and to do everything my uncle wished me to do, and commenced my voyage to England.

On the second day after leaving Calcutta we entered the Bay of Bengal, and with a fair wind sailed merrily over the dancing waves. During a few days I was sea-sick; but I soon recovered, and was then much interested in watching the sailors when they went aloft to take reefs in the sails, or to take in a royal or studding-sail. There were several passengers, and of all ages, many of whom, knowing that I was alone, were very kind to me. There was one young lady about eighteen, who was my special favourite, and who used to tell me stories as we sat on deck in the evening. I called her Constance: I did not then know her by any other name. Altogether, there were five ladies on board; for in those days more ladies went to India than ever came back. Then sanitary precautions were not as well-known as they are at present, and fever and cholera claimed their victims in the Land of the Sun. I will refer only to those with whom I was afterwards associated; and these were Mrs Apton, a widow, and her daughter, a girl about twelve years old.

Our voyage continued, without anything remarkable occurring, until three days after we had passed the Mauritius, when it became calm, and for three days we merely drifted helplessly on a calm sea. On the fourth day it became dark and gloomy; there were no actual clouds, but the sky was nearly black, the sun was invisible, and the captain and his officers looked anxious, whilst the passengers gathered together in groups, and talked in low tones.

I had noticed that the captain had gone several times into the cabin and looked at a long wooden instrument that seemed to interest him much, and which I have since learned was a barometer. By means of this instrument and the indications in the sky, he knew that a storm was coming. In the days of sailing-vessels a storm was a more serious matter than it is in the present days of steam. A lee shore is now not a matter of such extreme danger; for a steamer is not at

the mercy of the winds, though she cannot escape the fury of the waves.

Darker and darker became the sky, whilst the ship was stripped of all her sails except one on the fore mast and one on the mizen, and every one was watching anxiously for the first burst of the expected storm. It was about the hour of sunset when the gale began, and we ran before it for a few minutes, the sea as yet being calm. Suddenly the wind chopped round, and before the ship could obey her helm she was taken aback, the foresail flattened against the mast, and in another instant the mast snapped like a twig, and fell on deck. The passengers, at the commencement of the storm, had been ordered below so as to be out of the way of the sailors, and it was merely from the reports that the mates occasionally brought us, that we knew what was happening on deck. The sea soon rose, and the ship lifted and fell, just as though she had been a small boat. During two days the gale continued; but no fears were entertained for the vessel's safety until a tremendous sea, striking her astern, carried away her rudder and left her a helpless log on the water. The sky had been so completely overcast since the commencement of the gale, that neither the sun nor a star had been seen; consequently no observations could be taken to tell where the ship was; but the captain considered that she was west of the Natal bluff, and about fifty miles from the land. The currents in this part are, however, so variable and run sometimes with such force, that it is difficult, without observations, to ascertain a ship's position.

The night was pitch dark, and every one in a state of great anxiety. No one had undressed, all the passengers being huddled together in the principal saloon. It must have been shortly after midnight when we heard a great noise on deck, shouts and running about, and then came a crash and a shock that made every sailor and passenger aware that a great catastrophe had occurred.

I was lying on one of the fixed sofas, and was sent flying across the cabin, and was considerably bruised; but the pain I experienced I scarcely thought of, as my alarm was so great to hear the terrific rush of water which struck the vessel, poured over her, and deluged the cabin. Two or three times the ship rose, and then, with a crash of smashing timbers, came down again, and was once more deluged with water. "We have struck on a rock!" was the cry (such was the fact), "and shall all be drowned."

As though satisfied with its victim, the storm ceased as suddenly as it had risen; but the sea continued to break over us all night, and every minute we expected the ship to break up. Had she not been a strong teak-built ship, she would probably have gone to pieces long before morning; but the sea gradually went down as the tide receded, and we at length saw that day was breaking. By this time some of the most daring among the male passengers removed the hatch that had been placed over the gangway to keep the water out, and ventured on deck, when the full extent of our disaster was visible. The ship's masts had all fallen, and of the captain and crew only five sailors remained; the others had been washed overboard, or had been killed by the falling masts. The ship had struck on a ledge of rocks about half a mile from the shore, and had then been carried over this into a sort of bay inside. As the tide fell, this ledge acted as a sort of breakwater, and fully accounted for the sudden decrease in the force of the sea as the tide went down. Between the ship and the land there was comparatively calm water, spotted here and there with black-looking rocks just showing above water.

Knowing that when the tide again rose we might again be exposed to the heavy seas which were still running, the sailors at once called upon the passengers to help them to construct a raft; for every boat had been either smashed or carried away, and several small dark objects moving rapidly through the water showed that sharks were ready to seize on any human being, who ventured into their element.

A raft was soon constructed, and the females were first conveyed to the shore. I followed on the second journey, and then the raft went backwards and forwards, conveying to the shore some provisions, clothing, valuables, two or three guns and pistols, with ammunition, a large sail to serve as a tent, and other articles that might be deemed necessary.

The men worked till past mid-day, when the tide rose, and with it the wind, and it was no longer possible to make use of the raft. We were all, however, busy on shore, making a sort of "lean-to" out of the sail, cooking provisions, and searching for water; and we thus passed our first day, the wind again blowing a hurricane. We lay down to rest that night, thanking God for our escape; for although our future was uncertain, yet we were better off than were the poor fellows who had been washed overboard, and by this time had probably been eaten by sharks.

On the following morning there was no sign of the wreck, but the shore was strewn with her timbers and cargo: the latter, when not utterly spoiled by the sea-water, were collected and piled up near our tent.

During the morning the men had been talking together as to what was best to be done. It was hoped that some ship would pass the coast, and that by aid of a flag which we had saved from the wreck, we could signal to the ship, and thus be relieved from our position. One question which could not be decided was on what part of the coast we had been cast. Some of the sailors thought we were near Saint Lucia Bay, east of Natal, others that we were nearer the Great Fish River. Of inhabitants or houses we saw nothing, but at night we heard the cries of animals, some of which I recognised as made by jackals, for round Delhi there were hundreds of these animals which used to serenade us at night. We were fortunate in finding water: an excellent clear stream ran into the sea within a few yards of where we had landed. We also found oysters firmly fixed to the rocks, which were very good. Some fish-hooks and lines were among the articles saved from the wreck, and rough fishing-rods having been cut from the trees, several fish were caught, which we fried in our wood fire. Thus we had no fear of starving, and though our position was not pleasant, none of the party despaired. To me, I must own, the conditions were not unpleasant, I had read and heard of shipwrecks and adventures of different kinds, and being by nature gifted with a hopeful and fearless constitution, I rather enjoyed the whole thing; for I was too young to think or feel deeply for the loss of the captain and crew, who had been drowned. In fact, like most children, I was thoughtless, and did not reflect enough for the disaster to impress me much. I had kept beside Constance all the time we were on the raft, and sat beside her in our tent. I felt very happy with her, and used to gather flowers for her, as many grew close beside where we were stopping. To me it seemed like a picnic, such as we used to have sometimes in the cool weather at Delhi, but it was of longer duration.

The men had been talking about the possibility of travelling down the coast to find either Natal, where there were a few traders, or if we were west of Natal, to reach the Cape Colony, and then get some vessel to come up the coast and rescue the females and the remainder of the men. But the difficulties of the journey were unknown: they had no idea of what rivers or other obstacles might be in the way; and so four days passed without any move being made; and although a sharp look-out was kept, no vessel was seen.

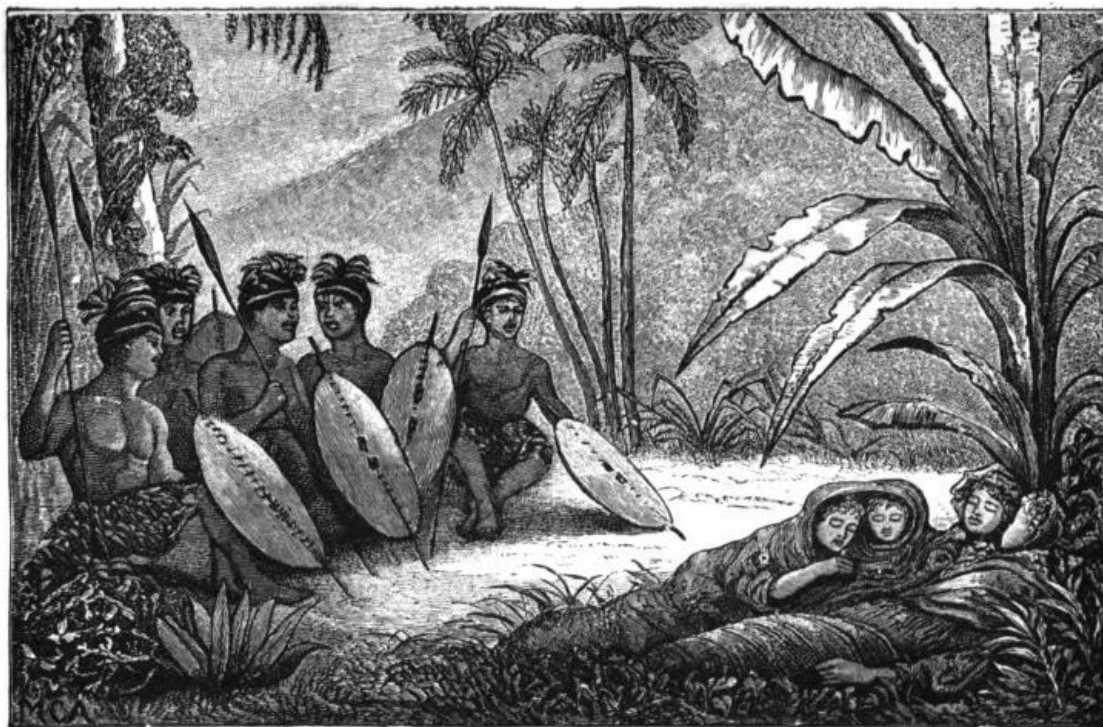
Chapter Two.

It was on the fifth night after we had landed from the wreck, that one of the sailors who was out with his gun, trying

to shoot some monkeys that he had seen in the trees, reported that he had seen some black men in the distance, but did not think they had seen him. He did not like to show himself to these men, for he did not know who, or what they might be. None of the party knew much about the natives on this coast; there was some kind of belief that they were Caffres or Hottentots, but whether these people were inoffensive and friendly, or the reverse, no one really knew. When I think of what happened, and now that I know the character and habits of the tribes in South Africa, I am surprised at the reckless indifference that was shown by the sailors and male passengers of our party, in not taking such precautions as should always be taken in a strange country.

I had slept under the canvas each night near the ladies of the party, whilst the men had selected various places near, on which they had made a bed of grass; and by sticking a few branches of trees in the ground, they had made a covering so as to keep off the dew, which fell very heavily each night. Thus the men were separated, whilst I and the females were all together.

It was towards the morning, although no signs of daylight appeared, that I awoke suddenly, with the feeling of some danger being near. I could not tell what it was, but it seemed like a dream in which I had escaped some danger. I could not get to sleep again, but lay listening and afraid to move. I must have remained in this watchful state about a quarter of an hour, when there was a noise as of men moving through the grass and bushes, the sound of blows, two or three groans, and then all was quiet again. I crawled along the ground to where Constance was lying, and found her awake and trembling. I whispered to her, "What is it?" She said, "I don't know, but keep quiet." We were afraid to move, but I could hear my heart beating, and it was as much as I could do to prevent crying out. We seemed to be hours in this state before the first signs of daylight appeared, and the objects round us could be seen. Day breaks quickly in those latitudes, and we were soon able to see what to us was a most astonishing and alarming sight. Seated on the ground and looking like stone figures, there were about forty black men. They had been sitting in a circle round the tent in which I and the females had been sleeping. They were each armed with some short spears, a large knobbed stick, and each had a black and white shield, which he held in front of him. My surprise was great on first seeing these men, and I called to Constance, who was asleep, to look at them. I could see none of the sailors or male passengers, and wondered how it was they were not showing themselves anywhere. As soon as Constance and the other ladies sat up to look at the black men, they became alarmed, and asked each other what it all meant. But they were not left long in doubt as to what to do, for a very tall black man rose and made a speech in a language none of us could understand; and then, signing to the females to follow him, he strode off towards the north, and away from the sea. By this time we were all much frightened: we did not know what had happened, but we supposed the men had been taken inland, as we could see no signs of them. We did not hesitate about following the man who had spoken, for the other men closed round us and shook their sticks at us if we hesitated about moving.



WATCHING THE SLEEPERS.

[p. 18.]

It was not till I had been many months in this country and had learned the language that I heard all that had taken place on that eventful night; and it may aid the reader to better understand our position if I now describe those details which were afterwards so graphically described to me.

Our ship had been wrecked on the coast of South Africa, about midway between Natal and Algoa Bay, and not far from a river termed the Umzimvubu, Imvubu being the native name of the hippopotamus, several of which animals are inhabitants of this river. The natives in this part were a branch of the great Zulu nation, but independent of the Zulus. They were sometimes called the Amapondas, but they were more pleased to be called Amazimvubu. This tribe was ruled over by a chief called Inyati, or the Buffalo, and was strong enough to be feared by the Amakosa tribes to the west, and respected by the Zulus to the east. In their habits they resemble the Zulus, and were given to use the short stabbing assagy in preference to the light assagy used for throwing by the Amakosa. They lived in huts similar to those of the other South African Caffres, and were great cultivators of the soil, growing mealies or Indian corn, a smaller grain called m'beli, pumpkins, and sugar-cane. They were lovers of cattle, and a man's riches consisted of herds of cattle and of wives.

I learned that the second day after we had been wrecked we had been discovered by these people, who had then set a watch on us; and it having been discovered that the men possessed firearms, and that there were women belonging to the party, it was decided that an attack should be made on the men during the night, and by surprise. Every detail of our camp was known to these people. By concealing themselves in the bush they had noted where each man lay down to sleep. Two Caffres had then been told off to assagy each individual, and to do it so quietly that no alarm should be given.

Every plan was so well arranged that, at a given signal, each man had been stabbed dead at once, and his body carried away and thrown in the water. The females, it was known, slept under the canvas, and they were not to be touched. I, being always with them and having long curly hair, was supposed to be a little girl, and so was spared; and when it was known that I was not a girl, I was allowed to live as I was so young. All these details were described to me by a young Caffre who had been present at the massacre, and whose first adventure had been at this affair.

We had walked for some hours along narrow paths that sometimes led through bushes, at others over hills and down valleys, and at length reached a collection of huts, which I afterwards learned was named *must*, or, as the Dutch and English call it, a kraal. At this kraal several men, women, and children came out to look at us, all seeming much amused at our appearance, and especially astonished at the long hair of the ladies, for the Caffres have only short and woolly hair.

We were given some milk at this kraal, and I observed that the Caffre who had spoken to us when I first awoke seemed to be giving orders to all the men, and when they replied to him they often said "*Inkose*." I tried to make these people understand me by saying a few words in Hindostani, but they could not understand me and shook their heads. On my repeating to them the first word I learned, viz., *Inkose*, they nodded, and pointing to the large Caffre, said "*Yena Inkose*" This, I afterwards learnt, meant "He is the chief."

We continued our journey during three days, resting at night in the kraals; and we saw thousands of Caffres, who were all alike, and who all seemed equally surprised at our appearance. At length we reached a kraal that was far larger than any we had hitherto seen, and on nearing which the Caffres came out in crowds and shouted "*Inkose*" and shook hands with all the men whom we had first seen. I and the three ladies were shown a hut, into which we had to crawl on our hands and knees: we then laid down, for we were all very tired and footsore. We were given some milk and some Indian corn boiled, but we saw no meat, these people apparently living entirely on corn and milk.

Mrs Apton and her daughter sat crying in the hut, and exclaiming that we should all be killed and probably eaten; but Constance seemed very brave and said that, considering how we had escaped from the wreck, we ought not to despair now. We all talked over our probable future, and tried to guess what had become of the men of the party. The Caffres had managed their slaughter so quietly that it was not till I could speak the language that we discovered what had happened to them. On the first night at this kraal the moon was full, and all the men belonging to this village and also those from several near it assembled, and, lighting a large fire, sat in a circle round it, and sang songs the whole night. We could not sleep in consequence of the noise, and we did not feel certain that we were not going to be killed and roasted at the fire, for we knew so little of the Caffres that we believed them to be cannibals.

It was just at daybreak when a Caffre came to the kraal and beckoned me to come out, saying "*E-zapa*" which meant "Come here." Thinking I was to be taken out and roasted, I clung to Constance and cried; but the Caffre dragged me away, and led me to where there were some dozen men sitting apart and talking. When I was dragged to where they were sitting, I was made to sit down, and a long conversation took place, two men seeming to be arguing with each other: one was the Inkose who had captured us, the other I had never seen before.

Had I then known the subject that was being discussed between them, I should have been more frightened than I was, but luckily all was settled without my knowledge. When the men of our party had been assagied, the orders were to spare the females; and I was supposed to be a little girl, as I was always with the ladies. The Caffres, however, soon found out that I was a boy, and the question now was whether I should be assagied or allowed to live. The chief was in favour of my being allowed to live, and determined to take me as his adopted son; whilst another chief recommended that I should be put to death. It took some hours for the council to talk over the matter, but at length it was decided that I was to be allowed to live, and was at once to be brought up as a Caffre.

Chapter Three.

Immediately the council broke up I was taken by the chief Inyati to a kraal about ten miles distant from that in which Mrs Apton and her daughter and Constance were stopping. I took a fancy to Inyati, and tried by signs and a few words which were a mixture of English and Hindostani, to ask him where I was being taken to. He seemed to understand my meaning, for he smiled, gave me a pat on the head, and gave me a knob-kerrie and an assagy to carry. Upon arriving at the kraal Inyati called out "Inyoni," "Tembile," and two Caffre boys about my own size came running towards him. Inyati spoke to them for some time, evidently about me, as he pointed to me often; the boys listened with great attention, and when he had finished, one of the boys repeated, apparently word for word, what he had been told. The chief nodded, and then walked away to one of the huts, whilst the boys put out each a hand and shook hands with me and beckoned me to follow them. They took me out about a mile from the kraal and towards a herd of cattle that were grazing on a hillside; we then sat down under the shade of a tree, and the boys commenced talking to me. I shook my head to show them I could not understand, and said, "Caffre humko malum ney," which is the Hindostani for "I don't know Caffre." Somehow I thought that, as the boys were black, they would understand Hindostani better than they would English. They talked together for some time, and appeared very earnest in some argument. They then sat down beside me, and, pointing to the assagy that I still carried, said, "Umkonto." I at once understood that they were going to teach me to speak Caffre, and being anxious to learn, I was much pleased at their intention. I repeated the word "umkonto," which I now knew meant an assagy, until I said it just as they did. They then pointed to the cattle and said, "Incomo," spreading out their hands so as to indicate all the herd. They then pointed at a chestnut-looking cow and said, "Imazi-e-bomvu," then at a white cow and said, "Imazi-e-molope." I learnt these words very quickly, and then, seeing a bird, I pointed at it, and looked inquiringly at my companions. They at once said, "Inyoni," which I knew meant a bird, and one of the boys, pointing to himself, said, "Igama's am Inyoni," which I knew meant, "My name is Inyoni." The boy then said, "Igama's arko," and pointed to me. I knew he was asking what my name was, so I said "Julius." They both tried to repeat the word after me, but it seemed more difficult for them to say "Julius" than it was for me to repeat Caffre words after them. Being anxious to learn useful words, I made signs of eating, and then of drinking. The boys were wonderfully quick at understanding; and, pretending to eat, they said "ejla," and then, pretending to drink, said "posa." The sun was shining, so I pointed to it, and was at once told that it was "Ilanga." The boys then patted their stomachs and drew them in as if they were empty, and said "Lambili, funa ejla"; this I understood meant, "Hungry, I want to eat."

Note: A Caffre chief who rebelled against us some years ago was called by the English, Langerbelali. The name really was Ilanga-liba-leli, which means, "The Shining Sun."

During this first day I learnt about forty words in Caffre, and as I afterwards found that about five hundred words enables me to speak in most languages, I was able in a fortnight to understand nearly all that was spoken, and also to make known what I wanted to say.

When the sun was near the horizon, the two Caffre boys collected the cattle, and drove them home. I aided them in this work, and tried to whistle as they did, but this I could not accomplish for some days; the cattle, however, seemed to be more afraid of me than of the Caffres, so I was a great help to them in driving the animals home.

On our reaching the kraal, the cattle were driven into the centre, where there was a circular space fenced round with tall upright poles. The men belonging to the kraal then milked the cows; for this I found was the men's work, no woman being allowed to milk them. I was taken into a hut where there were two little girls about my own size, who laughed at me, but would not speak. These girls were the sisters of Inyoni and Tembile, and one of them, although black, was very pretty. I was given a bowl of milk and some boiled Indian corn; and being very tired I soon fell asleep, and slept until disturbed shortly before sunrise by the two boys, who made signs to me to go with them and drive the cattle out to their grazing-ground.

During the next day I learned the Caffre for the numbers from one to ten. One they called *munye*, two was *mabili*, and ten *ishumi*. I also learned that some of the fruit in the bush was good and some bad. One fruit that these boys were fond of and was very good, they called Martingula; it grew on a tree something like the English holly and was about the size of a plum. It was red in colour, and varied very much in flavour: we found plenty of these trees, and ate a good deal of the fruit. The boys explained to me that whatever a monkey ate a man might eat, as monkeys knew quite well what was fit and what poisonous for food. Each day I became more apt in speaking Caffre, and as I heard nothing else spoken, I used to think in Caffre, and thought it a very pretty language. My young companions were light-hearted, and very kind, and quite unlike English boys, who too often chaff or bully a strange boy, especially if this boy belongs to a strange nation. But the young Caffres amused themselves for hours each day in throwing an assagy at a mark. The mark was a large hard fruit, in shape and size like an orange. It was placed on the top of a stick, and the boys threw at it from a distance of forty paces. I was very awkward at first, but having learned how to hold and throw the assagy, I became at the end of a week as expert as they were, and being stouter and stronger, I could throw the assagy to a greater distance. I also practised throwing the knob-kerrie, which did not require so much skill, but which I soon found was a very useful weapon, as quails in hundreds soon visited the country, and I and my companions used to knock down twenty or thirty quails a day with these sticks, and we used to make a fire and cook them, and found them excellent eating.

My first great sporting achievement was in killing a duiker, a small antelope that was found in bushy or stony country. This animal, which the Caffres termed *Impenze*, was very cunning, and could conceal itself in long grass in a wonderful way. I possessed very good sight, and rarely missed seeing anything that was to be seen, though I had yet to learn how to properly use this sight. We were sitting watching the cattle one morning, when I obtained a glimpse of an object moving in some long grass about a hundred yards from where we were. I did not say anything to my companions, but got up, and making a circular course, went quietly up to a rock which overlooked the grass in which I fancied I had seen the moving object. As I peeped over the stone I saw the impenze, standing broadside to, and about twenty yards from me. I had my assagy all ready to throw, and sent it with all my strength at the buck. The blade of the assagy went right through the buck's neck, and though it did not kill him, it prevented him from moving quickly through the grass and bushes, as it remained fast in his neck. I jumped down quickly and struck him with my knob-kerrie, and killed him with two or three blows on the head. The two Caffre boys had now joined me, as they saw I was attacking some animal. They jumped about in a state of great excitement when they saw the dead antelope; and then taking a good look all round, they told me to keep quiet, and not to tell any one about this buck having been killed. Inyoni at once skinned the buck and laid out the skin on the ground, pegging it down with mimosa thorns. The two boys then procured two sticks about a foot long, and of dry wood; these sticks they selected with great care. Placing one of these on the ground, Inyoni held down the ends with his feet, and then holding the other stick upright, he worked it round and round between the palms of his hands, and pressed it on to the second stick. Tembile relieved Inyoni when the latter was tired, and so they went on, turn and turn about, until the sawdust produced by this friction began to smoke and then to catch fire. A wisp of dry grass was then gathered, the sparks put into this, and the wisp swung round at arm's-length, when it very soon began to blaze, and in a few minutes we had a capital wood fire. With our assagies we now cut up the buck and fried it over the fire, and had a great feast, eating about half the animal. The remainder we concealed on the branches of a tree, for we knew that if we left it on the ground, a jackal or leopard would find it, and we should get nothing on the following day. I was told by my companions that if the men knew we had killed this buck and had not carried it to the kraal, we should all be beaten; so I must keep the secret, for my own sake as well as theirs.

Our life was very simple and quiet; and I have often thought in later years, that the life led by these Caffres was perfect freedom and luxury, compared with the slavery endured by business men in cities. A Caffre who possessed a hundred head of cattle might have acquired these by his father giving him a cow and a calf when he was a boy. Cattle increase in almost geometrical rates. Thus a cow and a calf would probably become in ten years fifty head of cattle, and the young Caffre would be a man of independent fortune. As soon as a Caffre possesses cattle, he purchases a wife, and the limit to the number of his wives is only drawn by the amount of cattle he possesses. A young good-looking girl is purchased for from eight to ten cows. These are not always paid at once, three or four being given at the time of marriage, and the remainder paid in a year or two afterwards. A wife among these people is not a matter of expense only, as it is with civilised nations; but is a profitable investment, as the wives work in the mealie gardens, do the digging and the sowing, and at the time of harvest gather in the crops. If then a man possess three or four wives, he cultivates a large piece of ground and has plenty of corn, pumpkins, and other grain, and also has cows from which he obtains milk. The men never drank fresh milk, which they call *ubisi*: this they consider only fit for women and boys. They placed the fresh milk in large gourds made from dried pumpkins, and which contained about two quarts of milk, which was kept for some hours exposed to the sun; the gourd was then shaken, and again allowed to rest; in about three days the milk turned and became lumpy, and had a tart taste about it, and was really meat and drink. When in this state it was called *amasi*. This amasi and boiled mealies were food enough for the Caffres, meat being eaten only about once a month, when some wedding took place, or a hunting expedition was successful. The Caffre men did very little except milk the cows, which they never allowed the women to do, go out hunting, and have dances, and long talks in their kraals. I should like to know what more pleasant life could be passed by any man in a civilised country than this. Had I been older or more experienced when I was living among these people, I should have been more surprised than I was at the absence of all those wishes, and anxieties, which form the principal desires of men and women in civilised countries. These Caffres had no desire for more than they possessed, except as regards cattle, and thus afforded an excellent example of the proverbs that "He who curtails his wants increases his income," and "He whose requirements are less than his means of supply, is the only rich man."

I was so fully occupied with the work that was drawn out for me by the Caffres, that I had not thought with much anxiety about my late fellow-passengers. I wished, however, to see Constance, and now that I could speak a little in the Caffre language, I asked where she was, and when I could see her. My inquiry and wish seemed to puzzle Inyoni, who told me she was well, but that I must not see her yet, as the chief had so ordered it. So, during six months I never saw a white person, and by that time I was to all purposes a regular Caffre boy. I could speak the language well, I could click out the proper clicks at right words, could throw an assagy better than any Caffre boy of my size. I could run faster than other Caffre boys, though I could not keep it up so well, but for a quarter of a mile I was very fast. I knew nearly every cow's name, and could whistle and drive a herd of cattle like a Caffre. The one thing from which I suffered was the tenderness of my feet. My boots had been worn out long since, and my feet, from having worn shoes all my life, were very tender;

but each day they became harder, though I often had to stop and sit down when I had trodden on a sharp stone. My only suit of clothes was worn out, but I had made a set of what the Caffres considered clothes, but were merely strips of goat's-skin about a foot long, fastened to a leather strap round my waist. This absence of dress I found caused me to be too hot in the warm weather and too cold in the early mornings and in the cold weather; but I hardened under the conditions, and soon did not mind it.

There was an amusement that I and my two companions carried on which I afterwards found very useful. This was to procure two or three straight canes about five feet long: one end of these we used to cover with clay, we then stood opposite each other, and danced and jumped about, and then suddenly threw these at, each other, using them like an assagy. At first the Caffres used to hit me at nearly every shot, and I never touched them; but after considerable practice I became as expert as they were, and could spring on one side so as just to avoid the blow, or throw myself down, or turn the spear aside with my shield, which was an oval-shaped piece of ox-hide. At about thirty paces from each other we could never hit one another, and then we closed in till one of us was hit. We used to keep a score on a stick of the number of hits against each of us, a notch in the stick being the mark. In after years, when it was a matter of life and death, the training and practice I had gained in my boyhood was of vital importance to me in avoiding an assagy, when one was thrown at me, and my dexterity in throwing one soon became known among the tribe with which I lived. The things I could accomplish with the assagy were the following. I could throw an assagy sixty paces, which, for a boy, was very good, but two or three of the men could throw the same assagy ninety paces. At forty paces I could hit a mark as big as a man's head about every other shot. I could throw the assagy either overhand or underhand, quivering it at the same time. If thrown overhand, the hand was held above the shoulder, and the arm from the hand to the elbow was vertical when the assagy left the hand. When thrown underhand, the back of the hand was down, and the arm from the hand to the elbow was horizontal when the spear left the hand. This underhand throwing was very effective in taking your adversary by surprise; for if you jumped about quickly and made feints, pretending to throw overhand, then suddenly throwing underhand, he very often could not dodge quickly enough to escape the weapon.

I never left my hut without one or two assagies and a knob-kerrie in my hand; for close to our kraal there were leopards, hyaenas, and other animals that were very dangerous.

There was one accomplishment that I had acquired from my companions that I had thought about night and day, and which I found very fascinating. This was "spooring," as the English and Dutch in South Africa call it; that is, telling by the footprints what animals have passed over the ground, when they passed, and at what pace. This study is quite an art, and I occupied many months in arriving at even a superficial knowledge of the subject. Although I of course had no opportunity of learning arithmetic or any of those things that boys learn in English schools, yet I had my brain exercised by such studies as spooring and the observation necessary to enable me to practise the art. To spoor well it is necessary to know many things that appear at first sight to have nothing to do with the question. One of the things to learn was to break off branches of various sizes from different trees, to place these in the sunshine and in the shade, and then to notice how long it took for these leaves and branches to look withered or otherwise. The smaller the branch the sooner it withered, and in the sun it withered sooner than in the shade. Then some trees, the wood of which was hard, would look fresh for a long time, whereas soft wood would soon show signs of withering. If the day was moist or wet, the branch that would dry on a sunny day would look fresh after the same interval of time. I used to take great pleasure in finding out these things, and Inyoni and Tembile used to break branches in the bush one day, and then take me to see them afterwards, and get me to guess how long a time had elapsed since they broke them. Of course we knew nothing about hours, but we used to point in the sky and say, "The sun was there yesterday, or to-day, when you broke this off the tree."

In this part of Africa the dew falls very heavily, and I found that the dew fell most just after the sun had set. This was a great aid in telling the time that had elapsed since an animal had passed over the ground, for we could tell whether it was after the dew, or before the dew had fallen. The footprints of the various animals I learnt after some time, for it was not very easy to tell the difference between a large black bush-buck's footprint and that of a wild pig. Also it was sometimes difficult to distinguish between a wild buffalo's footprint and that of one of our cattle; that is, if the buffalo was a young one. After a few months, however, I had gained much experience, and could tell the footprints of the following animals, all of which were to be seen near our kraal:—The hippopotamus, called *imvubu* by the Caffres, the buffalo, the large black bush-buck, the red bush-buck, and small blue bush-buck, the reit-buck, duiker, leopard, hyaena, the ratal, and many smaller animals. I acquired the habit of watching the ground as I walked along, and noting what spoor there was on it, and could thus discover what animals were in the neighbourhood; and I soon thought myself very clever as a spoor-finder. But I had yet much to learn, and soon found that, compared with my Caffre companions, I was blind and unobservant.

The principal event that proved to me how dull I was, led to my rising at once to a first place among the Caffres. It was during a warm day that we had entered the bush near the ground where we watched the cattle, and were sitting in the shade talking, when Inyoni, who was looking anxiously at a tree near, got up and walked to the tree and examined the trunk. He then called us and pointed to some marks on the tree; and at length, stooping on the ground, picked up two or three small hairs. Both the Caffre boys examined these and then said a leopard had been here during the night and had climbed the tree. The marks on the tree were from his claws, which he used just as does a cat in climbing. We did not like to follow the spoor, as leopards are very savage; but we went away from this place and sat down under the shade of some rocks at a short distance, and the boys told me stories about the leopard.

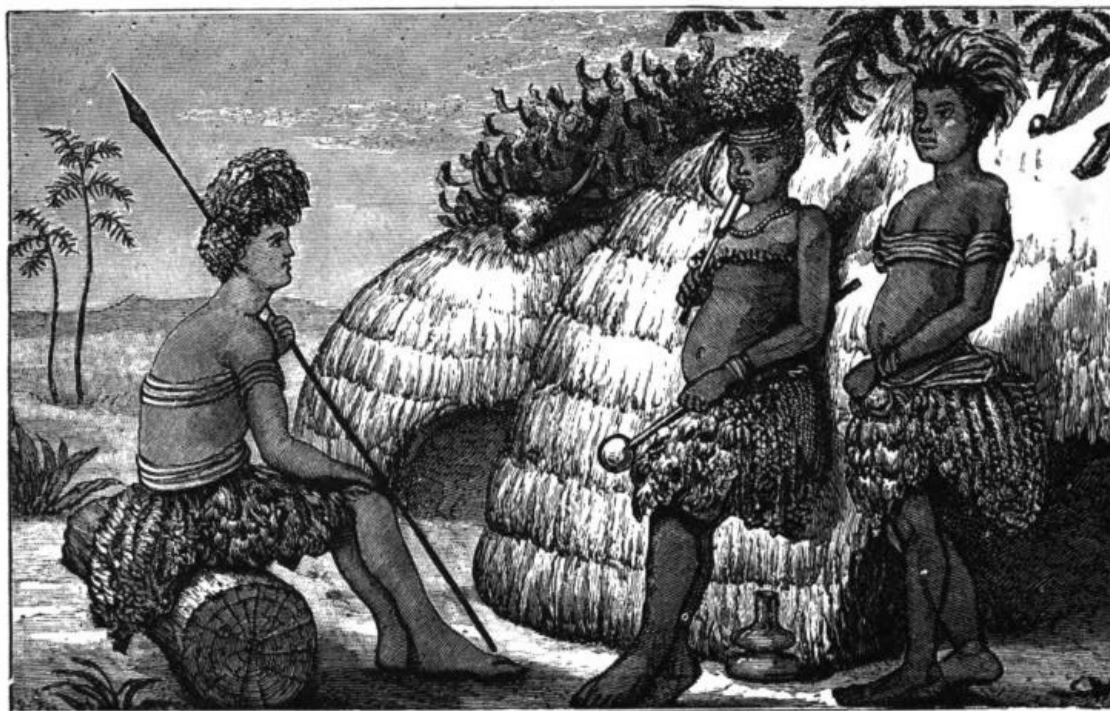
During that night I thought a great deal about leopards; and I remembered, in a book that my father had given me soon after I learned to read, that there was a picture of a trap that some one had made to catch cats. Now, the leopard is only a large cat, and is very like one in its habits, and the idea occurred to me that we might make a trap to catch the leopard. I thought over this scheme, and the next day talked to the boys about it. They were quite willing to try, so we set to work at once. The method we adopted was this. We cut down a great number of straight branches, about ten feet long and about two inches thick; these we stuck firmly in the ground in a circle, just as we used to construct a kraal. Peeling off the bark from some mimosa trees, we made a sort of rope, and bending the tops of these branches together, we fastened them firmly, so as to make a circular hut. After many days, we had so bound these together that, with all our united force, we could not separate them in the slightest degree. We then cut a small opening in this hut as a doorway, and we had a part of our trap complete. The most difficult part to make was the door itself. This we made by constructing a door the same as you make a hurdle, and we made two of these doors, and then fastened them together to make them strong. This door we made inside the hut, because we wanted the door to be bigger than the doorway. Having completed this door, we made out of buckskin a longish string, and fastened this to a stick in the centre of the hut; this string held the door up, but when the string was loosened the door slid down between two stout posts, and it was necessary to lift the door in order to get out of the doorway. All this being arranged in about a week's time, we next had to procure some bait, and were lucky in getting a guinea-fowl, which was a bird common in the bushes round our kraal. This bird we knocked over with our knob-kerries, and dragged it along the ground to the trap, and then fastened it to the string inside the trap. The Caffres told me that the leopard was so strong that he would force himself out of the hut if he had time to do so. We therefore agreed to keep watch in a tree near on the first night, and if the leopard came, to run to the kraal and give notice to the men. We did not tell any one at the kraal what we had done; for, to speak the truth, we had not

much confidence in the success of our trap, and we did not like to incur the risk of being laughed at. Our success therefore was as unexpected as it was complete.

Having driven the cattle home to the kraal, we ate some corn and drank some milk, and then ran back to where our trap had been constructed, and climbed into a large tree, from which we could obtain a good view all round. It had not even become dark when, as we sat silent and motionless in the tree, we saw the leopard come through some long grass and creep towards our trap. It crouched for some time near the trap and seemed to be listening, and then slowly crept in. In half a minute the door dropped, and the leopard was trapped. In an instant Inyoni descended the tree and ran off to the kraal, whilst I and Tembile remained up the tree. We could hear the leopard moving about inside the hut, but whenever he did so we called out, and he was at once silent, and appeared as if he were afraid of making any noise.

In what appeared to be a very short time Inyoni came back, and with him about twenty men, among whom was the chief. They were all armed with five assagies each, and one of the men carried a piece of wood that was on fire. The Caffres came up very quietly, and then surrounded the hut, remaining about ten yards from it. In a few minutes dry wood had been collected, and seven or eight fires were made round the trap in which the leopard was a prisoner. Sometimes the leopard would roar and tear at the side of his cage, but on hearing the Caffres outside he would become quiet again, and so the night passed. Soon after daybreak many more Caffres came to us, for the news had spread to the villages round, and when the sun rose there were more than a hundred Caffres round the trap. The chief now gave his orders, and the men obeyed him just as soldiers obey an officer. He directed one Caffre to go to the door of the trap, and with a long pole push up the door; all the other Caffres stood in a semicircle round the doorway and about fifty yards from it, each with an assagy in his hand ready to throw. No sooner was the door raised a few inches than the leopard rushed at the stick, scratching and biting at it furiously. The Caffre then retreated, and the leopard struggled at the small opening and succeeded in getting half out. The chief then shouted "*Bulala!*" and about forty assagies were thrown at the leopard, nearly a dozen of which entered its body. In spite of these wounds the animal struggled out of the doorway and sprang at the Caffres in front of him. A shower of assagies were again hurled at him, but he succeeded in reaching one man, whom he seized by the leg with his claws. In an instant, however, the other men closed in: there was a struggling mass of men, and then a shout of "*Yena gofile*" ("he is dead.") I rushed up to the crowd, and there was the leopard covered with blood, his lips drawn back showing his teeth, and his limbs extended as they had been in his last spring. I jumped about with delight and excitement, for this was the first leopard I had ever seen killed, and it was by the aid of my trap that he had been secured.

The legs of the leopard were tied together, and a long pole was then inserted between them, and he was carried to the kraal, the men singing songs as they accompanied his body. Two men immediately set to work to skin him, they then extracted his teeth and claws. Of the use they were going to make of these latter I at the time was ignorant, but in a few days I learned their value. All the principal men from the neighbouring kraals were invited to come to our village in the evening, for the Caffres intended to eat the leopard, the flesh being supposed to give a man courage and endurance. A very small piece of meat could be spared for each man, as there were more than a hundred men assembled. They all sat in a circle on a piece of level ground outside our village, a fire being lighted in the centre, at which the leopard, cut up into pieces, was being toasted. Many songs were sung by the men, the chorus being shouted by all. This chorus was very little more than "*Ingwe gofile, Tina shiele, Yena shingarnar, Yena gofile:*" which meant, "The leopard is dead, We have struck him, He is a rascal, He is dead."



"THE YOUNG GIRLS SEEMED TO REGARD ME MOST ATTENTIVELY."

[p. 43.]

We sat several hours singing songs that were extemporised by the best singers, and occasionally drinking *Itchuala*, a sort of beer made out of corn, and then we all retired to our huts and slept. Three days after this the same men assembled at our kraal in the evening, and I was told by the chief to come to the meeting. I did not know what it was for, but I found all the Caffres looking at me, and the young girls seemed to regard me most attentively. I thought perhaps they intended to eat me, though I had seen nothing since my capture that frightened me. When the men were seated in a circle, the chief stood up, and, going into the centre of the circle, made a long speech, which was to this effect: "This white boy I prevented from being assagied; some of you wished to kill him, but I said, 'No—he shall be as my son, let him live.' You agreed, and he lives. Though his skin is white, his heart is the heart of an Umzimvubu. He can throw an assagy well. He thinks, and it is he who made the trap that caught the leopard. I ask you, men, does he not deserve the necklace of leopard's claws? Shall he not be a young chief? Say, men, what you think."

There was immediately a shout of consent, and the chief, calling me to him, gave me a necklace made out of the

claws of the leopard, which he fastened round my neck, and immediately the men shouted, "*Inkosana!*"

"He is a young chief!"

I have, since those days, heard of men who by deeds of valour have gained the Victoria Cross, or by good service have received honours from their sovereign; but I doubt if any of these felt more pride and gratification than I did when I received this necklace of leopard's claws from the hands of the chief. I immediately felt a craving for opportunities of distinguishing myself, and wished for another chance at a leopard or at some other savage animal, in order that I might prove my courage, as ably as I had shown my skill in designing and constructing the leopard-trap.

Chapter Four.

There was a great change in the behaviour—of the Caffres towards me now that I had been made an *Inkosana*. Before this dignity had been conferred on me, there was a kind of watch kept on me; but now every Caffre, man, woman, and child, seemed to regard me as one of themselves. I was now always given *amasi* to drink instead of *ubisi*, the former being considered suitable for men, the latter for women and children. Finding myself a person of greater importance, I one day asked Inyati if I might go and see my white friends. He hesitated for some time, and at length said: "To-morrow at sunrise you may go. Inyoni will show you the way; you will reach their kraal when the sun goes down. Stay one day, then return."

I told Inyati I would do as he told me, and on the following morning I started with Inyoni on the journey. I had never asked what had become of the men and sailors who had been saved from the wreck. At first *I did not ask* because I did not know a word of Caffre, but afterwards I did not do so because I saw that the Caffres seemed disinclined to make any answers to my questions. Now, however, I was alone with Inyoni, he told me all the details of the massacre. He told me how we had been watched for two days, and it was found that the men had firearms; so they were all killed. On my inquiring why they were killed, Inyoni told me that many moons ago some white men had come on the coast, and had landed and had carried off some men and women from a kraal; that when the Caffres had assembled to get back their friends, the white men had fired their guns at them and had killed several Caffres, and then escaped in their boats. So that the chiefs had agreed that, if ever white people came again on the coast, they were to be watched, surprised, and the men assagied. From what I afterwards learned, I believe the men who thus visited the coast were slave-hunters.

We passed several kraals on our journey, at most of which the people came out and spoke to us, and every one who saw my necklace at once addressed me as "*Inkosana*." At least a dozen times Inyoni gave an account of my leopard-trap, and how we had killed this leopard, and I found myself looked at with envy by the boys and admiration by the girls, whilst both were very friendly, and usually walked with me for some distance on the journey.

The sun was several times its own diameter above the horizon when we reached a kraal in which, so Inyoni told me, one white woman was living. I entered this kraal, and Inyoni telling the head man that the chief had allowed me to come to visit the white woman, I was shown a hut and told I might go in. On entering this hut I saw Constance, who at once caught me in her arms and kissed me, expressing great delight at seeing me, as she feared I had been killed. I soon told her all that had happened to me, and that I was well-treated and not very unhappy. She listened to all I had to say, and told me she was very glad to hear so good an account, but that she was utterly miserable and wished she were dead. I tried to cheer her by giving her hopes of a better future, but she assured me it was impossible that we should ever see our friends again, and that if she did not marry one of the chief's sons they intended to kill her. We sat talking the greater part of the night, and the next morning went for a walk, the Caffres appearing to take no notice of us, though I could see one or two boys go on the hill-tops and sit down, evidently to watch us. We sat down under the shade of some euphorbia trees and talked over our prospects. Constance could tell me nothing of Mrs Apton or her daughter; they had been taken away to some distant kraal, and for a long time I heard nothing of them. I passed the whole of my time with Constance, and promised to come and see her again; then, bidding her good-bye, I started at daybreak on my return to my own kraal.

Although I was living among a race of black people who would be deemed savages, and who had slaughtered my companions who had been shipwrecked on the coast, still I felt a sort of home-feeling on rejoining my kraal and on meeting Inyati again after only three days' absence. Now that I knew about the male passengers and sailors having been assagied, I talked to several of the young Caffres about it; and their remarks were so sensible, and seemed to me so reasonable, that I must here repeat them.

They said that only twice had white men come on their coast. The first men who came made signs of friendship, and were well received. They stayed two days on shore, and then enticed several young men and maidens to go with them to the shore, where they captured them and carried them to their ship. Resistance was of course offered by the men, and several were shot, also two females were shot. On hearing of this treachery, all the chiefs along the coast met in council, and agreed that, if any more white men came to the coast, the people were to retreat, and a watch was to be set on the white men, and they were to be surprised and assagied before they could shoot anybody. Seeing our shipwrecked men on the coast, the Caffres concluded that we had come on an expedition similar to that of the former visitors, and so they had attacked us. They admitted that when they found there were women among the party they hesitated, but having received the chief's orders to attack us, they had no choice but to obey. "Now," they said, "we must keep you always, for if you went back among white people, you would tell them we had killed your companions, and then an army of white men would come and attack us."

There was no doubt it was by a mistake that my fellow-voyagers had been killed, but when I heard the Caffres' explanation I could not think them very wrong. We, in fact, had suffered for the sins of some slave-hunters, who might or might not have been English.

I explained to the Caffres how we had been shipwrecked and had escaped on rafts, and how they would have received presents had they been kind to us, and had they forwarded us to the nearest English or Dutch town. They admitted that such might have been the case, but now, having killed the white men, they said they must keep the thing quiet. I told them, that even now, if they forwarded me and the three ladies to the Cape Colony, they would be rewarded; but they shook their heads and said, "When you go among your own people you could not help telling them we had assagied your people, then an army come here and kill us. No, we keep quiet." It was useless my assuring them that I would not tell any of my people that the men had been assagied. The Caffres smiled and replied, "You don't know yourself. Now you believe you not tell, but when with your own people you could not help telling. Don't think of going away—that never be. You will by-and-by be Caffre Chief here."

All these conversations were of course carried on in the Caffre language, and I have endeavoured to give as nearly as

possible the meaning in English of the various words. In consequence of hearing nothing but Caffre spoken, and also having to express all my meaning in the same language, I could now speak it as well as the Caffres themselves, and so was able to learn all the views that the Caffres had on various matters. In thinking over in after-life these days of my early experiences, I have come to the conclusion that these people were a strange mixture of common sense, very acute perceptions, and also very childish in many things. As regards what we term science they were of course completely ignorant, so much so, that, child as I was, I knew more than they did. For example, a great argument had been going on in our village once during several evenings. I had heard in my hut some of the words, and distinguished the word *inyanga* used very often, this word being used to signify the moon, and also a month. A Caffre counts his age as so many moons. Thus a Caffre boy who was one hundred and twenty moons old would be nearly twelve years of age, and if he lived to be nine hundred and thirty moons old, he would be about seventy years. I have since wondered whether this was the way that the people in the East formerly counted their ages, and were therefore said to live to nine hundred years of age. For if, as it has been suggested by some modern explainers, this great age was given to the ancients in order that they might people the world, it seems that they sadly neglected their duty. For Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years before he devoted himself to this duty, and Lamech lived also one hundred and eighty-two years before he had a son. A Caffre who was one hundred and eighty-two moons old would be about fourteen years old, and as these people come to maturity very quickly he would be quite a young man.

After several long arguments the men at length appealed to me, and the question was this:—"Is it the same moon that comes each month, gradually grows larger, and then gets small again? or is it a fresh moon that is born each month, gets full-grown, and then dies?"

I told them it was the same moon, and they then asked me for proof, which I was quite unable to give; and so, although my statement was considered of some value, yet it did not convince the opponents of the theory about a different moon. They argued the subject during several evenings, and at the end of the discussion the result was not very dissimilar to that which occurs among a certain type of scientific men: each party remained of the same opinion with which he commenced the inquiry. From what I could learn, I found that those who asserted that it was a fresh moon born every month, had the best of the argument, and seemed to be most reasonable. There was, however, a peculiarity about these arguments which I always thought of in after years when I could compare them with the discussions and arguments in the civilised world on various questions. The Caffres always seemed to desire truth, and to argue for the purpose of eliciting it. They would admit the soundness of an opponent's reasons, and sometimes allow that these could not be answered. They never indicated that their object was to prove themselves right and their opponents wrong, no matter what was the result.

Inyati, talking to me afterwards about the moon, said, "Your white people believe it always the same moon."

"Yes," I replied, "they know it is the same." Inyati said, "I have often found that what is true cannot be made by words to appear to be as true as something else that is false. Talking is no good."

Finding that Inyati now talked to me on many occasions, I took the opportunity of asking him one day what had become of the things that they had taken from the men; for I knew there were some guns and other things which might be of use. He told me that most of them were buried in a hole near a kraal some miles away; and that the people were afraid of these things, thinking that they might blow up and kill them. I told Inyati there was one thing I knew of amongst these which would be of great use if we could find it, and I could show him what to do with it. I described this to him, and he then told me that this and a few other things were at his kraal, and he would show them to me. That evening he took me to his kraal, and lifting up a wicker door, he showed me several articles in a hole below. I there saw what I wanted, and took from the hole a pair of opera-glasses in a leather case. I then went with Inyati to a little hill near, and seeing about two miles off some Caffres, I asked him who they were.

He said they were too far off to recognise.

I then adjusted the glasses for my focus and told him the names of the Caffres, whom I knew, and then handing him the glasses showed him how to use them.

I never saw greater astonishment than that of Inyati when he looked through the glasses and perceived distant objects as plainly as though they were near. He never seemed tired of looking, first at distant then at nearer objects. He asked me what I called them, and I said in English, "opera-glasses." He shook his head at this, and then said in Caffre, "I shall call them 'bring near.'" He went back to his kraal and seemed deep in thought, and every now and then looked at the glasses, which he preserved with the greatest care.

On the following morning he assembled all the men, and had a council. He told them that I had shown him the use of a thing that was like "*tagata*" (witchcraft); and that this thing, though quite harmless, was wonderful. He said that people and things at a distance were instantly brought close to you, and you could almost touch them with your hand. At first the older men seemed inclined to disbelieve, but Inyati said, "What I tell you, that I can show." There was one old man who had the reputation of being a rain-maker, and was called Amanzinina, who would not believe what Inyati told him. This old man had always disliked me, and was one of those who had expressed the wish that I should be assagied. He said that I might practise witchcraft, and that this thing which made people come near was and could be only due to witchcraft; as it was impossible to be anything else. He suggested that the glasses should be burned, and that if I were burned too it would be all the better for the tribe.

Inyati answered him; but a great many of the men who were afraid of Amanzinina, agreed with him as to burning the glasses, though they said that I might be spared. At first I felt disposed to laugh at the nonsense spoken by this old man, but when I found how important his remarks were considered by the men, I was somewhat alarmed. Inyati, however, answered Amanzinina well, and said that I had nothing to do with this "bring near"; that it was made by white men, just as Caffres made assagies; that it was a thing which white men used everywhere; and that I, having seen men use it, knew what it was for, and that witchcraft had nothing to do with it. After a time the chief convinced all the men except Amanzinina, who would have nothing to do with the glasses, and would not even look through them.

The astonishment shown by the men when they looked through the glasses was quite equal to that which had been displayed by Inyati: they thought it wonderful, and several of them, seeing people at a distance, put their mouth to the glasses and shouted, believing that this would make their voices heard. They could not understand why it was, that if they could see people close, by aid of the glass, they could not also make them hear. At length, however, these glasses were looked on as a valuable treasure, and Inyati never went out without them. People came from great distances to see them, and every one was equally surprised at their use.

It was now the time when the crops of mealies and other corn were coming up, and a circumstance now happened which enabled me to judge of the manner in which these people, among whom I had cast my lot, would fight against an

enemy. From a village about ten miles from us, news was brought that two bull-buffaloes, very savage and cunning, had taken up their quarters in some thickly wooded ravines near the corn-ground of the village. Each night these buffaloes used to come from the bush, break through the fences, and eat the young corn. This meant a famine for this kraal, for the people depend on mealies for their food during the year. Aid was wanted from our kraal and from others in order to hunt these buffaloes and to kill them. In two days the hunting party had been assembled, and consisted of about five hundred men, armed with assagies, for the knob-kerrie was no use against a buffalo. I obtained permission to join this party, and we had assembled in the evening at the distant kraal, and were to hunt on the following day.

It was decided that there should be a great dance performed by the warriors before we attacked the buffaloes. There were two kinds of dances practised by these Caffres, one before a war was undertaken, the other before a hunt. The dance was performed by the men, who formed in a circle, and stood three deep. The dance consisted merely of stamping on the ground, first with one foot then with the other, keeping time to a song. The effect of about five hundred heavy feet striking the ground at the same instant was grand, and the shouts of the men became louder and louder, as their excitement increased. In the centre of the ring one or two men would occasionally dash about, quivering their assagies, and pretending to throw them; then, almost falling on the ground, they would suddenly spring in the air, dart from side to side, and rush forward making movements of stabbing an enemy. The proceedings of these men were carefully watched, for they were known as the quickest movers and fastest runners in the tribe, and their skill in dodging an assagy was such that no man ever had a chance of hitting them in the games they played with blunted assagies. The dance lasted about two hours, and we then lay down to sleep, some in the huts and others on the ground.

At daybreak we all got up, and having employed a short time in sharpening our assagies, we assembled in groups to receive our orders.

The buffaloes were known to be concealed in a dense ravine about two miles from the kraal. There were two parts of this ravine whence the animals could escape, and it was decided that they should be driven towards that end nearest the kraal. About one hundred men were told off to go round the top of this ravine and to enter at the far end, so as to drive the buffaloes before them. About twenty boys were placed round the top of the ravine, whose duty it was to watch the buffaloes and to give notice where they were in the bush. I was told to go with these boys, but I begged Inyati to let me go with him and to join the party who were to attack the animals when they were driven out into the open country. With a smile Inyati consented, and asked me if my assagies were sharp. I showed them to him, and having felt them he nodded his approval, and then assembling his men we marched off to our station.

When we had reached the top of the ravine, we were placed in a semicircle and then concealed ourselves. A party of about a hundred men then took up their position near the top of the ravine, and their duty was to run between the buffaloes and the ravine immediately they broke cover, so as to cut off their retreat, and thus to prevent them from breaking back, and dashing through the beaters. Everything was done in silence; a wave of the arm by Inyati was sufficient for an order, his hand held upright halted the whole party. Since then I have seen English soldiers at drill, but I never saw better discipline than I saw among these Caffres. When we were all placed in the positions allotted to us, a shrill whistle was the signal that all was ready, and the men at the far end of the bush advanced, beating the bushes and making a noise so as to frighten the buffaloes, and make them retreat from the ravine in the required direction. The boys on the top of the ravine soon saw the animals moving through the bush, and signalled to us, imitating their movements. It was amusing to see how well these boys acted. Two of them pretended to be buffaloes, and when the buffaloes moved on they moved; when the buffaloes stopped and listened, the boys stopped and imitated every movement, twisting round and round, just as these animals do when alarmed.

Nearer and nearer came the buffaloes, but there was not a movement among the men who were waiting for them. When the animals came near the edge of the bush they seemed to become suspicious, and we could hear them sniffing the air and snorting, though they did not move for some time. The boys did just as they saw the buffaloes do, and we thus knew all about them. Suddenly we saw the boys rush forward in our direction, and almost at the same time the buffaloes charged out of the bush. Inyati whistled shrilly, and in an instant a hundred men dashed in between the buffaloes and the ravine, and cut off their retreat, whilst the other men who had hitherto lain down sprang to their feet, in front of the animals. No time was given to the buffaloes: the men closed all round and assagies were hurled at the animals, and in a few seconds they were covered with assagies, just as a porcupine is with quills. The buffalo, however, is a powerful animal and dies hard; so, although badly wounded, they turned, one towards the ravine, and charged at the men there, the other came towards where I was. The buffalo that went towards the ravine was met by a shower of assagies, but he dashed straight on, and knocked over three or four men, and escaped into the ravine. The other, putting its head down, came at me, I suppose, because my white skin attracted his attention. The Caffres jumped right and left as he came close, and left me standing alone. The men called to me to jump, but I waited till the buffalo was within a few yards of me; I then held my heavy assagy by the wooden end, and sprang on one side so quickly that the buffalo missed me; when swinging my assagy round, I struck the animal on the hind leg just above the hock, and hamstrung it, so that it could only move on three legs. Before it could turn and charge again, the Caffres had closed round it, and had stabbed it in so many places that it slowly sank to the ground, giving a loud moan as it did so.



“THE CAFFRES JUMPED RIGHT AND LEFT AS HE CAME CLOSE, AND LEFT ME STANDING, ALONE.” [p. 60.]

I was greatly excited at this scene, and hurled my assagy at the animal, burying it deep in its side; and then danced about and shouted with delight as I saw it fall, the Caffres being equally pleased. From down the ravine we now heard shouts from the men, who announced that the other buffalo was down and dead. Two of the men whom the buffalo had knocked down were much hurt, but they were helped home, and in a week were quite well again; for these people recover very quickly from even most dangerous wounds.

The buffaloes were quickly skinned and cut up, the meat being carried to the kraal, where fires were lighted in every hut, and the flesh roasted, and boiled in large earthen pots. The whole of the afternoon and evening was passed in feasting, whilst songs with choruses were sung. I was frequently mentioned as the young white chief, for my performance was thought highly of, the fact of hamstringing the buffalo having greatly contributed to the success of the affair, and my quickness in escaping from the buffalo's charge being also a performance much appreciated by the Caffres.

The opera-glasses which Inyati had brought with him caused the usual astonishment when shown to the people at this kraal, and a chief there offered to buy them for five cows, but Inyati was not willing to sell them, as he said there was nothing like them in the country.

We returned home the next day, and I once more resumed the usual daily routine at our kraal.

Chapter Five.

It was nearly twelve moons after our fight with the buffaloes, that some strange Caffres came down to our village, and had several long conversations with Inyati. I soon heard what these talks were about, and I ascertained the following facts:—

Considerably to the north of our village, and about five days' journey from us, there were some high mountains called the Quathlamba Mountains; these mountains broke in spurs, and spread out like fingers of a hand till they came down to the plains. On these plains some of the tribe of our people had kraals and cattle. Within the past two moons some Bushmen had come down to the ravines and rocky precipices near these kraals, and had stolen the cattle. It was impossible to catch these Bushmen, as they could scamper up the rocks like baboons, and when they reached a position safe from the range of an assagy, they would sit and chatter at the Caffres who had followed them, hurl great stones down at them, and if near enough would discharge poisoned arrows, which were so deadly that if one hit a man he was sure to die. These Bushmen were so feared, and their attacks had become so daring, that the Caffres had come down the country to try and procure aid to drive these people away. The difficulty of punishing them was great, and Inyati pointed out that, if the Bushmen were so quick and active as to scamper up the rocks like baboons, he did not see what was to be done. These conversations used to take place in the evenings, and I listened to all that was said, and began to think of some plan by which to outwit the Bushmen. Suddenly I thought of something which I was surprised had, never occurred to me before. So on the following morning I told Inyati that, if he could help me, I thought we could drive off these Bushmen. He called me into his hut, and I then carried on with him the following conversation. I said:—

“When the white men were assagied some of them had long iron instruments that we call ‘guns:’ where are they?”

“Hidden.”

“I know how to use them, and if you could get me two of these I would go with you and our people, and kill some of these Bushmen.”

Inyati said, “Do you know how to use these things? Because once we did have a gun, and it went all to pieces, and killed the man who held it.”

“He put in too much powder.”

“Perhaps, but we have feared to do anything with such things since.”

When in India I had often seen my father clean and load his guns, and I knew all about them. I knew too that the captain had a double-barrelled rifle, which had reached the shore on the raft. If I could procure this and some ammunition, I knew I should astonish the Bushmen if they gave me a chance. I explained to Inyati that if I could get one particular gun, I would be able to kill the Bushmen.

Inyati said very little, but on the next evening he brought me the rifle and a large bag of ammunition. The rifle was rusty and dirty, so I set to work to clean it; the women being all afraid to come near the weapon, whilst the men were at first very cautious. Inyati now had faith in me, and sat down beside me whilst I explained to him the use of the weapon and how to pull the trigger. The powder was in a large flask, and was quite dry, as were also the caps; and I found forty bullets in the bag, so I had plenty of ammunition. I told Inyati that this gun would kill a man at a distance more than ten times as far as he could throw an assagy. He shook his head at this; but I asked him if I had not told him truth about the glasses, and he would find I was true about this gun.

I was very anxious to go against the Bushmen, for now that I had seen the buffaloes killed, I was like a tiger that had tasted human blood, and felt a longing for such exciting scenes as those I was likely to experience, if I went against the Bushmen.

Inyati sat thinking for a long time without speaking, and at length said, “We will go.” He then walked to his hut, and shortly afterwards sent messengers to call his people together, informing them that on the morrow we would start for the Quathlamba Mountains.

About fifty men assembled at our kraal at daybreak on the following morning, each man armed with five assagies, and a knob-kerrie, and provided with a shield made of ox-hide. The shields might be useful against a Bushman’s arrows or against an assagy, but were useless against a bullet. We each carried a bag of Indian corn, and several boys who accompanied us also carried bags of corn. I afterwards found out that if Inyati succeeded in driving off the Bushmen, he was to receive a reward of cattle from the people he had assisted, and they were to be bound to help him in any expedition that he undertook against his enemies.

Our journey was over a beautiful country well watered with little streams, and with plenty of fine trees. We found that a buck, called by the Caffres “*Umseke*” (the riet-bok), was plentiful here, and we surrounded and assagied two or three of these every day, and so had plenty of meat during our journey. On the fifth day we reached the nearest kraal of the tribe who were being plundered by the Bushmen. These kraals were situated on an open plain near some wooded ravines, the mountains being about five miles from them. The people received us with shouts, and gave us *amasi* and plenty of corn, and we then held a council of war.

From the information given at this council, I learned all about the Bushmen. There was a perpendicular rock about a hundred times the height of a man, on the top of which the Bushmen would assemble and defy the Caffres; to ascend this rock there was a narrow ravine, like a cut in the mountains that only one man at a time could ascend. The Bushmen guarded this, and had large stones ready to drop on the men who came up, and their poisoned arrows to discharge from their bows, so that it was impossible to attack them there with any chance of success.

The Caffres saw no means by which they could kill the Bushmen, as the rock could not be climbed, and was too high for an assagy to be thrown to the top from the plains below. I, however, thought this just the place that would be suitable for my plan; so, after the council, I told Inyati I had heard all that had been said, and everything was just as I wanted it to be. The only thing I feared was, that the Bushmen might come down from their rock and attack me in the plain; but if I had a hundred Caffres with me they would not do this.

As is usual with Caffre expeditions, we started before daybreak, guided by a Caffre who knew the way; and by the time the sun had risen and the mist had cleared from off the plains, we were within sight of the Bushmen’s rock. Inyati here took out his glasses, and after looking at the rock for some time, informed us that there were ten or more Bushmen on the top of the rock looking at us. We advanced quickly till within about four throws of an assagy from them; at which distance we were told, their arrows could not reach us. The Caffres then called to the Bushmen, and asked why they killed the cattle. The Bushmen danced and yelled, and fired two or three arrows at us, all of which fell short of us by many paces. Seeing a large ant-hill a little nearer the rock, I moved up to it; and, resting my rifle on the top, aimed at the group of Bushmen on the hill. Having taken a good aim I pulled the trigger, and when the smoke of my rifle cleared away I saw a Bushman tumbling down the rock, whilst another was lying on the ground kicking, evidently badly wounded. The other Bushmen were so astonished that they gathered round the man who was on the ground, and looked at him, thus giving me another good shot. I fired again, and another man fell down the rock quite dead. The remainder of the Bushmen did not wait for anything more, but retreated at full speed, climbing up the rocks like baboons, and evidently frightened. We waited some time and then the Caffres rushed on to the two men who had fallen and stabbed them with their assagies. They were, however, quite dead, but Caffres like to make sure there is no shamming. The bows and arrows of these men were taken, and also some lion’s teeth and claws that they wore; for these little Bushmen will kill lions with their poisoned arrows, and also elephants.

The Caffres then all came round me and looked at my rifle with evident signs of admiration. The distance at which I had killed the Bushmen was to them a subject of profound astonishment, and also to see that the bullet had gone completely through the men.

Our return to the village was a triumphant march, the men dancing, singing, and brandishing their assagies. Inyati walked beside me carrying the rifle, and asking me questions about the gun; how often it could be fired, how far off it would kill, and how it was made. I was the great hero of the day, child as I was, and these men now looked up to me as to a chief. Our reception at the village was most enthusiastic; men, women and children danced round us, shouting and singing. Unless one had been persecuted as had these people, it would be difficult to realise the importance of such an event as killing two of their enemies. The people at this kraal assured us that the Bushmen would now desert the country. They were very superstitious, and wherever a Bushman died or was killed, that place was at once deserted, as it was considered unlucky; so they felt certain that the Bushmen would now leave that part of the country. Some of the Caffres who had been out with me described to the people at the village how I had fired, and how the Bushmen tumbled down the rock. They were capital actors, and imitated the Bushmen very well. A young ox was killed for a feast, and we had a great supper, many songs, and a large dance; and on the following day returned towards our kraal, which we reached in seven days—a longer time than we occupied on our journey from the kraal, because now we drove with us ten cows, the reward given to Inyati for his assistance.

Chapter Six.

A few days after our return from the expedition against the Bushmen, Inyati called me one morning to his hut, in which were two of his counsellors. He then told me that I was raised to the rank of a counsellor, and that he intended to give me three of the cows that he had received from the Caffres, for freeing them of the Bushmen. He said that Caffres, as young as I was, were never made counsellors or had the privileges of men; but the two things I had done, viz., trapping the leopard and shooting the Bushmen, were so extraordinary that the tribe had agreed that I was to be made a chief. The rank which a chief holds among these people is of more importance than any civilised men could understand. The rank gave me command and authority over all men who were not chiefs. I could order them about, make them do work for me, whilst I need do nothing. I thanked Inyati for what he had done, and said I hoped to again show him what my rifle would do, in case there was any occasion for it, and that I believed I could kill an elephant or a lion with it, as easily as I had killed the Bushmen. He replied that "we should see."

On leaving Inyati I took my assagies and walked out to the hill where my late companions Inyoni and Tembile were watching the cattle, and sat down with them, telling them of my having been made a counsellor and chief. These boys were quite excited at the news and very pleased, and we sat talking some time, till we noticed that the cattle were alarmed by something and seemed uneasy. We ran up to them, and then saw quite a small calf on the ground, and something shiny all round it. In an instant I saw it was an immense snake, as thick as my body. Seizing an assagy, I drove it into the snake's head, and then, withdrawing it, stabbed it again in the body. The snake uncoiled itself, and came at me; but Inyoni, coming behind it, threw an assagy at it and pinned it to the ground, whilst Tembile drove another spear into it. Seeing my chance, I went close to the monster and stabbed it in the head two or three times, and thus killed it. As soon as we saw it was dead we cut some sticks, sharpened the ends of these, and pegged the snake straight on the ground. It was then longer than the three of us, and was a giant among snakes. The Caffre boys told me there were several such snakes about, and that they would kill and swallow a calf. They knew no other name for it than "Inyoka m'culu" ("the big snake.") They said these snakes ate only about twice each moon, and after eating slept for many days, and were sometimes then killed by wild pigs and leopards. They said that, many months ago, a Caffre boy was sleeping near here, and whilst asleep one of these snakes came to him, coiled round him and killed him. Before the snake could swallow him, some men came to the place and killed the snake, but the boy had been dead some minutes before they arrived. They described how this snake attacked anything. It first crawled slowly along the ground till near its prey, or waited in long grass, or in bushes, till some animal or bird came near. When close to the animal it wished to capture, the snake lunged rapidly at it, seized it with its teeth and dragged it to the ground, at the same time coiling round the animal and compressing it in its folds. Even a riet-bok could be thus killed by the snake. The reptile then slowly gorges its prey, and remains torpid many days.

Although this large snake was a terrible creature to look at, it was not as dangerous as several other snakes that were common near our village. The most dangerous of these was the puff-adder, which the Caffres called "*m'namba*." This snake I have seen about four feet long, and as thick as a stout arm. It is a sluggish, dull animal, very brilliantly coloured, its body being speckled yellow and black, which makes it look like dead leaves, so that you might tread on it without seeing it, unless you were always on the look-out. This snake has a practice of throwing itself backward and striking with its poisonous fangs anything that is following it. To be bitten by the *m'namba* is certain death, no case ever having occurred of a man or any cattle having been bitten and having lived after it. Our old rain-maker had some little bits of wood that he called *mutt*, some of which, he said, would prevent a man from dying when he had been bitten by a snake; but I never heard of a cure by this means. Some of his medicine was, however, wonderful in its effects, as I once experienced. I was very ill and had a bad fever; so old Amanzi came to me and gave me a small pill of wood, which I bit and ate. In a few minutes I broke out in a perspiration, and then went to sleep, and slept for nearly the whole of the sun's course round the earth (a whole day), and when I woke I was quite well. Caffres are very seldom ill: they eat so little meat, are so much out of doors, and take so much exercise, that they rarely suffer from bad health. The climate also is very healthy, so that the people were strong and robust.

It was about two moons after our expedition against the Bushmen, that I was out one morning with Tembile and Inyoni, on some hills near, in search of riet-bok, when we saw two strange Caffres coming towards us. These Caffres, we knew by the "*esikoko*" (the ring on the top of their heads), came from the east, near the bay of Natal. Having given them the usual salutation, we said, "*Chela pela s'indaba*" ("tell us the news"), when they told us that a large herd of elephants was coming down the country, and had done much damage to the corn-gardens of the Caffres on the way, breaking down the fences, eating and treading down the corn. They said there were two bull-elephants, very savage, in the herd, who ran after any man they saw or scented; and that three Caffres, near the Umlass river, had been killed by these elephants.

A herd of elephants visiting a country where the inhabitants are as defenceless as were these Caffres, is a serious matter. Assagies were little or no use against elephants; and if a regular attack was organised against them, in the same manner as we had attacked the buffaloes, we should probably have ten or twenty men killed, and after all not kill the elephant. The corn-gardens, on which we depended for our store of food, might be destroyed; and then there might be, if not starvation, at least great scarcity of grain. So that to prevent the elephants from coming our way was considered most important. There was a great council held the evening after the news was brought; and it was decided that we should send some men towards the east, to find out when the elephants came near us; and on their approach we were to light fires in their track and make noises, so as to try and make them travel in another direction. To turn them back would not have been a proceeding pleasant to the Caffres east of us, but yet we should have liked it, as it would rid us of the animals.

There was nothing talked about during the next week besides the elephants, and I learned much about these animals and their habits from the Caffres. These elephants, I was told, came down the country each year: they did so when the umbrella acacia had its young branches and shoots; for on this tree and several others the elephants fed. In its wild state the elephant lives almost entirely on the branches of trees. These it breaks off with its trunk, eats the smaller branches, and grinds the larger to pieces so as to extract the juice from them. It is at night that the elephant usually travels and feeds: by day, especially if it be very hot, he remains quiet in the bush—so quiet, that you might be within fifty yards of a herd of elephants and not know they were there. If, however, a man disturbs the herd when they are thus at rest, the animals will very likely charge at him, and hunt him through the bush just as a pack of hounds will hunt a fox. At this time of year the elephant bulls, cows, and calves, all keep together; but later on the bulls separate and sometimes travel alone. When thus alone, the bulls are very savage; and if two bulls meet in the bush a terrible battle ensues. The Caffres consider that a bull-elephant is a match for 100 Caffres, and even then the animal may get the best of the fight.

I was much interested in these accounts of the elephants, and began to think how I could manage to kill an elephant; for it was my ambition to do so.

The Caffre name for an elephant is *inglovu*, and the words *inglovu* and *ama inglovu* were frequently heard during the

next few days; for the expected arrival of the elephants was a most serious incident in the daily life of these people; and forty moons ago the elephants had suddenly travelled into this country and had destroyed all the crops of the Caffres near this village. It was all done in one night, and on the morning the people discovered that their yearly crop of corn had vanished. The season was too far advanced to sow again; consequently they were compelled to buy corn and to purchase it with cattle. So that their loss had been very severe.

Taking the first opportunity of speaking to Inyati, I inquired what he intended to do in order to protect his fields and gardens. He replied that the only thing to do was to light fires round the gardens, and to assemble and shout. I inquired why he did not dig a great ditch round his gardens; but he replied that it would take too long, and that the elephants could manage to cross almost any ditch that could be dug.

He also told me that sometimes pits had been dug for elephants; and some years ago an elephant fell into one of these pits, and had been helped out by other elephants; so that it was no use attempting anything against them, as they were as clever as men. That night I thought over every plan by which I could kill an elephant, and at length an idea occurred to me; but I kept my thoughts to myself, as I intended to try by myself if I could not kill one of these enormous animals. Great preparations were made by the Caffres for the arrival of the elephants, quantities of dead wood were gathered in heaps in readiness for large fires to be made when the animals approached our gardens. Several pits were also dug and covered with a hurdle, on the top of which earth was thrown and grass carefully laid. These pits were placed in the old paths of the elephants, because it was known that these animals always followed in their old tracks whenever they revisited a country, and though these tracks were overgrown, or obliterated, yet the instinct, or knowledge of locality of the elephants was so great, that they would travel miles through the bush, and then come out into the open at exactly the same place at which they had come out of the bush some thirty or forty moons previously.

The Caffres told me that the elephants did not understand any man getting up into a tree; that if they were chased by an elephant they climbed a tree, and, although this tree was not big enough to place them beyond reach of an elephant, yet the animal never seemed to think of pulling the man out of it, or of pulling down the tree. This information was of great value to me in carrying out a plan that I was forming in my head.

It was about half a moon's time after we first heard that elephants were coming our way, that we discovered their traces within five miles of our village. There was a marsh about five miles from us, formed by the overflow of one of the rivers, and in this marsh the elephants had rolled in the mud, and had then returned to the bush. In this bush there were several large trees, hung over by creeping plants and very easily climbed. Having followed the track of the elephants into the bush for a short distance, I noticed a tree that was covered with mud about the stem, and as high as I could reach with my assagy. This was caused by the elephants rubbing themselves against the tree after they had rolled in the mud.

Although the elephant is a thick-skinned animal yet he is much worried in hot weather by flies and mosquitoes. So, to escape in some measure from these pests, he rolls in the mud, and this mud sticking to his hide, forms a coating over him, which defends him to some extent from the mosquitoes. When he passes a thick tree he leans against this and rubs himself, and thus rids himself of a portion of the mud, and spreads it more evenly over his body.

Having selected a tree, I thought at first that I would tell Inyati what I intended doing, and would ask him to accompany me when I carried out my plans. On second thoughts, however, it occurred to me that if I were successful and Inyati were with me, I should do everything, but he would get the honour, because he was a man, I only a boy. So I asked Inyoni and Tembile if they would accompany me in an attempt to kill an elephant.

They replied that to go near these elephants was very dangerous, and that perhaps I did not know how very likely I was to be killed, so that they hardly liked to go for fear I was trying to do too much. I said they might trust me, as I had thought a great deal about what was to be done, and that by my plan there would be very little danger.

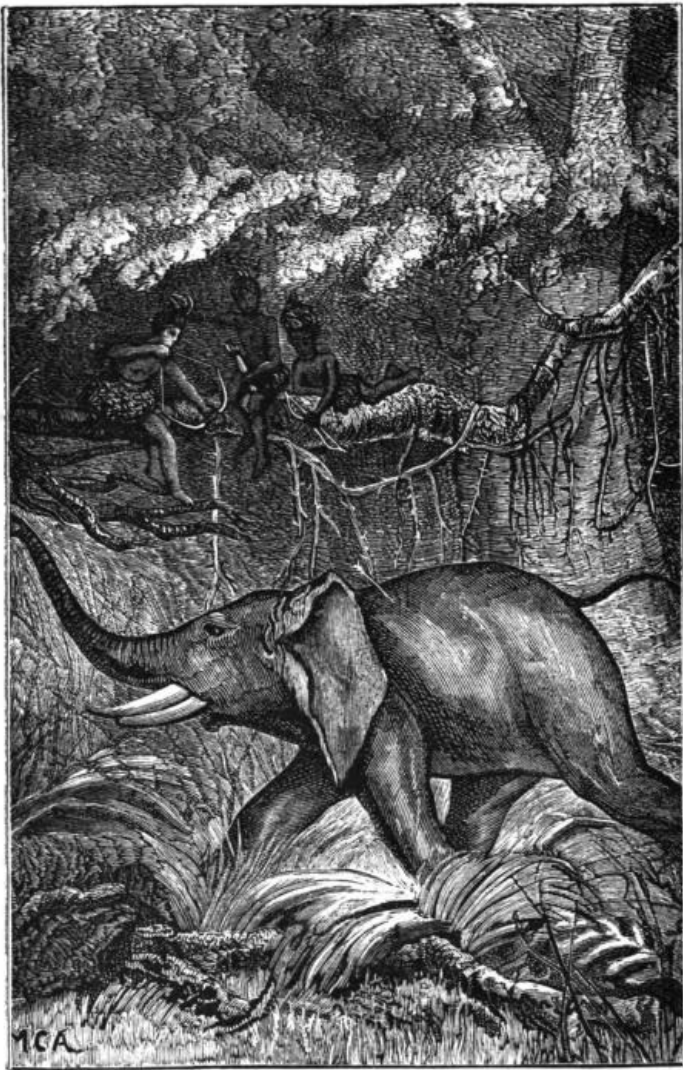
From information I had gained from the Caffres, I learned that the elephants usually drank every other night, and that unless disturbed they would drink at the same pools of water. I hoped, therefore, that if I climbed the large tree that I before mentioned, I might during the night or early morning, find the elephants under this tree, when I should have a chance of trying my plan upon them.

My plan was as follows:—The Bushmen that I had shot were armed with a bow and two kinds of poisoned arrows. One kind were made of reeds with a bone end, and were used for shooting small game; the other arrows were stronger, and had a barbed iron end, covered with poison. The barbed end fitted into a stout reed out of which it could be easily pulled. The reason for this arrangement was, that if the arrow struck any large animal such as a lion or a buffalo, the lion would scratch at the arrow and pull it out, and the buffalo in rushing through the bush might do the same. If, however, the reed end of the arrow were pulled, or rubbed off from the animal, the barb containing the poison would remain in its body, and so enable this poison to enter the circulation of the animal, and eventually to cause its death.

If I climbed a tree, and the elephants came underneath it, I could fire an arrow into the back of any one I selected, and by this means I hoped to kill one, if not more elephants. I explained all this to Inyoni and Tembile, and they agreed with me that it was a very good plan and likely to succeed. So having obtained the arrows and a bow, we three started for the tree when the sun was two hands'-breadth above the horizon, and was going down. Before we entered the bush we walked in the wettest parts of the marsh, so that our feet and legs might be covered with mud, when we should not leave any scent from our tracks; for the elephant is very keen-scented, and would avoid any place where the scent of a man was strong. These elephants, however, were not much afraid of man, because in this part of the country guns were not used against them, and they were accustomed to see men run away from them. So that the elephants had it all their own way.

We climbed the tree without difficulty, and having broken off the branches that intercepted my view, I seated myself on a stout branch, high enough to be beyond the reach of an elephant's trunk. Inyoni and Tembile were close beside me, and held the case containing the poisoned arrows. It was nearly full moon, but clouds occasionally made it rather dark in the bush, though not so dark as to prevent me from seeing anything beneath me.

The night came on, and the moon had gone over about half its course, when we heard a branch broken at some distance from us; and shortly after, the bushes made a rustling noise as though a gust of wind had shaken them; and then I saw something white and shining, and around this white object loomed a black mass. I almost immediately recognised the white object as the tusks of an enormous elephant, and the animal itself was the black mass. I took one of my arrows from Tembile, and fitted it to the bow, and waited for this elephant to come close to me. I was acquainted with the elephant in India, and was not surprised to find how quietly it walked in the bush: its steps made no noise, and the only sound audible was the slight rustling of the leaves as the animal moved along through the bush, and an occasional blow through its trunk as it sniffed the air around.



WATCHING FOR THE ELEPHANTS.

[p. 83.]

Careful as we had been to cover our feet with mud, still we must have left some scent; for the elephant came on very slowly, blowing through its trunk and shaking its great ears as it listened for some sound. At last it strode forward and came exactly beneath me, and, aiming at its back just clear of the backbone, I discharged one of my arrows with all my force. Immediately the elephant felt the prick of the arrow it gave a sharp cry and moved rapidly forward. It then stood still, listening, and apparently watching for some enemy, but it could not see us in the tree. After a short time it gave another and different cry, and immediately several other elephants, some large, some very small, shuffled along under the tree. One of these was a very large elephant with great tusks, and as it passed I sent an arrow into its back, which caused it to cry out just as the first had done. We counted about forty elephants in the herd, among which were three very large bull-elephants with large tusks. The herd went through the bush to the watering-place in the marsh, but did not return by the same path that they had followed on going to the marsh. So we did not see them as they came back.

As soon as it was light we descended from the tree, and found ourselves very stiff after sitting so long on the branches. After moving about a little we got all right, and then agreed that we should follow the trail of the two elephants that I had hit with my poisoned arrows.

The first thing to be done was to examine the feet-marks of these two elephants. Now the under part of the foot of an elephant is not smooth, but is marked by several small cracks; consequently when the elephant treads on soft ground, it leaves a kind of plan or map of its foot. The plans of no two elephants' feet are exactly alike, so that when you have once studied the plan of a particular foot, you can recognise the footprint when you see it in another place. It is just the same with the inside of the thumb and top joint of each person's finger. The grain of the skin makes a sort of pattern, and it rarely happens that this pattern of each finger is the same; and it still more rarely happens that the fingers of two people are alike. Having examined several good impressions of the two elephants' feet, we went quickly out of the bush, walked along the edge of the marsh, and then entered the bush again at the place where the elephants had re-entered it. It was easy to follow the elephants along the path they had made as they first entered the bush, for along this they walked one after the other; but when we had gone some distance into the bush, we found that the elephants had separated, some going one way, some another. They had also stopped to feed, and had broken off some very large branches from their favourite trees. We now set to work to follow the footprints of the two elephants that I had struck with the arrows. It was very difficult at first, as the ground was very hard, and covered with dead leaves; so that we could not obtain a good impression of the feet for some time, and we were puzzled at first. At length we found an ant-bear's hole in the ground, and near this the elephants had trodden on the loose earth, and we then recognised the footprints of the largest elephant that I had hit. We followed this elephant very cautiously, for he had separated himself from the others—a sign, as my companions said, that "*Inglovu efar*" (the elephant was ill), especially as it was evident he had not eaten, there being no branches broken along his track. After following the track during about a quarter of the day, we came so close to the elephant that we could hear him. Sometimes he would make a low rumbling sound, at others he would blow through his trunk, and then knock his tusks against the stem of a tree. All these acts were indications of his being very uneasy, and I hoped the poisoned arrow had begun to do its work. We sat down in the bush listening to the elephant, and ate some of our corn; for I had determined to follow this elephant for days, if possible, in order to find whether he died or lived. The elephant stood quiet in the bush about as long as it took the sun to move ten times its own diameter in the sky, and then it again moved slowly forward, selecting the densest parts of the bush to move through. About every hundred paces it stopped, and remained quiet for a little time, and then moved slowly on again. All these proceedings delighted my Caffre

companions, who declared the elephant was very sick. During the whole of the day we followed this elephant, and when the night came we ascended a tree, and slept a little; but as we could hear a leopard calling in the bush, and several bush-pigs were under the tree, we were mostly on the watch. The night was fine, though there was a heavy dew; and though we felt it very cold we did not like to go down on the ground to light a fire for fear of the leopard. As soon as it was light enough to distinguish the tracks, we again followed our elephant. He had travelled during the night, but had gone very slowly; and we saw some marks on the stem of a large tree that showed the elephant had leaned against this, as though he could scarcely stand.

We had moved through the bush very quietly and slowly, stopping every now and then to listen, and also to look all round us; for if we had come on this elephant very suddenly he might have charged us, and, before we could have escaped, he might have caught us and probably killed one of us. Tembile told me that when an elephant caught a man, he pushed him to the ground with his trunk, and then either knelt on him or thrust his tusks into him, and also would push him down and get him between his front and hind feet, and kick him backwards and forwards till he killed him. So, with this description of the elephant's proceedings, which I afterwards found was quite correct, we thought it best to be very cautious in our approach to the animal.

The sun had risen its highest in the sky, when we sat down to rest and to listen; for we knew that we were close to the elephant, as the footprints were quite fresh. We talked in whispers and avoided any noise, whilst we were on the alert for any sound that should indicate the whereabouts of the elephant. As we sat quietly thus waiting, Inyoni pointed upwards, and gave a grunt of delight: we looked up and saw a vulture slowly circling in the sky and nearly above us. "Elephant going to die," said Inyoni; "vulture knows it." We immediately followed on the elephant's tracks, and, after advancing about two hundred paces, we heard a noise in front of us, and saw the elephant lying on its side, whilst every now and then it swung its trunk about and struck the bushes, thus making the noise we had heard. The elephant was dying, its vast frame overpowered by the subtle poison of the Bushman's arrow. We kept at a short distance from the animal and watched it, as it gradually got weaker and weaker, and at length lay motionless. We then went close up to it, and found that it really was dead. It was a monster with great tusks as big round as my thigh, and as it lay on the ground it was far higher than I was as I stood up.

"The other elephant must be dead too," I said, "for I hit that also with an arrow."

"Yes," replied my companions, "and we shall find that too: perhaps vultures will show us where it is, if we watch."

We now agreed that Tembile should go as quickly as he could to our village, and call all the people to come and cut up the elephant, whilst Inyoni and I kept watch near it. So Tembile started off, whilst we who remained agreed to sleep turn and turn about, as we were both very tired.

I had a good sleep, and then Inyoni lay down whilst I kept watch. I could not keep my eyes from the dead elephant which lay a few paces from us. It looked such an enormous creature, that I could hardly believe its death had been caused by so trifling a wound as that given by the small arrow; but the poison used by the Bushmen is powerful beyond belief, and they kill all animals with their arrows.

As I sat listening for any sounds of the approaching Caffres, I heard a slight crack in the bush, then another and a louder crack; and I knew these noises must be caused by elephants, for the Caffres glide through the bush without making any noise. I awoke Inyoni, and we were soon convinced that the elephants were approaching us. My companion was alarmed, as he seemed to think the elephants were hunting us in order to revenge themselves on us. We crept through the bush to a large tree, and climbed this quickly, getting up so high that no elephant could reach us.

We had reached our place of safety, when we saw the first elephant approaching us: this was a cow, and it was following the track of the bull that was now dead. After this cow came about forty other elephants of various sizes. They came along with a sort of shuffling gait, stopping every now and then to listen and sniff the air, and then to move forward again. When they came to the spot where we had sat down, they smelt the ground, and then raising their trunks sniffed all round. Their attention, however, was soon attracted to the dead elephant, which they approached and touched with their trunks, several of them uttering sharp cries as though they wished to wake him. After a few minutes, however, they seemed to know that he was dead, as they moved away from him and stood looking at him, whilst they flapped their great ears and seemed very uneasy. Suddenly, as though suspicious of danger, the large cow-elephant uttered a shrill trumpet and dashed off through the bush, recklessly smashing the small trees and branches in her course. She was followed by the whole herd, and we could hear them as they forced their way through the underwood, the sounds becoming fainter and less audible until all was again quiet.

We remained in our tree, for we could not tell whether more elephants might not come, and on the ground we were in danger. All was quiet, however, for a long time, until we heard the slightest movement of some leaves; and then we saw Tembile, followed by Inyati and all the men and boys of our village. We whistled to them, and, descending the tree, told them what we had seen. We talked in whispers and then went up to the dead elephant and examined it. The reed portion of my arrow had been broken off, but the barb containing the poison was buried deep in the elephant's flesh, and thus the poison had circulated rapidly and had caused the monster's death.

Inyati with his assagy at once cut out this barb and a large portion of the flesh round it, and he then said we might safely eat the remainder of the animal, which would not be affected by the poison.

A scene was then commenced which I shall remember to my last day. About twenty Caffres set to work at the elephant, cutting the flesh off, and piling it in heaps near the animal, by the aid of hatchets; the tusks were cut out of the elephant's jaws, and were so heavy that one man could only just lift one. It took a comparatively short time to cut the animal to pieces, and to take off all its flesh, which was then divided into portions, the boys being given small weights to carry, whilst the men took larger and heavier weights. We then commenced our march through the bush, and before sunset we reached our village, at which we were received with shouts of rejoicing by the old men and females. Notice had been sent to the next village that another elephant was supposed to be dead, and the men of that village had watched the vultures, and had succeeded in finding the second elephant lying dead in the bush, and had cut this one up in the same manner as we had done with the first elephant I had killed. Elephant's flesh, although tough and unsavoury, is still eaten greedily by the Caffres. They are so fond of their cattle, and like to see a large herd near their kraals, that they will not kill an animal unless on some special occasion, such as a marriage, or a victory; so that a feast of flesh is a rare treat, and there is not usually any complaint about the toughness or want of flavour of the meat. As it was usual to have a great dance and general feast when any such event as slaying an elephant had occurred, invitations were sent to all the kraals near, to invite the neighbours to partake of the elephant's flesh.

Before the evening on which the feast was to occur, there had assembled nearly all the Caffres from ten miles round. There were some fine fellows among them, several young men six feet high, and as active as leopards, who could run ten

miles without stopping, and who could walk from sunrise till sunset without tiring. They all brought their assagies, and shields, as well as their knob-kerries, and were dressed in their dancing dresses.

News was also brought us about the elephants. There was now no fear of their destroying the gardens, as they had again taken up their residence in the forests about Natal. This was good news to all the Caffres about us, and was celebrated by one of the largest dances I had ever seen. There were more than a thousand men assembled, all in full war-costume, each with a shield, a knob-kerrie, and five assagies. They danced and ate, and danced again and ate again, during the whole night. To me was given the honour and glory of having killed the elephants, and I had to enter the centre of the ring of men, and describe and act the whole scene. I told how we climbed the tree; how I heard the elephants coming; how I sent my arrow first into one then into the other elephant; how these elephants paid no attention to so small a thing as an arrow, fired by me, a boy; but how this arrow was stronger than the elephant, and at last killed him. I went through all the movements of creeping through the bush on the track of the elephant, sitting down to listen, and at length seeing the elephant. I then lay on the ground just as did the elephant, and swung my arm about to imitate the movements of the animal's trunk, and at length died just as did the elephant.

The shouts and dancing after this performance were of the most exciting description, and lasted for a long time. When, suddenly, a very old chief came into the centre of the circle, and raising his arm to command silence, spoke in a loud clear voice words of which the following is a translation:—

“My people, we have been delivered from the elephants; the elephants that have often destroyed our corn, and brought us to starvation. And how have we been delivered? Not by two hundred warriors armed with assagies, many of whom were killed by the elephants; not by digging holes, and the elephants tumbling into them; but there have been two large elephants killed by our white companion who came out of the sea. He alone thought out of his own head how to kill the elephants, and though very young, has the mind of an experienced chief and the courage of a warrior. We have held a council and have decided that he be from this time forth a chief, and that he be called ‘Umkunkinglovu.’ What say you, men?”

A tremendous shout was given by the assembled crowd at the termination of this speech; and then one of the oldest warriors came into the ring, and placed round my neck a necklace made out of leopards' claws, whilst all the men called out “Inkosi!” The dancing and feasting were then continued till the first sign of daylight appeared, when we all retired to our kraals to rest.

On the following morning I met the old warrior who had put the necklace on me, and sat down talking to him. He was very anxious to hear where I had come from, and was much interested in the accounts I gave him of India. He was puzzled to know how it was possible that our ships found their way over the sea. There were no paths, he said, and the waves were always altering their shape, so that he could not tell how they got on. I told him that the men found their way by the sun and stars, but this he could not comprehend. After some time I asked him to tell me all he knew about his own people, and where they came from. He thought for some time, and then gave me the following account. Spreading his two hands on the ground he lifted the little finger of his left hand and said, “That me.” He then raised the next finger and said, “That my father.” He then raised the next and said, “That his father;” and so he went on, to the thumb of the left hand, giving father after father. “All these lived here,” he said. Then he raised the thumb of his right hand, and said, “That father lived in Zulu country, and quarrelled with great chief there, and came down here.”

“But how did those other fathers live?” I enquired.

He raised four more fingers, and pointing to the last said, “That father live other side of the sun.”

By this, I have since learned that he meant the other side of the equator, or up near Somali.

“That father and all his people have great fight; too many people there, so they come down slowly, and at last live in Zulu country. Those fathers had strange animals that they used to ride on, and which went as fast as an ostrich, but all these died as they came down country.”

I understood from this that he meant his people formerly owned horses.

“Then,” he continued, “we break up, some stop one place, some another—we come here.”

The old chief thus made out ten fathers, and, taking four generations for a hundred, it made out that, about 250 years previously, the Caffres must have resided not far from Nubia.

Two days after our feast all the Caffre visitors had gone home, and we had settled down again to our usual quiet life.

Chapter Seven.

I must now pass over three years of my residence amongst the Caffres; for although I had several adventures with wild animals, and my career was full of interest, yet the events that occurred were very similar to those which I have already related. The free, independent life I led, the perpetual outdoor exercise, and the fine climate, had so agreed with me that I had grown to be quite a young man. I was strong for my age, tall, and very active. There were only two Caffres in the country who could run faster than I could; and although I could not throw an assagy as far as some of the Caffres, yet my aim was good, and several times I had hit a running buck with one of my assagies, when the animal was forty yards from me.

It was at this date that news reached us which caused the greatest alarm. The Zulu country was about three days' journey from us, that is, about 140 miles. The chief who ruled over the Zulus was named Chaka. He was a man never satisfied unless he was at war with some other tribe; and as he had trained a very large army to fight skilfully, he always gained a victory over those he attacked, and consequently was able to appropriate the cattle of the tribes he had conquered. Of all the chiefs in South Africa none were as powerful, and as much feared as Chaka. For he would not always wait for a cause before he attacked a tribe. It was provocation enough for him if another nation were rich in cattle. He considered that no one ought to be rich but he. So he would assemble his army, often without letting them know what he intended them to do. Then he would march off, and suddenly attack and destroy a tribe who had no suspicion that anything was intended against them.

The Caffres who lived near Natal Bay, and the Umlass river, were always on the alert. For they feared Chaka, and

suspected that he would attack them some day.

Our tribe near the Umzimvubu were on very friendly terms with the Caffres near the Umlass, and it was agreed that if Chaka attacked them we should help them, and send as many fighting men as possible to aid them. We knew that if the Caffres near the Umlass were eaten up, it would only be a matter of time before our turn would come. If we allowed Chaka to attack each tribe separately his victory would be easy, but if we joined we should give him some trouble. The probability of Chaka coming down to attack us was a subject often discussed in our kraals, and also the best plan of defence. We knew that we should be outnumbered, and that therefore it would not do to meet his warriors in the open country. We must endeavour, by skill and stratagem, to make up what we wanted in numbers. With this end in view our men were always practising throwing the assagy, and the knob-kerrie, and also constantly running long distances, so as to be in good training. It was fortunate that these precautions had been taken, or our own tribe would have been destroyed.

One day the news was brought us that Chaka was assembling his army, and it was believed that he intended attacking the Caffres near Natal. The news was shouted from hill to hill, and spread rapidly over the country. A council was called, and on the same day that the news had arrived, about five thousand men had assembled near our kraal, each armed with assagies, knob-kerries and shield.

There was a great deal of talking amongst the chiefs, and the plan to be adopted for defence was long and eloquently discussed. It was decided that our little army was to travel at once to near the Umlass river, and join with the people there. The coast near the sea was densely wooded, and in many places was hilly, whilst several rivers twisted about amongst wide reedy banks; and amidst such country we should have a better chance with the Zulus, than we should have in the open country.

Before we started on our journey, I spoke to Inyati, and asked him to let me have twenty men whom I should select, and also that all the guns should be given over to me and my men. I had managed to get possession of a small barrel of gunpowder that had been saved from the wreck, and also some lead. This lead I melted and dropped into water, so as to form small pieces of lead like slugs. I made up nearly a hundred rounds of cartridges, with the aid of small skins cut from buck and other small animals; and with these precautions, I fancied I could do a great deal when it came to a fight. Among those I selected for my little company were Inyoni and Tembile, who I knew would follow me anywhere; in fact all the men I selected had full confidence in me, for never before had any boy (as I really was) done as much as I had.

Our march was commenced on the second day after our council, and we presented a formidable appearance. There were about five thousand men, all fine-looking, active fellows, full of confidence, and, in spite of the formidable reputation of Chaka's warriors, ready to meet them in battle.

It occupied two days to reach the Umlass river, where we were met by some hundred chiefs, councillors, and head men from the villages near.

The plan that had been adopted for our march was to send on in advance a number of women and boys, each carrying a large basket full of mealies. These were deposited at the end of our first day's march. The women and boys then collected as much corn as they could procure from the villages near them, and went on another day's march, so we had plenty to eat on the journey.

The chiefs at the Umlass were very glad to see us, and were quite astonished when they beheld me. They asked all sorts of questions about me, and treated me with the greatest respect. I knew quite well how to behave with the dignity of a chief, and I soon impressed the visitors with my importance. They had heard of the power of my guns, and seemed terribly afraid of them, and looked at them with great awe. I told them that I could easily kill a man at the distance of three throws of an assagy, a statement that Inyati corroborated.

We heard from these chiefs that Chaka might come down upon us any day, and that he would try to surprise us; but that men were on the look-out beyond the Umganie, and runners were placed at various points to convey the news and signal when the enemy came in sight. The army of these Umlass Caffres was concealed in the bush along the coast, and amounted to nearly 8,000 men; whilst the cattle had been driven westward, and concealed in places from which it would be most difficult to drive them.

Our army was placed on a hill west of the Umlass river, which river opens into a wide bay near the mouth; and to attack us on this hill would entail great loss on the enemy.

We lay down to rest after our march, and slept; for it was a practice among these Caffres to sleep as much as possible before any great work, as they seemed to think that men could lay in a stock of sleep which would be of use to them two or three days afterwards. I am inclined to believe that this idea was correct, and that by sleeping a great deal during three or four days, we can go the next three or four days with scarcely any sleep.

The third day after our arrival at the Umlass, runners came from the east bringing the intelligence that the Zulu army, as numerous as a flight of locusts, had crossed the Tugela, and were spreading down the country. Quick as were the movements of this army, the Caffres in the country were equally rapid in their movements, and more than 3,000 men joined us, and several thousand cattle were driven across the Umlass river, and secreted in the bushy country to the west of it.

Umnini, a chief who lived near the head of Natal Bay, had the chief command of the whole army, whilst Inyati had command of the men who came from the Umzimvubu district. There had been several consultations between Umnini, Inyati, and other chiefs, as to the best method of defending the country, and a plan was arranged which was well thought out and carefully planned.

The course which it was thought the Zulus would follow, was on the open country about five miles from the coast; they must, however, pass through a portion of the bush near the Umbilo river at the head of Natal Bay, and it was here that our attack was to be made. Our plan was, to allow a certain portion of the army to pass through the bush; then to dash in, and separate this portion from the main body; keep the main body at bay whilst our men attacked those who had passed into the open beyond the bush.

During the various walks I had taken about the country, I had discovered a place that I at once selected as one suitable for my small party of twenty, in case we had to make a stand. It was a solid piece of ground like a rocky island in the middle of a large vlei or marsh. The marsh consisted of water and soft mud, so deep that a man would sink nearly to his shoulders in the mud. The island was surrounded by this mud for nearly 100 yards, and so was beyond the cast of an

assagy. To secure a pathway to this island, I employed my men in cutting branches of trees and placing these in a line from the firm ground across the marsh to the island. It required a great many branches; but we worked hard, and at length made a foundation on which we could get to the island without sinking above our ankles. We had intelligence of the movements of the Zulu army, and knew just where they were each hour of the day; but our own army kept so carefully concealed, that not a man could be seen.

The Zulus evidently thought they were not likely to meet much opposition, and did not take the precaution of sending forward small parties to examine the ground in front, and feel for their enemies; so we hoped to surprise them.

All our arrangements were made to attack the Zulus when they had crossed the Umbilo river, which they did shortly after daybreak. They marched on, singing war-songs, and beating their shields, and entered the bush country; and when about 2,000 were out in the open beyond, about a thousand of our warriors rushed on the line, cut it in two; and half the party facing about, prevented those who had passed from retreating, whilst those who had been stopped found themselves unable to advance. With a shout that could be heard for miles, 5,000 of our warriors rushed out from their concealment and closed with the Zulus in the open. In spite of their discipline and training, the Zulus, thus overmatched, were soon broken and their slain covered the ground. The loss on our side in this encounter was small, though several men were wounded. In the meantime the fight in the bush-path was severe: not more than four or five men could stand abreast, so the numbers on the side of the Zulus were no great advantage. Our object was to prevent those behind from helping the party we had cut off in front. In a battle it is impossible for one person to describe what takes place in all parts of the field, so I will now confine my description to what occurred to my own party.

I believed that the Zulus were not acquainted with the fact that we had any firearms with us; and, consequently, that they would be much surprised when they heard the report of our guns, and saw the effect of our shot. I believed that, instead of beginning to fire at the early part of the battle, it would produce more effect if I waited until some critical period, and when, perhaps, our own side might require some special assistance. I had not very long to wait for such an event, as a large party of the Zulus had worked their way through the bush, and had formed up so as to attack our forces in rear, and at the time when they were broken and scattered after their victory over the two thousand Zulus. Seeing this party assembled, I called on my men to follow me, and ran down to within about two assagies'-cast from them. They awaited my coming, looking surprised to see so small a party attempt so daring a proceeding as to approach so close to them. Suddenly giving the word to my men, we turned and ran towards our island in the marsh, as though we were afraid. The result was just what I expected—the Zulus came full speed after us. All my men were splendid runners, so we reached our causeway and were on the island before a single Zulu had arrived at the edge of the marsh. The Zulus were not aware how soft and deep the mud was, nor did they know that the narrow causeway we had made was the only means of reaching the island; consequently several hundreds rushed into the vlei and were completely pounded, unable to advance or retreat. One of their leading chiefs, however, had seen where we had run across the vlei; so, assembling his men, he came over the causeway at a run, followed by some two hundred men. I allowed him to come almost within an assagy-throw's distance, and then, aiming carefully with my gun, I shot him dead. Four or five other shots were fired by the men with me, and as many men fell dead. The result was that a panic seized these men, and they retreated; but our own people had now formed up, and were charging on the Zulus, and a terrible slaughter ensued. The men in the vlei were knocked on the head with stones or knob-kerries, and a second disaster befell the Zulu army. In the meantime, the Umlass Caffres, led by Umnini, had driven back a large force of Zulus, which had attempted to work round outside the bush and to outflank us. These men retreating, as also the few who had escaped from the first attack, led to a general rush among the Zulu army, who were not certain but what they might be attacked by a much larger force than their own. They knew they had been surprised, and they saw that our plans had been well arranged. This, together with the fact that our people possessed firearms, spread such alarm that they could not be made to attempt another attack. Our people followed up the retreat as far as the Umganie river, killing a large number more of the Zulus—and our victory was complete.

That night we had a great dance and a great feast, amidst which songs were sung descriptive of our various deeds during the day. We had placed our spies at different commanding positions, so as to give early intelligence in case the Zulu army recovered itself and again attacked us; but they did not attempt to do so, for they had captured several cattle up the country, which they drove into Zululand and claimed a victory over us. We heard that our tribe was the only one that had ever been able to stand against the Zulu army.

We had not gained our victory without loss, for the part of the Zulu army that we had cut off, although outnumbered, yet fought well, and killed more than two hundred of our men, whilst five or six hundred were wounded. The rapidity with which the wounded recovered was marvellous—a result due, I suppose, to their having lived almost entirely on vegetables and milk, and always being out in the open air.

Although there was much rejoicing on our return, there were also laments, because some of our bravest young men had been killed, and their relatives showed just as much regret at their loss as do the English when they lose a friend.

The scenes through which I had passed during my residence among these Caffres, had produced upon me the same effects as though I had lived three or four times as long. Although I was at an age when English boys are engrossed with tops, hoops, and marbles, and look upon a performance at football or cricket as something to make a boy famous, yet I had trapped a leopard, had killed an elephant and had now been engaged in a desperate fight and had aided to win the victory. These stern realities had aged me, and I felt confidence now both in myself and in the weapons I could use: I sat in the circle with the warriors, and had, after the battle, spoken before the assembled people. With the Intombis (young girls) I was a great favourite, and as some of these were very pretty, I liked to sit talking with them.

The life I now led was such as any boy might envy. I cannot imagine any of the pastimes, amusements, or excitements of civilisation that can compare with that which can be obtained in a life of nature. In the first place the climate was very good, never very cold and never very hot. Rains occurred in the autumn, but they were soon over and my kraal kept me dry. I had now several cows which supplied me with milk, *ubisi*, sweet fresh milk, and *amasi*, sour milk (like junket), which I preferred. What are now called mealies (Indian corn) were also plentiful, so that there was no want of food. These mealies we used to bury in large holes near our kraals. The holes were dug about ten feet deep, and about six feet in diameter. A fire was then lighted at the bottom, and from time to time we plastered the sides with mud, and then dried this with more fire, and so made a hard and dry hole; we buried the mealies in this and then arched the top of the hole by means of hurdles and turf, so that the water when it rained ran off the sort of roof: our mealies then kept dry and could be dug out when required. By means of various traps and snares that I set, I had caught several buck in the bush, and also some guinea-fowl. I clipped the wings of the guinea-fowl and kept them in an enclosure I had made of reeds, and now they had become quite tame, and I always had plenty of guinea-fowls' eggs. Quail, too, used to come to this country in thousands during the autumn, and these we used to knock over with our knob-kerries. I had got quite accustomed to the absence of clothing; in fact, even now, I often feel uncomfortable and in a kind of prison when I have clothes on. I had killed several monkeys, out of the skins of which I had made myself tails to wear round my waist, and also round my neck. When the sun was very hot I carried some large banana leaves, which protected my head from the sun, and served as a parasol. Now, considering that I had no want of food, had nothing to do which I did not like, could go

out hunting whenever I chose, was not bothered as boys are in civilised lands, I ought to have been very happy. I was happy; but I could not get over the feeling that I was away from my people, that my father must think I was dead, and my uncle, who intended being so kind to me, must also have given me up as lost. The ship in which I had embarked at Calcutta would be put down as one among the many "not since heard of." I saw no chance, however, of ever again rejoining my relations; and, though I thought frequently of every possible chance of doing so, I could see no likely means of success. These Caffres had spared my life and taken me among them as one of themselves. They had behaved well and kindly to me, had rewarded me fairly for what I had done, and gave me the rank of a chief. If I eventually rose to be the paramount chief in this country I should be a king in a way: I should have the power of life and death over my subjects, and I thought I might be able to teach them many things which they now were ignorant of. When, however, I thought of their laws and customs I found it difficult to imagine what I should teach them to make them better than they were. I knew very little about religion, and did not feel equal to trying to teach it, because the chiefs were always reasoning about things that were told them, and did not understand believing things on faith.

There was one subject that I was anxious to speak to these chiefs about, but had always felt some hesitation. Now, however, I determined to inquire from them why they had killed all the sailors and men who had been shipwrecked. For, although these Caffres were warlike people, yet I knew they were just, according to their reasoning, and would not kill men in cold blood, unless with some end in view.

One evening I was sitting in my kraal, grinding down some nails to make points for some arrows, when an old chief named Inguana came to my hut and sat down beside me. After some conversation I asked him why his people killed the white men who were wrecked. He then told me that some years ago a ship came to nearly the same place, and about forty men landed and made friends with the Caffres, and stopped some days. At length they prevailed on several men and women to go on board the ship and kept them there; they then came again on shore and gave many men something to drink which made them insensible. These men they carried in boats to their ships: some men woke and resisted, and they were shot. Then the ship went away, and the Caffres never saw their friends again. So when they saw the men on shore from my ship, they feared them and thought similar acts would be committed; so, keeping a watch, they caught them asleep and assagied them. The proceedings of the former visitors showed they were slave-catchers, and thus their acts caused the death of the poor sailors who had escaped from shipwreck. Similar proceedings often happen in various parts of the world; some white men behave badly to the so-called savages, and then harmless visitors suffer for the acts of these rascals. From what I had seen of these Umzimvubu Caffres, I did not believe they would kill white men without a cause, so I was glad I had been able to hear why they had slaughtered the sailors. The Caffres themselves thought that the sailors were probably the same as those who had carried off their relatives, and so determined to surprise them before they had an opportunity of taking any more prisoners. When I told them that the men they had killed were harmless and in distress, they really seemed sorry for their acts.

Chapter Eight.

One of the Zulu chiefs who had been killed in our battle near Natal had a headdress of ostrich-feathers. This headdress was considered a great curiosity, and our principal chiefs divided these feathers amongst them, and on great occasions wore them in their head-rings. I heard that, on the plains under the Quathlamba Mountains, ostriches were to be found; so I was anxious to make an expedition there, in order to try and shoot or trap these birds, and so procure a large supply of feathers. On talking this matter over with the chiefs, they told me I must take a large party with me, as Bushmen were numerous there, and it would be dangerous to visit that country unless well-armed and in numbers. I, however, told the chiefs that three or four of us armed with guns were a match for any number of Bushmen. This statement the chiefs did not deny, but they said that if the Bushmen crept on us at night, they might hit us with their poisoned arrows, whilst we could not see them. I answered, however, that sport without some danger was only fitted for women, and that I had already proved that I could take care of myself.

After a very long talk it was agreed that I, with twenty men whom I should select, were to journey up country, and try our luck against the ostriches. I chose the best men with whom I was acquainted, and also my two young Caffre friends. We carried five guns with us and about twenty rounds of ammunition each. So that we were a formidable party as regards strength, though few in number. Our daily journeys must have been about thirty miles, as we walked from sunrise to sunset, and very quickly. We had no want of food, for there were plenty of antelope in this country, and we used to spoor these, to where they had lain down in the reeds or long grass; we then surrounded the spot where they were concealed, and closed in on them; when they jumped up to make off, we either assagied them, or knocked them over with our knob-kerries.

After eight days' walking we came to the plains where we expected to find ostriches, and I now made use of my glasses to scan the country round. There was plenty of game in these plains, herds of the *impovu* (elands) and other animals, and water was also plentiful, as numbers of small streams flowed from the ravines of the Quathlamba into the plains, south and south-east of them. So that we considered this country very suitable for kraals, as there was plenty of grass for cattle and the soil was well-suited for growing corn.



"RESTING MY GUN AGAINST A ROCK, I TOOK A STEADY AIM." [p. 116.]

We worked our way over these plains till we came to the rising ground at the foot of the mountains, which we ascended, and could then obtain a good view of the surrounding country.

As we were sitting on the rocks looking in various directions, we heard a noise above us, and saw a large rock rolling and bounding down towards us. Instantly we jumped behind rocks and so protected ourselves, and the rolling rock bounded over our heads. On looking up we saw two Bushmen standing on some crags about 150 yards from us: it was these men who had loosened the rock, in order, if possible, to crush some of us. They shrieked at us, and shook their fists as if defying us; they thought themselves safe, as they were far more active on the rocks than Caffres, and could easily keep out of assagy-range; but they little knew how we were armed, for they had probably never heard the report even of a gun. Resting my gun against a rock, I took a steady aim at the Bushman and fired. The man instantly fell, rose again, and waved his arms, and then dropped dead. His companion instantly bounded off up the mountains as fast and as active as a kipspringer.

We ran up the rocks to where this Bushman lay, and the Caffres drove their assagies into him to make sure he was not shamming; he was, however, quite dead. On looking round we saw a well-worn path leading to what appeared a solid wall of rock. On approaching the rock we found a hollow which had been scooped out and formed into a cave, and this was evidently the Bushmen's home. On entering this cave we were surprised at the multitude of things inside. There was a lion's skin, and a necklace formed out of his teeth, two more formed out of his claws; three leopards' skins; several skins of elands, which were arranged so as to form a bed. In one corner were about a hundred ostriche's feathers, whilst nearly a dozen ostriche's eggs filled with water were round the cave. There was also plenty of dried meat, evidently eland's flesh, and a number of poisoned arrows. Here then we had come on a treasure, for the leopard-skins and the necklaces, were much valued among our tribes. All the animals whose skins had been found in this cave, must have been killed by the Bushmen with their poisoned arrows, showing how daring and skilful these men are with their tiny weapons, for to kill a lion they must have come to within at least forty paces of him. We secured all these articles, and then called a council of war to decide whether we should stop in this country in order to kill ostriches or return with what we had obtained. We at length decided to return; for we had seen no ostriches, and as they are the most keen-sighted and fastest of animals, we might wait many days before we even saw one. Eland, however, were plentiful, and we saw a large herd of them on the plains; so we divided our party into four divisions—three of these were to go round on the opposite side of the elands, whilst those of the fourth party, who had guns, were to lie concealed by some rocks, and the herd was to be driven up to us. Our plan succeeded well, and the herd came to within about an assagy's-throw of us before they knew of our presence; so that we fired each two shots before they got out of range, killing three elands. This supplied us with plenty of meat; so we had a great feast, and dried enough flesh to last us on our journey back.

On our return to our kraals we were received like heroes who had won a great battle. Our feathers were the envy of the whole tribe, so I gave several to the various chiefs, and it was agreed that a chief might wear as many as he liked, the head man of a kraal might wear only one, and no lower man might wear any. We thus made a division in the rank of men, which is of great importance even with men as uncivilised as were these Caffres.

Among the men at our kraal there was one called Ebomvu, because his skin was redder than most Caffres. He was the Rain-maker of the tribe, and was much feared, because he was considered a wizard. Now the power which these

wizards had was very great. They were believed by most of the men in the tribe to be able to foretell events, to produce rain in time of drought, to tell who had bewitched cattle, or men, and made them ill, and they used this power very often to get rid of any person who was not agreeable to them. The Rain-maker was a dangerous man, and I had soon learnt that, unless I was friendly with him, he might proclaim that I had bewitched somebody, and then probably all the power of my friends could not save me from being killed.

I saw one case where an old man who had made an enemy of the Rain-maker, was killed by the people, and as the proceedings then adopted were similar to those usually practised, I will give a description of what occurred.

A cow belonging to the head man of a neighbouring kraal died during the night. There was no doubt in my mind, on looking at the animal, that it had died from the bite of a snake, probably the *m'namba umculu*, or great puff-adder. Ebomvu, however, told the owner that the cow had been bewitched by some enemy who wanted to serve him an ill turn, and that this enemy he would smell out. In two days after the cow's death Ebomvu commenced his proceedings. He assembled all the principal men of the kraal, and also those of the kraals near; and then, entering the cattle enclosure, went to the spot where the cow had died, and told the men to dig. Several men set to work digging up the ground, and discovered the end of a cow's horn, on which was scratched a mark like a cow's head. Ebomvu seized this and smelt it, shouting, "*Nuka, Nuka*" ("It stinks.") He then moved slowly out of the kraal, holding the horn in front of him, and going first in one direction, then in another, until he reached the huts where the old man lived to whom he was an enemy. Here he went on the ground and crawled on like a dog, smelling the ground like a hound. He entered the hut of the old man, and pointing to a corner told the men to dig there. They turned up the ground, and found a horn just the same size and shape, as that which they had discovered in the cattle enclosure, and on this horn were the same marks as those on the horn first found. This was considered positive evidence that the cow had died from being bewitched. So a council of all the chiefs was called, and the case was tried. The evidence of the finding of the two pieces of horn was given, and on being examined the same marks were seen on each. So the old man was ordered to pay a fine of five cows to the man whose cow had died, and five cows to the chief himself. Had it been a man who had died instead of a cow, the old man himself would have been killed, and all his cattle taken by the chief.

I was much afraid lest the wizard should accuse me of "tagata," as they called witchcraft, so I always made friends with him, and gave him presents, and used to sit and talk with him whenever I could. I gave him several fine ostrich-feathers, with which he was much pleased, and he told me I should some day be the great chief of this district.

Chapter Nine.

Shortly after my trip in search of the ostrich-feathers, an event occurred which obliged our people to call a meeting of the whole tribe. There came to our country some Caffres belonging to the tribes which lived west of us, and on the banks of the Kei river. These tribes were the Amakosa, the Amaponda, and others. Beyond them were the white men, consisting of the English, called the Umlungos, and the Amabores, as the Dutch farmers were called by the Caffres.

Between these white people and the Amakosa, there had been a sort of war going on for some months. The Caffres had been unable to resist the temptation of seeing fine fat cattle grazing near them, and but carelessly watched. The young Caffres especially were excited by such sights, because many of these wished to purchase a wife, and as the price demanded for a wife was ten cows, they were unable to buy the girl they were fond of. If, however, they could manage to drive off ten cows from the white men they might purchase a wife at once. Now in India, I remembered, it was just the reverse: there a father had to give a large sum of money to get his daughter married, so that a man who had several daughters was simply ruined in consequence of the money he had to give for his daughters to get husbands. Consequently, in India it became a general practice to kill female children as soon as they were born, as a matter of economy; whereas here, in South Africa, female children were a source of wealth to their fathers.

When the white men found their cattle had been stolen, they formed a party and started on the spoor, and if they caught the Caffres who had stolen them they shot them as if they were hyaenas. Fights consequently took place between the Amakosa and the white men, and several had been killed on both sides. These events led to war being declared against the Amakosa by the English, and this war had just commenced when the visitors came to our country.

All the principal men of our tribe having been assembled, we formed a large circle about four deep on some open ground near my hut. We sat down close together and remained silent whilst the two Amakosa stood in the middle of the ring to address us, which they did in the following manner:—

"Chiefs of the Umzimvubu!—We come as speakers from the Amakosa, to ask you to help us against the white man. We have lived for many generations on the banks of the Kei and in the Amatola Mountains. We once owned the land down to the Great Fish River; the Fingoes were our slaves, the Hottentots were afraid of us. The white man has now come, and on small pretences has taken our land, and made us give them hundreds of cattle. Our young men have been shot down like dogs; but at last we have quivered the assy in our defence, and in our bush and in our mountains we are strong. We want your aid in two ways: first, to let your young men join us; and, secondly, that you will let us drive our cattle into your country, so that the white man cannot capture them. For this we will pay you cattle, giving you one in every ten. Your men are brave, and can fight as we heard they did against the Amazulu. If we are eaten up, the white man will soon come to your country; so we are a strong fence against them, and you should help to strengthen that fence. I have spoken as our chiefs have told me."

The two Amakosa then moved from the centre of the circle and sat down among our chiefs. There was a silence of several minutes, during which each of the intending speakers was reflecting on what had been said. That we should receive one in ten of the cattle that we took care of was a tempting offer to many, whilst several of the young men were pleased at the idea of encountering the white man, and showing their bravery. I crept round the circle to where Ebomvu the Rain-maker was sitting, and whispered to him, "What do you think of this?" He replied, "I have not yet obtained the right thought!" I said, "The white men have all guns; they are in thousands; and if we join the Amakosa, they may come and attack us, and then, would the Amakosa help us?" Ebomvu nodded, and took a large pinch of snuff; and then, seeing that no chief came forward, he walked into the centre of the ring, and stretching out his arm addressed the chiefs.

Since that time I have heard among civilised nations many so-called orators, but I can fairly state that I never heard greater eloquence than I did from Ebomvu.

He said: "Men of the Umzimvubu!—Our visitors from the Amakosa have asked us to help them against the white man, who is encroaching on them. They also ask us to take care of their cattle, so that the white man, if he enters the Kloofs of the Amatola, may not carry off their cattle. They tell us that it is to our advantage to join them against the white man; for otherwise the white man will soon push against us. And if we take care of their cattle they will give us one out of

ten. Now when anything is done between two tribes it is done because of friendship and brotherhood, or because of trading one with the other. Although we are friendly with the Amakosa, yet they have not treated us like brothers. They have been hard with us in trade: the knives, spearheads, and other things they obtained from the white man, they would not part with to us except for high prices. So we must look at this matter as trade, and I cannot see that we gain much advantage by sending our young men to be shot down by the whites. We should be fighting for the Amakosa; and we are asked to do this because, perhaps, by-and-by, the white man may want to fight with us. So we are asked to do now what would be very bad for us if we had to do it by-and-by. Then we are to protect the Amakosa cattle, and to receive as reward just one in ten. This is not enough: the Amakosa are hard at a bargain, and I think we are required to give much and receive but little."

Ebomvu then sat down again among the principal men, a murmur of "*Di'a vuma nawe*" ("I agree with you") being uttered by the older chiefs, whilst loud cries of "*Hi, Hi, musa*" were uttered by the younger men.

After a little delay a young chief, who had fought well against the Amazulu, stepped into the centre of the circle, and raising his shield and assagies, said, "Listen to me, men of the Umzimvubu. I am for war. I think we ought not to sit down like boys or women, and let our friends, the Amakosa, fight alone. We are strong and we know how to fight. If we join the Amakosa we shall share in the spoil; we must have our share of the cattle, of the guns captured, and we may also procure some of those animals on which men ride. Shall our tribe be termed a tribe of cowards? I say, let us join the Amakosa, and dip our assagies in the blood of the white man."

A tremendous shout was given at the termination of this address; and it was evident that, as far as numbers went, there were more in favour of war than there were against it. This was an example of what took place among civilised nations. If the majority of an assembly are emotional rather than intellectual, a man who appeals to the emotions gains more adherents than the speaker who talks sound sense. Consequently, when another young chief spoke in favour of war, it was decided that we should join the Amakosa and fight the white man.

What I was to do I did not know. I felt that, although I had become a regular Caffre in habits and thoughts, yet I was an Englishman; and if I fired and killed a white man, I should be guilty of murder. I thought a great deal about this matter; for though I had nothing to complain of in my present life, yet I longed to see my father again, and to let him know I was not dead. I knew that, lost as was the ship in which I had left Calcutta, there would be no records of her ever found. I alone could tell the tale, for the ladies who had been saved had become the wives of Caffres, and they told me that now they must live and die as they were, and could never again return to civilisation.

I had great doubts whether the life I now led was not *the* one which most men in cities toiled for all their lives. Boy as I was, yet I had rank, I was a chief; I had cattle, the great wealth in this land; I had a gun and ammunition; I had always plenty to eat; I wanted no clothes, I could wrap myself in an *ingubu* (blanket or kaross) made of jackals' skins, which kept me warm in the cold nights; I had no work to do that I didn't like. There was plenty of game to shoot or trap; and, except during a short rainy season, the climate was as fine as any in the world. What more pleasant life than this could I lead anywhere? In England I should be at a school, having to learn a lot of things in which I took no interest; perhaps, if I did not work properly, I might be caned, I, who was now a chief, and if any man struck me should probably use my assagy against him. There were two sides to the question of returning to civilisation. I had read also that my uncle passed seven or eight hours a day in a dark office in London, in a place crowded round by other houses, so that you could scarcely see the sun, and where there were so many men that you scarcely ever breathed anything but second-hand air. Still, there was the longing always coming over me to see my father, and to tell him that I was happy, and if he did not mind I should prefer remaining where I was. But the war-spirit had broken out, and every one, even to the smallest *intombi* (girl) was dancing about, singing war-songs. As was the custom with these tribes, a great war-dance was arranged; all the fighting men, in full war-dress, assembled from miles round. We mustered more than five thousand fighting men, besides about three thousand boys able to throw an assagy, and assist at critical moments, when the enemy were broken or too powerful at any particular point.

I shall always remember the war-dance which now took place; it was a sight only to be seen in the wilderness, and where civilisation has made no progress. The men assembled formed a ring three and four deep, and sat quietly on the ground for more than an hour, each with his shield in front of him. At a given signal we all started to our feet, with a shout; then, imitating the movements of an old chief who entered the centre of the ring, we beat the ground, first with one foot, then with the other; then, jumping in the air, came to the ground with both feet at once, making the earth shake as we did so. After we had continued these proceedings for some time, a young bull was brought into the ring and turned loose, three young chiefs entering at the same time. They shouted and beat their shields, so as to alarm the bull, and then closed on him, hurling their assagies at him. The animal soon became savage and charged at the young chiefs, and a regular bullfight occurred; but so active were the Caffres, and so well did they back one another up, that in a few minutes the bull was so terribly wounded by assagies that it sank to the ground and died.

Four bulls were killed in the same manner and by different sets of young chiefs, the circle of warriors all the time singing their war-songs and dancing and beating their shields. During two days these festivities were kept up, and then the leading chiefs met in council to decide upon the plan of operations. I soon began to observe that several of the chiefs regarded me in a manner different from that in which they had formerly done. They were not unfriendly, but they were silent; and I feared that some enemy had been at work who was jealous of my rise and progress. I was rich for so young a chief, as I now possessed fourteen cows and several calves; but I did not think I was rich enough to be accused of witchcraft, and my cows taken from me. I had but to wait a few days before I learned why this change in manners had taken place. One evening an old chief sent for me to his kraal for a *kaluma* (talk), and on my entering his hut I found two other chiefs there. They offered me snuff, and *Itchuala*, and then the old chief said:—

"Umkunkinglovu! we know you are brave and can fight well, and we should have liked you to lead a division of our men; but we have thought that, as you, although a Caffre at heart, are still white, you might not like to fight against white men. We don't know about white men; we don't know who are friends, and who enemies. We, the Umzimvubu, fight against the Amazulu, though we are both black. Do you white men ever fight one against the other?"

"Yes," I replied, "when nations like your great tribes disagree they fight."

"Then are the people at war with the Amakosa of your tribe?"

"Yes, they are."

"Then you would not like to fight against them?"

"No; I should be a rascal to do so."

"We thought it might be so," said the old chief, "so we are going to leave you in charge of the tribe, to take care of the cows and the young people, until we return."

"I should like to speak about this war," I said; "may I?"

A nod was the only answer.

"This war," I said, "will probably bring great trouble to the tribe. You have been misled by the Amakosa; for the white men against whom you are fighting are powerful, and if they require them can bring ten men to your one. You with assagies only cannot defeat them, for they are all armed with guns, and are good shots. They can wear you out; for they can destroy your crops of corn, and capture your cattle, or worry them so that they cannot feed. You have little to gain, and all to lose. Why do you go on this expedition?"

The three chiefs sat silent for a few minutes, and then the elder said, "We believe the Amakosa. Their chiefs say the white men are not numerous, and are very slow—that in spite of their guns, which are not much use in the bush, the assagy has gained the victory; unless we fight the white man, he will march on and will soon want our country, and we shall be wiped out. We are now bound by promise to fight, so it is no use now thinking any more about it. Besides, the Amakosa tell us that the white men employed to fight are not allowed to fight as they like or could, but are bound up with straps and tight clothes, and are made to wear red blankets round their bodies, so as to be easily seen and therefore easily shot. They have to carry a number of things also, which prevent them from running fast, and tires them when they walk. So an Amakosa warrior feels he is better able to fight than a white soldier, who cannot move through the bush, as the thorns hold him by his clothes; so that he cannot shoot, and is easily assagied."

I endeavoured to convince these chiefs that it was no use fighting against the English; but they listened patiently, and then said that, when I left my friends the whites, I was too young to be able to judge correctly of numbers and strength, and that I should see them return with many guns and plenty of cattle.

Chapter Ten.

Nearly all our fighting men had left our country, whilst I remained with the very old men, the young boys and the women. I did not like remaining inactive in this way, yet I could not have fought against my own people. I felt very dull and lonely; so took my gun and wandered in the bush, following the old elephant-paths, and looking out for a buck or a leopard. Left to myself, I was accustomed to sit in the bush for hours, meditating on my past life, and on my probable future. Lately, a strange longing had come over me to return to civilisation. The novelty of my wild life had worn off, and the Caffres were not the companions to me that they had been when I was younger. Their aims and ambitions were limited. To eat abundance of meat, to possess abundance of cattle, to have four or five wives, was the looked-for happiness of the men. Anything that required mental exertion they seemed incapable of. They could with difficulty count beyond ten; they knew nothing about other countries, or the habits of other nations. They believed the Zulus the most powerful nation in the whole world, whilst the whites they regarded as foolish people with wrong ideas.

Reflecting on my condition, I began to consider how I could make my escape from the Caffres, and rejoin my own people. I knew that if I could reach England I could make myself known to my relatives, could communicate with my father, and should have fair prospects even if I returned to India. This was quite a change in my ideas, from what I fancied some months previously; but solitude seemed to have given me a clearer view of things as they really were, and I now thought over every plan by which it might be possible to reach some English settlement, make myself known, and thus be enabled to rejoin my relatives.

Several days passed, during which I scarcely spoke to any of the Caffres. I felt depressed and out of spirits—perhaps a presentiment of what was coming. I had received no news of the army that had gone to join with the Amakosa against the British soldiers, and so could not learn whether or not they had been victorious. Half a moon had passed since the army left, and the old men began to be anxious for news; still none came.

It was early morning, the sun not having appeared, that, as I lay rolled in my jackal-skin kaross in my hut, I heard the voices of men in my kraal. These voices were low, and subdued. Thinking it was our warriors who had returned, I jumped up and crawled out of my hut. It was not yet light enough to see clearly any objects except they were very near; but before I could rise on my feet, I received a blow on my head, which stunned me, and knew no more till I came to my senses, when the sun was nearly overhead. I then saw a sight which astonished me. Seated in our kraal were more than a hundred Zulu warriors, watching a fire at which one of our young bulls was being roasted. They were all in full war-costume, and I saw that many of their assagies were stained with blood. I tried to rise, but found that my hands and legs were tied, and that I could not move. The Zulus, seeing I was sensible again, called to a chief who was sitting at a distance, and pointed to me attentively, and then said—

"Who are you?"

"I am an Umlungo who has been kept among these people," I replied, "and they have made me a chief."

"Where do you come from?"

"I came in a ship which was wrecked on the coast; all the men were killed except me."

"When do you expect your men to return?"

"I don't know; they have gone to fight with the Amakosa against my people."

"Why did they not take you?"

"I could not fight against my own tribe." The chief waited for a short time, looking at me attentively, and then said, "You will return with us; attempt to escape, and twenty assagies will be in your body." He then turned away, and walked to his seat outside the circle.

I was struck with the dignity and manner of this chief. He seemed one born to command, to be self-possessed, calm, and decided. He walked like a chief, and I could easily understand how it was that the Zulus were so powerful if they possessed many men like this one. I felt being tied, as it was very painful. So I spoke to one of the men near me, and said

that, if the chief would unfasten my arms and legs, I would promise not to attempt to escape; but if I remained tied, I should not be able to move when they did unbind me. The Zulu carried my message to the chief, who nodded, and the young Zulu came and unbound me. I rose to my feet, but felt very sick and giddy from the blow I had received from the knob-kerrie on my head, and was obliged to sit down again. The chief then called me, and I went over to where he sat, and he asked me if I was hurt. I pointed to a lump on my head where I had been hit. He felt my head, and said, "That is nothing." He then inquired how many guns had been taken by the warriors who had gone with the Amakosa.

I told him eight; and, thinking it better to deal fairly with him, I told him that in the thatch of my hut there was my gun.

He immediately sent a man into my hut to search, and shortly my gun was brought out. The chief examined this carefully—a gun was evidently new to him—and I explained how it was loaded and fired. He was much interested in all I said. So, being anxious to gain his favour, I told him there was something else more wonderful still that I could show him. He told me to bring whatever it was. So I brought him my field-glasses, and, adjusting them for a long sight, I placed them in his hands, and told him to look at some cows about half a mile off. He raised them to his eyes, and instantly started back with astonishment. He examined them carefully, and seemed more surprised as he looked again through them. I then made him look through the glasses the opposite way, viz., through the large glasses, and to look down at his feet. His legs then appeared about twenty feet long, and he was more astonished with this than even with the fact that distant objects were brought nearer by the aid of the glass. He called several of his men to look through the glass, and laughed at their surprise.

The chief now told me that I was to return with them to the Zulu country, when they drove off our cattle. He made no secret of how he came here. He said that an *impi*, or army, had been sent against some of the Basutos; that when they were returning they heard that all our men had gone with the Amakosa to the westward. So they came down to our country to take some cattle and carry off some of the young girls, and that on the morrow they intended to start on their return journey. I found they had killed several of our old men, but as there was no one to resist them, they had easily gathered together the cattle they required.

On the following morning we started on our journey, and I found that over a thousand men had come down to our country, whilst the main body of the army were up to the north-east and numbered several thousand. With the exception of the women, I was the only prisoner they had taken. The Zulus rarely take prisoners, they kill their enemy; but, seeing that I was white, and therefore not a Caffre, they had spared me.

Our march was carefully made. About half a mile in front some dozen men, who were good runners, kept a look-out, and signalled to us every now and then to let us know that all was right and no enemy near. We had about a hundred cows and young bulls with us, which were driven along in our midst. Not a boy or female of our tribe was visible: they had all retreated to the bush and concealed themselves. The kraals were empty and most of them burnt. I felt very sorry for my old companions, though they had gone to fight against the English. It seemed, however, like a punishment to them, to be thus attacked at home when there was no reason why they should go out and fight against those who had never done them any harm.

Our march was first nearly northwards, till we came near the Quathlamba Mountains. We then went east, crossed the Umzinyati river and the Tugela, and entered the Zulu country.

I was surprised at the number of cattle I saw in the Zulu country. Thousands of beautiful cows were everywhere to be seen; and the grass was finer and better suited for grazing than down near the Umzimvubu. Our small army was welcomed with shouts by crowds of Zulus who turned out to meet us, and who looked on me with great surprise. When they found I could speak their language as well as they could, their surprise was greater; and they at first would not believe that I was not an Albino, or white Caffre, such phenomena being sometimes seen among them.

I was taken to the kraal of the chief who had captured me, and who was called Inklanzi, the meaning of which is a fish. This name was given him because he was a very good swimmer, and could stop for a long time in the water. Inklanzi told me that on the following morning I was to be taken to the Great Chief, who perhaps might order me to be assagied; so I must be careful how I behaved.

I slept but little that night, for I feared, from what I had heard, that the Great Chief of the Zulus, merely for his amusement, might like to see how I died.

On the following morning I was called by Inklanzi to go with him to the chief's kraal. It was the largest I had yet seen. There were at least five hundred huts, the Great Chief's hut being much larger than were the others.

Round the chief's hut there were always about thirty men on guard, for every great chief feared being assassinated. It was also the law that, whenever any chief came to talk to the Great Chief, he was, on approaching to within an assagy-throw of the Great Kraal, to stop and shout "Inkosi" three times. If he heard no reply, he was not allowed, under pain of death, to advance. If he was told to "come," he must still shout "Inkosi," until he reached the hut. This plan prevented surprise; for no stranger could even approach the hut without incurring the penalty of death, unless he shouted to announce his arrival.

Inkklanzi, after shouting "Inkosi," was told to come; so he and I went to the hut of the Great Chief. We waited outside for some time, silently listening for orders to enter. At length a loud voice from inside said, "Is the white boy there?"

"Yes," replied Inkklanzi. "Bring him in," said the same voice. We entered the hut, and on seeing the chief I made him a low salaam, the same as do the Hindoos, and said "Inkosi." The chief looked at me for some time, and then asked Inkklanzi if I spoke Zulu. On Inkklanzi replying "Yes," the chief said, "Where do you come from? Tell me your history."

I commenced by telling the chief that I came from far away in the direction that the sun rose, and where men rode upon elephants, and where houses were so high that, if your brother were on the top of the house and you were at the bottom, you could not recognise him. I gave other descriptions of India, to which the chief listened for some time, and then exclaimed, "Amanga" ("You are lying.")

"It is true, chief," I said.

"Go on," exclaimed the chief.

I then told him of our voyage, of the ship being wrecked, and of the men being assagied, whilst I and some women

were spared.

"Where are the women now?" inquired the chief.

A glance at Inklanzi showed he was in terror, and I guessed the cause. So I said, "I don't know; I think they are all dead."

Turning to Inklanzi the chief said, "Why did you not bring those women?"

Inkklanzi replied, "We searched everywhere, chief, and we only heard they had all died."

"If those women are alive, you shall be knob-kerried for not bringing them."

"Did you fight against my men near the Umlass?" inquired the chief.

"Yes," I replied.

"Can you throw an assagy?"

"Yes, and I can run."

I was proud of my running, for among the Umzimvubu there was no man could beat me for a short distance.

The chief shouted for one of his guard, who approached crawling on his hands and knees.

"Bring Cachema," said the chief.

The man jumped up, and rushed off to obey his orders. In a few minutes, the Zulu called Cachema rushed up within an assagy's-throw of the chief. He then stopped and shouted "Inkosi" three times.

"Come here," said the chief to Cachema. "You must run with this white boy and show him how to run."

I looked well at Cachema, and had never seen a finer specimen of a young man. He was tall—six feet at least; his legs were large compared to his body, but muscular and well-shaped; his skin shone like satin; and, as he moved, there was an ease and grace just as we see in a leopard. I feared I should stand no chance with this man; but I was in excellent condition, and I saw that he failed in one respect, viz., that he was flat-footed, whilst I was very high in the instep, and had therefore more spring than he had.

The chief said, "You two run to that tree, touch it, and run back here again. I will give a cow to whoever wins." Cachema looked at me with surprise. He seemed to consider it absurd for me to attempt running with him, as I was smaller and younger. We took each other's hands, and when the chief said "Hamba" ("Go") we started.

The tree was about two hundred yards away, and the ground over which we ran was hard and firm. I got the best of the start, and managed to keep just ahead of Cachema till we reached the tree. I knew from experience that most Caffres could run a mile at the same pace as they could run a few hundred yards, their wind was so good, and they never tired. So I did not run at full speed to the tree; but, after touching it, I came back as fast as I could run. I expected every instant to find Cachema rush past me. I dared not look round to see where he was, but continued at my best pace, and rushed past the chief several yards ahead of my opponent.

I then returned; and, making a salaam in Indian fashion, said "Inkosi."

"Come here," said the chief. I approached him, when he felt my legs, looked at my feet, and took a general survey of me. He then said, "You have spoken the truth: you can run." Calling Cachema he said, "Why did you let this white boy beat you?"

Cachema replied, "He is a springbok, and runs like one."

The chief laughed, and said, "The white boy will now be my head-runner. You, Cachema, must be called 'gathly,'" which meant something like "slowly."

I was at once provided with some crane's feathers, a large black-and-white shield, six assagies, and made one of the body-guard of the Great Chief of the Zulus.

My life was now not as free or as pleasant as it had been among the Umzimvubu Caffres. Here I was a sort of servant of the chief: before this I was a chief myself. Sometimes I was days together with nothing to do: at others I was sent long journeys to take messages from the Great Chief to some of his principal men. I soon saw that these journeys would give me an opportunity of escaping when I wished. But the Zulu chief never seemed to think I should care to get away from him; for his special body-guard were envied by all the young Zulus, because they had plenty to eat, plenty to drink, and were able to order nearly every other Zulu to do things.

A few days after I had been installed as runner, a great review was held of the army that had gone against the Basutos. This army consisted of about 5,000 men. They were armed with assagies and knob-kerries: there was not a gun among them, and as yet they had not learnt the power of guns; although, when they attacked us near the Umlass, they had been defeated because we possessed some guns. Their assagies and their numbers caused the Zulus to be usually successful in all their wars. The review was held on some hills about a mile from the chiefs kraal. He rode a trained ox to the scene; and I, with about thirty other men, attended as his guard.

There were five regiments to be reviewed. Each regiment had shields differently marked, and each of the assagies belonging to the regiment had also a mark on it, so that, if lost, it would be known to whom it belonged.

These Zulus were well-trained. They advanced at a run, wheeled, reversed, dashed forward, all fell to the ground as a shower of assagies was supposed to be hurled at them, sprang again to their feet and charged. It was a lively scene, and one that brought out the quickness of the Zulus to perfection. The men were then all formed in a large circle, and two

young Zulus entered this circle from opposite sides. Each had his shield and assagies. They approached each other cautiously and slowly, watching every movement of the other. When within about forty yards, one man sent an assagy at his opponent. The spear flew true to its mark; but the Zulu aimed at jumped on one side, avoiding the sharp blade of the spear, and, running forward, cast an assagy at his opponent. This was avoided with equal skill, whilst the lookers-on shouted with excitement. The two men drew closer and closer to each other; and, as they did so, they found it more difficult to avoid each other's assagies. Both became more and more excited, and at last they closed and grappled with one another, when the chief called to them to stop. They were then brought to him and given a large calabash of Itchuala (beer) to drink, and were told they had done well. Several of these encounters took place, only one man being struck in the leg by an assagy. A great dance completed the review, and we returned to the kraal of the chief.

The only furniture in the huts of the Zulus was a wooden pillow or seat. All the men preferred sitting or lounging on the ground, and I afterwards found that sitting in a chair was really tiring till you were accustomed to it. In the East men always lounged on cushions or low seats, instead of sitting upright on chairs. Finding, however, some strong canes growing near the rivers, I gathered a number of these and made a chair for the chief, with which he was much pleased, although he would sit on it only on rare occasions.

Chapter Eleven.

Several moons had passed since I was brought to the Zulu country, and my life had been monotonous. I had been sent with messages twice to the Tugela river to a chief there, who was suspected of not being too obedient to the Great Chief. He was a fine young chief called Cloko, and was a great sportsman. On the last occasion that I visited him he was preparing for a hunt against the hippopotami, which were in a lake near his kraal. The water in this lake could be let out by digging away a sand bank, which had been accomplished when I reached the kraal. The Zulus had provided themselves with heavy, barbed spears, to which some thick wood was attached. A rope made of grass was fastened to the iron, so that if two spears stuck in the hippopotamus he could be held by several men pulling in opposite directions.

The Zulus call this animal *imvubu*, and several were known to be in the lake. Some logs were fastened together to make a raft, and two Zulus took their stand on this with their spears ready for use. As the water in the lake drained away the *imvubu* were seen among some reeds near the shore. They were carefully approached by the men with the spears, and when quite close the spears were hurled at the largest animal visible. The hippopotamus rushed at the raft open-mouthed, but another spear was hurled at him which made him turn and try to escape; but fifty Zulus now held on to the rope, and his progress was stopped. The struggle was now very exciting. Several Zulus closed with the animal and drove their assagies into him, even through his thick hide, which in many places was nearly two inches thick. The fight was sometimes on the shore, sometimes in the water; for the animal was so powerful that even fifty men could scarcely stop him when he rushed away. At last, bleeding from a hundred wounds, the monster was dragged on shore, and was soon skinned and cut up. The hippopotamus is the fattest animal in Africa, three fingers thick of fat covering his flesh. He is very good eating, tasting something between pork and beef. I carried away a large piece with me as a present to the Great Chief, who was fond of this food.



"THE HIPPOPOTAMUS RUSHED AT THE RAFT OPEN-MOUTHED."

[p. 150.]

I saw several hunting scenes whilst I stopped at this kraal, which I will relate now, though they occurred at intervals. One was the destruction of two bull-buffaloes which had taken up their residence in a ravine near some corn-gardens, where they did considerable damage. This coming to the ears of the Great Chief, he ordered one of his regiments to go out and kill them. I obtained leave to see the *inyati*, as they call the buffalo, killed, and a grand sight it was.

In a dense ravine, where the trees and bushes grew very thick, the buffalo lay concealed. The first work, therefore, was to drive them out of this stronghold. It was dangerous work, because in this thick bush the Zulus could not spring away from the charge of a buffalo as they could in the open country; and the animals, knowing their strength in such

cover, would not readily be driven out of it.

A hundred Zulus were sent into the bush to drive the buffaloes to the far end, where, it was thought, they would leave the cover in order to gallop across a small open piece of ground towards a forest beyond. On this open ground the attack was to be made, and in the following manner. The main body of the Zulus were lying down three deep, and in two lines, in the direction of the sides of the ravine. They were partially concealed by the long grass which covered this ground. As soon as the buffaloes left the ravine, it was expected they would gallop between these two lines. Then the Zulus at each end of the line wheeled inwards, and the buffaloes were inclosed in a circle of warriors. About one hundred men were scattered beyond these two lines, in order to stop the buffaloes if they broke through the circle.

It was with great difficulty that the animals were driven through the ravine. They clung to the cover very tenaciously, and several times charged at the men who were driving them; but these men, beating their shields, and getting behind trees, escaped from any damage. At last the buffaloes came to the edge of the bush, sniffed the air suspiciously, and then dashed forward across the open.

The crouching Zulus rose to their feet, wheeled round in front and rear of the animals, and hurled their assegais at them. In an instant the buffaloes looked like porcupines, each quill being represented by an assegai. Lowering their heads, they charged the body of men, one animal going forward, the other attempting to regain the ravine. The courage of the Zulus was now shown. The men in rear of the buffaloes rushed forward; two or three held the tail, others clung to the hind legs, and in an instant with their sharp assegais hamstringed the animals, when they were soon despatched with assegais. This was not accomplished without damage. Two Zulus were killed, and several were so knocked about that they could not stand.—Stout poles were cut, and the carcasses of the buffaloes were carried in triumph to the chiefs kraal.

In order to keep his warriors fit for warlike expeditions, the Great Chief sought every occasion of sending parties into various districts, when he heard there was anything to be done, especially connected with danger.

Soon after the buffaloes had been killed, news was brought to the chief to the effect that near the Pongola river there was a very large lion, which was very fierce. When the Great Chief heard this he smiled and ordered Inyovu, one of his chiefs, to come to his kraal. On Inyovu coming the Great Chief said:

“Inyovu, near the Pongola there is a very large lion. I want the mane of that lion to wear over my shoulders, and his teeth I require for a necklace. Take your regiment and bring me the lion’s skin and teeth. *Hamba.*” (“Go.”)

I asked the Great Chief if I might go with Inyovu and see the lion killed. He consented, on condition that I did not go into too much danger. He said several men were sure to be killed, but I must not be one of them.

It was a ten days’ march from the chiefs kraal to the Pongola river, near which the lion was said to live. We carried with us bags of mealies, but there were several buck on the way which we managed to kill with our assegais and knob-keries. The plan we adopted was, to send look-out men in front, and when they saw any antelope these were watched until they lay down in the long grass or among the bushes. The Zulus then surrounded the buck, and gradually closed in on it, forming at last a close mass of men; knob-keries and spears then settled the question, and a feast was the immediate result. There were very few Caffres in this country, and only a few wandering Bushmen, who fled at our appearance; but there were elands, koodoo, buffalo, rhinoceros, zebras, hartebeest, and several other animals. Elephants also were plentiful. We heard from the few Caffres who lived here that the lion could be heard to roar nearly every night, and that he lived in a rocky ravine near a small stream that ran into the Pongola. He was said to be very fond of zebras, and to live almost entirely on them; so that where the zebras lived, there the lion was sure to be.

I asked Inyovu how he intended to kill the lion. He replied, “First find out where he lies down by day, then surround him and assegai him. It will cost perhaps forty men,” said the chief; “but we must obey the chief, and take the skin and teeth to him.”

“Suppose you fail?” I inquired.

“We must not return without the lion,” said the chief. “If we did, the Great Chief would order fifty men to be assegaied, and send another regiment to do the work; so we must kill this lion.”

Inyovu never seemed to have the slightest doubt or hesitation about carrying out the orders of his chief. He was told what to do, and he must do it. He had above 1,000 men with him—too many, he thought; but the Great Chief liked the regiment to work together, and always to be in sufficient numbers to ensure success.

Inyovu now sent out several parties of ten men, in order to look out for the spoor of the lion and to listen for his roars at night. What he hoped to do was to come upon the lion after he had made a grand supper, and when he would be asleep; for then he might be mortally wounded or disabled before he could damage any of the Zulus. Instead of having a great dance, as was usual before an encounter with dangerous animals, we all remained quiet, scarcely speaking even above a whisper, as we listened for the lion’s roar.

It was some time before daybreak that a runner from one of the look-out parties came to the chief and informed him that the lion had killed an eland just about sundown, and had dragged the land into some long grass near a small pool of water, and had been feeding on it during the night. The place was watched by several men, so that the lion could not escape without being seen.

A few low whistles were given by Inyovu to bring his men together; and, guided by the runner, we quietly wended our way to where the lion was resting. We were met by some of the men just as it was getting light, and from a hill near we were shown where the lion was concealed. Our party was then divided into four, and each of these worked their way out on the plain, so as to surround the lion.

Great care, however, was taken that no men went to windward of the lion; for, so sensitive is the smell of these animals, that if fast asleep they would at once awake if a man passed several assegai-throws’ distance to windward of them. I was much struck with the silence maintained by the large party of Zulus: not a sound was audible, not a foot fall heard as the men closed in on the den. A wave of the arm by the chief was sufficient to direct his followers where and how to move. Since those days I have seen the soldiers of most nations when being reviewed, and I have been struck with the noise which seemed necessary both in shouting words of command and in the rattle of accoutrements, all of which appeared to tend to confusion, and to interfere with watchfulness; making a surprise by such troops appear impossible; so that I compare favourably the Zulus, for some purposes, with the best European soldiers.

To be able to advance to within a few yards of a lion without waking him, is a performance which requires the greatest skill; but it was accomplished, and before the lion could spring to its feet, twenty assagies were buried in its body. The powerful brute, however, although bleeding from its many wounds, sprang forward and struck down one of the Zulus. But, quickly as the lion moved, the Zulus behind him followed with equal rapidity, and assagy after assagy was buried deep in the lion's body. After vainly tearing at the spears that were sticking in him, the lion sank to the ground and was instantly despatched.

Only two men were wounded—neither very badly; a result due entirely to the careful manner in which the lion had been crept on. Inyovu told me that if the lion had been aware of our approach, he would have charged before he could have been speared; and that thirty or forty men would have been killed to a certainty before the lion was rendered harmless.

The lion was soon skinned, his teeth and claws extracted and taken charge of by Inyovu. The flesh of the lion was eaten after a very little cooking, and was much appreciated by the Zulus, especially the heart, the eating of which is supposed to give great courage and strength.

Our return journey was quickly accomplished, and we were received by the Great Chief at his kraal. Inyovu gave a description of what he had done, both in getting the news and stalking the lion. He went through all the movements most graphically, creeping along very slowly, and then showing how he hurled his assagy at the lion, and how the lion charged and struck down one man. It was a very good description, and any listener must have had as good an idea of the scene as though he had himself been present. The Great Chief received the lion's claws and teeth, and gave them to his wives to make into necklaces and armlets for him.

The Great Chief possessed twenty wives, and none of these was allowed to do any work in the fields like the wives of the common men. They passed their time in making bead-ornaments, forming and ornamenting snuff-boxes for the chief, grinding up tobacco (which grew here) into snuff, and in collecting news with which to amuse the Great Chief when he was at leisure.

I was surprised at the amount of news which was brought to the chiefs kraal. Some of this was confidential, and was not told to any one except to the chief himself; but plenty of news came which we about the chiefs kraal heard of.

I heard that the Umzimvubu Caffres, among whom my lot had been first cast, had lost many men in their fight with the white men, and had brought back very few cattle; and that it was probable that a fight might occur between the Amakosa and my old tribe. I also heard that a few white men had built huts near Natal Bay, and were living there, trading with the Caffres in those parts. This last news caused me to think once more about trying to escape and rejoin my own people. The Great Chief was very angry when he heard that white men had come to Natal. He said they would supply the Caffres there with guns, and that, by-and-by, they might become strong enough to resist him. He called several of his counsellors, and inquired whether they did not think he had better "wipe them out" at once. The men the chief consulted were divided in opinion; the older men were in favour of prudence, and letting the white men rest; but the younger were for attacking the men at the Bay of Natal at once, and so getting rid of them. I listened to every word I could hear at this meeting, because it seemed like hearing the decision of a jury, whether my people were or were not to be destroyed. I had several ideas about what I should do in case it was decided to attack the white people; for it seemed unjust that they should be attacked and killed without any warning, and I could not reconcile myself to the thought of remaining quiet and not giving some warning to the white men who were living at the Bay.

For several days the chiefs were talking about the affair; and I noticed that, whenever they did so, I was sent on a message to a distance, so that I could not hear what was talked about. I also found that none of my companions ever said a word to me about the men at the Bay; so I guessed that this was the order of the chief, and that I was not to know what was being done about the white men. I watched carefully every proceeding, however, of the chiefs of the different regiments; and I soon found that preparations were being made for a great expedition somewhere; and as there was no tribe with which we were at war, I felt convinced that it must be the white men against whom this army was to be sent.

From a few remarks I heard, I became certain that the white men at the Bay were to be surprised and killed; and consequently determined to try and warn them, and if possible make my escape at the same time. It would be a great risk, and if discovered I should be assagied at once. It was evident that there was a suspicion that I could not be trusted when an attack on white men was intended; otherwise the subject would be spoken of to me by some of the young chiefs. So I pretended to know nothing about the proposed expedition, and went my journeys the same as usual, and when asked for the news I usually said there was none. It was always the habit of the Zulus, when I visited any place, to at once say, "*Chela pela s'indaba*" ("Tell us the news"), and the news they liked best was about proposed expeditions of the army against other tribes. So, when I told them there was no news, they looked surprised; for rumours had reached them that some expedition was preparing.

I discovered after a time that at the next full moon the expedition would start. The army was to assemble near the Tugela river, and make a rush on to Natal, slaughter the white men, and return as quickly as possible to the Muse Umkulu or Great Kraal. Having gained this information, I decided on my own plans. Whenever I was sent on a message by the chief, I carried with me an assagy of a peculiar shape to show that I was journeying on the business of the chief. Those who saw this assagy were bound to give me every assistance, to supply me with food, and obey my orders. So I was a great man when I carried the assagy, and was never stopped or even delayed.

One evening, just before the full moon, I received the chiefs orders to travel to the kraal of a chief named Inyoko Umkulu, who lived near the Pongola river, and tell him to send some leopard-skins to the Great Chief. Now the Pongola river was in the opposite direction to that in which the army would travel to Natal; so I at once suspected I was sent away to prevent my seeing the army leave. I made my plans at once.

At daybreak I started, and travelled till the sun had risen three hand-breadths above the hills, going towards the Pongola, then I turned and travelled towards the Tugela river. I saw but few Zulus as I went, and those I did see dared not stop me when I showed them the assagy of the chief. From what I have since learned of the distances, I find I must have travelled at least fifty miles a day. So on the third day I reached the Umganie river near Natal, and saw the houses of the white men.

On entering the first house I came to, I saw a man with his wife and two children, all of whom looked at me with surprise; for they recognised me as a white boy, though I wore the tails and carried the shield of a Zulu. When I spoke to them in English they were still more surprised, and soon became alarmed when I told them a Zulu army might be upon them at any moment, and unless they could escape they would all be assagied, as I knew the orders that were given to the chiefs, who led this army. These people inquired who I was, and how I happened to be with the Zulus. I gave them a brief account of my shipwreck, and the life I led afterwards, but urged them to lose no time in doing something for their

safety. The man at once went to the other huts, and all the white people were soon assembled to hear my tale. Some disbelieved me, but the majority were at once for making things safe—a proceeding which was far easier than I had imagined. Collecting plenty of food, and taking everything of value from their huts, they placed these on board a small schooner that by good luck was in the bay at anchor. Several boats were there also, and by aid of these the people could be conveyed to the vessel. Notice was sent to all the Caffres, of the expected arrival of the Zulu army; and they assembled on a range of hills west of the bay, where there was a very thick wood, and where they could oppose best the trained warriors of the Zulu army.

Chapter Twelve.

A day passed without any signs of the Zulus, but at daybreak on the second day a Caffre runner came shouting that the Zulus were crossing the Umganie river. We made a rush for the boats, and were soon all on board the schooner, where we waited, each with a gun, to see what the Zulus would do. The army moved rapidly and swept down on the settlement, and burnt the huts, but they did not find a living human being. Seeing the ship, they came down to the beach, and shouted to us to come on shore. I knew they had no guns; so, ascending the rigging, I called to the leading chief, and said: "Tell the Zulu dog that he is not cunning enough. He sent me to the Pongola, so that he might murder the white men without my knowing what he was going to do; but I came before you to tell them. You may now go back again."

A yell arose from the Zulus when they heard this and recognised me, and a hundred men dashed in the water and swam towards the ship. We allowed these to come close and then fired at them, killing or wounding several; the remainder then swam back to the shore and concealed themselves in the wood. I knew the Zulus too well to believe they would give up at once trying to kill the white men, and so I told my companions. We therefore kept watch all day and all night, and it was lucky we did so; for, just before daybreak on the following day, the Zulus again entered the water and swam silently to the ship. The sailors, however, had now made a very useful weapon: they had procured some large, heavy stones, which they had sown up in canvas and fastened to long ropes. These they threw on the Zulus, and stunned or sunk them. They could haul the stones up again and throw them again. Except by the cable there was no means by which the Zulus could climb into the ship, so we could kill them just as we liked.

Finding they could do nothing against people in a ship, the Zulus withdrew; and we thought that, as we did not see anything of them for three days, they must have left Natal.

I felt quite certain that the chiefs would not give up trying to kill the white men, for if they returned to the Great Zulu Chief without being successful, some of them would be assuaged to a certainty. At the end of the three days the white men were desirous of going on shore, to see what remained of their goods. I tried to persuade them not to venture, but they replied that three days had now passed and not a Zulu had been seen; so it was not likely that any were near Natal. But this was the very reason why I thought it likely that they were waiting for a chance. I told the white men so; but they only laughed at me and said, "These niggers are off home now." Thinking that I might be of use in keeping a better look-out than the white men, I went on shore with those who landed. Six of them got in a boat, and pulled up the bay, and landed near where their huts had stood. The remaining men stayed on board the schooner. There was not a Zulu to be seen anywhere, and we walked to the remains of the huts, which we found entirely destroyed.

At a short distance from these huts was some thick bush through which was a narrow path. This path led to some open ground where the cattle belonging to the settlers used to graze. The white men were anxious to see whether the Zulus had destroyed or carried off their cattle, and so entered this path through the wood. Knowing the usual practises of the Zulus, I thought this a very dangerous proceeding; but my caution only made the white men say, "Don't be afraid, we ain't."

Just before we entered the bush, I saw on the sand several footprints of men, quite fresh. These footprints had been made after the last dew had fallen, so I knew it was not very long since the men who had made them must have passed over the ground. I called to the white men in front of me to stop, as I had seen fresh footprints of Zulus; but they replied that I couldn't tell when these had been made, and as I was afraid I fancied these dangers.

Scarcely had they spoken when there was a rustling noise in the bushes, and in an instant about fifty Zulus sprang on to the path, surrounded the white men, and assuaged them instantly. Seeing this, I dived into the bush, and during the noise crept through the bush and made my escape towards the shore. I hoped to reach the boat that had brought us from the ship; but, on coming within sight of it, I saw it was in possession of the Zulus. So my retreat by that means was cut off. The distance from where I was to the nearest part of the shore to the ship was nearly two miles, and there was dense bush nearly the whole way. To attempt to work my way through this bush would have been a most dangerous proceeding, for it is impossible to move in the bush without making a noise; and the Zulus were certain to have placed men on watch in this bush, so that an assuagy stab would be the first thing that would acquaint me of the presence of a Zulu. Soon after I had joined the white men, they had given me clothes to wear, so the Zulus would distinguish me now at a great distance. To lie concealed in the bush was, I knew, of but little use; for they would follow my trail and surround me just as they were accustomed to surround a lion. As soon as I had seen that the boat was in possession of the Zulus, I had concealed myself in the bush to consider what to do; and I decided to work my way up the coast about a mile, and then take to the beach and try to reach the ship that way. Just as I had made up my mind to do this, I saw a large party of Zulus marching from where they had killed the white men towards the boat; and I noticed that they had put on the clothes of the men they had killed, and at a distance might have been mistaken for white men.

I lay still till all these men had passed, and watched their proceedings. They sat down near the boat, and seemed to be having a talk about something of importance. I tried to think what I should propose had I been at the meeting, and the Zulus my friends; and, knowing the Zulu tactics, I believed I could tell what they said almost as well as if I heard them. My idea was that they would wait till it was dark, and then get into the boat and pull to the ship; and, by the aid of the clothes they wore, pretend to be white men, and get on board the ship. If the men on board were not on their guard, this plan would very likely succeed; and, knowing how careless and unsuspecting the white men were, I believed the chances were in favour of the Zulus succeeding in their attempt.

From none of the Zulus having followed me, I believed it possible that they had not seen me before I rushed into the bush, when my companions were attacked; but I knew the habits of the Zulus too well to be certain about this. They had often told me that the best means to come within assuagy-range of a buck was to walk slowly round him, gradually narrowing the circle, but never looking at him, and pretending that something in the distance attracted your attention; then, when near enough, rush forward towards the buck and throw the assuagy.

If the Zulus had seen me, they must know I was concealed somewhere; and the best method of capturing or

assaging me was to set several men to watch the country, and to remain perfectly concealed and quiet. This plan they had already adopted for three days, and had succeeded in trapping half of the white men. My best chance, therefore, was to remain quiet until it was dark and then to attempt to reach the ship before the Zulus could do so.

It required great patience to lie for several hours in the bush, not daring to move; for, if I even frightened away a bird that had settled near me, the suspicions of the Zulus would be raised, and the bush in which I was concealed probably surrounded. The day passed very slowly; and, after a short time, not a Zulu was to be seen. I knew that this meant that they were all on watch in the bush; and I thought how easily ignorant white men, who knew nothing about spooring, or who never watched other indications, would be surprised and killed by these so-called savages. I knew that a large body of Zulus were in the bush near where the boat lay, because two or three vultures kept circling over the place. I also saw other vultures circling over the bush where the white men had been killed, and I was very much afraid that they might circle over me. If they did, I was lost. The sun seemed to move very slowly this day, but at last it touched the hills near the Umlass river, and soon after it became dark. I at once left the bush, and moved cautiously towards a marsh near the coast. It was by my ears I must now save myself, and perhaps by my legs. I moved through the long reeds of the marsh, and entered the bush beyond. In the darkness it was impossible to move silently in the bush; but I stopped occasionally to listen; and, hearing nothing, again advanced. I passed through the bush and came on the open beach, about a mile to the east of the entrance to the bay. I stopped again to listen, but could not hear any noise which indicated the presence of the Zulus; and, it was so dark, that I could see but a short way ahead or round me. Still advancing slowly and silently, I moved along the beach towards the point where the schooner was at anchor, when I saw before me a group of Zulus standing together talking in a very low tone. They saw me as soon as I saw them; and, calling to me, asked who I was. I replied in Zulu, "Don't make a noise; I have news for you presently." I then turned to the right, where there were several sand-hills between the beach and the bush—amidst which I should be lost to sight. The dense bush beyond also prevented the outline of my figure being seen against the sky; and I thus hoped to pass the Zulus and get a start of them. They, however, suspected something, and turned after me. Seeing that the only chance of escape was a run, I moved quickly among the sand-hills; and then jumping on to the hard beach, which was better suited for running, I dashed off at speed. I had no fear of any single Zulu catching me in a straight race, for I had beaten their best runner. What I dreaded was that another party might be on the beach in front of me, when I should be stopped by them. The noise I made in running would be sure to put a party on the alert; besides which the Zulus in rear who were chasing me now began shouting; a proceeding I knew they would not adopt unless they hoped to make known to some other parties that they were in pursuit of an enemy. The distance from where I began running to where the ship was, about three-quarters of a mile, I could run at speed, and now that I was running for my life there was no lack of energy. I found I was leaving the Zulus behind, and was now well beyond the reach of an assagy. I still kept on, however, and reached the beach some two hundred yards before the leading Zulu. I jumped into the water, and swam rapidly towards the schooner; but a new danger here threatened me. The night was very dark, and no one on shore could have seen me had it not been for the phosphorescence of the water. As I swam I left a trail of light behind me—like a rocket—and the Zulus, seeing this, threw their assagies at me; but, luckily, none struck me, or I probably should never have been able to relate my early history. I was soon beyond range of the spears, and then called to the men in the ship to lower a rope for me to climb on board. I was heard, and a rope with a bowling-knot at the end was lowered. In this knot I placed my feet, and was soon on board, when I told the white settlers and sailors what had taken place on shore. I also told them that I suspected the Zulus would try to get on board in the disguise of the men they had assagied, and that we must be prepared for them. Having given this information, I obtained some dry clothes and some food; and being now listened to with more attention, I made all arrangements for receiving the Zulus when they made their attempt to come on board as I felt sure they would. A careful watch was kept by two men, whilst the others were ready to jump up at the slightest noise. We had five double-barrelled guns on board, and several boat-hooks, which would serve as excellent weapons to keep off boarders. I believed the Zulus would try to surprise us, and to get on board under pretence of being white men, for they could not come in great numbers in the boat, so I had no fear of being overpowered.

The sailors proposed that, as soon as the wind was suitable, we should hoist sail and escape from the bay—certainly the most prudent thing to do; but there was a surf on the bar at present, due to the south-east wind that had been blowing for some days. And this surf rendered it dangerous to attempt to get out of the bay.

The greater part of the night passed, and not a sign of the Zulus was visible; but a short time before day break, and whilst it was still dark, one of the look-out men came below and called us all to come on deck, as there was a noise as of oars being used in a boat. We had made our plans, so as not to indicate we were on guard when the boat came alongside. So we all crouched under the bulwarks and thus concealed ourselves. The stream of light in the water made by the boat was soon visible, and very quickly it came along; the Zulus knew nothing about rowing, but they managed the oars very well, and brought the boat close to the schooner. They were dressed in white men's clothes, but had their assagies and shields in the boat ready for use. I could not help admiring the daring of these men, and their obedience to the orders of their chief. They had killed several white men, and might have returned with their clothes as proofs of their success; but their orders were to kill *all* the white men, and they were now endeavouring to carry out these orders. But for our own safety we must kill them, and if possible obtain possession of the boat. When the Zulus were alongside, one man climbed on the shoulders of another, and thus reached to the bulwark, and in an instant was on board. As he came on the deck he was struck down, and the alarm at once spread. Instead of attempting to escape in the boat, the other Zulus tried to get on board by the same means; and each man was knocked down before he could use his assagies. As yet not a shot had been fired, but now, as one man only remained in the boat, he pushed off and would have escaped with the boat if we had allowed it, so one of the settlers fired and shot him. The boat was now drifting away, so I jumped over board, and swam towards it, and climbed in. On entering the boat I found that both the oars had fallen overboard, and I could not therefore row the boat; and as the tide was running out very rapidly I was being carried towards the bar. Now, inside the bar sharks were rarely if ever seen; but on the bar they were numerous, and I knew the boat would be upset when it reached the breakers on the bar, and I should have no chance, as the shark would soon pull me down. I therefore thought I must give up the idea of saving the boat; and must jump into the water and try to reach the schooner; but I saw in the water several streaks of light, which showed me that other Zulus had entered the water with the intention of assisting their friends, and several of these were between me and the ship. To have attempted to reach the ship, therefore, would have been a dangerous proceeding, as I should have been caught by several of the Zulus, and either drowned by them, or taken prisoner, and assagied. I struck out therefore for the opposite shore, where the Bluff of Natal, a high piece of land, stands, and soon reached the shore, where I concealed myself in the bush; and, being much fatigued with the exertions of the day, lay down and soon fell asleep.

I hoped when daylight came to swim back to the schooner, or signal to them to send me a boat; so I felt no anxiety about the morrow.

I awoke on the following morning from the heat of the sun, which was shining on me, and for a few seconds I was in doubt where I was and what had happened. I was stiff and uncomfortable from having laid down in my wet clothes, which were scarcely yet dry, in consequence of the heavy dew that had fallen; but I got up and worked my way carefully out of the bush to where I thought I should see the schooner. On reaching the shore I looked and looked again; no schooner was visible where she had been, I then noticed that the wind was blowing from the west—the favourable wind for a vessel to leave the harbour. I ran round the Bluff to the side next the sea, and there saw the schooner with all sails set, about five

miles off. I then knew I was deserted by the white men, who probably thought I had been drowned, so that I was now the only white man remaining on this coast.



"I THEN KNEW I WAS DESERTED BY THE WHITE MEN." [p. 176.]

During the various adventures through which I had passed since the shipwreck years ago, I had never despaired or felt really unhappy: there was always some excitement going on, and my mind was occupied in planning various things either for sporting or other purposes. Now, however, a feeling came over me that I had never experienced before. Had I been better acquainted with the human body and its requirements, I should have at once attributed this effect to its proper cause. During the whole of the previous day I had eaten nothing, and had gone through much hard work and excitement. The depression that I suffered was more due to absence of food than to the causes by which I was surrounded, for when I had eaten I saw everything in a more hopeful light. Still I was in a bad way; for I possessed no weapon except a sailor's knife, I had no food and did not know where to procure any, and I was probably surrounded by enemies.

I wandered down the rocks on the shore and gazed at the distant ship. I knew it was useless to signal, she was so far distant; yet I took off my jacket and waved it, till my arm was too tired even to lift above my shoulder. Then I sat down to think.

As I looked down I saw fixed on the rocks at my feet a shell which I at once recognised as an oyster, such as we used to procure at Bombay. With my knife I opened this, and ate this African shell-fish. On searching on the rocks I found hundreds of oysters, and was enabled to make a hearty meal. Trickling down the side of the bluff was also a little stream of fresh water. By gathering some large leaves of a plant like the banana, I allowed the water to accumulate in these, and my thirst was quenched. Growing on the shore also were some trees, bearing a fruit I well knew, and called by my old friends of the Umzimvubu the *Martingula*. It was very good to eat, and in size was similar to a plum, with a peculiar flavour. I also saw several bees, so I hoped to procure some honey, and there was consequently no fear of starving.

I thought it prudent not to show myself on the shore of the bay, for fear some Zulus might yet remain; though I anticipated that, as soon as they had seen that the schooner had sailed they would return to their own country with their proofs of victory.

I considered for some time whether I should try to work my way down the coast, so as to reach the Umzimvubu and my old friends; but a strange longing had come over me to once more be among white people, and I thought that the Bay of Natal would be a much more likely place from which to find a ship than down by the Umzimvubu district. So I decided to keep myself concealed on the bluff, at least for some time; for I need not want for food, as there were oysters in abundance on the rocks, and when the tide went down there were several pools of water left on the rocks, in which were fish of various sizes: these I caught with a forked stick, and so managed to live on fish diet. I was not long, however, before I adopted a Caffre expedient for obtaining meat. In the bush were numbers of red bush-buck, and also duikers: to trap these I bent down the stem of a young tree, so as to form a spring, and by means of withes and the bark of a shrub, which was as strong as rope, I made a noose in the path frequented by these buck. Scarcely an evening passed but I caught a buck, and so had plenty of meat. I sadly wanted some salt, however; but I soon thought of a plan for securing

this. There were several small hollows in the rocks above high-water mark, these I filled with sea-water, and, as they were exposed to the sun, the water soon evaporated, and a deposit of salt remained. With this salt I rubbed the strips of buck-meat I had cut with my knife; and, hanging these in the sun, made a provision for the future. I was obliged to hang them at the end of thin branches at a distance from the ground, for I found that leopards frequented this place, and although they might not attack me, yet they would at once carry off and devour my meat.

I wanted some weapon very badly: I had cut a stout stick to make a knob-kerrie, but such a weapon would be harmless against a leopard. I should have felt more comfortable if I had possessed two or three assagies, for there is a feeling of power when one grasps a weapon which we know how to use. I believed it possible that I might find some assagies, if I crossed the bay and searched along the shore where so many of the Zulus had been killed or wounded. I waited till it was nearly dark one evening, and then swam across the channel that separated the bluff from the wooded shore opposite. I landed on this shore, and, keeping close to the bush, examined all the likely places for an assagy to be found, and at length found three very good ones. I could see no fresh traces of men's footprints, and concluded that all the Zulus had left Natal.

I therefore ventured further inland, and visited the locality where the white men had been ambushed by the Zulus. I found the remains of their bodies: hyaenas and vultures having feasted on them, but little remained except their bones. Almost hidden by the long grass, I saw the stock of a gun; and found this to be a double-barrelled gun, with a flask of powder and a bag of bullets close beside it. Such a treasure I had not expected, and I now felt that I was secure against any average enemy. In order to get across the channel with my powder dry, I collected a quantity of wood and fastened this together by withes and bark, so as to make a raft on which to keep my powder and gun above the water. This raft I pushed before me whilst I swam, and thus succeeded in getting over the water with my valuable cargo in safety.

I now felt well prepared to pass a long time in my solitary locality; so I set to work to cut down some small trees, and make a sort of Caffre hut. This I deemed necessary for my safety by night, or when I slept; for if a leopard or a rock-snake found me asleep, the first might carry me off before I could use my gun, and the snake might encircle me in his folds, and crush me before I could use even a knife. It occupied me two days to complete my hut, which was then waterproof and quite safe from the attacks of any animals—at least so I imagined.

In the present day, when a box of lucifer matches enables every person to instantly procure a fire, it is not easy to realise the difficulty that is experienced by those unprovided by any such artificial aids. To procure a fire I was obliged to adopt the usual Caffre method of using two dry sticks. One of soft wood was placed on the ground, the other of hard wood was held in the hands and worked round, whilst it was pressed into a hole in the soft wood. After several minutes of this work a few sparks would be produced, which were placed in a wisp of dry grass, and swung round at arms-length. By this means a small flame was produced and a fire kindled. It was then my particular care to preserve this fire, and never let it die out. To do so was no easy matter, for I was obliged to have a large stock of dry wood collected, and to so heap this up, and protect it from the wind, that it would smoulder for hours. If there came rain, it was even more difficult to keep the fire permanently burning; and, after rain, to reproduce fire was extremely laborious. This, then, was one great source of anxiety to me, for I dare not let any smoke rise in the air, for this would let any enemy know that man was on the bluff; for, clever and cunning as all animals in a wild state become, even the monkey or baboon does not know how to create a fire, or how to keep this fire blazing when they do find one which man has lighted, I have now to relate one of the greatest escapes I ever experienced, though many which I have already described may appear to have been marvellous.

A week had passed since I had procured the gun and some assagies from the place where the Zulus had ambushed the white men, and I had seen no signs of a human being; but I knew too well the enemy by whom I had been captured, not to be aware, that if he intended to recapture me, he would lie concealed for many days, watching for a chance of surprising me. My intention was to support life until a ship came to Natal, for I concluded that when the schooner which had escaped, reached Table Bay, and informed the authorities there that the Zulus had overrun Natal, some steps would be taken to obtain at least information as to what had since occurred. Thus I lived in daily hopes of seeing a sail, and once more joining with white men.

One night I had retired to my hut, and had slept till the dawn began to show, when I woke with a strange feeling of oppression and weight on my chest. My gun was close beside me, and my knife within reach of my hand. For a moment I was not aware what was the cause of the singular feeling I experienced, and I opened my eyes without otherwise moving. In the dim light I saw that which, for an instant, caused my heart to cease beating. Over my chest was the coil of the body of a rock-snake, this coil being bigger round than my thigh. I could see that the tail of the snake was outside my small hut, and in consequence of my lying on the ground the huge reptile had not been able to coil completely round me. I knew I was in imminent danger, and I also at once decided on the safest and most probable means of escape. Moving my arm slowly, I grasped my knife, and then raising my head, saw the snake's eyes within two feet of mine. His head was on the ground, and so close that I could lift my hand above it. I carried out this movement very slowly, the snake remaining motionless. Then with a sudden stab I drove my long knife through the snake, just where his head joined his neck, and pinned him to the ground. With a struggle I slipped from under his body, and now the fight began. So tenacious of life are these reptiles that, although I had separated his head from his body as regards the vertebrae, yet he twisted and rolled the great coils of his body so rapidly and powerfully that several times he had surrounded my legs with a loop, and it was only by a quick movement on my part that I escaped the danger of being enclosed in a vice-like embrace. I succeeded, however, in avoiding its coils, and suddenly scrambled out of the hut, leaving the snake in possession.

I knew that the reptile was mortally wounded, and that if I let him remain where he was he would die. I had no wish to enter the hut again, and finish him; for his weight was so great that he might hold me to the ground. So I sat outside and listened to him as he occasionally rolled, or turned over. It was lucky for me that the snake was a rock-snake, which is not poisonous. I could fight this fellow on fair terms; for it was strength against strength, and, with such a weapon as a knife even, I felt equal to the combat. When, however, one meets a puff-adder or a cobra, the fight is not equal. You may kill either of these, but if either has bitten you your death is certain. Of all the creatures with which I have had to fight, a poisonous snake is the very worst. During my residence among the Umzimvubu tribe I had many escapes from these poisonous snakes, some of which I may as well now relate.

Round the kraal in which my hut was situated when I lived among the Umzimvubu was a fence, made somewhat in the manner in which hurdles are built in England. One morning I wanted to go out to look for the cattle, and stepped on the fence, intending to leap over it. As my foot rested on the upper part, I saw a cobra raise its head from among the branches, and I instantly fell back, escaping by the smallest distance from the rapid dart made by the reptile. To have been bitten would have been certain death, for a full-grown active cobra is sure to kill where he strikes.

Another escape was from a puff-adder, a snake equally as deadly as the cobra. I was looking after the cattle in the Umzimvubu country, and finding the sun very warm I went to an acacia tree, so as to sit in the shade, and sat down on a rock near which was some moss. My right hand held my assagies, and as I came to the ground my hand and assagies

rested on a large puff-adder. I felt the reptile move, and seeing my hand was on its neck, I pressed it down, whilst with my other hand I drew an assagy and drove it through the head of the serpent, and thus escaped the bite which would have proved fatal. I scarcely ever passed a day in the bush without seeing a snake, and I must have killed over a hundred during my residence among the Umzimvubu.

With considerable difficulty I dragged this snake out of my hut and pushed it down the sloping side of the bluff, and into the water, where the tide carried it out, and it probably became a feast for shark, which were in great numbers outside the harbour.

A few days passed after my adventure with the python, and nothing extraordinary happened. I had succeeded in capturing two red bush-buck, which supplied me with animal food; but the oysters on the rocks and the fish I secured when the tide was low, in the various pools, afforded me plenty to eat. I should certainly have liked some Indian corn, but I did not dare venture near any of the kraals which were in the neighbourhood, for fear I might not be well-treated by the Caffres, or might be seen by some of the Zulus who, I still believed, were lurking in the neighbourhood.

People who have passed their lives amidst scenes of civilisation are not aware of the patience which so-called savages can practise without doing anything unusual. A Caffre will sit for a whole day and watch for a buck to come to some pool to drink; or he will set a trap every evening for a month, on the chance of capturing some animal; and never gives up after repeated failures, as a white man would do. Knowing these peculiarities, I believed it possible that the Zulus would wait a month even, rather than give up the chance of capturing me.

About a week after my escape from the snake, I woke one morning in consequence of hearing a sea-eagle screaming. Two or three of these eagles used to fish in the bay, and were splendid birds. I always noticed that whenever I appeared on the shore, one of these birds gave a shrill warning sort of scream; so, immediately I heard the bird, I crept out of my hut to look round, in order to see if anything was visible on the shores of the bay. From close beside my hut was a very good look-out station, from whence I had a very good view of the shore, from the Point to the Berea bush and the Umslatzane river. I scanned this shore carefully, and after a time saw a man in a tree, evidently examining the bluff where I was. I looked round to see if any smoke was coming from the embers of my fire, for such a circumstance would at once have exposed my whereabouts. Luckily none was visible; so, keeping watch, I turned my attention to this one man. After a time he descended the tree, and then from out of the bush came more than fifty Caffres. At first I could not discover whether they were Zulus or Natal Caffres. Each of the two tribes were armed alike with assagies and shields, but the *esikoko* (the ring round the head) was higher with the Zulus than with the Natal Caffres; and by this peculiarity I discovered at last that it was a party of Zulus; and, from their movements. I had no doubt they were in search of me, as they repeatedly stopped and pointed to the bluff. As this party advanced along the shore, to a point opposite that on which was my hut, I thought out what was the best course for me to adopt. The Zulus would have to swim across the channel in order to land near where my hut was situated; and, if I had only been backed with two or three men with guns, I could have defied the whole of this party, and either shot them as they were swimming or when they landed. To adopt this plan single-handed would, I knew, be useless. I might shoot perhaps half a dozen of them, but the others would close in on me and assagy me before I could reload. If they did not do this, they would lie in ambush; and when I moved near them, would assagy me when my back was turned. It would not do, therefore, to stop and fight. Having come to this conclusion, I waited to see the chief of this party order his men into the water, so that they should swim across the channel. I then crept back to my hut to get my gun and ammunition and two assagies. I concealed the other assagies and scattered the embers of my fire, so that the Zulus should not by that know how lately I had been there. I then walked backwards for some distance, and, scrambling down the sea-face of the bluff, reached the shore; and, keeping as much as possible on the rocks, so as to leave no footmarks, I started at a run towards the west. My intention was to make for the Umbilo river, and work up this to the Berea bush. There was an immense amount of cover in the Berea, and elephant-paths in numbers. If I could conceal my trail I might remain in this bush for a long time without being discovered. There were plenty of berries also that were good to eat, and water would not fail me. Once on my trail, I knew the Zulus too well to doubt their searching for me for weeks; but near the Umlass river were Caffres who would soon dispose of these fifty Zulus. But I did not want to be again taken among any tribe of Caffres. My instincts now induced me to wish to rejoin white men. A little savage life for a change is agreeable; too much of it soon tires a man who has once enjoyed civilisation.

I did not fear being overtaken by the Zulus; for they would ascend the steep bluff to my hut very cautiously, and would then be some time before they hit off my trail, so I had a good long start of them. What I did fear, however, was that some outlying party might be concealed along the ridge of the bluff; and from these it would be difficult to escape, as I should probably come on them within assagy-throw before I saw them. In cover, the man who remains still has an immense advantage over another who is moving about. The man who moves cannot do so without making a noise; and, in cover, where the extent of one's vision is limited, the ears often discover what the eyes cannot perceive. All animals which live in the forest, therefore, possess large ears, which enable them to hear well all that is going on round them. The leopard, bush-cat, etc, remain still and watchful when in the forest and watching for their prey. If they moved about, even their stealthy tread would be audible, and the animal which they wished to capture would be alarmed, and would escape. I knew the danger I incurred in moving through the bush, but there was no help for it.

Chapter Thirteen.

I had made my way along the coast till I was past the Umbilo river, and was crossing some tolerably open ground, when I saw before me a large party of Caffres. I halted to examine them, and instantly saw that they were not Zulus. Although I did not wish to again join any tribe, and perhaps be compelled to remain with them, yet a few friends to back one up, when pursued by an armed party of Zulus, would do one no harm. I at once made up my mind to advance to this party and claim their protection. As I approached them they uttered exclamations of surprise, and one man came forward quickly, and when near enough to be recognised, I saw he was a young chief called Eondema, who had fought with me when I came into this country with the Umzimvubu Caffres against the Zulus. Eondema expressed the greatest surprise at seeing me, and began asking me a multitude of questions. I, however, told him there was no time to talk now, as I was pursued by a party of Zulus, and that we must be prepared either to run, or to stop and fight. On looking at the party with Eondema, I believed them equal in numbers with the Zulus; and as I possessed my gun and plenty of ammunition, I had no fear of our side getting the worse of a battle. Eondema spoke to his men, and they all agreed to fight; and the only thing, therefore, to be done now was to make our plans, so that we should take the Zulus at a disadvantage. The rapidity with which arrangements were made showed that Eondema's young men were well-trained: the plan was to divide the party into two divisions, each concealing themselves in the bush. I remained with Eondema, and informed him that I intended to shoot the chief of the party as a commencement, and then the most formidable-looking men among the enemy. We had sent two men to the front in order to look out and give us due notice of the approach of the Zulus; for I had no doubt that, however much care I had taken to conceal my spoor, yet these keen-eyed men would soon find my footprints, and follow them up just as truly as would a bloodhound. Our preparations having been made, I was able to talk to Eondema, and to tell him how I happened to be at this place. I described my life among the Zulus and my escape from

them; also the manner in which the white men had been killed by the Zulus, and my escape from the water. Then how I had feared to move from the bluff where I had made my hut, lest I should fall into an ambush; and then I told him how I had been awakened by the cry of the sea-eagle, and had seen the Zulus preparing to cross the channel and get to the bluff. I accounted for the Zulus knowing where I was, by a small quantity of smoke from my fire having risen on the evening previously. This had no doubt been seen, and as smoke will not rise without a fire, and as fire cannot usually be kindled except by man, the suspicions of these men had been raised, and so they were determined to examine the bluff and see who was there.

Now a Zulu in a very short time would be able, from the signs near my hut, to read a history of my proceedings. He would see where I had opened the oysters on the rocks, where I had caught fish, where I had left the bones of the buck I had killed; and, in fact, would know what I had done as correctly as though he had seen me each day. The Zulus consequently would know I was alone, and that to capture me was not a difficult task. It was about three miles from my hut to the place where I had met Eondema and his party, and this distance would soon be passed over by the Zulus, even when following a trail; so that at any moment we might see our look-out men signal to us that the enemy was in sight. Although Eondema and I were talking, we yet carried on our conversation in so low a tone that no one could hear us who was three times our length from us.

In describing various things connected with my early life among these people, I naturally use the same terms which these people employed. For example, they had no knowledge of time, as we understand it: "an hour" or "ten minutes" would be unintelligible terms to them. If a Caffre wished to tell you how long a time it would occupy you to journey to some near river or kraal, he would point to the sky and say, "You will journey there whilst the sun is travelling from where he is to that point in the sky." If the journey was a very long one, occupying many days, he would name the number of days; or he would refer to the moon and say, "If the moon is half grown when you start, it will be full size when you arrive." A two-moon journey would be two months. Then, for short distances, a Caffre would describe it as two assagy-throws, which would be a little more than one hundred yards; twice or three times my length would be about twelve or eighteen feet. After a time these comparisons become quite natural to one, and when I go back in memory to my life among them, I at once speak as I then spoke.

"I am going half a moon's journey in the direction of the rising sun," a Caffre would say; and this would mean that he was going a journey of fourteen days towards the east.

The patience that Caffres will show when waiting for an enemy or for some animal to approach them was well shown on this occasion. Not a man showed himself, or spoke above a whisper, during at least two hours; at the end of which time one of our scouts signalled to us, and then came rapidly somewhat in our direction; but he was too well-trained to come to us, for he might have been seen, and our ambush consequently would have been a failure. This scout ran past the bush where we were concealed, and about four assagy-throws to the left of it. After he had passed us a long way, he disappeared behind some bushes, and immediately commenced creeping towards us. We could only now and then get a glimpse of him, but an enemy at a distance could not have seen him. On reaching our position the scout told Eondema that all the Zulus were coming, and were following my footprints; that they were all armed with assagies except one, who possessed a gun. He added that the Zulus did not seem to be aware that any enemy was near, for they had no spies out, that he could see; although three or four men walked on each side of the main body, and at some distance, so as to be ready to run round and cut off my retreat, in case they found me unprepared for them. From my ambush I was able to obtain a good view of the Zulus, as they advanced; and I saw that the man who possessed the gun was a chief of some note. He was one of those who had been engaged in the slaughter of the white men, from one of whom he had probably obtained his gun. I told Eondema I would shoot this chief, and would then make him learn how to use the gun. The Zulus did not come carelessly on to the ambush, as English soldiers would have done, and been in consequence taken by surprise; but they spread on each side of the bushes, two or three men going down to leeward, in order to *smell* if there was anything extraordinary concealed in the bush. A white man with a good nose could smell a Zulu at the distance of several hundred yards, if the wind were blowing from the Zulu towards the white man; so that men accustomed to the woods will often smell a wild animal before they see it. The Zulus who had gone to smell for an enemy evidently suspected an ambush, as they called to the chief, and we could hear "*Kona eclatini*," as the end of the sentence, which means, "There in the bush."

The Zulus, at this warning, closed together, and seemed preparing for a rush at the bush in which we were concealed. Eondema had remained quiet, watching the enemy, not a move being made by any of his men. Slowly and steadily the Zulus now advanced until they were about two assagies' distance from me. Seeing the chief with the gun was coming straight towards me, I aimed at him and fired. He made a bound like a buck and fell to the ground. Eondema and his men instantly sprang to their feet and rushed at the enemy, whilst I reloaded and watched to see where I could be most useful. It was now a hand-to-hand fight. The assagies were flying about freely, and several couples had separated themselves from the main body, and were engaged in single combat. Eondema was occupied with a powerful Zulu, who was pressing him hard, the shields being used to cover the greater part of the body, whilst the stabbing assagy was thrust now and then at an apparently exposed part of the body. I watched this encounter for a few minutes, when I saw a Zulu stealing up behind Eondema, his assagy ready to stab him. Now was the time for my gun to be of use; so, aiming at this creeping savage, I shot him dead just as he was within stabbing distance of Eondema. The fight between the two parties did not continue long. It was mostly hand-to-hand; and with such men as the Caffres, who were brave as men could be, it was fighting to the death; so that one of the two engaged was sure to be assagied. Eondema was active as a cat, and managed to wound his antagonist with his assagy; and then, closing with him, finished him without difficulty. Only a few Zulus escaped, for when they found their chief shot they fought desperately, and retreated only when there were four to one against them.

After the fight I explained to Eondema how to use the gun that the Zulu had carried. It was a gun with a flint and steel lock, and Eondema was never tired of cocking it, pulling the trigger and seeing the sparks fly from the flint. I remembered that in India I had seen fire produced by means of tinder and brimstone matches. I could easily make the tinder, but had no brimstone with which to make matches. As, however, to create fire was a very long process with the Caffres, I thought of making some matches out of a small bundle of dry grass, the end of which bundle I rubbed over with wet gunpowder. As this gunpowder dried it stuck to the grass. I then placed the gunpowder end of this large match in the pan of the gun; and, on pulling the trigger, ignited it by the spark. I by this means produced a fire instantaneously: which was considered by the Caffres a wonderful discovery, and the gun was thought to be more useful as a fire-producing machine than as a weapon.

After defeating this party of Zulus we held a great council of war to talk about what should be done. We knew the character of the Zulus too well to imagine they would wait long before they revenged themselves for the defeat, of this expedition, which had evidently been sent by the Great Chief of the Zulus to search for me. After considerable talking, we came to the conclusion that it would take four days for the men who had escaped to reach the kraal of the chief, two days more to plan an expedition, and four days additional for the expedition to again reach the locality that we were now in.

Eondema decided to move with his cattle and wives across the Umlass river, and to seek the aid of Umnini, a chief who was related to him, and who could bring a thousand men to fight.

These Caffres, however, did not like this kind of fighting—there was nothing to gain by it. The style of fighting they liked was, when many cattle could be captured, if an enemy were defeated. In the present instance they would be fighting merely to defend themselves, and prevent their own cattle from being captured; and I had great doubts whether I should not be given up to the Zulus, if by this act a fight could be prevented. The difficulty of an arrangement was how to communicate with the Zulus. These people usually made sudden attacks, and practised surprises, and did not understand what civilised nations called a flag of truce; so that assagies began to fly before a word was spoken, and as soon as blood was drawn it was too late to attempt to settle the difficulty by talking. I was very anxious about myself, for although the Caffres are hospitable when visited by any one independent of them, they are disposed to come the "chief" over those who require aid. I, although a recognised chief among the Umzimvubu, was at present an escaped prisoner; and had it not been for Eondema and his men, I might have been captured and killed by the party of Zulus who had traced me from my hut on the bluff. Consequently, Eondema had a sort of hold on me; but he was a generous young fellow, and though he was sorry to lose several of his men, yet he said nothing to me about any obligation on my part.

My great object, however, was to find some means of rejoining the white people. I did not know enough of the geography of South Africa to be aware of any way of reaching the Cape Colony, except by means of a ship entering Natal Harbour.

I had learnt from my old companions that there were white men in numbers to the west of the Umzimvubu; but that the tribe of the Amakosa was very warlike, and had frequently drawn the assagy against the white men. To journey through the country of the Amakosa, therefore, would have been dangerous, if not impossible; and the white men were to the west of these tribes. If, then, I was to rejoin the white men, it must be by means of a vessel coming to Natal Harbour; for no other harbour up the coast was suitable for a ship to enter.

Chapter Fourteen.

Three days only had elapsed since my escape from the Zulus, and the fight between them and the men of Eondema, and I had been living with the young chief, and considering what I should do in order to rejoin my own people, when, at daybreak on the fourth day, a great noise was heard, and before we had time to do more than wonder what this was, a war-party of the Zulus was upon us. From facts which we afterwards learnt, we knew that the few Zulus who escaped from the men of Eondema had met a war-party of the Zulus not many miles east of the Umganie river, and had told the chief of this party that I was among the Umlass Caffres. This chief concluded that if he could capture me, and take me back to the Zulu king, he would be well rewarded. He also knew that there were cattle in plenty belonging to these people, and so, by a surprise, he hoped to capture me, and also carry off some cattle.

Their plans had been well arranged, for they had kept to the bush until within a short distance of our kraal. They had then rushed on it, and were upon us before we could prepare for them. Eondema and I were in the same hut, and we both made for the doorway, to get out and see what the noise was caused by. Eondema had scarcely moved a foot out of his hut before he was knocked on the head with a knob-kerrie, and instantly killed. Fearing the same fate, I did not follow him; but, seizing my gun, fired a shot among the Zulus who were round the doorway. In an instant they retreated, but I heard the call for "*umlilo*" ("fire"), and I knew they were going to burn the hut down. Now a hut set on fire from the outside would burn inwards, and roast any one who remained in the hut; but if the fire were applied to one part of the inside, it would, if properly kept down, burn outwards and make a hole through which a man might escape. There was no time to lose. So I blew up the embers of the fire, and lighted the grass on the inside of the hut opposite the doorway, and by help of some milk which was in the calabashes in the hut I prevented the fire from rushing all over the hut. In the meantime, the Zulus had set fire to the hut near the doorway, and I could hear the crackling of the flames above me. As soon as the smoke was very thick I threw the milk on the fire I had lighted, and pushing against this part, found I had made an opening large enough to creep through. I wished much to take my gun with me, but this I knew was impossible; and, besides, it would have been useless as a means of preservation, for although I might have shot one or two Zulus, yet I should have been assagied immediately after. My only chance of escape was that of getting out of the hut without being seen, and being able to move in the smoke without being recognised.



"I MADE AN OPENING LARGE ENOUGH TO CREEP THROUGH."

[p. 202.]

Having forced my way through the opening in the hut, I lay down outside for an instant to look round; and, hearing all the Zulus near the door on the opposite side of the hut to that from which I had made my escape, I rose and walked slowly away, still keeping in the thick smoke caused by the fire of the hut.

Now people not accustomed to hunting game such as antelope, leopards, and other like creatures, would probably have started off and run, as soon as they got clear of the hut. I knew better than to do so stupid a thing. If I had run, I should at once have attracted attention, and been followed, and my race for life would have commenced immediately. By moving slowly I was not noticed, and thus had gone more than a hundred yards from the hut before a Zulu, who was running towards the kraal which was burning, passed close to me, and seeing me, stopped; and, recognising me, hurled an assagy at me. The practice I had gained with Inyoni and Tembile stood me in good stead on this occasion, or I should have been speared. I dodged the assagy, which stuck in the ground near me, within reach of my arm, and seizing it threw it at my enemy. He was not as quick in escaping as I had been, and my assagy struck him in the chest and the blade passed through his body. I closed with him at once, and with one of his own knob-kerries struck him on the head, and I believe killed him. I did this so that he might not tell any other Zulus that he had seen me. Possessing myself of his shield, assagies, and knob-kerrie, I started off at a run towards the bush; for it was there I hoped to conceal myself, and possibly escape the keen eyes of the Zulus; for although they might follow my spoor as correctly as a dog will follow a buck, I still hoped I might defeat all their cunning.

The attention of all the Zulus was taken up with the kraal from which I had escaped; for they expected me to rush out as soon as I found that the smoke and fire would destroy me. That I should escape from the back part of the hut had not been thought of.

The distance from the kraal to the Berea bush was about a mile, and this distance I passed over at a rapid walk, and succeeded in entering the bush without being recognised by any of the enemy. The Berea bush was at this time visited annually by one or two herds of elephants which came down from near the Zulu country. They stayed in the bush during several months, and made paths through the thick jungle, along which a man could walk easily. The bush was nearly impenetrable except along these elephant tracks; so I thought I might easily conceal myself in this bush for two or three days, unless my footprints were seen, when I should certainly be tracked and probably caught or assagied. Having entered the bush without having been recognised, I made my way along an elephant-path, where the tracks of the elephants were quite fresh. I knew that in this bush there must be a herd of these animals, and if they would only walk along the same path that I had travelled they would rub out the print of my footprints, and I should be safe. I walked on into the densest part of the bush; and then, finding a large tree, I climbed into it; so that, if the elephants scented me and became savage and hunted me, I should be safe in this tree.

I knew I might have to remain in the bush during two or three days, and that I might remain all that time without food; but I had been accustomed to this trial, and people who in civilised countries take their three meals a day are not aware how long a man in health can last without food, especially if he is in the open air and can obtain water.

From the tree into which I had climbed I could see the sea beyond the bay, so that if a ship came off the harbour I could see it, but how to reach it would be the difficulty.

I had been but a short time in the tree when I heard a noise as of branches being shaken. At first I imagined that the elephants were moving through the bush, and consequently shaking the trees; but I soon saw in the topmost branches a number of small grey monkeys, which were leaping from branch to branch, and peeping at me whenever they could obtain a glance. They seemed to consider me an invader of their property, and to be angry in consequence, as they came within a few yards of me and screamed loudly. Now I did not fear the monkeys, as they were small, and having an assagy, I could easily have defended myself; but I knew that if any Zulus were in the bush they would at once suspect that the monkeys were making this noise because some strange creature was in the bush, and they would come to see what it was; and so, though they might not be able to trace me by my footprints, yet they would be attracted to my concealment in consequence of the noise made by the monkeys. Breaking off some branches, I threw these at the

creatures when they came near me; but they did not seem frightened, and screamed and jumped about more than before. Suddenly, however, their attention seemed to be attracted by something else, as they left the trees around me and became greatly excited as they watched something on the ground. I feared that perhaps the Zulus had followed my footprints, and had traced me to where I then was; but I soon heard a noise which I recognised as that made by an elephant, and it was this creature to which the monkeys were giving so much attention. The elephant I soon saw as he moved slowly through the bush; he was a large bull-elephant, and was alone, no others being near him. When this is the case an elephant becomes very savage, as he has usually been driven out of the herd by a combination of younger bull-elephants. He then wanders about in the bush, and is ready to attack anything that he comes across. I was rather pleased to know that such an elephant was in this bush; for I knew the Zulus had a great dread of a solitary bull-elephant even in the open country, whilst in the bush he was still more to be feared. It would therefore be probable that, if (as they soon would) they knew of the presence of the elephant, they would not like to traverse the bush in search of me. As long as I was up a tree as high and as strong as that in which I now was I was safe from an elephant.

During two days I remained in the bush, passing the night in a tree, and by day gathering fruit and drinking water. People in civilisation eat and drink either at stated hours or when hungry and thirsty. I had long been accustomed to do both when I could. If not thirsty, and I came on a stream of good water, I drank, because by so doing I prevented myself from becoming thirsty; so that probably I might have managed to pass a month in this bush, without suffering from want of food or water. I had, however, found a tall tree from which I could see a great part of the flat and marsh of Natal, as also the bay and sea beyond; and on the afternoon of the second day I saw two sights which rejoiced me. The first was a large party of Zulus moving from near the bay towards the Umganie river: these men were driving some cattle before them, and were apparently leaving the country. The other sight was a ship which was sailing up the coast, and was evidently making for the anchorage opposite the harbour. Having taken up a safe position in this tree, I passed the night quietly, and when the first light of day enabled me to see distant objects, I perceived that the ship which I had seen sailing was now at anchor, with no sails set. Immediately I saw this I descended from the tree, and worked my way out of the bush; and, exposing myself as little as possible in the open country, made my way across the marsh and through the bush to the beach. I there procured a large branch of a tree, and waved it so as to attract the attention of any one looking out from the ship.

I incurred some risk in doing this; for if any outlying party of the Zulus were near they would have seen me and I could not easily have escaped. But I was obliged to show myself on the beach, so as to attract attention, or I feared the ship might leave without sending a boat on shore. I watched with considerable anxiety for some sign of a boat from the ship, but it must have been several hours before I saw a sail set on the vessel, and she began to move. I now noticed that the tide was high, and that there was but little surf on the bar, so that it was possible the vessel, which was small, might intend coming into the bay. My doubts were soon set at rest, for she headed towards the bluff, and came slowly on, and after being washed by one or two breakers as she was on the bar, she came into smooth water, and glided into the harbour and cast anchor.

I did not wait for a boat, but jumped into the water and swam to the ship, from which a rope was thrown me and I climbed on board. The sailors and captain looked at me with much surprise, and I now found an unexpected difficulty, viz., to speak English readily. I, however managed to improve as I went on, and told the captain what had happened at Natal; and how the white men had been massacred by the Zulus, except those who had escaped in the ship. The captain had heard nothing of what had happened here, as he had come from the Mauritius, and the ship that had sailed out of the harbour had gone down the coast to Cape Town, and the communication then between various places was not as rapid as it is now. This ship required fresh meat, and the difficulty was how to procure it. All the cattle had been swept off by the Zulus, except that which had been concealed by my friends across the Umlass river; and there would be difficulty in communicating with these men, as it was not certain some strong force of the Zulus might not be in the bush concealed.

The captain of the ship was very kind to me, and fitted me with a suit of sailor's clothes, and assured me he would take me down to Cape Town, from whence I could obtain a passage to England. He told me that nothing had ever been heard of the *Madagascar*, the ship in which I had sailed from India, and which had been wrecked; but it was supposed she must have gone down in the gale which had visited the Isle of France about that time. When I told him there were white women prisoners among the Caffres, or at least their wives, he said that he would go into the country with his men, and bring these women away. I told him that such an attempt would cost him his life and would be useless, because the white women were now contented with their lot, and probably would not leave; and the Caffres were not likely to allow their wives to be carried off by half a dozen men whom they could assagy without difficulty. The captain, however, like many ignorant Englishmen, underrated the power of the Caffres, and asserted that a dozen armed Englishmen, especially sailors, would be more than a match for a thousand niggers. I told him he did not know how skilful and cunning these natives were, and that if the country were bushy, an equal number of Caffres, though armed with assagies only, would be more than a match for him and his sailors. The captain merely laughed at me, and said he would like to try them.

Chapter Fifteen.

I remained on board ship this day, talking with the captain and sailors; the former was anxious to get his water casks filled, and also to procure some fresh meat and vegetables. I was able to tell him where to get fresh water: to get this it was necessary to pull up to the head of the bay to where the Umbilo river ran into the harbour. The water of this river was very good, and at low tide was not affected by the salt water that entered the bay. I told the captain he must be very cautious; because, as the boat would be seen as it proceeded to the river, an ambushade could be arranged by an enemy without any difficulty. The captain said he would take his pistols, and the men would be armed with guns and handspikes; so he did not fear a few naked niggers. I suggested to him that we should row up the bay whilst it was dark, and get to the river before daylight, fill the casks and then return; by so doing, no spies could be aware of the boat having left the ship, and when it returned it would be too late to ambushade us. The captain, however, said that this was making too much fuss about the matter; and, supposing after all no Zulus were near, we should have taken all this trouble for no reason.

"If," I replied, "Zulus are here, and we don't take this trouble, we shall all be assagied or made prisoners."

It was no use, however, talking to the captain. He was one of those dull men who never can see a danger before it really occurs; and probably would have gone and sat down in a mealie garden to eat his lunch in an enemy's country, and so have been surprised and assagied; whereas, had he selected a wide open space, he could have seen an enemy approach, and could either have retreated, or prepared for defence. Englishmen, however, are never fit for bush warfare with savages, until by long experience they have been taught what to do, by the savages themselves.

It was some time after sunrise when the captain and four men started in his largest boat with his barrels to procure fresh water. I went with him to show him where the Umbilo river was situated, and took with me a double-barrelled pistol

and ten rounds of ammunition. I cautioned them all to converse in very low tones, because voices are heard from the water at very long distances, and it was not advisable to give an enemy's ears the chance of discovering us in case he was so situated as not to be able to see us. I felt certain that if any Zulus were near the bay, they would keep watching the ship, and would have seen the boat leave, and would make their plans accordingly. It took us a long time pulling to the river, and I had scanned every part of the country to try and discover some sign of an enemy: not that I had much hope of seeing one, even if he was there. We reached the mouth of the river, and tasted the water, which was quite fresh. I suggested that we should examine the bush a little way, to see if there was any sign of the Zulus; for if they attacked us when we were busy with the casks, we should be taken at a disadvantage.

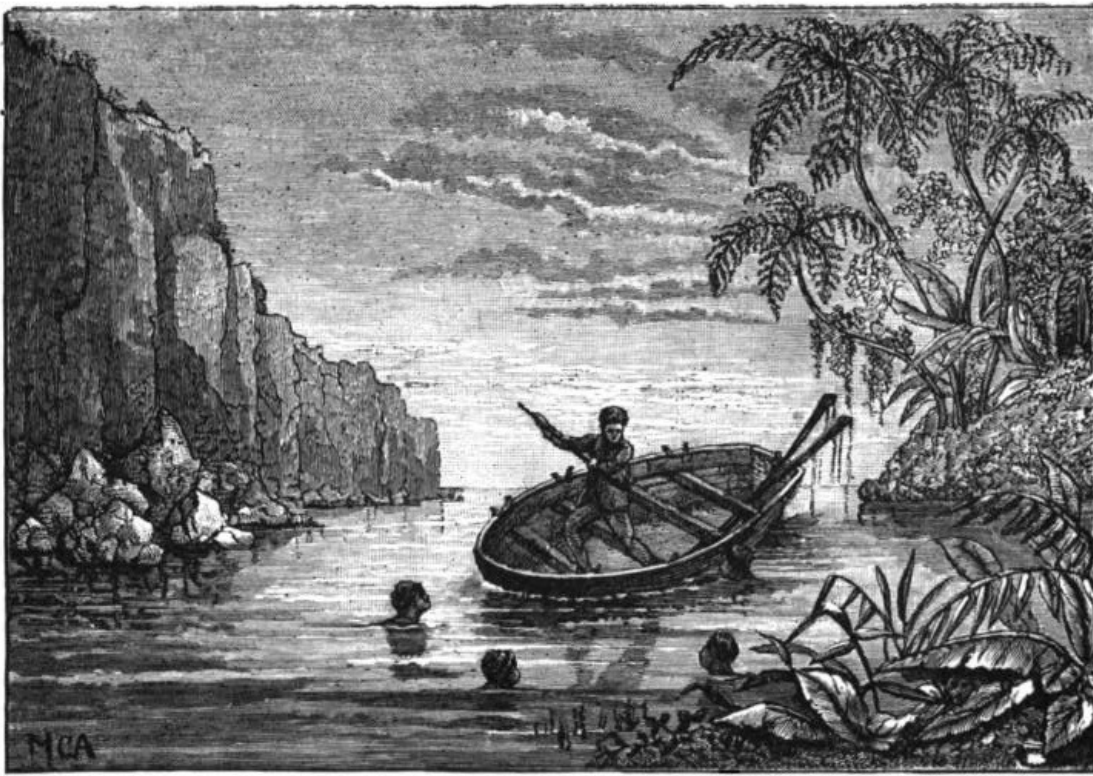
"There are none of your niggers here," said the captain, "never fear; let's get our water without more delay." So the barrels were filled, and placed in the boat, and we were preparing to re-embark, when a rustling in the bush near us attracted my attention. On looking round I saw three or four Zulus crouching behind some bushes and watching us. Pointing my pistol at them, I said to the captain, "Zulus are here, get into the boat at once." I would not fire for two reasons: first, if I discharged my pistol, I could not reload again before they could close with me; secondly, I knew that a Zulu would retreat to some cover when he saw a pistol pointed at him; and there would thus be time for us to get into the boat.

I hoped that when the captain knew that all my caution had not been without cause, he would get into the boat as rapidly as possible, and we might then easily have pulled beyond the range of an assagy, for no man can throw an assagy well when he is among the bushes. The captain, however, instead of following my advice, shouted "Hurrah, we'll wallop 'em!" and before I could stop him, he had called to his men and had rushed into the bush where the Zulus had been watching us. It was useless to follow him. I called out to warn him that he was going to destruction, but he made no reply; and I at once ran to the boat and pushed off in it, so as to keep a short distance from the shore, and there waited to see what should occur. I soon heard the report of pistols and some loud shouting from the sailors, but not a sound came from the Zulus, who when in the bush like to keep their position secret. Soon, however, the shouts ceased, and I heard a groan, then another, and soon all was quiet. I knew too well what had occurred: the captain and his men might possibly have shot two or three Zulus; but then, when their pistols were unloaded, the Zulus had closed with them and had assagied them. I pushed the boat a little farther from the shore, and waited on the chance of some one of the party having escaped, and of this one reaching the shore; but in a very short time I saw four Zulus come to the mouth of the river and beckon to me. They made signs for me to come on shore, and pointed into the bush behind. I at once knew that, in my sailor clothes, they did not recognise me; so I called out in English, "What do you want?"

"He cannot speak Zulu," said one of the men. "We must get the boat, and then we may get on board the ship in the night."

I then heard them arrange a plan: which was that six of their men were to run down in the bush to where the channel was very narrow, through which channel I must pass. They could then, by swimming, get before the boat and hold on to it; and either get into it, or drag it on shore. A sailor, such as they supposed I was, they did not seem to think able to do them much damage. The Zulus sat down on the shore and took snuff from their small snuff-gourds, and no one unacquainted with the cool proceedings of these men, would have imagined that they had just been engaged in a deadly combat.

I spoke to them a few words in English; and then, taking out the oars, began pulling the boat down the bay. Luckily the tide had not yet turned, so the stream was with me. The boat was heavy, and I was not accustomed to using the oars. So I had great difficulty in moving the boat. I managed, however, to make it travel through the water. I could not help being amused at seeing how calmly the Zulus watched me. They made no attempts to stop me, because they knew that they could then do nothing effectually, and that if they did attempt to do anything it would merely excite my suspicions. I knew it would be of great advantage for me to conceal my identity; for, if they knew that they had to deal with one who had been trained in their own school of warfare, they would take extra precautions, to prevent being taken at a disadvantage. The narrow channel through which I had to make my way was about half a mile from the river, and as I approached this I kept a careful watch on the shore. In the boat were two pikes—very good weapons for close quarters, but no use against an assagy; for the latter can be thrown and will pass through a man at forty yards' distance. As I approached the channel, I saw the bushes near the shore moving more than they would do if the wind alone had acted on them; so I knew where to expect the enemy. I then saw four Zulus slip quietly into the water; and, keeping all but their heads under water, make their way to the centre of the passage where the boat must pass. I went on with my rowing until I was within an assagy's-throw of these men. I then pulled three or four strokes rapidly, so as to give the boat considerable speed; and, dropping the oars in the boat, crouched down and seized one of the pikes. All was quiet with the Zulus: not a ripple in the water showed their presence, whilst not a man was seen on the shore. Suddenly, standing up, I found two of the Zulus within a yard of the boat. With my pike I thrust at one of these, and drove the pike into his throat; the other had just placed a hand on the bows of the boat, and had partly raised himself out of the water. A second thrust, in this man's chest, sent him back, and he sank—I fancy to rise no more, as the blood gushed out of his wound as I withdrew the pike.



"I THRUST AT ONE OF THESE, AND DROVE THE PIKE INTO HIS THROAT." [p. 218.]

At the same instant two assagies flew close past my head, and I saw two Zulus up to their middle in the water and preparing to cast other assagies at me. Dropping into the bottom of the boat, so that only my eyes were above the bulwarks, I seized my pistol and aimed at the nearest Zulu. As I pulled the trigger he was about to cast his assagy; but it never left his hand, as I hit him in the chest and he sank in the water, rose again and floated down the stream. The other Zulus made for the bush and concealed themselves from view.

I again loaded my discharged barrel, and, taking the oars, pulled as fast as I could towards the vessel. The report of the pistols had been heard by the sailors on board, and they were on deck looking out. They hailed me as soon as I came near: and when I told them that I believed the captain and the other men had been killed, they were astonished, for they also seemed to think that the captain, with his pistols, was more than a match for any number of "niggers."

I told them that the Zulus were not men to be despised, that they were brave in every sense of the word, and that they were clever in all the arts of bush warfare, and would most probably try to capture the ship; so that we must be prepared for them, and must keep a careful watch all night. Had the wind been suitable, the sailors would have left the harbour at once, but there was a heavy surf on the bar, and the wind was blowing in the harbour, so we could not get out.

After I had been some hours on board, I found the sailors talking together in low tones and looking at me very suspiciously. I had no idea what this meant, but after a time two of them came to me and told me they suspected me of being in agreement with the Zulus, and having led the captain into an ambush. I told them it was not my plan for the captain to go on shore for water; and if I had been friends with the Zulus, how was it I had shot them, and killed one of them with a pike? The sailors replied that they had no proof I had done so, and they would rather not have me on board. I told them that, if I had not come on board, they would have gone on shore fearlessly, and would all have been killed by the Caffres, and their ship taken. This argument produced no effect on the sailors; who, like all ignorant people, considered that no amount of reason or facts were as powerful as their own prejudices. They had somehow conceived the idea that I was in league with the Zulus, and could not perceive how differently I should have acted had I been so. They had, however, made up their minds to get rid of me, and to turn me out of the ship; and though I begged hard to be allowed to stay and go with the ship to Cape Town, they would not hear of it. They seemed to consider they were very generous not to string me up to the yard-arm, for having been concerned in what they called "the murder" of their captain and shipmates. They would not allow me to keep the pistol, but gave me a knife; and then, making me get into the boat, they pulled ashore, and there left me.

When I found myself once more on the land, alone and unarmed, I began to think that the Caffres were better than the white men. It was in consequence of the ignorant obstinacy of the white men that they had fallen into ambuscades and been slaughtered. This style of proceeding seems common among white men, as was shown during the Zulu war; where, in spite of all that has been written about the Zulus and Boers, the English commanders acted just as foolishly and recklessly as did the captain of the little ship, and the disasters which occurred might have been avoided by any one acquainted with the Zulu style of warfare. It was true that I was unarmed and without food, in a country where behind every bush there might be an enemy; but I did not feel as helpless as would a man who had lived all his life among towns and civilisation. I could construct traps for animals, I knew what roots and berries were good to eat, there was plenty of water to drink, and I might find some weapons. Besides, it was possible that another ship might come to the bay, the captain and sailors belonging to which would not be as self-sufficient as were those I had just left. I might still remain concealed in the bush for a long time, and probably might make my way down to the Umzimvubu tribe, and live the remainder of my life as a chief. The white men I had seen were not of a class to impress me much with the advantages of civilisation. The Caffres, it was true, were cruel in some ways, and had quite different ideas from the whites; but there was something very pleasant in their wild life, the simple requirements of existence, and their love of reasoning from facts. White men had their sciences, about which I knew little; but none of these could follow the spoor of a horse for miles over a hard-soiled country, nor could they distinguish the footprint of a hyaena from that of a leopard; and if any of them happened to be left alone in the bush as I was, surrounded by enemies, and without weapons or food, they would certainly starve or be captured.

The dress that had been given me by the captain was a blue flannel jersey, blue trousers, and a jacket. To be seen in this dress at any distance by a Zulu would have been fatal, for he would have recognised a white man's attire. I therefore cut up the jacket to make "tails," which I hung round my waist. I kept on the jersey because it made me look dark-coloured, but I dispensed with the trousers. People who have worn clothes all their lives do not know how imprisoned a man feels in clothing, when he has been accustomed to live without any. When I had on a jersey and a jacket I felt as though I could not cast an assagy; and as to running with trousers on, it was simply impossible. When I had divested myself of my unnecessary raiment, I felt much more as if I could take care of myself than I did when I was in sailor's clothes. The weather was warm, but the nights were chilly. I had become so accustomed to be without clothes that I suppose I was like an Englishman's face, which he never covers with clothes even in the coldest weather.

I did not long remain on the beach, but made my way into the bush to a thick part where there were some large trees; I then sat down to think what should be done. I knew there would be great danger in attempting to make my way down to the Umzimvubu; and, once there, I could not expect to get away in a ship, as no ships ever came near the coast at that part. I believed it possible that when the news reached Cape Town that white men had been murdered at Natal, some soldiers might be sent up in large ships, either to revenge the death of the murdered men, or to obtain particulars of the massacre, so if I remained near the bay I should stand the best chance of getting out of the country. I suppose it was on account of my white blood, if I may use the term, that made me wish to go again to civilisation, as also the desire to see my father. For there was much to attract me among my old companions. If I returned to my old residence, I should at once take my place again as a chief and have everything I wanted. My companions of years would be again with me; and I should rest, as it were, on the laurels I had won in my various adventures. I had already discovered that white men did not seem to value or even understand the qualities I possessed, whilst my being unable to read or write well was looked upon as indicating ignorance. When I lived among youths of my own age in England, I believed I should be laughed at because I did not know as much of book learning as they were acquainted with. My books had been the forests, the plains, the rivers and mountains, and the skies above us. To read from the signs on the ground what animals had travelled over it, and when they had travelled, was an interesting book to me, and quite intelligible. To know the time at night by the position of certain stars was also a page that was intelligible; but how should I feel when asked to read from a printed book, and found myself laughed at as a dunce? I had already seen that white men were suspicious of me, and acted on these suspicions alone. Considering all these points, I felt quite undecided whether to again join the Umzimvubu Caffres, and live all my life as a Caffre; or wait on the chance of some ship coming into the harbour, and of being able to get a passage to Cape Town or England.

Although much pre-occupied with these thoughts, I did not neglect the necessities of the present. I must make myself secure from the possible attacks of two forest enemies, viz., snakes and leopards. I must sleep, and when asleep I might be seized by a leopard, or be coiled round by a rock-snake; for there were, I knew, rock-snakes in this bush at least thirty feet long, and to be seized by one of these monsters would be certain death. There was no time before dark to build a kraal, so I cut down branches and brushwood, and arranged this in a circle round the spot on which I intended to pass the night. I cut also two sticks, one having a large knob at the end; the other, which was very hard wood, I sharpened so that it was like a spear. This was the best I could do in the short time before it came dark. I then lay down and listened to hear what might occur near me.

I soon heard some rustling in the bush, which sometimes came near and then went away to a distance. This might be caused by a buck, but it might be a leopard. It was so dark that I could see nothing. The nights in Africa are darker than they are in England; and when I held my hand up I could not see it, though it was not half a yard from my eyes. It is difficult to imagine anything more exciting and trying to the nerves than to be thus alone in the bush during a dark night; when you know that dangerous animals are near you, and when noises indicate that these animals are aware of your presence, and are examining you to see whether you can be safely attacked. To sleep was impossible; I did not like even to lie down in a position of rest, but crouched on the ground with my sharpened stick ready for use in case I was attacked. Towards daylight, however, I could resist the desire to sleep no longer; and, as all seemed quiet round me, I lay down and was soon in a sound sleep.

When I awoke, the sun was many times its own size above the horizon, and was shining on the trunks of the trees around me. I ascended one of the trees, from which I could see the masts of the ships in the bay. The wind was blowing from the south-east, and as long as this wind continued the vessel would not get over the bar. I knew as long as this ship remained in the harbour the Zulus would not leave this part of the country; they knew the stupid character of the English sailors, and they also must be aware that they could not leave until they had procured fresh water. Having descended the tree, I procured some fruit and berries; and, making my way to the edge of the bush, I procured some fresh water, of which I drank a large quantity, for I did not think it safe to move about in the bush, and did not wish to have to come again to the water during the day. On my return from the *vlei*, I heard a rustling in the bush near me; and, becoming instantly still, I heard some animal creeping away. Being desirous of knowing what the animal was, I moved cautiously to where I had heard the noise; and at only a few yards from me came on the carcass of a red bush-buck which had been only lately killed. There was a mark on the buck's neck which I knew indicated that a leopard had been its destroyer; but little of the buck was eaten, so I knew I had disturbed the leopard at its feast. With my knife I cut several strips of meat from the back and hind quarters of the antelope; and, wrapping these in some large leaves, I fastened them round with strips of bark, and was then provided with food for at least three days.

On again ascending the tree to look out, I saw a boat leaving the vessel with some sailors, and I could see casks in the boat; so I knew they were going to the shore to procure water. These sailors, instead of going up the bay, had seen a small stream of water running down the side of the bluff, and had determined to get their barrels filled from this stream. It was certainly a safer place than the Umbilo river would have been, and I saw the men fill several casks and return in safety to their ship. Soon after a change of wind took place; and, the sea going rapidly down, the surf on the bar decreased, the sailors set sails on the vessel, and she glided out of the harbour, and, crossing the bar, was soon lost to view behind the high land of the bluff.

I was now once more alone as regards white men, but I might be surrounded by enemies; so after looking all round the country as far as I could obtain a view, I descended from the tree and sat down to consider what to do. Suddenly I heard a human voice—it came from the shore outside the bush. Listening attentively, I heard the Zulu language spoken; and as the men spoke loudly, their words were distinctly audible.

"The ship has left now," said one of the men, "there is nothing for us to wait for."

"He must have gone in the ship," said another.

"Yes, his people must have taken him with them. He was very cunning; dressed like a white man, he deceived us at first, and he must have heard us speak of the plan for capturing the boat at the narrows. I knew him when he rose in the boat after shooting Copen."

"He has escaped us," said another Zulu, "but we have killed four white men, and have their small guns to take to our chief." "*Hambani si hamb!*" ("let us be going"), said a loud voice, and I could hear the tread of the men as they moved along the beach.

I remained motionless while the sun travelled about ten times its own breadth, for I knew enough of the Zulus' cunning to be aware that this conversation might be carried on in various places, as a trap to throw me off my guard, in case I was concealed near enough to hear what was spoken. I then crept through the bush as stealthily as a snake, and examined the beach, and saw a long distance off a party of about forty Zulus moving along the shore towards the Umganie river, which was the direction of the Zulu country. I remained concealed until it became nearly dark, and then made my way down to the entrance of the bay, where the channel was very narrow. The tide was low, and no current was running in either direction; so I swam across the channel without difficulty, and made my way up the bluff to my old kraal, which I found had not been burnt or destroyed. There were several excavations made by the sea on the shore side of the bluff—sort of caves, in fact—and to one of these I made my way; and, having lighted a fire in this cave, cooked the whole of the antelope's flesh and made a good meal, whilst I reserved a large quantity for future use. The light from my fire could only be seen from the sea, and there was no chance of any Zulu getting a glimpse either of the fire or its smoke. I found several small fish in the various pools which had been left by the high tide, and these I intended to cook and eat on the morrow, because fish will not last fresh as long as will flesh, especially when the weather is very hot. Having had a good meal I felt fit for anything.

There are probably some people who would feel unhappy if they were alone in a wild country, without clothes, weapons, or a stock of food; but I had been trained in a rough school, and having, at least, two days' food with me, I was far from feeling in a bad way. There is always something pleasant in knowing that, on one's own exertions only, one's success or failure really depends. Half the pleasure in life is lost when we are helped to everything by the hands of another, our independence is gone, and we become too often dissatisfied and idle. Not only did my daily food depend on my exertions, but actually my life was in my own hands: any incautious act, such as showing myself on the beach or bluff, might lead to my being attacked by the Zulus. It was necessary to think before I did anything, and my daily habits were therefore the result of long consideration.

I had a wish to visit the Umbilo river, to see whether any of the weapons belonging to the captain remained on the spot where he had been killed. I knew this was a dangerous expedition to make; but everything I did was dangerous now, for I could not tell who was my enemy, or where I might meet one. I decided that any expedition I might make ought to be undertaken towards evening; because, if I should be seen by the enemy and pursued, the darkness of night would soon prevent them from following my spoor, and I should get a good start of them during darkness. If I could procure some weapon, even an assagy, I should feel more able to defend myself against some possible assailant. As soon as the sun approached the western horizon I moved along the beach towards the Umbilo river, which I reached just as there was light enough to see surrounding objects. I found the bodies of the captain and his men: these had been mutilated by the Zulus, and the clothes of all of them had been carried off. I looked carefully over the ground and among the long grass, for anything that might have been dropped, and was delighted to discover a double-barrelled pistol, which I knew belonged to the captain. It was unloaded, and had evidently been fired very recently. Near the pistol I found a small leather bag, in which were ten ball-cartridges, the bullets from which fitted the pistol. Before finding this I was only a match for one enemy, but when my pistol was loaded I knew I was equal to three at least.

I had no desire to pass the night near the dead bodies of the sailors, so I made my way through the bush towards the beach, where there were rocks and hollow places, amidst which I could find a secure resting-place for the night.

I had slept for some time when I was roused by a noise not far from me. It was a loud grunt or roar—I could not say which was the proper term. So I listened with the hope of gaining more information. My pistol in my hand, I crept to the opening of the cleft in the rock, in front of my sleeping-place. The breakers on the shore before me were sparkling with a thousand stars, for the sea-water here is very phosphorescent, and, consequently, made objects between me and these breakers quite distinct. I thus saw the form of an enormous animal standing near the shore, and recognised it as that of the *imvubu*, which is the Caffre name of the hippopotamus. If I had only possessed my bow and poisoned arrows, I might now have tried them on this monster, and probably might have been successful in driving an arrow through his thick hide; but to fire at him with my pistol would, I knew, merely be wasting a bullet and a charge of powder. Besides, I could eat but a small part of the *imvubu*; and as the vultures would be sure to circle in the air above where the carcase of the monster was to be found, any Caffres in the neighbourhood would notice these, and would come to see what was attracting them. At present I wanted to remain concealed, and to think what was to be done in the future. I lay on the ground watching the *imvubu*, which every now and then gave loud grunts, and opened his enormous mouth, as though gaping after a long sleep. The monster then moved along the beach; and, as I found on following his spoor in the morning, he had his home in the Umlass river, about two miles from where I had slept.

When the first signs of daylight appeared, I made a meal of oysters; and then ascended the high land to examine the surrounding country and see what was going on. I soon noticed vultures circling in the air, near the head of Natal Bay, and knew that these birds had been attracted by the bodies of the captain and sailors, whose bones they would pick, and leave but little for the hyaenas and jackals.

As soon as I saw no indications of men anywhere I walked on the high land near the sea, keeping a little on the side next the sea, so that I could not be seen from the land side. Every now and then I ascended to the ridge, just high enough to see over it, and then examined the country to discover anything going on near me. I should have found the opera-glasses very useful here; but my eyes had been well-trained, and I was not likely to fail in seeing anything unusual within one or two miles of me. People who have not been accustomed to use their eyes much, especially in a wild country, do not know how the sight can be cultivated. It is a case of eyes and no eyes. One man will see the spoor of animals and signs of different kinds, whilst another will not notice one of these things. A snake, for instance, I never missed seeing, and was as unlikely to put my foot on a snake without seeing it, as some men would be to put their foot in a pool of water.

I walked on towards the Umlass river, sometimes through thick bush, sometimes on the open ground, but saw no indications of men having lately passed over the ground. There were some old kraals here, but they had been long deserted; but some mealies were growing near the kraal, where the gardens had been, and some of these I gathered and ate: though they were rather tough, still they were good for food.

Not having slept much on the previous night, and the sun being now high in the heavens, and giving great heat, I decided to sleep for awhile. I therefore examined all the ground for about the distance of two assagy-throws from me, to see if there were any signs of snakes near; for I did not wish to sleep where it was likely a poisonous snake might crawl over me, or a large rock-snake become familiar. Seeing no signs of snakes, I lay down under the branches of a large euphorbia tree; and there, in the shade, I was soon fast asleep.

When I awoke, it was because of some noise which had disturbed me; and, upon glancing round, I saw some twenty or thirty men, armed with assagies, standing round me. At first I thought they were Zulus, but, on a second look, knew they were men of the Umzimvubu tribe; and I then, to my delight, recognised my old friend Inyati, and near him my companion Inyoni. At first they did not recognise me, but believed I was one of the sailors from the ship who had escaped the Zulus. When, however, I called Inyati by name, and he had looked at me close, he was astonished and delighted to find it was me. Inyoni shouted and danced as though he were mad. Having sent four men in different directions to keep watch and prevent a surprise, we sat down on the grass, and I related to the men all that had happened to me since I had last seen them. My journey from the Zulu country down to Natal, Inyati said, was wonderful; whilst he laughed at the ignorance of the captain and sailors, in allowing themselves to be caught in so simple a manner by the Zulus. I felt rather small in being caught asleep by Inyati and his men, so I asked him how he had discovered me.

He replied that he and his men had kept under the ridge of the hill, so as to examine the country, without themselves being seen; that with his glasses he could see everything a long way off, and he had seen me just before I lay down. He and his men then crept up to where I was sleeping, and had just surrounded me when I awoke. I informed Inyati that I believed no Zulus were now west of the Tugela; and that, unless a large army came to attack our tribe, none of the Zulus would come to Natal, as their object of driving away the white man had been accomplished.

Inyati then asked me what I was doing, or intended to do.

Thinking it unwise to tell him I wanted to get away in a ship, I replied that I was making my way to my own tribe when he and his men surprised me.

Being satisfied that no enemy was near us, it was agreed that we should hunt, and procure some flesh for a meal. The spoor of several buck had been seen, principally that of the *impenzi*, or duiker, as the small antelope is called by the English. This buck lives in the country where the bush is not thick, but is scattered, and where rocks and long grass afford plenty of cover. The manner by which we secured these antelope without firearms was simple and effective. The spoor of the animal was followed until it was certain that the buck was concealed in a small clump of bush. This bush was then surrounded, the Caffres being all at some distance from where the buck was crouching. The circle of Caffres then closed in rapidly and silently; and when only a few yards from each other, stones were thrown into the bush. The duiker then started out on the side opposite to that from which the stones had been thrown, and was met by a shower of assagies, one or two of which usually hit it. If it was missed, it would attempt to escape on the opposite side, when another shower of assagies assailed it. By this means three duiker were soon killed, and we then lighted a fire, and enjoyed a feast of venison.

There was much news which Inyoni told me that was interesting. One of the English ladies had died: I could not find out which, but Inyoni said she was not very young. He also told me that elephants had again come down near the kraal in which I had lived, and that there was a lion not far off. He was very anxious to kill this lion, not only on account of the honour that would attend the performance, but also to obtain a necklace of its teeth and claws. He suggested that when I came back to the kraal, he and I might make an expedition and shoot this lion.

After the escapes I had passed through among the Zulus, and the manner in which I had been treated by the English sailors, I felt quite at home among my old companions, and thought, as I have often done since, that the so-called savage is superior in many ways to the imperfectly educated Englishman. The Zulus and the Caffres on the south-east coast of Africa were what would be called gentlemanly men if they had resided among civilised beings. They were most considerate in all their proceedings one to another, and there was a ready acknowledgment of superiority when this had been demonstrated; whereas, amidst so-called civilisation, men too often attempt to claim merits which they never did and never will possess, and thus to claim to command when they are only fitted to obey. I soon discovered that my adventures and escapes had raised me in the opinions of my old companions. They addressed me now always as *inkosi* ("chief"), and listened with great attention to all I said.

After we had finished our meal, two Caffres were sent on to the hill-tops to keep a look-out, and the remainder of our party lay down in the shade and slept, till we felt ready to start on our journey down to the Umzimvubu country.

I felt quite safe now that I had so many armed and watchful men with me. We walked on over the hills and through the bush, occasionally stopping for an hour or two, to hunt duiker or red bush-buck, both of which were plentiful about this part of the country. We never neglected keeping watch whilst we were hunting; because, knowing how rapidly the Zulus move, and how fond they are of surprises, we never were certain that a party of these men might not be concealed somewhere and might suddenly attack us. Had the commanders on the English side, during the late Zulu war, been as well acquainted with the habits of these men as we were, such disasters as befell us would have been guarded against or avoided; but it seems as though men were selected for that war because they knew nothing either of the Zulus, their country, or language, but because they had crammed successfully at the Staff College.

When we arrived at the first kraal in our own country and among our own tribe, I was welcomed with shouts and congratulations by the men, and with pleasant smiles by the females; and certainly for a time I felt very glad that I had not sailed in the ship from Natal Bay, but was again among my friends who knew me, and where my past acts had caused me to be respected and admired. There are few things—as I have found in after-life—so painful as being among strangers, where the past of which we may be proud is unknown, and unthought of, and where we occupy the same position as though in our previous career we had acted like fools or rogues.

Chapter Sixteen.

Almost immediately after my return to my old kraal, I went to see the English ladies who had been on board the ship. I found that Mrs Apton was dead, but the others seemed to have become quite reconciled to their lot. They were now the mothers of several children, and they told me that they would not now leave the country if they could. What they most wished for were some clothes in which they might dress like Englishwomen. Their knowledge of dress, however, had enabled them to form, out of the skins of antelopes, very ornamental dresses; and although some people might have laughed at their attire, yet the Caffres thought their ornaments most becoming. It seemed singular how very quickly these females had become accustomed to the strange life they were compelled to lead. They did not work in the gardens as did the Caffre women, but were treated just the same as the wives of the greatest chiefs. The other Caffre women were not jealous of the English females, but treated them kindly, and seemed to regard them as strangers deserving of hospitality. What was most admired was the long hair of the English ladies, the Caffre women having only woolly locks.

There was no restriction now placed upon my movements. I had fought for my tribe, and had shown that I was true to the men who had saved my life; so I was trusted just the same as though I had been born a Caffre. Although I had been

so well-treated by my present companions, and the life I now led was very pleasant, yet the fact of having seen and conversed with Englishmen had caused a feeling of restlessness to take possession of me; and I was always thinking of where I should be, and what I should be doing, if I had succeeded in getting away in the ship from Natal Bay. It was now a common thing for me to leave my hut and go down to the hills near the coast, and watch the sea, in order to find out if any ships were near. I knew enough of English habits to be certain that the slaughter of the captain of the vessel would be revenged, though I did not know by what means this would be accomplished.

It was about a moon and a half, or six weeks, after I had returned to the Umzimvubu district, that one morning I saw from my look-out station a large ship sailing, and not very far from the land. I remembered that the sailors had told me that when a vessel was going round the Cape to the east, she always kept about sixty or seventy miles from the land, to avoid the strong current that ran from east to west. When, however, a ship was travelling from east to west she kept nearer the coast, so as to get the benefit of the stream in her favour. The vessel I now saw was going eastwards, and yet was close inland; so I thought it very likely she was coming to Natal. She was of too large a size to come over the bar; and I believed she must be a vessel of war. As she came nearer the land I could see guns looking out, as it were, of her ports; and I then knew she was a man-of-war. Before the sun set this ship had anchored opposite the harbour of Natal, and had furled all her sails. I returned to my kraal and kept silence as to what I had seen. I wanted to think during the night what I should do as regards this ship. If I told the men of the kraal that a ship had come to Natal, they might object to my going there, for fear I should tell the tale about the slaughter of my shipmates. Silence therefore was the most prudent plan. Just before sunrise, I, with a large bag of boiled corn and armed with my pistols and an assagay, started for Natal Bay. The journey was a long one, but I was in such training that I could run and walk very fast, and I believe could manage fifty miles a day, without much fatigue. It was near sunset, however, before I reached the high land on the west of the bay: from this high land the ship was seen, and when first viewed I saw two boats rowing to the vessel. There was a great deal of surf on the bar, so I felt certain that no boat could have entered the harbour that day, and that probably the boats I had seen had been to look at the bar to see if it were practicable.

I found my old hut on the bluff just as I had left it; so, making a meal of my boiled corn, I lay down and slept well after my long journey.

I was awake in the morning by the screams of a sea-eagle, and found, on looking out, that the sun had risen many times its own diameter in the sky. The wind had changed, and was now blowing from the north, and the surf on the bar was much less than it was on the previous day, and seemed to be decreasing. On looking towards the ship I saw two boats full of men pulling towards the harbour; and these, I saw, would, if properly managed, be able to cross the bar and enter the harbour. Descending the bluff, I went down to the shore, and, breaking off a large branch of a tree, waved it over my head, hoping that some one either on the ship or in the boats would see me. It was exciting work seeing these boats approach the bar and wait for some time as they saw the waves break and curl at this spot. After some time the oars flashed in the water. I saw the boats first on the crest of a wave, then lost sight of them, then saw them reappear and glide along in comparatively smooth water as they passed the dangerous breaking water on the bar. The boats were now so near that I could count the men in the boats, and could see they were all armed, and were dressed alike, which was not the case with the crew of the small vessel that had previously visited Natal. As the boats approached the shore several men stood up in the front part of the boat, and seemed to be on the look-out for an enemy, as they had guns, which they held ready for firing. I called out that there was no one on the shore but me, and saw that surprise was caused by my speaking English, because I was in dress like a Caffre, and my skin had become very brown.

On approaching the rocks on which I stood the boat stopped, and a young-looking man at the stern of the leading boat called out—

“Who are you?”

“I am an English boy who was shipwrecked here some years ago.”

“What is your name?”

I was about to answer “Umkinglovu,” but I remembered that I was called Julius by my father, so I replied, “My name is Julius.”

“Are there any Caffres about here?” inquired the officer, for such I found afterwards that he was.

“I do not think there are; but if there should be, I don’t think they would do you any harm.”

The officer smiled as he said, “Do me any harm! no, I don’t think they are likely to do that. Are there any white men here?”

“None,” I replied. “The few white men who were here have either been killed by a war-party of the Zulus, or have escaped in a vessel.”

“Then how is it you have escaped?”

“I was with a tribe down the coast, who fought with the Zulus and beat them off.”

“How did you come by those pistols?”

“They belonged to the captain of a small vessel here, who was killed by the Zulus as he was getting water up the bay.”

As I said this the officer spoke in a low tone to a companion who was sitting near him. He then said—

“Put those pistols on the ground, and come into the boat.”

I did as he told me, and stepped into the boat, the sailors eyeing me suspiciously.

“Pull off from the shore,” said the officer, and the boat was moved into the middle of the stream, so that it was safe from an attack by any one not armed with guns.

“Now sit down here,” said the officer, as he pointed to the stern of the boat, “and answer my questions.”

I complied with his request, and he then questioned me—as to where the nearest Caffres lived how numerous they were, how they were armed and whether they were friendly or otherwise to white men.

I gave him all the information I possessed on these points, but I found it difficult to make him understand how it was that the Zulus were enemies of the white man, but the Caffres about Natal were friendly. He seemed to look upon all Caffres as “niggers,” and not to distinguish the one tribe from the other.

He then asked me if I could show him where the captain of the merchantman had been killed, and upon my pointing to the place he ordered his men to pull up the bay, to the spot. Upon reaching this, I explained the whole affair to him, and pointed out where the Zulus had attempted to stop me. As I continued my account, I found by the looks of these sailors that I rose very much in their estimation.

“Why did you not come away in the ship?” inquired the officer.

I told him of the behaviour of the sailors, and their suspicions of me, and that they had put me on shore; that, if I had not been well acquainted with the habits of the Zulus, I should have been assagied or made prisoner by these people.

As we pulled down the bay towards the bar, the officer told me he intended taking me on board the ship to see the captain, and to tell him what I had seen and known about the slaughter at Natal.

Before we had gone halfway to the ship, I became very sick. There was a heavy sea on for a boat, and I was unaccustomed to the motion, so that I was soon suffering from the effects of the waves on the boat.

I, however, scrambled up on to the deck of the ship, and found myself in the presence of several officers, who looked at me with astonishment. The officer who had brought me in the boat told a tall officer, who, I afterwards learned, was the captain, what my previous history had been. The captain at once was deeply interested, and inquired all particulars about the shipwreck, and what had become of those who had escaped drowning. I told him that I was the only male survivor, that the others had by a mistake been assagied, as it was supposed they were slave-catchers. The females, I said, were the wives of Caffres, and would not wish to leave their adopted country. The captain having listened to all I had to tell him, asked me if I should like some clothes, for I was dressed like a Caffre. Upon my intimating that, if I remained in the country clothes would be useless, but if I were to be taken away I must have some raiment, the captain took me to his cabin, and having sent for some of the midshipmen, I was soon rigged out in a suit of clothes that fitted me tolerably well. From the captain I learned that he had come up to Natal to make inquiries relative to the murders that had been committed on the white people, and to punish the murderers. I explained to him that the Caffres who lived near the Umlass and in the neighbourhood, had nothing to do with the slaughter of these people; that it was a war-party of the Zulus which had come down the country for the purpose of killing all white men. He seemed, however, disinclined to believe that the people in the country were not a party to the massacre, till I told him of the fight we had with the Zulus, and our battle near the Umlass river.

On that night I slept on board ship, and by the following morning had quite recovered from my sea-sickness. The captain sent for me very early, and asked if I could guide a party to the nearest Caffre kraal, as he wanted to see the people in their natural state. I told him it might be dangerous, as the Caffres would suppose we had come to attack them or to make slaves of them. He laughed at the idea of being attacked; for, as he would take a large party with him, who would be armed, he considered he would be more than a match for all the Caffres in the country. I told him he did not know what these people were in war, and how by a surprise they would to a certain extent do away with the advantages which his firearms gave him. About fifty sailors were armed, and being led by the captain we landed at the upper part of the bay, and marched on towards the Umlass. The chief in that neighbourhood was named Umnini, and was a very fine fellow. I was anxious to let him know we were a friendly party come to see him, but I could not meet or see any Caffres by whom to send a message. I felt quite sure that we had been observed, for Caffres are very watchful. We had passed over some open ground just beyond the Umslatazane river, and had entered a bush-path beyond, when I heard a shrill whistle which I knew meant a signal for attack. I at once shouted in Caffre, “We are friends, come to see Umnini.” The captain looked at me in astonishment and said, “What are you shouting about?” I told him he must halt his men and keep them quiet, or we might have a thousand men on us in half a minute. As he could not see a Caffre, or even hear one, he said, “A thousand men! why there is not one to be seen.” I again called out in Caffre and said, “I have brought the chief of the big ship to talk to Umnini. He is friendly and wants to see him.” There was silence for a short time, and then a voice from the bush was heard, and inquiry was made as to why a messenger was not sent first to say we were friends.

I replied that the chief of the ship did not know what the law was in this country.

The captain, who was much surprised at hearing the voice come from the bush when he could see no one, asked me what they were saying. I told him that the Caffres suspected that he had come to attack them or to capture some slaves, and if I had not spoken he would have been attacked in this bush. I inquired of him if I should ask the Caffre chief to advance and to talk to us, for it would not be prudent for us to go on any farther unless the Caffres allowed us. The captain seemed rather suspicious of treachery, but having cautioned his men to keep together, said that I had better ask the chief to come to us. I called out again, asking the chief to come; when, from behind every tree and bush, and apparently out of the ground, a Caffre appeared, each armed with his six assagies and a knob-kerrie, and carrying his shield before him. Our party was completely surrounded, and had war been intended we should soon have been assagied. The chief who commanded this party was Umnini’s young brother, whom I knew well. As he quietly advanced to us, he showed no surprise or any sign of fear. His appearance, I saw, impressed the captain, who touched his cap as the chief advanced. This young chief was called Ingwe, and I told him who the captain was, and that he had come to pay a visit to Umnini. Ingwe shook hands with the captain, and then, speaking a few words to the Caffres informing them that we were friends, told them to go on to Umnini’s kraal and announce our arrival.

Ingwe led the way, and we walked through the bush-paths. The sailors seemed surprised at the order and discipline of these Caffres, and the dignified manner in which they behaved; but their surprise was greater when we approached the chiefs kraal, and found the men drawn up in two lines, between which we marched till we came near the huts, where Umnini met us. Umnini addressed all his conversation to me, and I translated it to the captain, and when the captain spoke I had to turn his words into Caffre.

Umnini said he was glad to see the chief of the large ship, and was sorry there had nearly been a mistake made, as the captain came armed and like a war-party; but he was welcome to the kraal, and a young bull would shortly be killed for a feast for the sailors.

The captain replied that he did not think his coming armed would have been mistaken for war, as he had no cause of complaint against Umnini, but wished to see the chief in his kraal; that he did not wish an ox killed, as his men would not be allowed to eat at that hour.

Umnini then asked the captain and me to come into his kraal, where we saw several of Umnini's wives and children. The captain sat down in the hut, and we had a long conversation about the Zulus, and their attack on the white people at the bay; also about the life the Caffres lived, their habits, etc. The captain kept on making notes in a pocket-book as he received his answers, and seemed much interested in what he heard. He then asked about the white women who had been wrecked with me, and inquired whether it were possible to see them and persuade them to return to civilisation in his ship.

I told him I believed they would avoid being seen, and certainly would not leave the country, as they were the mothers of several children, and were regularly accustomed to the life they now led. We stopped about as long as it took the sun to go ten times its diameter; and then, bidding the chief good-bye, we returned to our boats and pulled off to the ship. Umnini had made a present of a gourd snuff-box to the captain, and had received in return a watch-chain, which Umnini hung round his neck.

Several of the officers of the ship were anxious to go on shore to have some shooting, and asked me where was the best place to go. I told them that in the bush there were elephants and antelope; that it was dangerous sport going after elephants, but if they were careful, they might kill one. Four officers arranged to go with me, in search of them, and to start at daybreak. On the open ground near the head of the bay, there were some pools of water just outside the bush, where the elephants were fond of drinking during the night. Upon landing from our boats, we walked to these ponds, and I told the officers that we must not speak above a whisper when we entered the bush, and must walk so quietly that no man could hear the footsteps of the man in front of him. The officers smiled at my cautious instructions, and seemed amused at the idea of being taught by a mere boy. The elephants had visited the pool early in the morning, and had then entered the bush by one of their well-worn paths. The traces of the animals were very plain, the print of their large feet being distinctly marked in many places. We had not entered the bush more than the distance of four or five throws of an assagy, when I heard the slight crack of a stick in front of us. I stopped, and stooping down, saw the outline of an elephant looming amidst some dense underwood. I pointed to this spot and whispered to the officers, "Elephant."

They stooped and peeped, but could see nothing. I then signalled to them to go slowly forward, when they would, I hoped, obtain a view of the animal. The officers crept on, but not being accustomed to the bush, each man made more noise than would fifty Caffres. They had only gone on a few steps, when they turned to me and said, "That is not an elephant, it is only some old tree." At the same instant, the elephant, hearing their voices, turned in the bush; and, crashing through the underwood, was soon far out of sight and beyond a shot. The astonishment of the officers was very great when they saw their "old tree" become a nearly full-grown elephant, and heard it crashing through the bush, the breaking branches which it carried away in its rush sounding like the report of musketry.

"The youngster was right after all," they exclaimed. "Only fancy, an elephant standing as quietly as that."

They wanted to follow the animal; but I explained to them that they might as well follow a bird on the wing, as the elephant would probably not stop until it had gone some four or five miles through the bush, and would then be on the alert and difficult to approach.

Finding there was no chance of again seeing the elephant, the officers decided to come out of the bush, and try to get a shot at some buck on the more open ground.

We had gone some distance from the bush, when, on looking towards the Umganie river, I saw in the distance a large party of Caffres. I instantly lay down, and called eagerly to the officers to do the same; for from the glance I had obtained I thought this must be a war-party of the Zulus, probably sent down to see what the ship was doing here. The officers laughed at my caution, but they concealed themselves, though not as quickly as they ought to have done. I wished now that I had my glasses with me, for the body of Caffres was a long way off. I soon saw, however, that the party were Zulus; and informed the officers of the fact, and that we must run for our lives.

Had I been alone I should not have feared for the result of a race, because we were some considerable distance in advance of the Zulus, and I could run as fast and as far as the best man amongst them; but I had already found that the officers were not fit to run far, the long time they had been on board ship having prevented them from getting into racing condition. Our boat was fully a mile and a half, as I should now term the distance, from where we were concealed, and I knew that a Zulu would run this distance about as fast again as the officers. I told them that their lives now depended on their doing exactly what I directed them to do; and I added that they ought now to know that I was better acquainted with things in this country than they were, as I could distinguish an elephant from a dead tree. They said—

"All right, give your orders."

We crawled along the ground for some distance, till we were concealed by a portion of the bush; we then rose and ran along the edge of the bush, but we did not run very fast, for I was afraid that my companions would get out of breath before the real race began. When we had gone some distance near the bush, I found that, to go in the direction of our boats, we must now move in the open country. I told my companions of my plan, and said that we could move no faster than the slowest runner among them. I saw that one of the officers, who was rather stout, was already out of breath, and I feared that we should find it hard work reaching our boat before the Zulus were upon us. When we struck off into the open plain I looked round, and then knew that the Zulus must have seen us from the first, as they were coming on at a run, which, although not very fast, had yet enabled them to decrease the distance between them and us.

"Now do your best," I said, and we commenced our run.

The Zulus uttered a shout, as they now saw us plainly, and several of their fastest runners advanced in front of the main body. I now carried two guns of the officers that they might get on the more easily, but found that our pursuers were gaining rapidly on us.

When we were within a short distance of the boat, about twenty Zulus were nearly within an assagy's-throw of us. I said to the officers, "Run to the boat: I will stop the Zulus." The officers ran on whilst I stopped, and, dropping one of the guns, aimed with the other at the leading Zulu. The man dodged about as I aimed, but my bullet struck him, and he fell to the ground; with the second barrel I hit another Zulu, and then the other men dropped on the ground to conceal themselves. Picking up the gun I had dropped, I darted off to the boat, into which the officers had embarked, and jumped into it, telling them to push off at once. The water for some distance was shallow, and before we could get into deep water, about a hundred Zulus dashed in, and were hurling their assagies at us. We fired at these men, whilst the four sailors in the boat rowed as fast as they could; and as the water became deeper, we could move faster than the Zulus, and so were soon beyond the range of their assagies.

The Zulus, on finding they could not reach us, instantly left the water and concealed themselves in the bush, in order to avoid our bullets.

"Smart work," said one of the officers, who seemed rather to enjoy the excitement; "I don't think I ever ran so far before." Another officer said, "I tell you what it is, youngster, you are well up in this kind of work."

As we rowed down the bay I heard a voice shouting from one of the islands in the bay, and asking what number of Zulus there were. I told the Caffre about five hundred.

I now asked the officers to stop the boat, because near the head of the bay I saw some dust rising, and I suspected that this was caused by some of Umnini's warriors who had been assembled to resist any attack the Zulus might make. The rapidity with which these people could arm and assemble was very great. From a distant kraal men would arm and run towards the point of danger. As they passed the various kraals on the way they would be joined by the warriors from these kraals, and as every full-grown man was a warrior, the army soon swelled to a considerable size. I should have liked to join Umnini's people in what I expected would be an attack on the Zulus, but I did not like to take the officers with me, and they said they would not allow me to leave them; so we kept the boat in deep water, and beyond where an assagy could be cast on to the boat. The Zulus, who had followed us down to the water, had concealed themselves in the bush as soon as we had secured our retreat; but they now evidently had some knowledge of the approach of Umnini's men, as they were moving rapidly through the bush, and calling to one another. The distance from the head of the bay to where the Zulus had followed us was not very far, and I knew that the rapidity with which the Caffres moved would soon enable them to attack the Zulus. The latter, however, either thought the numbers of their enemies too great, or else they did not wish to fight, as there was nothing to fight for, no cattle being near enough for the Zulus to carry off, even if they gained the victory; so they retreated rapidly towards the Umganie river, followed by Umnini's people.



"WE ASCENDED THE HIGH LAND, SO AS TO OBTAIN A VIEW OF WHAT WAS TAKING PLACE." [p. 259.]

I knew that, from the summit of some tall trees on the shore of the bay near the bluff, a view could be obtained of the coast even beyond the Umganie; so I suggested to the officers that we pulled down the bay, and ascended the high land, so as to obtain a view of what was taking place. We soon reached the shore beneath the bluff, and ascending it found that we could see both the Zulus and Umnini's Caffres. The Zulus, finding that they would be overtaken before they could cross the river, had faced about, and, standing shoulder to shoulder, were awaiting the attack of their pursuers. The battle soon commenced, by a shower of assagies being thrown by the Natal Caffres; then a charge was made, and for a time we could see nothing but a struggling mass of black warriors. Then the tide of battle evidently turned in favour of Umnini's men; for the Zulus were flying in the direction of the river, followed by the Natal Caffres. In savage warfare, it is in the retreat that the greater number of men are killed: the pursuer has the advantage of casting his assagy at an enemy who can neither dodge nor protect himself by his shield. The number of Zulus who were slain during this retreat was very great—we could see man after man struck down and assagied; and the officers became quite excited, and exclaimed that these niggers fought like tigers. I told them of some of the battles I had been in, against the Zulus, and of some of the dodges we had practised. They said they wished they had some two hundred blue-jackets with them, and they would have given a good account of these Zulus. I told them that the cutlasses used by the sailors would be of no use against an assagy; that a Zulu would send his assagy through a man at twenty or thirty yards' distance, and that a

man armed with a sword would be unable to do anything with it at that distance. Then, again, when the Zulus rushed in on an enemy, it was possible to shoot down several of them, but those not shot would stab with their assegais, before the men armed with guns could reload.

Having seen the defeat and the slaughter of a large number of the Zulus, the officers decided to pull off to the ship, and report to the captain what had occurred. There was luckily very little surf on the bar, and we pulled over what there was without shipping much water in our boat. On reaching the ship, the officers gave an account to the captain of what had occurred, and were very full of praise for my skill and coolness in having saved them from the Zulus; for they agreed that, had they been left to themselves, they never could have reached the boats, as the Zulus would have surrounded them, and though they might have shot several, yet they could not have loaded quickly enough to prevent their enemy from closing in on them. The officers gave a very good account of the fight they had seen between Umnini's Caffres and the Zulus; and if any doubt had remained in the mind of the captain about these two tribes being at enmity with each other, this fight would have placed the matter on the side of certainty.

On the morning following the day on which we had escaped from the Zulus, the captain sent for me to his cabin. On my entrance I found him sitting near a writing-table on which were various papers; he told me to sit down, as he wanted to ask me several questions. He then produced a map of the coast of South Africa, and pointed to Natal Bay, the Umlass river, and other places; and then asked if I could tell him exactly where the ship in which I had been wrecked had gone on shore. I estimated the distance from the Umzimvubu river, and with a pencil marked the spot.

I then described to him the country inland, as far as I had been, and pointed out that several small streams were not put down in the map.

After we had talked about these matters, the captain said, "Now tell me more about yourself, who you are, and all that."

I gave the captain a history of my early days in India, and then explained to him that I was on my way home to England to be educated by my uncle, who was reported to be very rich, when our ship was wrecked. When I told him the name of my father, he looked in a large book, and then asked me my father's Christian name. At first I could not recall it, but after a little thought I said it was William Mark.

"Your father is alive and is now a colonel," said the captain, "but is no doubt under the impression that you were drowned, as nothing was heard of the ship you were in after she was seen at the Mauritius."

I was delighted to hear this news, and a great longing now came over me to see my father and to again join civilisation. I told the captain what my wishes were, but that I had no money and did not know how I was to get to India, or to England; nor did I know whether my uncle was alive, and whether I ought now to go to England. I was quite able to take care of myself if alone in the African bush, or on the plains, though enemies of various kinds might be around me; but I felt I should be powerless among white men, whom, from my experience of the sailors in the former ship, I had found very stupid and suspicious.

The captain told me he would take me to Simon's Town at the Cape, and see what could be done about communicating with my friends.

It took, in those days, upwards of four months for an answer to a Cape letter to England to be received, and about the same time for a letter sent to India to be answered and received at the Cape. I did not remember my uncle's address in England, so that it would be impossible to communicate with him; nor did I know in what part of India my father was, but as he was well-known at Delhi, I believed that a letter sent there would be forwarded to him.

On the following day the captain decided to leave Natal and start for the Cape. The wind was in our favour, and we sailed westward, our course carrying us about twenty miles from the coast. I remained on deck watching the old familiar localities and pointing out to the captain the various rivers and headlands. Just before dark we were opposite the rocks where I was wrecked, and the captain took some observations and marked on his map the exact spot.

During the next two or three days I passed an hour or so each day, giving the captain an account of the wreck, and of what occurred afterwards; he wrote down what I told him, and, having made a sort of history of this, he then read it over to me, asking me if it were all correct.

He said, the loss of the ship had caused great excitement in England, he remembered, at the time; but when no news came, and a ship sent from the Cape to search could gain no intelligence, it was concluded that she had gone down in the storm, between the Mauritius and the Cape, and of course it was expected every one had been drowned.

We had a fair wind all the way down to Simon's Bay, and accomplished the voyage in six days. As soon as we had anchored, the captain went on shore to visit the admiral, and I was left on the ship. In about an hour one of the officers came to me and said a signal had been sent from the admiral to say that I was to go on shore to the admiral's house. A boat was provided, and I was soon pulled on shore.

Although I had led the life of a savage since my shipwreck, and had gained no experience of what is called polite society, yet the dangers through which I had passed had given me self-dependence; and the calm, dignified behaviour of the chiefs, both among the Zulus and the Umzimvubus, had given me an insight into the proper way of conducting myself. When, then, I was taken by the captain before the admiral I was not flurried as some youngsters might have been, but very cool and calm. The admiral examined me critically, and then said—

"You have had some strange adventures up the country."

"Yes, sir," I replied, "I have been some years living entirely among the Caffres."

"Is the account you have given of the shipwreck quite correct?"

"Everything I told the captain is just as it occurred."

"Don't you think the English women who are up there would come away if they could?"

"No," I replied, "they told me themselves they would not leave now: they have children, and have been well-treated;

and they could not come again to civilisation after living during some years as the wives of Caffres."

"Then," said the admiral, "if I sent a ship up there to bring these women away, you don't think they would come?"

"I am certain they would not; and you would not be able to find them. The Caffres would carry them up the country, and conceal them as soon as your ship was seen to be landing men; and if you attempted to use force, you might be opposed by several thousand warriors; who, though armed with assegais only, would yet, in the rough bushy country, slaughter two or three hundred men armed with muskets."

After some further conversation the admiral asked me what I wished to do.

I replied that I had no money, no clothes, except what the captain had given me, and no friends at the Cape; that I should like my father, who was in India to know of my safety, and should like to receive his instructions as to what he wished me to do. I added that, if I stopped at the Cape, my father would pay any one for my keep as soon as he knew where I was.

The admiral shook hands with me, and said I had better return to the ship at present; but that he should be glad to see me at lunch in an hour's time, and he would consider what should be done for me.

At the lunch I was fully occupied in answering questions about the details of the shipwreck, and my adventures in the wild country of the Umzimvubu. My description of the slaughter of the captain of the merchant vessel, and his obstinacy in not being cautious enough, seemed rather to amuse some of the officers who were present. Altogether, I was much pleased with my treatment by the admiral, and returned in the afternoon to the ship.

On the following morning I found that a Cape Town paper had a full account of the shipwreck, and of my adventures among the Caffres, giving my name, and stating who I was. I was amused at finding myself so famous all at once, but did not then anticipate what would be the speedy result of all this being known at the Cape. What was the result must be reserved for another chapter.

Chapter Seventeen.

It was about two hours past mid-day, that a boat came from the shore, and a gentleman in plain clothes stepped from the boat on to the ship, and inquired if Mr Peterson was on board. I was sitting in the cabin, reading, and the gentleman was shown down into the cabin, and I was told he came to visit me. The gentleman, who was old, but tall and erect, looked at me very critically, and then said, "Is your name Julius Peterson?"

"Yes," I replied, "that is my proper name, but I have been renamed by the Caffres."

"You of course remember your father," said the gentleman; "can you describe him to me?"

I gave a very accurate description of my father, and then of our compound and bungalow at Delhi. In reply to the gentleman's inquiry, I gave the details of our journey to Calcutta, and of our voyage, shipwreck, etc.

"You have no papers, or anything about you, which could prove you are the person you represent yourself to be?" said the gentleman.

I laughed as he made this remark, for I could not see how I could be any one else but myself; when, however, I saw how serious the gentleman was in making this inquiry, I began to reflect that there was really no one who could know me, and that my own statement was the only evidence of my identity. After several other questions the gentleman informed me that his name was Rossmar; that he lived at Wynberg, near Cape Town; that he was well acquainted with my uncle, who had written to him some time after I had left India, to meet me at the Cape if the ship touched there on her voyage home. He then told me of the anxiety my friends had suffered when nothing was heard of our ship, and at last they had concluded that we had all gone down with the ship. Mr Rossmar apologised for having asked me so many questions, but he said that cases had happened where a shipwrecked boy, or man, had after some years represented himself as some other person, who really had been drowned, so that he had merely used common caution. He then congratulated me on my escape, and said that he hoped I would come to his house and make it my home until I received instructions from my father or uncle, both of whom he said, by last accounts, were well.

I explained to Mr Rossmar that I had neither clothes nor money, and was scarcely in a condition to accept an invitation to a house. He said that all could be arranged very easily; that clothes for temporary purposes could be procured, ready made; and that he would see to everything in that way, I thanked Mr Rossmar for his kindness, and having bid good-bye to the captain and officers of the ship, I stepped into the boat and soon landed at Simon's Town.

Having been provided with a stock of clothes at a warehouse, Mr Rossmar drove me in his carriage to the admiral's, where I stopped for a short time, and then started for Wynberg.

There are few more beautiful places in the world than Wynberg. Situated in the lower slopes on the east of Table Mountain it is protected from the south-east and north-west gales. The vegetation is luxuriant, tropical trees and fruits growing in abundance, as also those common in England. The houses are excellent and roomy, and the gardens gay with flowers. The merchants at Cape Town, when well to do, usually have a house at or near Wynberg, and Mr Rossmar, as I afterwards learnt, was one of the richest men in this colony.

On arriving at Mr Rossmar's house I saw several ladies at the window, and was introduced by Mr Rossmar to his wife and four daughters. Although I felt quite at my ease when talking to the admiral, yet I was awkward when the young ladies talked to me. Mr Rossmar told them that all which had been printed in the paper about the shipwreck and my adventures was true, and that I was quite a hero of adventure.

It was not long before I overcame my diffidence, and was soon talking to Mrs Rossmar and her daughters as if I had known them all my life. They were much interested in the account I gave them of my life among the Caffres, and when I told them the details of my fight with the Bushmen and Zulus, they became most excited. To me the change from the wild rough life I had led was like coming to fairyland. The house was beautifully furnished; there were several horses in the stable, and having learned to ride in India, I soon was able to manage the most spirited horse, and used to ride every evening with the ladies. They were all excellent musicians, and this to me was a new experience, for in India we had very

little music in olden times, and as a boy I heard nothing of even that little.

The story of my escape from shipwreck and my life among the tribes up the country was known and talked about all over the Cape. Many people there, although long resident at the Cape, knew little or nothing of the Caffres, their habits, or their country. Cape Town and its neighbourhood was civilised, whilst where I had been was wild as the wildest country. I was asked out to many houses in the neighbourhood, and had over and over again to relate some of my adventures. As is usually the case with ignorant and jealous people, there were some who thought I was inventing stories to astonish them: they did not believe that I had gone through so many strange and exciting scenes, and did not understand how such a boy, as I comparatively was, could have been made a chief by these people.

I passed nearly four months at Mr Rossmar's house, the happiest that I can remember in all my life. Although there was no pretence even of study or of learning anything, yet I gained knowledge from hearing the questions of the day discussed; and from the habits of observation I had acquired in consequence of my life in the bush, I found that I noticed and remembered things which had entirely escaped the observation of all the others. This habit of noticing once saved the life of one of the Miss Rossmars. I was walking in their garden one morning, near a small flower-bed, from which one of the ladies intended to pick some flowers. The path on which we were walking was close to this bed. On the path I noticed a broadish smooth mark leading into the flower-bed. Instantly I knew this to be the spoor of a snake. I stopped Miss Rossmar from picking the flower she was just stooping to gather, and made her stand back. I with my stick moved the flowers so as to examine what was underneath. Just under the flower that the young lady intended gathering, a large puff-adder was coiled, and the reptile was evidently on the watch, as it struck my stick the instant I moved the flower. Had this reptile bitten a human being, death would have been a certainty. I killed the adder, and it was afterwards stuffed by a naturalist at Cape Town, and a small wax-work flower-bed was made to represent the scene as it occurred. If Miss Rossmar had been bitten by the adder, it would have been considered an accident, and probably an unavoidable one; but this case was an instance of how observation may avoid an accident. A Caffre does not believe in what we call an accident: he says it is due to want of care, or to want of observation. In the majority of cases this is true. Men in London get knocked down by cabs and waggons because they do not look carefully to the right and left before they attempt crossing a street. Every year numbers of people are drowned in consequence of bathing in dangerous places, or entering the water alone when they do not know how to swim. When we read of the accidents that annually occur in England we can see that a very large number are due to want of caution or insufficient observation. Living as I had done in a country where one's life may depend on the caution with which even your foot is placed on the ground (for a snake may be there, and treading on this would be death) makes one old in caution and thoughtfulness though young in years.

The four months that I lived with Mr Rossmar taught me much. I was quite at home in society, both with the ladies and gentlemen. I had learned to speak Dutch fairly—for nearly all the servants were Dutch—but was ignorant of accounts, and of Latin and Greek, and consequently would have been considered a dunce in most English schools. Yet I knew more than most youngsters in matters of practical utility.

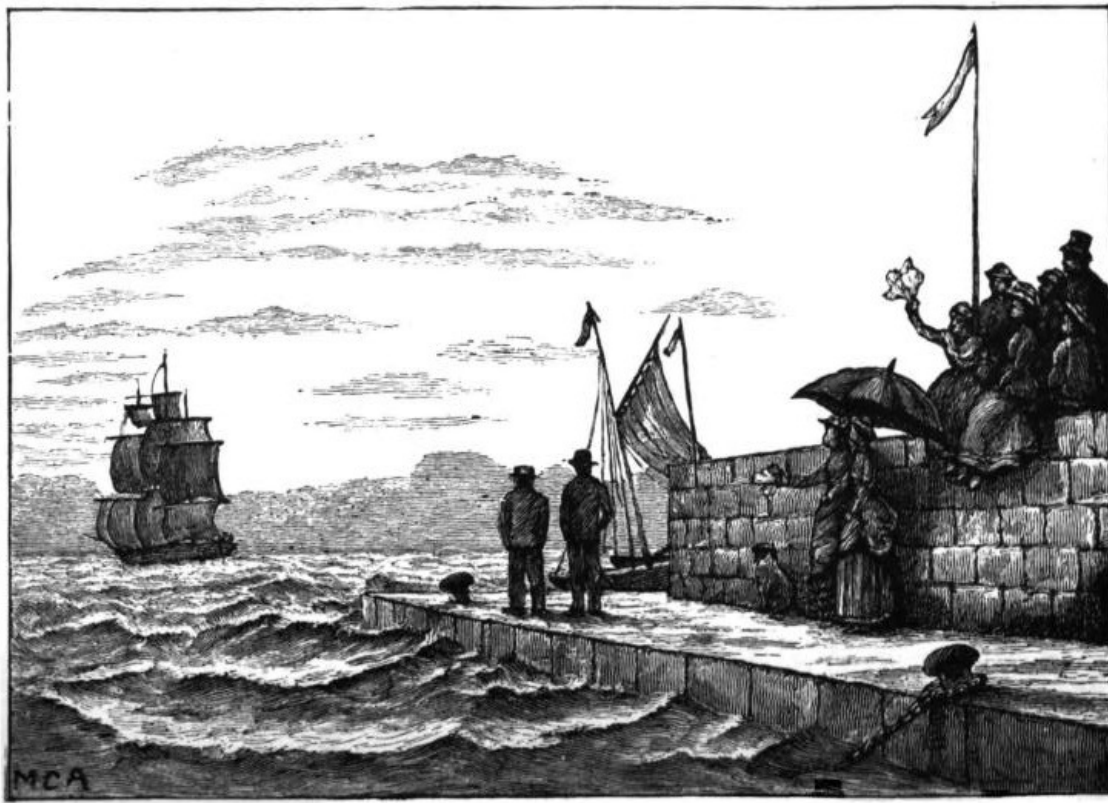
Cape Town in those days was the high road to India. Nearly all the large East Indian merchant ships used to stop at Cape Town, and the English letters used to be brought by these. It was a few days beyond four months after my arrival at the Cape, that a ship arrived and brought letters from my uncle in England, both to me, and to Mr Rossmar. The letter to me was very kind. My uncle said that I had been given up for lost, as nothing had been heard of our ship for so many years; but that if I decided, and my father wished, that I should go to England to him, he would be very glad to see me, and he thought it would be the best thing I could do. He said I should be quite a hero in England, as the English papers had copied from the Cape papers the account of my escape from shipwreck, and life in the wilderness; but that he thought I should have to work hard for a year or two at various studies, in order to be equal with other young men in my position in life. I found that my uncle had written to Mr Rossmar, thanking him for his kindness to me, and sending bills for five hundred pounds, for my use in providing an outfit, paying for my passage home, and any other things that I might require. It was thought advisable that I should not leave the Cape until letters reached me from my father in India; and I must acknowledge that I did not like the idea of leaving my present comfortable quarters. I had become very fond of the Miss Rossmars, and felt just as if I were one of the family. I had everything I could require—a comfortable house, excellent companions, a horse to ride, and nothing to do except what I fancied. The novelty of the life charmed me, and this perhaps was one reason why I did not have any longing for the sports and excitement that had formerly fallen to my share.

A few weeks passed, and then a ship was signalled as entering Table Bay from the East. This ship was an Indiaman, so I expected a letter from my father. Scarcely, however, had the ship cast anchor than a boat left her, and pulled rapidly to the shore. In this boat was my father, who on hearing of my safety had obtained leave, and had at once started for the Cape.

Our meeting was a joyful one; my father was astonished to see the change that a few years had made in me. When I left India I was comparatively a child. The open-air life I had led, the continued exercise and the healthy food had caused me to grow rapidly, and also to be stout and strong. The various dangerous adventures through which I had passed had made me a man in manner, and I had gained that important quality self-dependence, without which a man is sure to be a failure. My father listened with the greatest interest to my accounts of the various dangers through which I had passed. When I explained to him the life led by some of these Caffre Chiefs, he agreed with me that, except for the uncertainty of being attacked by some other tribe, no life could be more pleasant than that of a chief in that country. To possess a large herd of cattle giving a plentiful supply of milk; several wives who cultivated the ground, and thus supplied corn, pumpkins and other vegetables required for food; game in abundance in the forests and on the plains, and no king or prince in Europe could lead a more happy life than did a Caffre Chief. When I compared the life of even a rich merchant in Cape Town with that of a Caffre Chief, I could not but come to the conclusion that the latter had the best of it. A merchant would go to his office by ten o'clock in the morning, would be shut up there going over accounts till about four o'clock; he had not time for any sport or pleasure during the day, and on his return home, often seemed pre-occupied with the business, to which he had devoted his time in the morning. Then, again, losses of money would sometimes occur, and the unhappiness caused by such a loss, seemed far greater than when a successful speculation, caused temporary happiness. A Caffre's wants were few, but all these he could supply, and his only anxiety was that relative to wild beasts, poisonous snakes, and invasion by an enemy.

I went with my father to dine with the admiral at Simon's Town, and also accompanied him to several other houses, to dinners, and entertainments of various kinds. Soon after his arrival he wrote to my uncle, saying that he still wished me to proceed to England to have my education attended to, that he could stay at Cape Town about a month, and would like me to remain with him during that period, after which I should embark for England.

The month passed very rapidly. My father was also a guest of Mr Rossmar's, for Cape people were famous for their kindness and hospitality, and seemed as though we conferred a favour on them by staying at their house. At length the ship arrived in which my father was to return to India, and I bid him a long farewell, for it would be five years before he could retire and come to England, where he eventually intended to settle.



"I HAD MANY FRIENDS TO BID ME GOOD-BYE."

[P. 277.]

I now daily expected the arrival of the Indiaman in which passage had been taken for my voyage to England, and five days after my father had sailed, the ship was signalled, and a few hours afterwards anchored in Table Bay. I had many friends to bid good-bye besides those with whom I had been staying. The parting was very sad, but I promised that if possible I would come again to the Cape, and stay a long time with my various friends.

A voyage in the sailing-vessels of those days had much more romance and interest in it than is now possible in a modern steamer. Formerly a ship was dependent on the amount and direction of the wind; there was always the excitement of watching the barometer, the clouds, etc., to discover if possible any change of wind; a storm was a greater battle than it now is; and the uncertainty of the duration of the voyage had its charms. Some sailing ships were nearly eighty days in reaching England from the Cape, others accomplished the voyage in a little over fifty.

We had a fair wind on leaving Table Bay. I remained on deck watching the Table Mountain gradually sink, as it were, on the horizon, and when darkness came on I went to my cabin below, and felt dull and miserable. There were about fifty passengers on board, mostly old Indians. My story was known to them all, and several were acquainted with my father; so I soon made acquaintances with my fellow-voyagers, and found the time pass pleasantly enough. We cast anchor for a day at Saint Helena, and I had an opportunity of visiting the most beautiful parts of that island. Our voyage continued favourable until we were within a few degrees of the equator, when the favourable wind died away, and we were left becalmed. This was not an unusual condition. The captain informed us that he had remained on one occasion ten days in these latitudes without moving a mile. The heat was very great, but as most of us had been long in India we stood this better than did those passengers who had merely joined us at Cape Town. I soon took great interest in catching shark. These sea monsters seemed attracted to the ship, and there was usually a dorsal fin seen above the water within a hundred yards of our ship. I constructed an arrangement for shark-fishing which was very successful. At the end of a stout copper wire I lashed a strong hook, and then, with a long line fastened to the wire, I could play the shark just as salmon-fishers play a salmon. By this means I used to catch a shark nearly every day. One of these was a monster ten feet long. We used to haul these fish on deck by slipping a bowling-knot in a rope down our line and over the shark's fins; and we had great excitement when the creatures were hauled on deck, as they were dangerous to approach until they were killed by blows on the head, and their tail partly amputated with a hatchet. There were on board three gentlemen, who were good chess-players. I used to watch these play their games, and soon learned the moves and the manner in which the game was played, and before the voyage was half over I could play chess very fairly. I also learned from one of the mates how to measure altitudes of the sun, and how to find the latitude each day. This gave me a taste for astronomy, and I learned also the names of the principal stars. The voyage was thus to me a period of interest, and did not hang heavily on my hands; whereas those people who took no interest in anything during the voyage, were always wearied and cross.

As we approached England we met or overtook several ships: our vessel was a very fast sailer, and never failed to overtake any ship that we saw ahead of us. It was on the fifty-fourth day from leaving the Cape that we saw some land, which the captain told us was Ushant. Two days afterwards we were off Plymouth, and in another week were beating up the Downs. There were few steamers in those days, and nearly all the ships sailed up the Thames. When we reached Gravesend a gentleman came on board, who told me he had been sent from London by my uncle, who wished me to land at Gravesend, and travel by coach to London. I was really sorry to leave the ship, where I had passed two months very pleasantly, and had been treated most kindly by the captain and officers, as also by my fellow-passengers.

However, I was delighted with what I saw from the outside of a four-horse coach, as we travelled up to London. But London bewildered me: the noise, the number of people and vehicles, made me quite giddy; and though I could find my way for miles in an African forest, yet I doubted whether I should ever be able to walk alone in London without losing myself. My uncle lived in an old-fashioned, but very comfortable house near Highgate, and we reached that locality about six o'clock in the evening. The time of year was autumn when I arrived, and it was a lovely evening, the sun about setting. My uncle's house stood in a garden, with fine trees round it, and at that time Highgate was quite in the country. A very dignified oldish man met me at the door, who I was informed was the butler, and who, having taken charge of my luggage, said that Mr Peterson was in the drawing-room, and would be glad to see me there. I was preceded by the butler, who opened the door with great solemnity, and announced "Mr Peterson." My uncle was standing with his back to

the fire, and at the first glance I came to the conclusion that I had rarely seen a more striking-looking man. He was quite six feet high, neither thin nor stout; his hair was quite white, and worn rather long. He must have been nearly seventy years of age, but was as erect and straight as a life-guardsman. His eyes were deep-set, and partly concealed by heavy black eyebrows, which produced a curious contrast with his snow-white hair. His glance at me as I walked across the room seemed to read me at once, and I mentally exclaimed, "He is a chief."

"Welcome to England, my boy," said my uncle, as he shook me heartily by the hand. "You have had strange adventures since you left India; but, judging from your appearance, you do not seem to have suffered much. Why, you are quite a young man, and I expected to see a mere boy."

At the age at which I had then arrived there are few things which are more flattering than that of being told you are no longer a boy. When with the Caffres I never thought of such things. The fact of having been made a chief had promoted me to the dignity of manhood, but when I came again among white people I was treated as a boy by some of these; my uncle, however, considered me a young man.

After a few remarks about my voyage, my uncle informed me that we should dine in an hour, and that probably it would take me some time to dress and refresh myself after my journey: he rang the bell, and told Edwards, the dignified butler, to show me to my room.

There was a solid well-to-do look in everything in my uncle's house: the furniture consisted principally of carved black oak; curiosities of various kinds were hung up in the hall and on the walls of the staircase. My bedroom had several handsome pictures in it, the bed itself being a large four-poster.

Edwards helped me to unpack my portmanteaus, and hinted that the master always dressed for dinner. My outfit at Cape Town had been very complete, so I arrayed myself in a "claw-hammer" coat, as the sailors term it, and a white tie, and made my way to the drawing-room, where I found my uncle. In his evening dress he looked still more noticeable than when I first saw him, and I felt proud of being the nephew of so distinguished a looking man.

During dinner I was surprised at the knowledge my uncle possessed of the Caffres, and of South Africa. He had evidently studied that country, and was well acquainted with its geography, climate, and the character of the natives. The questions he put to me taxed all my local knowledge to answer, and I found it difficult to believe that he had not himself been in the country. He was much interested in my account of the language; he was himself a great linguist, and traced in the Caffre words I used a connection with the Arabic. After dinner we sat talking, mainly about my adventures at the Cape, my uncle's questions leading me on to give him all the details of my life in that country. At ten o'clock he told me that he always breakfasted at eight; that at seven o'clock the gong sounded three times, at half past seven four times, and at eight five times. He added that one of the things about which he was particular was punctuality, as very much, especially in business, depended on attention to this.

When alone in my bedroom I began to speculate on what was to become of me. I had left India with the intention of being sent to a school in England, for the purpose of being educated for one of the colleges devoted to aspirants for India. After my long residence among the Caffres, where I had learned nothing of what in England is termed education, but had added years to my age, I knew how very awkward I should feel in going to a school where probably I might be the biggest boy in the school, but where the smallest boy would know considerably more than I knew. I, however, trusted my uncle would consider all these questions, and I had not long to wait before I found that my trust was justified.

On the third night after my arrival my uncle after dinner said:—

"I have been thinking, Julius, what is best to be done about your education. You are peculiarly situated: you are in age and appearance quite a young man, and I have discovered that you are very observant and have sound common sense; but you know nothing of those things which are esteemed in the world, such as mathematics, accounts, Latin, French, and other matters. I don't think it would be pleasant for you to go to a school and mix with other boys, who would be so much younger than you are, but who know so much more. I have decided therefore to secure a private tutor, who will come to this house each morning and work with you till half-past-four. You will, if you are in earnest, progress much more rapidly by this means, and I wish to know when you would like to begin to work."

"At once," I replied. "I had thought exactly the same about going to school, and should certainly have been ashamed of myself for knowing so little."

"It is no fault of yours," replied my uncle. "You know more of some things than many men learn during the whole of their lives; for whilst others have been acquiring a knowledge of Greek, Latin, and mathematics, you have learned how to think for yourself and to reason on what you see. It is rare to find a youngster like you as much a philosopher as you are, and all your life you will derive a great advantage from knowing how to do things for yourself."

My life now became one of routine; the tutor who came was a comparatively young man, but was a very able teacher. We were more like companions than master and pupil, and when in our leisure hours I had told him of my past life, he took great interest in me.

My uncle had a dinner-party about once a week, to which he invited men who were remarkable in some way—authors, artists, men of science, and travellers. I took great interest in such society, and my knowledge of South Africa and the private life of the Zulus caused me to be listened to with attention whenever I was asked questions.

Two years passed in this way, and I made such rapid progress that I had become a fair mathematician, understood book-keeping by double entry, had gone through the six books of Euclid, could read and write French, and might be said to be well educated. My tutor was surprised at the rapidity with which I acquired knowledge. I, however, attributed it to the cultivation of my powers of observation, which had been developed during the wild life I had led in Africa.

My uncle at this period informed me that my tutor had told him, that I had made such rapid progress, that there was no necessity for my continuing my studies, and that he now considered it desirable that I should decide what course I should adopt in life.

I knew my uncle must have already made up his mind, and so considered it desirable that I should tell him that I had not sufficient experience to make any selection, but would rather follow his advice.

"Then," said my uncle, "what do you think of coming into my office, and learning the business which I have followed with tolerable success? The army is poor pay, and often great hardship. The Indian Civil Service is better, but I think you

are too old for that, and I don't know any other line that would suit you. You can live here with me as long as you find it comfortable, and perhaps in time you may take my place."

During the whole of my residence with my uncle I had never been to his office, which I now learned was in Fenchurch Street; and in a few days I was taken by him and introduced to the head clerk, who, having received instructions from my uncle, took me into an outer office and made me acquainted with four young men who were clerks. These four young men were considerably older than I was, as far as years were concerned, but their manners and conversation soon caused me to look upon them as mere boys; they seemed to have but little powers of reflection, to avoid thinking deeply on any matter, and to endeavour to do as little work as was possible. They indulged greatly in chaff; but, I suppose, from the fact of my being the nephew of their chief, as they termed my uncle, they never chaffed me. I felt but slight inclination for their society, and before I had been a week in the office there was a sort of antagonism between these clerks and myself.

My uncle did not seem displeased that I had not become very intimate with these clerks. He asked me one day how I liked them. I replied that I found nothing really to dislike, but they seemed to me particularly foolish, and to be too fond of trifles.

My uncle smiled, and said, "The fact is, Julius, you are very old, though young in years. The scenes through which you have passed have aged you, and you look for realities in life. The clerks in my office are thoughtless and superficial."

It would not interest the reader if I were to describe in detail the life I led during the next three years. It was passed without any important events. I learned the details of my father's life in India from letters received nearly every month from him. I had become thoroughly acquainted with my uncle's business, and obtained a knowledge of the largeness of his transactions. Considering what must have been his wealth, I should have been surprised at the quiet way in which he lived, had I not discovered that he had a great dislike to display. He had often expressed the opinion that a man should be more than he seemed, instead of seeming more than he was. This he carried out practically. He lived very comfortably, but even with me in the house could not have spent much more than a thousand pounds a year, whereas his annual income must have been seven or eight times that amount.

I had become acquainted with several people in London, all friends of my uncle. To the houses of these I was frequently asked, and great attention was shown me. It seemed to be understood that I should be my uncle's heir; and I knew enough of the ways of the world, to be aware that this fact, had probably more to do with the attention paid me, than any special qualities in myself. I was not, therefore, carried away by such attentions, nor did I become vain in consequence, both dangers to which some young people are liable. I visited everything in London worth seeing, my uncle putting no restrictions on me. He was fond of the opera, and we often attended it together, as also some of the principal theatres. He allowed me an income for my work at the office, and told me that although he did not wish to restrict me as regards anything essential, yet he thought I ought to live within this income. After two years' experience I found I could do so, and one day mentioned to my uncle that I had not only done so, but had saved fifty pounds.

But one event occurred during this period, which broke the monotony of civilised life.

It was on a Sunday afternoon, during the winter time, that my uncle accompanied me, to call on a family who lived on the borders of Hampstead Heath. Some of the members of this family were much interested in my adventures in Africa, and I had promised to bring over a knob-kerrie made of the horn of a rhinoceros, to show one of the daughters who was an invalid, and could not visit my uncle's house to see the few African curiosities that I had there. We stayed at this house till it became dusk, and then set out on our walk home. At that date Hampstead Heath was a lonely place, and robberies were not unfrequent. It occurred to me, soon after we had commenced our walk, that if I were alone I might possibly have an adventure, which I believed would have been amusing. Armed as I was with this formidable knob-kerrie, I could have felled an ox; then I had not neglected my running, and I felt certain that not one Englishman in a thousand could catch me, in case I chose to run. I did not expect that two men walking across the Heath were likely to be stopped by highwaymen. As these ideas crossed my mind, my uncle said, "This heath is rather a dangerous locality to be in late at night: there have been several robberies here lately."

"I was just thinking of that," I replied, "but I suppose the robbers don't use firearms."

"Not if they can help it," said my uncle, "as that would make too much noise."

As we wended our way across the heath, I watched carefully the ground in advance. Although it was a darkish evening I could still see several yards in front of me. Everything was quiet, and we seemed the only people out at the hour. Suddenly, from some bushes near the path, three men jumped up, and were at once within a yard of us.

"Now then," said one of these men, "just hand out what you've got, before we knock your brains out."

He had scarcely spoken, before I had lunged at the lower part of his chest with my knob-kerrie, the point of which was sharp as a knife. Shifting my hand to the sharp end, I brought the heavy knob down on the head of the man next to me, who fell as though he had been shot. The third man had grappled with my uncle, and the two were struggling together; for my uncle, although old, was still powerful. Watching my chance, I dropped my knob-kerrie on the shoulder of the highwayman. His arm fell helplessly to his side; at the same time my uncle struck him with his fist and he fell to the ground.

We did not wait to see more, because these men were usually provided with pistols, and after the treatment they had received, we believed they would not be very particular about their use. We therefore moved off as rapidly as we could, and reached home in safety; my uncle little the worse for his struggle, except that his coat was torn. At that date the regular police did not exist, and our report of the affair produced no results. We, the next day, visited the scene of our encounter, and found unmistakable "spoor" of the highwaymen having suffered, as there was a great deal of blood on the ground where the man whom I had struck had fallen.

I was much complimented by all my friends, to whom my uncle related the adventure; but I explained to them that such scenes were not new to me, that the life I had formerly led had trained me specially so as not to be surprised or taken at an advantage, and it would be strange indeed if, now that I had come to civilisation, I should forget all my early education.

Whether it was this adventure, or merely the memory of the past that caused me to become unsettled, yet it was a fact that I had a growing desire to once more visit the country where I had passed such eventful years. In the solitude of my bedroom I used to carry on imaginary conversations in Caffre with my old companions, and retraced my career

through the various adventures that had occurred. Weeks passed without my mentioning this feeling to my uncle; but one evening he was speaking about Mr Rossmar, when I said that I believed a very profitable trip might be made to Natal, where ivory, ostrich-feathers, and leopard-skins could be procured for a few beads or some cheap guns.

My uncle remarked that Mr Rossmar had, curiously enough, suggested the same thing, the difficulty being to find a trustworthy person who knew the country, and who would undertake the business.

I at once said, "I could do it myself. I know the country, can speak the language, and should be able to do away with 'middle men,'" middle men being the intermediate traders who make their profit by buying cheap and selling dear.

"Would you like such a trip?" said my uncle.

"Most certainly I should," I replied. "Lately I have thought how much I should like to visit the country again and see some of my old friends there. I am certain that there is a great quantity of ivory in many parts, and ostrich-feathers could be procured, as ostriches are plentiful."

"We will think about it," said my uncle, "and perhaps it may be managed."

After this conversation I became unsettled. I was always thinking of the wild life I had led, of its freedom from all forms and conventionalities, and the beauty of the country.

My uncle said nothing more for some weeks, but again referred one morning to our previous conversation, and asked if I were still willing to pursue my adventures in South Africa. He said that I could sail to the Cape in one of the ordinary Indiamen, and charter at the Cape a small vessel which could cross the bar at Natal. When this ship was loaded I could return with her to Cape Town, transfer my goods to an Indiaman, and return home. The whole business, he thought, might occupy a year; and, if carefully carried out, ought to be profitable.

Chapter Eighteen.

It was a bright fresh morning in April, that—I embarked at Gravesend in the full-rigged ship *Condor*, bound to the Cape and Calcutta. The most unpleasant and dangerous portion of the voyage in those days was from Gravesend through the Downs, and along the Channel. Sailing ships only then made these long voyages, and they were sometimes detained during many weeks in the Downs waiting for a fair wind. Then, when sailing in the Channel, they often had to beat against a contrary wind the whole way. In my case we were fortunate in having a fair wind nearly the whole way from the Downs, until we had entered the Bay of Biscay. Fine weather continued until we were within a few degrees of the Equator, when the usual calms stopped us, and we lay broiling on the calm sea during ten days.

I caught two rather large sharks, and had a narrow escape from one as I was bathing from a boat near the ship. We reached Table Bay in sixty-two days after leaving Gravesend, which period was considered by no means bad time for a sailing vessel. Having cleared my baggage from the ship and Custom House, I put up at an hotel at the corner of the parade in Cape Town, and sent word to my friend, Mr Rossmar, to say I had arrived.

Early on the following morning, Mr Rossmar came to see me, and was at once full of complaints on account of my not having immediately gone to his house, and made it my home. The few years that I had been in England had taught me much as regards the rules of so-called society. In England there was formality and etiquette which did not exist in the Colonies, particularly at the Cape. Friendship in England and at the Cape conveyed entirely different meanings. At the latter, a friend's house was almost like your own: you did not think it necessary to wait for a special invitation to go to dinner and take a bed, but if you rode over in the afternoon it was considered unfriendly if you did not stop till the next morning. I had forgotten these conditions, and so had first stopped at an hotel. By noon, however, I had reached Mr Rossmar's house, and was received as though I had been a long-lost brother.

I was surprised, when I saw the Miss Rossmars, to find that they were more pretty than any girls I had seen in London. They had, too, the great charm of being natural and unaffected, and to be less occupied in seeking admiration than English young ladies. In spite of what I had gone through in the Zulu country, I was in reality merely a boy when I formerly stayed at Wynberg. Now I was a man; and the experience I had gained in society in London had made me capable of judging of the relative merits of that great paradox,—a young lady.

A certain portion of the day was occupied in making arrangements for my voyage to Natal. I found that a small vessel would sail from Table Bay in a month's time, and I had made arrangements with the owners to use this vessel almost as if she were my own. I had brought from England quantities of beads of various colours, looking glasses, blankets, and some hundreds of assagy blades that I had caused to be made at Birmingham. All these things were, I knew, highly esteemed by the Caffres, and would purchase nearly everything they possessed. I was not so busy with my preparations but that I had plenty of time to pass with the Miss Rossmars. We rode nearly every day, had climbing expeditions up the Table Mountain, musical afternoons at home when the weather was not suitable for going out, and in fact enjoyed ourselves as people in the Colonies alone seem to do.

The natural results followed. I became much attached to Nina Rossmar, but as this is not a love story, but merely an account of my adventures in the wild country of south-eastern Africa, I will not weary my readers with the old, old tale, but will merely state that I wrote to my father and uncle, asking their consent to my marriage with Nina. These letters I wrote before I started for Natal, as I hoped the answers would be awaiting me on my return.

The month passed very rapidly, and I embarked at Table Bay in the little brigantine which was to convey me to Natal. I have sailed since that time on many seas, but the roughest I ever experienced is off the Cape. Well was this Cape termed the Cape of Storms, for there seemed a storm always on hand, and no sooner had the wind been blowing hard in one direction and then stopped, than a gale sprung up from the opposite point of the compass. Many times, as the huge waves came rolling towards us and seemed to be about to break over us, I thought nothing could save us from being sent to the bottom, or turned over; but the little vessel, which drew only eight feet of water, was like a duck on the ocean, and though she bounded like a thing of life as the monstrous waves approached and moved under her, she was very dry, scarcely any seas washing over her. We were, however, thirty days on our voyage from Table Bay to the Bluff at Natal, and we had to anchor on our first arrival, as the wind was off shore. I scanned the well-known coast as we lay at our anchorage, and recalled the strange scenes through which I had passed. There were the high-wooded bluff on the west entrance to the harbour, the low sandy hillocks to the east, where I had run the gauntlet of the Zulus, the dense wood of the Berea bush, and the islands in the bay where I had outwitted the Zulus, when I was in the boat. Now that I was again

in the vicinity of these scenes of my early days, I felt in doubt as to whether I was not more a Caffre than an Englishman. I found myself actually thinking in Caffre, and speaking sentences in that language to myself.

I noted that there were several houses near the entrance of the harbour and up the bay which did not exist when I left Natal. These, I afterwards found, were the houses of some Dutchmen who had settled there.

The wind having changed the day after our arrival, we entered the bay, having crossed the bar in safety.

It seemed strange, after my experiences of civilised life, to come to a place where there was not an hotel, or any house where one could put up. I had, however, made my plans from my knowledge of the country, and had provided myself with waterproof sheeting that I could turn into a small tent, and so was independent of a house. The Dutch Boer, when he travels, makes his waggon his house, and is thus as independent as an English gipsy. I took the first opportunity of landing, and making the acquaintance of the few Dutchmen who resided at Natal. My knowledge of the Dutch language, which I had acquired at Cape Town, was now of great use. I thought it prudent not to let the Dutchmen know of my experiences in the country, but to be quite independent of them in my future proceedings. I made arrangements for the hire of a pony during my stay in the country, and also two oxen, which had been trained to carry packages and were termed pack-oxen by the Boers. I believed that I had so altered that none of my old Caffre comrades would recognise me, and I intended to travel among them—at least at first—without letting them know who I was.

One of the Boers asked me to stay at his house, but I preferred remaining on the ship until I made my start up the country.

The first visit I paid was to the kraal of Umnini, near the Umlass river. I took one of the Caffre servants of the Boer with me; this Caffre could speak Dutch, and I wanted to conceal my knowledge of Caffre for some time, so I spoke to him in Dutch, and asked him to speak in Caffre to the Caffres.

On arriving at the kraal of Umnini, I was interested as to whether I should be recognised by these men. During the interval that had elapsed since I was last at the kraal of Umnini, I had increased in height, and had developed whiskers; the change in my appearance, therefore, was considerable, and I considered it unlikely that I should be remembered. The Caffre with me told the people of the kraal that I was one of the Boers, he knowing no better, and that I had come to trade, and wished for leopards' skins and elephants' tusks.

Several of the men who were present I remembered: these men had been with me often, but although they looked at me very hard they none of them seemed to remember me. Having ascertained from my Caffre that I could not speak their language, they made their remarks on me very freely. These remarks were complimentary. They said I did not look like a Boer, but must be a young chief. "He has the head of a chief," said one man, and the others agreed with him. They also decided that I must be strong and a good runner. These and other similar remarks I listened to with much amusement, but without giving the slightest sign that I understood what they were saying. After a time Umnini came to me, and, after looking at me for some time, said, "It is the young White Chief of the Umzimvubu." The men who had been speaking about me smiled at this remark, and said to Umnini, "No, chief, it is not him, it is a young Boer." Umnini looked at me very attentively, but I gave no sign either of recognising him, or understanding what he said.

Speaking in Dutch to my Caffre, I told him to ask the chief if he had any ostrich-feathers, or elephants' tusks, as I wished to buy them.

He replied that he had a few tusks, and wanted to know what I would give for them.

Having brought with me some beads as specimens and a few blades of assagies, I showed him these, but he said that what he wanted was guns. The talking continued for some time, and I at length asked that I might see the tusks. Umnini said I could go with him into his kraal where the tusks were kept. We alone entered his hut, and he then pointed to six fine tusks, but believing that I could not understand what he said, he made signs that they belonged to three elephants.

Having carried my joke far enough, I looked at Umnini and said in Caffre:—

"Chief, you alone were correct and you alone knew me. I *am* the White Chief of the Umzimvubu, and I have come back to see you again, and to bring you some things you will like. I am going also to see my own tribe to the west."

Umnini scarcely seemed surprised, as I told him who I was, but said he had been certain about it when he saw me.

Our conversation, which had not been heard outside of the hut, had been carried on in a low tone; so no one besides Umnini knew who I was. I told him I did not wish to be known at present, and asked him to keep my secret. He agreed to this, and when we crept out of the hut he did his acting splendidly, and spoke to my Caffre, asking him to enquire of me what I thought of the tusks.

I replied in Dutch, saying I would buy them. Then bidding good-bye to the people, I returned to the ship.

Two days afterwards I started with two Caffres and a Hottentot for my old residence near the Umzimvubu. The pony I rode was a good shooting pony, and on the first day I shot two coran and a red bush-buck, which supplied the party with plenty of food. On the second day I reached my old kraal, and was again anxious to see if I should be recognised. I was not long in doubt. Inyoni, my old boy-companion, had now grown into a fine young man, and was standing near the entrance to the kraal, watching me and my companions as we advanced. When close to him he looked at me for an instant, and then shouted, "Inkōsi" (chief), and seized my hand. His shout had brought out all the people who were in the kraal, each of whom recognised me. Those whom I had left as boys, and little girls, were now young men and women, and all were delighted to see me. The Hottentot and Caffres, who had accompanied me from Natal, looked on with astonishment, and when they heard me speaking Caffre as well as they themselves spoke, they seemed to think it was witchcraft.

I had a busy time of it answering all the questions that were put to me by my old friends, who were anxious to know what I had been doing, where I had been, and whether I intended to again live with them. When I told them how I had passed day after day in a room, in the midst of a large city (London), and had rarely seen the sun, and had shot no buck, had not even seen a wild elephant, and had enjoyed no sport, they were astonished how it was I had gone through all this, when I could have come back at any time, and enjoyed the free, happy, exciting life of a chief with them.

The arguments used by my old friends have often been considered since that time by me, and the problem is a

curious one, whether civilisation, with all its advantages, has not so many drawbacks as to render the wild, free, healthy life of so-called savages preferable.

At the date about which I write, there was no sport in the world finer than could be obtained in that part of Africa. Such sport as fox-hunting in England, deer-stalking in Scotland, pheasant, partridge, or grouse shooting, was as inferior to the sport in Africa as catching minnows is to salmon-fishing in a fine Canadian river. When a man has once followed the track of the giant elephant, through the mazes of an African bush, has come close to his formidable game, has fired at him, and heard the terrific sound of his angry trumpet, as he charges through the bush, he feels that he has enjoyed a class of sport superior to all other. Even stealthily approaching and slaying the formidable buffalo, in his forest stronghold, is a sport to be remembered all one's life. To attempt to compare such sport as standing at the corner of a cover, and knocking over pheasants as they fly over you, with the sport formerly obtainable in the forests or on the plains of Africa is ridiculous.

"Why do you not come back to us, and enjoy life?" said Tembile;—"you, who could follow the tracks of a buck without a mistake, who could assage a running buck, and hit with your knob-kerry a bird on the wing. Here you could have plenty of cows, plenty of corn, several wives, and, as you are a chief, you could do all you wanted. What can there be in your country to compare with what we have here?"

As I listened to Tembile, and reflected on what he said, and then thought of the life I had led in my uncle's office, I really began to think that civilisation was a mistake. What prince or duke in England could go out from his house, and within a few miles get a shot at a wild elephant or buffalo, or walk through as magnificent a forest as that near our kraal, and shoot antelope, or rare and beautiful birds? The freedom, too, of the life here was one of its greatest charms. Although the advantages of civilisation are great, yet the price we pay for these is enormous. Should I return to England and become a sort of slave to society, or should I remain in Africa? was really a question which I thought over frequently. The attraction at Wynberg, however, turned the scale.

Soon after my arrival at my old kraal, I had made inquiries about the white women who had been my fellow-passengers from India, but I found there was a disinclination on the part of the Caffres to give me any information about them. I afterwards spoke to Tembile about them, because I knew I could trust him to tell me the truth. He said that the Caffres were afraid, now that I had been so long among white men, that I might endeavour to take away the white women; so they had been concealed, and I was not to know where they lived.

I assured Tembile that I had no intentions of that sort, and I believed it would be better for the white women, to now remain with their husbands and children, than for them to return with me.

Having made various inquiries, I heard that there were more than a dozen elephants' tusks in the kraal near, some of them very heavy, but the Caffres had no wish to dispose of their ostrich-feathers. These feathers they used as head-dresses when great dances took place, and were very proud of them. I told the Caffres that I wanted as many tusks as I could procure, and, as I had now some very strong guns, I should like to find elephants and shoot them.

I had been five days at the kraal of my old friends, when news was brought that the elephants, according to their annual custom were coming westward, and were only a day's journey from our kraal.

I therefore assembled all the men whom I had formerly taught to use a gun, and told them that I wished their help in shooting some of the largest elephants. I explained to them that an elephant might be hit by many bullets and yet would not be killed, unless he were struck by the bullet behind the shoulder, or in the chest. I then said that I could give them powder and could make bullets for them, so that they need not expend the store of those which they had carefully preserved in case they were attacked again by the Zulus. The Caffres expressed their willingness to join me in my shooting expedition, but reminded me that there was as much danger in attacking elephants as there was in a fight with the Zulus. I admitted that there was danger, but that, if we were careful, we need none of us get hurt.

I had brought with me from England two large-bored double-barrelled guns, which I knew would be well-suited for shooting elephants or other large game, and I had practised with these guns at Cape Town, and could make nearly certain of hitting a mark the size of a man's head at eighty yards nearly every time I fired. I felt, therefore, great confidence in my weapons, and I intended to take Tembile with me when I hunted, and to make him carry my second gun, by which means I could obtain four shots at any one elephant.

News was brought us two or three times a day by Caffres, as to where the elephants were feeding and what they were doing; so, all our plans being arranged, I started with Tembile and four other Caffres for that part of the bush where it was thought we should find the elephants.

The bush in this part of Africa consisted of large trees, about ten or twenty paces apart. Between these there was dense matted underwood, so thick and tangled that a man could not force his way through it. From the trees creepers of large size hung in festoons, like large ropes. Some of these had projecting from them thorns an inch or more in length, and sharp as a needle. The dense underwood rose to a height of three men, so that it was in many places impossible to see round you a greater distance than you could reach with an assage. The only means of moving through the bush in these dense parts was by following the paths made by the elephants. When a herd of these animals had been for any length of time in the bush, they made so many paths that it was easy to move about in the bush; but the growth of the vegetation was so rapid, that a few weeks after the elephants had left the bush it had again overgrown the old paths, and was once more impenetrable.

Elephants usually left the thick bush during the night or very early in the morning; they would then roam about in the open country, and drink at some stream or pond. When possible, they would roll in the wet mud, like pigs; then, as day broke, they would re-enter the bush, seek the densest parts, and there remain quiet during the heat of the day.

I had decided that the best chance of success with the elephants would be to follow them into the bush, come upon them during the middle of the day, and get our shots at them as they stood half sleeping in the bush. The Caffres, I knew, could walk so quietly in the bush, that, if we were careful about the direction of the wind, we might approach the herd without their being aware that an enemy was near them.

A day's journey brought our party to the country where the elephants had now taken up their residence. The Caffres near were most anxious about their crops, for they expected the elephants would come some night and eat up, or trample down their corn. We found that the elephants had not drunk during the previous day; so we felt sure they would drink during the coming night. Some large ponds near the edge of the bush was the place where it was expected they would satisfy their thirst, so we sent some Caffre boys to keep watch near these ponds, and to let us know the news as

soon as possible.

The sun had not risen on the following morning when our spies came into the kraal, and told us that the elephants were now drinking and rolling at these ponds; that there were nearly a hundred of them; and, among these, three enormous bull-elephants, with tusks nearly as long as an assagy.

This news was very gratifying. So, after we had eaten our breakfasts and taken some corn with us, we started for the bush. We examined the footprints and marks made by the animals, and could easily distinguish those made by the three large bulls. To follow these tracks into the forest was easy. The bush-path was clear and well trodden; so we moved on silently, but not too quickly.

When we were some distance in the bush, we heard the trumpet of an elephant; and I came to the conclusion that we were now within half a mile of our formidable game. Having sat down and talked in whispers for some time, we then slowly advanced, peeping through the bush whenever any opening gave us a chance of doing so.



"I SAW AN ENORMOUS ELEPHANT, STANDING MOTIONLESS AND BROADSIDE TO ME." [P. 310.]

I was leading, and was followed by Tembile, who carried my second gun; then the other men came after, each stepping on the same spot, so that we incurred but slight risk of treading on any dried stick, for to crack a stick in the bush would have given the elephants warning of our approach. Suddenly Tembile touched my shoulder, and, on my looking round, he pointed to my right, and then stood motionless. On looking in the direction at which Tembile was pointing, I saw an enormous elephant standing motionless and broadside to me, and not ten paces distant. Signalling to two of the Caffres to approach, I pointed to the elephant's shoulder, and, raising my gun, fired my two barrels in quick succession. Each of the Caffres fired a shot, then we turned and rushed down the path up which we had advanced. For an instant there was no sound except the echoes of our guns. Then the most tremendous screams and trumpeting were given by some fifty elephants, and we heard the branches of the trees snapping like a succession of rifle-shots.

We could not tell at first in which direction the elephants were moving, the noise of the broken branches coming from all around us. After a time, however, we learned from the sounds that the herd was moving away from us. Having reloaded my gun, we advanced with great caution to the spot from which we had fired. The elephant was not there, but his tracks were quite distinct. He had rushed forward through the bush, and had carried everything before him—trees being carried away as though they were mere sticks.

A few paces from where he had stood we found blood in abundance, and from the appearance of this blood the Caffres assured me the monster must soon die. It was dangerous work following this wounded elephant, because he would be more savage now than at any time; so we had to advance with great caution. We had not gone far, however, before we saw him leaning against a tree, swinging his trunk about, and swaying his huge body. The Caffres told me not to fire, as he must soon fall, and to fire would disturb the remainder of the herd. We waited only a short time, when the elephant slipped down and remained quiet. Tembile cautiously approached it and signalled to us that it was dead. We had no fear of the game being carried off, so we left it in the bush and again followed the remainder of the herd.

When elephants have been alarmed they rush away through the bush for about a mile, then stop and become very cautious; to approach them requires the greatest care, as they are then on the watch, and, their scent and hearing being both very acute, the approach of a man is soon discovered.

The traces of the elephants were easily followed, and we knew when we were close to them by the rumbling noise we heard. A large elephant was soon seen, standing flapping his large ears, and with his trunk raised so as to scent the air; but our approach had been so cautious that the animal had not discovered us, and he received eight bullets behind the shoulder before he had time to move. He did not charge as we expected, but ran only a few yards and then dropped. Two large-tusked elephants were thus killed, but we wanted two more; for we had seen by the footprints that there were two other large bulls in this herd.

During the whole of this and the following day we followed the herd, and killed five large elephants, all with magnificent tusks. Such sport I was aware I should never again enjoy, and so I made the most of it.

After four days the whole of this ivory was conveyed to Natal Bay, and I had bid my old friends good-bye. I hardly liked parting with them, and held out hopes that I would again return to their country; I feared, however, that I should not be able to do so, for when once settled in England it would be difficult for me to leave.

On my return to Natal, I found the Dutchman who was there had collected several large tusks, and also many hundred ostrich-feathers, so that I had a large stock to carry back to Cape Town. My voyage to Cape Town was rapid, a fair wind all the way; and in seven days after leaving Natal, I was once more at Wynberg, and at the house of my friends. I found letters there both from my father and uncle, in both of which consent was given to my marriage with Miss Rossmar.

After a month's residence at Cape Town we were married, and started for England. Fair winds and fine weather favoured us, and in sixty days after leaving Cape Town we reached England.

My life now became one of comparative monotony. I worked with my uncle, and after a time succeeded him in his business. Money was plentiful: my wife possessed a good fortune, and my uncle at his death left me all his property, which was considerable.

I owned a house in London and also one in the country; in the vicinity of the latter there is what is called in England good sport—partridges, pheasants, hares, and rabbits being numerous. But such sport was to me dull and uninteresting; I was always remembering my sport in Africa, and had a longing for again roaming through an African forest in search of large game; but civilisation had advanced in South Africa, and I heard that where I had followed the tracks of elephants, sugar plantations and corn-fields now existed, and that even the Caffres had lost their simplicity, and were now in that disagreeable condition of being half-civilised.

My father had retired from the Indian service, and had taken a pretty house in the country near me, but was often complaining of the climate and habits of England. To him India was the most charming country in the world, and the servants in India were the very best. Still he managed to enjoy himself and passed much of his time with me, listening to my account of the incidents that had happened to me in Africa.

I had missed in my early youth the training usually given to gentlemen's sons: I knew but little Greek or Latin; of history I was ignorant; of mathematics I had but a superficial knowledge. Yet my early training had been of a very practical kind, and was of benefit to me in after-life. I had learned to rough it in my youth, and to do everything for myself. Although I kept many servants, yet I was not dependent on these, as most people are in civilised countries. I could, if required, light my own fire and cook my own meals, and I should have felt it no hardship to do either.

Although I fully appreciated the advantage of a large and well-furnished house, yet I could have been quite happy in a hut no bigger than a Caffre kraal. And I had learned the great secret, that if we curtail our wants, we arrive at the same result, as though we increased our income. My wants were few, and these I had ample means of supplying. Instead of working on at my late uncle's business till I became too old to enjoy freedom, I gave up the business whilst I was still comparatively young, and devoted my attention to various subjects in which I was interested; so that, although my early education had been very different from that of most boys, it had been of a thoroughly practical kind. I had learned self-dependence and could help myself, and envied no man. I watched with interest the changes that took place in South Africa, and my only regret was, in seeing how affairs were managed out there by those who seemed utterly ignorant of everything connected with the country and the people. I sometimes offered suggestions when it appeared that catastrophes must occur if matters went on as they were going. My opinions were ignored, and the disasters occurred, but such results are not unusual. My career as a White Chief of the Caffres was not without its charms to me, both during its existence and now as a reminiscence; and I trust it may have afforded amusement to my young readers.

[Chapter 1](#) | [Chapter 2](#) | [Chapter 3](#) | [Chapter 4](#) | [Chapter 5](#) | [Chapter 6](#) | [Chapter 7](#) | [Chapter 8](#) | [Chapter 9](#) | [Chapter 10](#) | [Chapter 11](#) | [Chapter 12](#) | [Chapter 13](#) | [Chapter 14](#) | [Chapter 15](#) | [Chapter 16](#) | [Chapter 17](#) | [Chapter 18](#) |

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE WHITE CHIEF OF THE CAFFRES ***

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