

a distance the most grotesque appearances, such as those of houses, quadrupeds, birds, &c. Burchell has given a good idea of this species of scenery

But 'tis not the innocent to destroy,
For I hate the huntsman's savage joy.

Afar in the Desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side :
Away—away from the dwellings of men,
By the wild deer's haunt, and the buffalo's glen ;
By vallies remote, where the oribi plays ;
Where the gnou, the gazelle, and the hartebeest graze ;
And the gemsbok and eland unhunted recline
By the skirts of grey forests o'ergrown with wild vine ;
And the elephant browses at peace in his wood ;
And the river-horse gambols unscared in the flood ;
And the mighty rhinoceros wallows at will
In the *Vley*, where the wild-ass is drinking his fill.

Afar in the Desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side :
O'er the brown Karroo, where the bleating cry
Of the springbok's fawn sounds plaintively ;
Where the zebra wantonly tosses his mane,
In fields seldom freshen'd by moisture or rain ;
And the stately koodoo exultingly bounds,
Undisturb'd by the bay of the hunter's hounds ;
And the timorous quagha's wild whistling neigh
Is heard by the brak fountain far away ;
And the fleet-footed ostrich over the waste
Speeds like a horseman who travels in haste ;
And the vulture in circles wheels high overhead,
Greedy to scent and to gorge on the dead ;
And the grisly wolf, and the shrieking jackal,
Howl for their prey at the evening fall ;
And the fiend-like laugh of hyænas grim
Fearfully startles the twilight dim.

Afar in the Desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side :

in his view of a natural obelisk in the Bushman country. After passing through this scenery, which reminded me of the enchanted City of the Desert, in the Arabian tales, we proceeded over immense plains, extending as far as the eye could reach, covered only with low bushes. The animals that we saw were the usual inhabitants of such regions,—ostriches, quaghas, springboks, &c. We steered N.N.E. by compass till sunset, when we

Away—away in the wilderness vast,
Where the white man's foot hath never pass'd,
And the quiver'd Koranna or Bechuan
Hath rarely cross'd with his roving clan :
A region of emptiness, howling and drear.
Which man hath abandon'd from famine and fear ;
Which the snake and the lizard inhabit alone,
And the bat flitting forth from his old hollow stone ;
Where grass, nor herb, nor shrub takes root,
Save poisonous thorns that pierce the foot ;
And the bitter melon, for food and drink,
Is the pilgrim's fare, by the Salt Lake's brink :
A region of drought, where no river glides,
Nor rippling brook with osier'd sides ;
Nor reedy pool, nor mossy fountain,
Nor shady tree, nor cloud-capp'd mountain,
Are found—to refresh the aching eye :
But the barren earth, and the burning sky,
And the blank horizon round and round,
Without a living sight or sound,
Tell to the heart, in its pensive mood,
That this is—NATURE'S SOLITUDE !

And here—while the night-winds round me sigh,
And the stars burn bright in the midnight sky,
As I sit apart by the cavern'd stone,
Like Elijah at Horeb's cave alone,
And feel as a moth in the Mighty Hand
That spread the heavens and heaved the land,—
A "still small voice" comes through the wild,
(Like a father consoling his fretful child),
Which banishes bitterness, wrath, and fear—
Saying "MAN IS DISTANT, BUT GOD IS NEAR!"

turned off to the N.W. a little, in quest of a fountain, which we reached before dusk. Here we had good water, but no shelter, and scarcely materials enough to make a tolerable fire.

We had scarcely taken up our position, when we observed a light at a little distance from us. This we concluded to be some Bushman encampment, and looked that our guns were all in order, that we might be prepared for the worst. I had brought with me my double-barrelled gun, and about ten pounds of ammunition, and my Hottentots had each a musket. We had just struck up a fire and begun to cook some victuals, when a party of those poor savages, consisting of about a dozen men and women, approached, and without exhibiting any signs of apprehension, came and seated themselves beside us, around our fire, and entered immediately into conversation with my guides. Though I would much rather, under present circumstances, have dispensed with their visit, yet I considered it best to treat them civilly, and with every appearance of confidence. They examined my dress, and evinced considerable eagerness to know what was my object in journeying through their country. After all their questions had been answered, they thought fit to entertain themselves and us with one of their *country-dances*, which they renewed at intervals, and kept up till midnight, "under the pale moon light," with great animation.

The dance* consisted of stamping on the ground with great violence, wreathing their bodies, at the same time, into all manner of contortions. Their only music was a sort of groaning sound uttered by the men, with a softer monotonous moaning accompaniment by the females. They continued this dance for several hours with great vivacity and apparent enjoyment, while the perspiration flowed profusely from their bodies.

During the intervals of this dance, I took the opportunity, while they were sitting round our fire, to make one of my Hottentots put a variety of questions to some of the most intelligent of them, to ascertain whether

their language was so very deficient in compass as I had heard. The following was the result of my examination with regard to the numerals :

One, t'a ; two, t'oa ; three, quo.

These three sounds are the whole of their simple numerals. The others, as far as ten, are expressed by repetitions and combinations of these three words, in the following manner :

Four—t'a, t'oa.

Five—t'oa, t'oa, t'a.

Six—t'oa, t'oa, t'oa.

Seven—t'oa, t'oa, t'oa, t'a.

Eight—t'oa, t'oa, t'oa, t'oa.

Nine—t'oa, t'oa, t'oa, t'oa, t'a.

Ten—t'oa, t'oa, t'oa, t'oa, t'oa.

The exceeding want of invention and ingenuity displayed in their language is a striking evidence of the degraded state of intellect among them. The mere care of supporting existence seems to have engrossed their entire faculties. The intellectual nature has succumbed to the brutal. Yet this party is considered by the Hantam colonists as one of the most civilized of the Bushman hordes ; for they are advanced a little beyond the hunter state, being in possession of a few cattle, and a flock of about 200 sheep. The captain of another kraal, who is commonly called the " Bushman Boor," also possesses a small flock. Which instances prove, however, that these people are not so entirely destitute of foresight and prudence as they are generally represented.

About midnight our visitors left us and returned quickly to their own camp, and we stretched ourselves out by the fire to sleep. I wished to prevail on the Hottentots to keep watch alternately with me, but this they strenuously objected to, urging, in the first place, that it was quite unnecessary, and in the second, that it was quite impossible,—because, as they alleged, after a hard day's journey " no man can keep himself awake." I

was, therefore, obliged, both now and throughout our journey, to trust our safety to the care of Providence, and to rise frequently in the night myself to replenish the fires with fuel. At this place (Adriaan's-Fonteyn) it was no easy matter to keep up a watch fire, there being no fuel except the dung of the wild animals frequenting the fountain.

8.—Rose at dawn of day, and turned our horses loose to graze on the dry tufted herbage, while we made our hasty breakfast. We then prosecuted our journey for about eight hours, without stopping, except to let our horses roll, an indulgence which relieves them greatly when fagged and heated. The country, as we proceeded, became more and more parched and desolate. We crossed the dry beds of various torrents, and saw on our right several beds of salt called the Brak-pans. We passed through a valley about six miles in breadth, entirely composed of naked sand, which had the appearance of being occasionally covered with water, though not a drop was to be found at present. We had not met with water during the whole day; and to augment our thirst, a strong scorching north-east wind blew full in our faces. At length, however, we reached a spot known to my guides, called the *kuil* or pit, where we found a small natural reservoir of tolerable water, but so deeply sunk between two rocks, that we with difficulty succeeded in drawing up a little of it for ourselves by means of the shell of an ostrich egg, but without the possibility of procuring a supply for our horses. Neither was there grass or any sort of forage for them in the neighbourhood. We rode on, therefore, a little farther, and then unsaddled; but our horses could not graze, on account of thirst, and we lay panting under a burning sun, without a bush or a rock to shelter us. The thermometer stood at 85° in the shade, and on being placed in the sun immediately rose to 110°. This was a mighty change, in so short a space, from the cold hills of the Roggeveld.

About two o'clock we again proceeded, directing our course somewhat more to the eastward, in order to survey an immense "salt-pan," which was

said to exist in that vicinity. The country was entirely without verdure of any description. Brown stunted bushes scattered here and there were its only covering. The soil consisted, in some parts, of a sharp gravel of decomposed schistus,—in others, of a calcareous stratum, strewed over with flints. At length, from the summit of a low ridge of hills, I beheld at my feet, and extending far to the northward, the prodigious “pan,” or rather valley of salt, which I was in search of. This valley, from what I could guess, and learn from my guides, can scarcely be less than forty miles in circumference. It was now covered with fine dry salt of a brilliant whiteness. When the occasional torrents of rain fall, it must be one vast sheet of water: and there can be no question, I apprehend, that this, and similar collections, of salt in South Africa, are occasioned by the sudden and heavy rains washing off from the surface of the adjoining country the innumerable saline particles, with which the earth is every where impregnated, into these natural reservoirs. I named this, the Commissioner’s Salt-pan, in honour of His Majesty’s Commissioners of Inquiry now in the Colony.

I took from this spot the bearing of Spioen-berg, the summit of which appeared like a dim speck in the horizon over the extensive plains which we had crossed.

I now directed the Hottentots to steer north-east, in order to fall in with the course of the Hartebeest River, and ascertain its junction with the Gariep; after which I purposed to follow the stream of the latter towards the coast. After skirting the margin of the salt lake for some time, we turned off to the east; but had scarcely travelled an hour from its banks, when we were overtaken by twilight, and were forced to take up our bivouac on the open plain, without a bush to shelter us from the cold night wind, or a drop of water to refresh our poor horses. For ourselves we had my two holster bottles, which I had filled at the last fountain. With one of these, and a very moderate allowance of provisions, we were obliged to content ourselves;

not knowing when we should obtain a fresh supply. I named this spot Dry Station. A miserable one it was, in every respect, and scarcely afforded us even fuel to make a fire.

As soon as the night closed in, we observed a Bushman fire at no great distance. This was an object, however, that I was far from regarding with satisfaction; for my guides had taught me to entertain (perhaps unjustly) considerable apprehension of a nocturnal attack from these vindictive savages; who might, no doubt, naturally enough regard us as hostile intruders in their country. We slept, nevertheless, undisturbed by them, or by the wild beasts, till about two hours before daybreak, when we again proceeded on our journey, anxious to reach some fountain, or pool of water, as neither our horses nor ourselves could hold out long without a supply of that vital article.

9.—We passed a considerable ridge, covered with dry tufted grass, and after a ride of about three hours, a little after sunrise reached the bed of the Kat's-kop (Cat's-head) River, as my Hottentots called it; but, to our extreme disappointment, found it completely dry. We unsaddled, but our horses were so thirsty, that they refused to eat. They had not had any water since we left Adriaan's-Fonteyn, and we now began to be seriously alarmed, both on their account and our own.

Witteboy and I immediately set out on foot in opposite directions, to search the bed of the river for some pool or puddle yet unexhausted. Jacob was unwell, and unable to assist us. I proceeded about two miles up the channel without success; when, observing the fresh traces of Bushmen, I returned to our station. There I found that Witteboy had also come back unsuccessful. From the circumstance, however, of Bushmen's recent foot-prints being seen, we concluded that water must exist at no great distance. Witteboy again set off in search of it, and at length was so fortunate as to discover a pit, recently dug by the Bushmen, and which contained water, though of a very brackish quality. On his return with this intelligence, we

immediately proceeded thither with the horses, and with some difficulty got them down to drink from the pit by turns. On filling my two bottles to carry water to Jacob, I was so unlucky as to let one be broken by the horses, which in our circumstances was a very serious misfortune.

We now sat down to cook our dinner, and on rummaging our knapsack, found to our dismay that this was the last meal that it would supply; the greater part of its contents having been unfortunately lost, when our pack-horse ran off at starting from Tee-Fonteyn. Almost all our horses had occasioned us much trouble by their wildness and want of training, excepting one old one, which was stiff, and already beginning to look exhausted. The conduct of the Hantam boors in supplying me with such a set of animals, upon such an excursion, was certainly extremely reprehensible, and in the sequel proved not a little disastrous to us.

CHAPTER III.

FARTHER INTERVIEWS WITH THE BUSHMEN.—GAMKA RIVER.—HARTE-
BEEST RIVER.—MISERABLE CONDITION OF A HORDE OF KORANNAS.
—SUFFERINGS FROM THIRST AND FAMINE.

WE were convinced, from certain indications, that Bushmen were watching us from an adjoining height; and ere long a small party were observed approaching in an open and peaceful manner. They consisted of one old man, two women, and two children. The children appeared healthy, and in good condition, but the adults were miserable-looking creatures. The old man was exceedingly emaciated, and the skin of one of the women hung in loose folds from her sides like a piece of leather. They had come to beg tobacco, and a small piece which we gave them seemed to render them quite happy. They readily entered into conversation with my Hottentots, but could furnish no satisfactory answers to our inquiries, in regard to the existence of water in the direction in which we were travelling. These poor creatures were at this time subsisting almost exclusively upon the larvæ of ants, which they dig from the ground with a pointed stick, hardened in the fire, and loaded with a stone at the thick end. We saw many parts of the plains full

of holes which they had made in search of these insects. There are two species of ants which they chiefly feed upon—one of a black, and the other of a white colour. The latter is considered by them very palatable food, and is, from its appearance, called by the boors “Bushmen’s rice.” This rice has an acid, and not very unpleasant taste, but it must require a great quantity to satisfy a hungry man. In order to fill the stomach, and perhaps to correct the too great acidity* of this food, the Bushmen eat along with it the gum of the mimosa tree, which is merely a variety of gum arabic.

While we were conversing with those people I observed that the old man was without the joint of one of his little fingers. On inquiring the cause, he said that his mother, having lost all her previous offspring soon after birth, had cut off this joint to prevent the like misfortune happening to him. Such puerile superstitions seem to constitute all the religion of the Bushmen.

Having refreshed ourselves and our famished horses, we proceeded a little after mid-day. A strong north-east wind, the *sirocco* of these regions, blew full in our faces, which it parched excessively; and the frequent application of a little fat, which I had kept for the purpose, but slightly relieved me. Our way now lay over a boundless plain. On our right was the range of the Kat’s-kop hills; and on our left, and in front, one of those extensive views peculiar to the vicinity of the Great River. Speaking generally of the Bushman country, between the Colony and the Gariep, it may be described as one great inclined plain, falling very gradually from the Nieuw-veld ridge of mountains to the banks of that river.

About an hour after we started we fell in with a Bushman and his wife,

* The facility with which a strong and palatable acid may be obtained from certain species of ants, is not unknown in Europe. In Norway the peasants catch quantities (by placing bottles half filled with water in the ant-hills) which they afterwards boil up and make into vinegar.

returning from a hunting excursion. He had been successful, and was carrying on his back half of the carcase of a young gemsbok which he had slain with his poisoned arrows. His wife was loaded with the remainder, together with a little child which sat upon her shoulders, with its legs hanging over her bosom, and holding itself on by her matted hair. This load of provisions, and probably a hearty meal from their game as soon as it was killed, had given these people a comfortable and joyous appearance. The female appeared to me the prettiest Bushwoman I ever beheld. In spite of the prominent features of her race she might almost be called a beauty, with her dark eyes sparkling like brilliants from a happy laughing countenance, and with a set of teeth as white as the finest ivory. On questioning them about the probability of finding water on our route, the hunter, pointing to a certain part of the heavens, told us, that if we rode hard, we should find water by the time the moon stood there. This indicated a distance of not less than fifty miles. Yet it was a consolation to know that we should find water even within that distance. Rewarding our informant with a bit of tobacco, we pushed on with redoubled speed.

About sunset I ventured, on the strength of the Bushman's report, to divide, with my Hottentots, the bottle of brackish water we had brought from the pit, in the bed of the Kat's-kop River, which proved, however, very inadequate to refresh our burning thirst. Hour after hour succeeded till midnight was past, and still the moon had not reached the situation pointed out by the Bushman, while our horses were ready to sink under us at the rate we travelled. As we drew near the spot where we expected to find water, my guides, who usually kept a little ahead of me, requested me to ride in close file with them, because lions usually lay in ambush in such places, and were more apt to spring upon men when riding singly than in a clump together. We had scarcely adopted this precaution when we passed

within thirty paces of one of these formidable animals. He gazed at us for a moment, and then lay down, couchant, while we passed on as fast as possible, not without looking frequently behind, with feelings of awe and apprehension. We soon after reached the bed of the Gamka (or Lion's) River, but found it at this place, to our sorrow, entirely dry. We were all ready to sink under the exertions we had this day made, and the thirst we had endured. Jacob, in particular, who was unwell, and had suffered much from the hard riding, repeatedly told us that he could hold out no longer, but wished to lie down and die. The dread, however, of being devoured by the lions now acted on him as a spur to exertion; and Witteboy and myself, knowing that our fate depended upon our getting water, continued to urge on our horses along the course of the river, most anxiously looking out for the pool the Bushman had told us of. In this way we proceeded till two o'clock in the morning, and were almost despairing of success, when we at length discovered the promised pool,—which, though thick with mud, and defiled by the dung and urine of the wild beasts, was, nevertheless, a most grateful relief to us and our horses. We had been up since two o'clock on the preceding morning, had been on horseback above sixteen hours, and had travelled in that time a distance of fully eighty miles, the last stage of about sixty entirely without stopping. Our condition, and that of our horses, may therefore be readily imagined to have been one of great exhaustion. Extreme fatigue had, indeed, quite destroyed all appetite,—which, as we had not a morsel to eat, was no great disadvantage. Having fastened our horses to a bush, we stretched ourselves on the earth near them, being too wearied to take the trouble of kindling a fire for the short space of the night that remained, trusting that, if the lions discovered us, they would prefer the horses to ourselves.

10.—We were awakened about daybreak by the roar of a lion at a

little distance, but were not otherwise molested. The other difficulties of our situation now engrossed all my thoughts. All our horses were excessively fagged by the severe thirst and great exertions of the two preceding days. The old horse, indeed, exhibited strong symptoms of giving up altogether. Jacob seemed to be in a plight equally precarious. We had not a morsel of provisions left, nor did we know when we should get any. We had calculated on finding game in plenty, but the great drought that had long prevailed in these regions had driven almost the whole of the wild animals to other quarters. We, however, remained here till about mid-day to refresh our horses; we ourselves lying panting with empty stomachs under the scorching sun. The Hottentots named this spot, significantly enough, "*Korte pens* (empty paunch) station."

We proceeded at an easy pace along the banks of the river, which we found in many places covered with mimosas, the certain sign of a climate never subject to any great severity of cold. This plant is never found on the more elevated tracts of Southern Africa. Passed a solitary conical hill, near the junction of the Gamka with the Hartebest River, to which, in honour of a friend, I gave the name of Ravenhill. Several beds of torrents that must occasionally pour forth considerable streams, here join the Gamka. The country in general appeared excessively dry and barren, though here and there were spots covered with withered grass. The soil was alternately sand and sharp calcareous gravel. Not a living creature was to be seen.

About sunset we crossed the channel of the Gamka, for the last time, our course now turning almost due north towards the Hartebest River where we hoped to find water, and probably game. We proceeded at a very lagging pace, for some of our horses were lamed by the sharp flinty road, and the old one got fairly fagged; so that we were at length reluctantly obliged to leave him. About nine o'clock, after a tedious ride of nine hours, during

which we had scarcely travelled thirty-five miles, we reached the bed of the Hartebeest River, at a place called "Camel's Mouth;" but, to our extreme chagrin, found it perfectly dry. We had no resource but to tie our horses to a tree; and, having made a fire, we stretched ourselves beside it, and sought consolation in sleep. During the night we were disturbed by the hyænas, which came within a few yards, but did not venture to attack us.

11. — At daybreak turned our horses out to graze. We found ourselves in the bed of a river, which at some seasons must contain a stream of water of great power and volume. It is, in fact, the channel through which all the waters of the northern side of the Nieuwveld pour themselves, after the great thunder-storms, or periodical deluges, into the Gariep. How precarious and unfrequent these deluges are, may be surmised from the fact, that this river had not been running for *five* years.

The banks were overhung with the umbrage of mimosa and willow-trees, and numbers of doves and pigeons were chirping and cooing among the branches. At another time I should have enjoyed such soothing sounds in a scene so lone and tranquil. At present, the pressure of hunger awoke only my regret for having neglected to bring small shot, that, by that means, I might now have procured a breakfast of turtle-doves. Famine, alas! is too powerful for poetic sentimentality.

Our first care was to search for water, and we had the great satisfaction of discovering it at no great distance, in a pit about ten feet deep, recently dug by the natives. It was very brack, indeed, but proved, nevertheless, a most grateful relief to us. To assuage the cravings of hunger, our Hottentots gathered and ate a little gum from the mimosa-trees. I also attempted to eat a small quantity, but could not swallow it.

Witteboy then went out with his gun in search of game; Jacob followed to look after the horses which had strayed to some distance in quest of pas-

ture ; and stayed behind to guard the baggage. While I sat here, musing in no very comfortable mood, two Korannas suddenly made their appearance, and without hesitation came and seated themselves beside me. They were miserable-looking beings, emaciated and lank, with the withered skin hanging in folds upon their sides, while a belt bound tight round each of their bodies indicated that they were suffering, like myself, from long privation of food. I attempted to make them understand by signs that I was in want of provisions, and would gladly purchase some ; but they only replied by shaking their heads, and pointing to the "girdles of famine," tied round their bellies ; and I afterwards learned that they had been subsisting for many days entirely on gum.

In this situation we sat together for upwards of two hours, until at length Witteboy made his appearance, leading the old horse that we had left some miles behind the preceding night, but without any game. He immediately entered into conversation with the Korannas, but could learn from them only the details of their own miserable situation. On account of the long continued drought, the wild game had almost entirely deserted this quarter of the country ; the bulbs, also, had disappeared ; and they were reduced to famine. Jacob soon after returning with the horses, we saddled up about nine o'clock, and left these poor Korannas and the "Camel's Mouth," filing away in a melancholy train down the dry channel of the river. We took this path through a heavy sand, to save our horses' feet from the sharp flints which covered the banks.

After about an hour's ride, we came to a spot marked with the recent foot-prints of the natives ; and, looking around us, we saw two human beings seated at a little distance under a mimosa. On approaching them, a picture of misery presented itself, such as my eyes had never before witnessed. Two Koranna women were sitting on the ground entirely naked ; their eyes were fixed upon the earth, and when we addressed them, one of them muttered some words in reply, but looked not up on us. Their bodies

were wasted by famine to mere skin and bone. One of them was apparently far advanced in years. The other was rather a young woman, but a cripple. An infant lay in her naked lap, wasted like herself to a skeleton, which every now and then applied its little mouth alternately to the shrivelled breasts of its dying mother. Before them stood a wooden vessel, containing merely a few spoonfuls of muddy water. By degrees the Hottentots obtained for me an explanation of this melancholy scene. These three unfortunate beings had been thus left to perish by their relatives when famine pressed sore upon the horde, because they were helpless, and unable to provide for themselves. A pot of water had been left with them ; and on this, and a little gum, they had been for a number of days eking out a miserable existence. It seemed wonderful that they had so long escaped falling a prey to the wild beasts ; but it was evident that one or two days more of famine would be sufficient to release them from all their earthly sufferings.

My heart was moved with commiseration for these deserted and dying creatures, but I possessed no means of relieving them. We had looked forward with confidence to the relief of our own pressing wants on reaching the Koranna hordes upon the Gariep ; but if the others were in a similar condition with those we had seen, our prospect was, indeed, a very gloomy one. Leaving with melancholy forebodings this scene of misery, we continued our journey down the bed of the river. A little farther on, we found several more Koranna women and children on the banks, in a condition not much better than those we had just left. The men belonging to the party had been absent several days in quest of game, and had left them to subsist on gum till their return. From them, of course, we could procure no assistance.

From the long want of food, I now began to feel myself so weak, that I could with difficulty maintain an upright posture on horseback. The jolting of the horse seemed as if it would shake me to pieces. It struck me that I

would try the method which I saw adopted by the famishing Kqrannas, and by my own Hottentots, of tying a band tightly round the body. I unloosed my cravat, and employed it for this purpose, and had no sooner done so, than I found great and immediate relief. We continued travelling in this manner, sometimes in the bed of the river, sometimes along its banks, till about two o'clock, when we found the heat so overpowering, that we unsaddled at the foot of a conical hill, and turned the horses out to graze. Witteboy and I then ascended the hill to look over the plain for game; and thinking we perceived some at a distance, we set off in pursuit, leaving Jacob in charge of the horses. I felt so weak that I threw off my coat and waistcoat, my gun being a load more than sufficient for me, and was often obliged to rest by the way. On reaching the spot where we thought we had seen the game, we could perceive no living creature; so that either the animals had fled, or our eyes had deceived us. The latter was probably the case, for the glare of light reflected from the dry and calcareous gravel in the heat of the day, was almost enough to destroy my sight, and frequently dazzled and deceived even that of the Hottentots.

After a weary trudge of about two hours, we returned with desponding hearts to Jacob; saddled up our horses, and again proceeded; having bestowed on this spot the name of "Hopeless Hill." We moved slowly on till sunset, without observing any game, or finding water. Passed the bed of a considerable branch of the Hartebeest River, which takes its rise, as my guides informed me, about 20 or 30 miles to the westward, near some large salt-pans. At eight o'clock, finding ourselves quite exhausted, though we had not travelled to-day above 25 miles, we unsaddled in the bed of the river, tied our horses to a tree, and stretched ourselves on a bank of sand. Our rest, however, was but indifferent,—disturbed by cold, hunger, thirst, and the howling of wild beasts, and by frightful dreams, produced by all these afflictions combined.

12.—At dawn of day awoke again to the full sense of our distressed condition. Witteboy and I immediately proceeded to an adjoining height to look out for game. We could see none; but observed a party of Korannas at no great distance, to whom we immediately proceeded. There were about a dozen of them, young and old; and all in the same state of destitution as those we had last seen. They were subsisting principally upon gum, and had not a morsel of any other food to give us. One of them, however, led us to a pit which they had dug in the channel of the river, where, with some difficulty, we procured each of us a draught of very brack water; which, bad as it was, somewhat relieved our thirst. Our prospects of obtaining relief were now more than ever disheartening. We had been three days entirely without any food, except a little gum, which was, perhaps, even worse than none; and for two days previous to that, we had been on very short allowance. All this time we had been travelling with very great bodily exertion. I felt myself dreadfully reduced, and as weak as an infant. My poor Hottentots looked like moving ghosts. Their gaunt, hollow cheeks, and eyes sunk in the sockets, gave them a frightful aspect. Jacob was suffering under illness as well as famine,—yet neither of the poor fellows complained much.

I now proposed to kill one of the horses to supply our urgent wants, since the prospect of shooting game had become almost hopeless, and our fruitless search for it had almost worn us out. Witteboy, however, begged earnestly that I would permit him to make another attempt with his gun. I agreed: but before he set out, it was necessary to procure water for the horses. To effect this, we were obliged to enlarge the pit, and dig a passage to it, in order to admit them one by one. We had no other implement but a tortoise-shell; and with this we at length, with great difficulty, accomplished our object. Witteboy then set off with his gun, accompanied by three or four of the Korannas, who were scarcely less anxious for his success than ourselves,—hoping to come in for a share of what he might kill. Jacob and I, mean-

while, took up our station on the top of a small hill, to watch the proceedings of the hunters. An old Koranna kept us company, from whom I obtained the following information respecting his tribe, through the interpretation of Jacob.

The Korannas inhabiting the banks of the Hartebest River, are entirely destitute of cattle, and live precisely in the same manner as the Bushmen: that is, upon game, when they can kill any, and upon such esculent roots as the country produces; and when these resources fail, they support life as well as they can upon ants, and gum, and the twigs of a certain bush. They kill the game, in the same manner as the Bushmen, by poisoned arrows, and by pitfalls, with a sharp stake fixed in the centre. These pits are so numerous along the banks and bed of the Hartebest River, that it is surprising we escaped falling into some of them. At this time, the extreme drought, by destroying all vestiges of the edible bulbs over the surface of the country, had reduced these people to extreme destitution. These Korannas surpass the Bushmen generally in stature, and differ from them in language, and in some other slight particulars. But as they appear formerly to have possessed cattle, like the rest of their nation, and to have been reduced to this precarious mode of life by being plundered by some of their neighbours, their present situation exhibits the obvious process by which the Bushman race have been originally driven back from the pastoral state to that of the huntsman and robber.

CHAPTER IV.

RETURN OF WITTEBOY WITH GAME. — VORACITY OF THE HOTTENTOTS.

—ARRIVAL ON THE BANKS OF THE GARIEP.—HYÆNAS AND LIONS.—

JOURNEY DOWN THE RIVER. — BAND OF KORANNA HUNTSMEN.—

EXCURSION TO VIEW A REMARKABLE WATERFALL.

THE tedious day wore on apace as we thus sat anxiously waiting the return of Witteboy, who, with his party, had been long hidden from our view by the undulations of the country. The old Koranna was talkative and friendly in his way, and did his best to entertain me; sometimes supplying me with a morsel of gum to stay my stomach, sometimes sending a little girl to bring us water in an ostrich egg-shell. This water, though the best they could procure, was so much impregnated with salt, that it seemed only to increase the thirst it was intended to relieve. The hot dry wind from the north-east blew witheringly upon us,—parching up the lips till they cracked, and relaxing our wasted frames to exceeding languor. I felt oppressed by a torpid lethargy, but tried in vain to escape from my cares by sleep; a horrible night-mare constantly invaded my slumbers, and soon awoke me. Jacob was still worse than myself, and seemed already almost exanimate. It was with much difficulty that I could rouse him up now and then to interpret the questions I put to the old Koranna.

Evening at length approached, and still the hunting party appeared not. The pangs of hunger pressed sore upon us, and our only relief was to draw our "girdles of famine" still tighter round our bodies. I wished much that I had provided myself with a pair of dandy stays, which, in my present circumstances, would have been invaluable. At length, just as the sun was sinking under the horizon, we descried Witteboy and his Koranna followers returning; and the sharp eyes of my comrades soon discovered that they were loaded with flesh. As they approached, this joyful news became certain. A zebra had been shot, and each was carrying a piece of it for immediate consumption. The Korannas, old and young, sprang forth to meet the huntsmen, skipping, dancing, and shouting for joy. Jacob and I, exhausted as we were, were reanimated by their jocund cries, and by the sight of so seasonable a relief, to a sense of joy and gratitude, less clamorous, but scarcely less intense than that of these half-famished savages. We had now been nearly four days without food, and but very ill supplied with bad brackish water. Had Witteboy again failed of success in hunting, we must have killed one of our horses—a resource which the Hottentots were even more unwilling than myself to resort to.

Without questioning Witteboy how or where he killed the zebra, we all commenced roasting and eating. In a short time I had picked several of his ribs. As for the Hottentots, I do not exaggerate, when I say, that each of them had devoured eight pounds of meat within an hour, and an additional allowance of three or four pounds more before they slept. The Korannas marched off in a body to the place where the zebra was shot, to feast upon the offals, and certain parts of the carcase which we had allotted them, on the condition of their keeping careful watch over the remainder until we joined them in the morning.

The sudden change in the appearance of my Hottentots this evening, after their hunger was assuaged, was remarkable. Hope and happiness again re-

animated them, and that haggard and horrid appearance which had invested their visages, began to disappear. So voracious was their appetite, that I really became apprehensive they would kill themselves by repletion: and in the middle of the night, when I awoke, I again found them eating and smoking by turns.

We made our bivouac this night upon the high bank of the river; for the Korannas had warned us not to sleep again in the channel where we lay the preceding evening; that being, as they said, literally "the lion's path." Our new lodging was but a bleak one. We could with difficulty collect firewood sufficient to warm us; our couch was the bare flinty gravel; and the night wind was so chill as to prevent us from sleeping comfortably. The moon also had deserted us, and we were disturbed all night long by the hungry hyænas howling around us.

13.—We saddled up at an early hour. Jacob, notwithstanding his ravenous appetite the preceding evening, was so weak and stiff, that he could not rise without assistance. We got him, however, on horseback, and proceeded north-east about seven miles, through a labyrinth of low rugged hills, sprinkled over with bushes of the *Wagt-ccn-beetje*. We found there the Korannas in charge of the remains of the zebra. The heavy incursions made upon the carcase, and the excessive protuberance of paunch now visible in these hungry guardians, evinced that they had made good use of their time and their teeth. We saved, however, the two hind-quarters and the head for our own use, and without delay tied them upon our pack-horses. The Korannas were rewarded with the remainder. Our new acquaintance, well pleased with our generosity, would gladly have persuaded us to go in pursuit of a herd of zebras which we saw at no great distance; but having now as much meat as we could conveniently carry, it was a matter of too urgent importance to get forward to the Gariep, and to prosecute the remainder of my excursion without delay, to admit of wasting our time and

strength in hunting for the natives, whose destitute condition we could not permanently relieve, even if successful.

We made the best of our way, therefore, towards the Gariep, which we reached to our great satisfaction, in about a couple of hours. After suffering so severely as we had done, from the want of water, what a glorious object did this river appear, flowing in a majestic stream, deep and rapid, and 500 yards in breadth! We hurried down to the channel, and plunged our hands and faces into the cooling waters, and at length assuaged a thirst which the briny wells of the Korannas seemed at every draught to increase. We then turned our horses out to refresh themselves on the herbage along the banks, while we employed ourselves under the shade of the willows, in cutting up our zebra flesh into thin slices, to dry in the sun. Having now abundance of meat, and a whole river of fresh water, we made a princely feast, though without either salt or sauce, or any sort of vegetable. We found the zebra flesh sweet and good; yet it never seemed somehow sufficiently to satisfy our hunger,—and we had scarcely finished one meal, before we found ourselves ready for another.

It was remarkable, that during the period of our recent sufferings from hunger and thirst, my imagination, both sleeping and awake, was continually conjuring up all manner of dainties, and delicious brooks of limpid water. Now that we had plenty of flesh, it seemed to me as if bread alone could satisfy me.

Our horses were so much knocked up by want of water, bad pasturage, and flinty roads, that they required rest and refreshment not less than ourselves. We resolved, therefore, to remain here till next day at noon.

After all our privations, it was no slight satisfaction to me, to have so far accomplished one of the objects of my journey. I had reached the banks of the Gariep by a route never taken before by any traveller, and had been enabled to add to the map of South Africa, the distinctive features of the

intermediate region, which, dreary and desolate though it be, is not without a strong interest in the eyes both of the naturalist and the philanthropist.

The Gariep must pour into the ocean a mighty volume of water at certain seasons. At this period it was at its lowest ebb, and only about 500 yards in breadth ; but the numerous vestiges of its overflowings extended over each bank at least a mile from the margin of the water, and at some places to three or four times that distance. At the spot where we had reached it, and for a considerable way downwards, its course was nearly north-west. On the opposite bank a ridge of mountains runs parallel with the river. This ridge, as I have ascertained, accompanies its course from a little below Griqua Town almost to the ocean, a distance of nearly 500 miles : I have called it the Gariepine walls. At no great distance above our present station, a curious rapid is said to be formed, by the approach of this Gariepine wall to the ridge called the Duke of York's mountains. At that place the river, forcing its passage between the hills, is to a considerable extent arched over by an immense cliff, suspended between two rocks. The roar of the waters rushing through this narrow gateway, was distinctly heard by us at a distance of many miles. But during the season, when the river is swollen to its full height, the scene must be infinitely more imposing ; and the immense collection of waters above the rapid, then spreading out into a noble lake, studded with islands, must be a magnificent object to the lone dwellers in the wilderness. The Gariep is subject at all times to very sudden risings, occasioned by heavy rains in the upper part of its course, and on this account the natives are cautious not to sleep too near the margin of the stream. We had ventured this evening, however, to make our bivouac even in the channel of the river, for the sake of more easy access to the water. About midnight, we were suddenly awakened by a loud roaring, "like the voice of many waters" rushing down upon us. We started up in a terrible fright, and ran to our horses, thinking the floods, with all their "water-kelpies," were come to

sweep us off to the ocean: when lo! the sound died away in distance, and was heard no more. We then concluded that it was the roar of the rapid, borne down to us by a sudden gust of wind, and ventured to return to our couch of sand, where we slept undisturbed through the rest of the night.

14.—A little before daybreak we turned out our horses to graze, being anxious to refresh them as much as possible before we again started. They had not been long at large, before we heard the hungry howl of the hyæna, and presently four of the horses came up to our fire at full gallop, as if claiming our protection. We instantly seized our guns and ran to the rescue of the remaining horse, and found him beset in a corner of the thicket by a ferocious tiger-wolf (*hyæna crocuta*,) who was attempting to break in upon him. We soon put to flight the hyæna, and brought off our poor old hack, trembling all over like an aspen.

We breakfasted this morning on the zebra's head, which we had buried the preceding night in the hot embers. We then repaired the wear and tear of our riding gear, packed up our dried meat, and got ready to start about noon, having, as we conceived, now tolerably recruited ourselves, and our steeds. I observed a variety of birds at this place, viz. herons, water-hens, wild geese, divers, three sorts of crows, several species of hawks and vultures, two species of swallows, three of pigeons, and a variety of finches and other small birds. The crows were extremely familiar, coming within a few paces of us, and picking up the bones we threw to them. The smaller birds also appeared, from their familiarity, to be very little annoyed by mankind. We observed no natives, nor any traces of them in this vicinity.

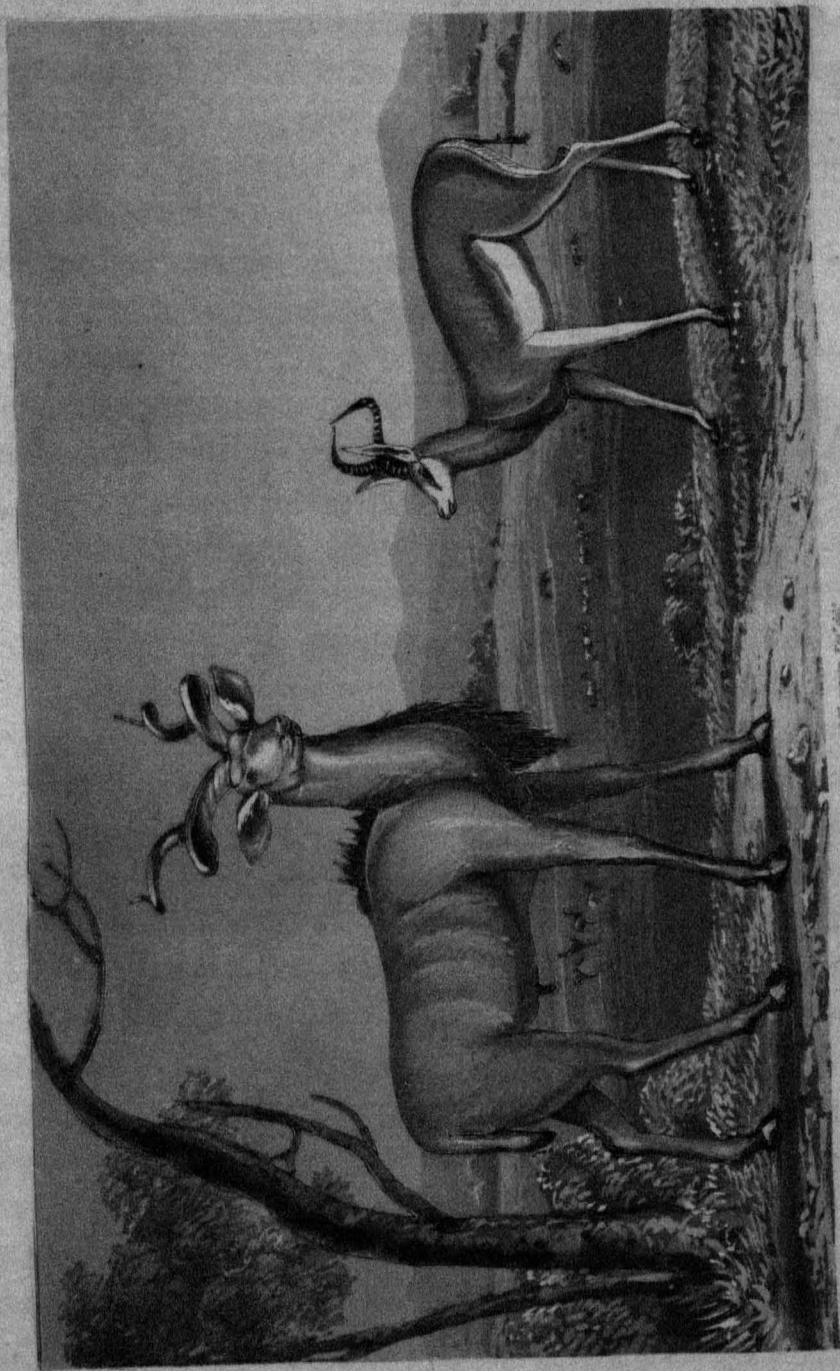
About two o'clock we left Junction Station, as I had called it, in reference to the confluence of the Hartebeest with the Gariep. The dry channel of the former river, which we soon after crossed, was here of vast

extent, manifesting the gigantic force and magnitude of this torrent of the desert when it is in flood. We found the banks of the Gariep, as we proceeded downwards, so closely beset with mimosa and willow groves and thickets, that it was extremely difficult to get access to the water. As we rode along, a herd of koodoos, which had been down to drink, bounded past us from the thicket, but too suddenly to enable us to fire with effect at them.* At these paths, made by the wild game through the jungle in resorting to drink at the rivers, the lion very frequently lies in wait, in order to spring suddenly upon his prey. Such places are, consequently, peculiarly dangerous, of which my Hottentots this evening obtained sufficient demonstration. We had unsaddled on the bank, and Witteboy and Jacob had proceeded with the horses down to the water, when a lion suddenly made a spring at one of them, but missing him walked off, (as that animal generally does in such circumstances,) without making a second attempt. The Hottentots hurried back in terror, and we lost no time in tying up the horses, and lighting a large fire to protect them and ourselves from this powerful and insidious enemy. We experienced, during the night, no farther disturbance.

15.—Continued our journey at daybreak. The views we occasionally caught of the river from the rising grounds on its banks, were very magnificent. The rich foliage of the willows along the margin, and the thickets, or rather forests of mimosa-trees, spreading for at least a mile on either side, formed a striking contrast to the parched-up plains and hills out of the influence of its periodical overflowings.

The sultry north-west wind continued to blow strong in our faces; and whirlwinds were often observed sweeping up the course of the river, car-

* The koodoo is one of the most remarkable of the South African antelopes, but now too well known to all lovers of natural history to require minute description. The horns of the male are sometimes upwards of four feet in length; yet he is a lover of the thorny brakes on the river banks: the female is destitute of horns. The figures of this animal, and the springbok, in the accompanying plate, are accurately engraved.



G. Thompson del. sculp.
SPRING BOK AND KOODOO.
London, Print by W. Colman, Jan. 1847.

rying the loose sand and withered wrack of the banks along with great violence. We continued looking out very anxiously for the natives, and felt not a little surprised that we had yet met with none. We saw many of the pitfalls dug by them for ensnaring the larger game, and sometimes with difficulty avoided falling into them. The thorny mazes of the banks, and the rugged nature of the adjacent country, alike impeded us. All our horses still exhibited symptoms of great exhaustion, and some of them had become quite lame by wounding their feet in the stony paths. We proceeded, therefore, but slowly.

We had now advanced about fifty miles down the river without having met a single native; and knowing that its banks are far more densely inhabited than any other part of the Bushman or Koranna country, and observing also, many of their dwellings recently deserted, we could not account for the apparent abandonment of this favourite region by its inhabitants. At length, in the course of this forenoon, as we were crossing a deep recess close to the margin of the river, we came suddenly upon a party of about thirty Korannas, seated under the shade of the wood. Our first sensation was that of lively pleasure at regaining the society of a peaceful and friendly race of men, (for our journey from the Colony had been but a dreary one;) but our joy was suddenly checked, by seeing the Korannas, the instant they observed us, start on their feet, and fly to their arms; and I expected the next moment a shower of poisoned arrows to be poured in upon us. But Witteboy, with great presence of mind, threw himself from horseback, flung down his gun, and ran towards them with extended arms—calling out in their own dialect, that we were friends. This instantly brought them to a parley, and we soon shook hands together with mutual satisfaction. We now learned that the cause of their alarm at our appearance was the conduct of the Namaqua robber Africaner, who, with a strong party of runaway slaves and bastards, keeps the whole of the adjoining tribes in terror, and has already reduced the greater part of them to destitution, by plundering them of their flocks

and herds. On first seeing us, this party took us for some of Africaner's band, and had determined to resist to the uttermost. Their kraal, with the cattle, women, and children, was on the opposite side of the river, so that we could neither procure milk nor any other refreshment from them. They had crossed the river merely for the sake of hunting.

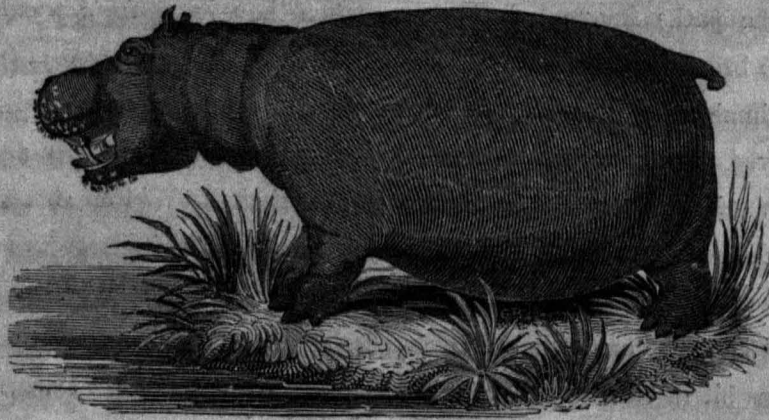
As soon as we came to a friendly understanding with these people, I made inquiries respecting a great cataract which I had been informed existed in this vicinity. To my high satisfaction, I soon ascertained that it was not above seven or eight miles down the river; and as mid-day was scarcely passed, I determined to visit it immediately, and return to the Koranna camp to spend the night. Leaving our two weakest horses, therefore, I set out with Witteboy and five of the Korannas whom I engaged to accompany us on foot. As we approached the fall the sound began to rise upon our ears like distant thunder. It was still, however, a work of some exertion to reach the spot, from which we were divided by a part of the river, and beyond that by a tract of wild woodland, several miles in extent. The main and middle branch of the Gariep, which forms the cataract, traverses a sort of island of large extent, covered with rocks and thickets, and environed on all sides by streams of water. Having crossed the southern branch, which at this season is but an inconsiderable creek, we continued to follow the Korannas for several miles through the dense acacia forests, while the thundering sound of the cataract increased at every step. At length we reached a ridge of rocks, and found it necessary to dismount and follow our guides on foot. It seemed as we were now entering the untrodden vestibule of one of Nature's most sublime temples, and the untutored savages who guided us, evinced by the awe and circumspection with which they trod, that they were not altogether uninfluenced by the *genius loci*. They repeatedly requested me to keep behind, and follow them softly, for the precipices were dangerous for the feet of men,—and the sight and sound of the cataract were so fearful, that they themselves regarded the place with awe, and ventured but seldom to visit it.

At length the whole of them halted, and desired me to do the same. One of them stepped forward to the brink of the precipice, and having looked cautiously over, beckoned me to advance. I did so, and witnessed a curious and striking scene ; but it was not yet the waterfall. It was a rapid formed by almost the whole volume of the river, compressed into a narrow channel of not more than fifty yards in breadth, whence it descended at an angle of nearly 45° , and rushing tumultuously through a black and crooked chasm, among the rocks, of frightful depth, escaped in a torrent of foam. My swarthy guides, although this was unquestionably the first time that they had ever led a traveller to view the remarkable scenery of their country, evinced a degree of tact as *Ciceroni*, as well as natural feeling of the picturesque, that equally pleased and surprised me. Having forewarned me that this was not yet the waterfall, they now pioneered the way for about a mile farther along the rocks, some of them keeping near, and continually cautioning me to look to my feet, as a single false step might precipitate me into the raging abyss of waters,—the tumult of which seemed to shake even the solid rocks around us. At length we halted as before, and the next moment I was led to a projecting rock, where a scene burst upon me, far surpassing my most sanguine expectations. The whole water of the river (except what escapes by the subsidiary channel we had crossed, and by a similar one on the north side,) being previously confined to a bed of scarcely one hundred feet in breadth, descends at once in a magnificent cascade of fully four hundred feet in height. I stood upon a cliff nearly level with the top of the fall, and directly in front of it. The beams of the evening sun fell full upon the cascade, and occasioned a most splendid rainbow ; while the vapoury mists arising from the broken waters, the bright green woods which hung from the surrounding cliffs, the astounding roar of the waterfall, and the tumultuous boiling and whirling of the stream below, striving to escape along its deep, dark, and narrow path, formed altogether a combination of beauty and grandeur, such as I never before witnessed. As I gazed on this stupendous scene, I felt as if in a dream.

The sublimity of Nature drowned all apprehensions of danger ; and after a short pause, I hastily left the spot where I stood, to gain a nearer view from a cliff that more immediately impended over the foaming gulf. I had just reached this station, when I felt myself grasped all at once by four Korannas, who simultaneously seized hold of me by the arms and legs. My first impression was, that they were going to hurl me over the precipice ; but it was a momentary thought, and it wronged the friendly savages. They are themselves a timid race ; and they were alarmed, lest my temerity should lead me into danger. They hurried me back from the brink, and then explained their motive, and asked my forgiveness. I was not ungrateful for their care, though somewhat annoyed by their officiousness. I returned to my station to take a sketch of the scene, but my attempt was far too hurried, and too unworthy of its object, to please myself, or to be presented to the reader. The character of the whole of the surrounding scenery, full of rocks, caverns, and pathless woods, and the desolate aspect of the Gariepine mountains beyond, accorded well with the wild grandeur of the waterfall, and impressed me with feelings never to be effaced.

The river, after pouring itself out in this beautiful cascade, rushes along in a narrow chasm or canal, of about two miles in length, and nearly five hundred feet in depth, apparently worn in the solid rock, in the course of ages, by the force of the current.

In the summer season, when the river is in flood, the fall must be infinitely more magnificent ; but it is probably, at that season, altogether inaccessible ; for it is evident, that the mass of waters, unable to escape by this passage, then pour themselves out in mighty streams by the two subsidiary channels, which were now almost dry, and at the same time overflow nearly the entire tract of forest land between them,—which forms, at other seasons, a sort of island, as we now found it. I named this scene “ King George’s Cataract,” in honour of our gracious Sovereign.



CHAPTER V.

THE HIPPOPOTAMUS.—OBSTACLES TO CULTIVATION.—NATIVE MODE OF CROSSING THE RIVER.—CUSTOMS, CHARACTER, AND CONDITION OF THE KORANNA TRIBES.

THE approach of evening, and the importunities of the Korannas, at length drew me reluctantly from the impressive scene I have vainly attempted to describe. We hastened back to their encampment, and I and my attendants fixed our bivouac for the night under an aged willow-tree, upon the very brink of the river.

In conversing about the waterfall, the Korannas mentioned that a hippopotamus had been killed by falling over it a short time before. But such an accident, they observed, seldom occurs, as the instinct of these animals leads them to avoid being carried by the current too near the rapid and rocky channels, and they usually pass such places by taking a circuitous course

along the banks. The hippopotami are numerous in many parts of this river, and are occasionally caught by the natives, by means of huge pitfalls dug in the paths frequented by them, when they issue from the floods by night, to browse on the wooded banks. The capture of one of those enormous animals must be an event of jubilee and rejoicing to a whole horde of half-starved Bushmen or Korannas, sufficient to banish hunger and heaviness for weeks to come. The hippopotamus, though timid on shore, is sometimes a dangerous antagonist in the water. In the pairing season, especially, the natives dread much to encounter him in crossing the river. Mr. Moffat informed me, that once when he was passing Read's Drift, a Hottentot of his party was bit in two by one of those monstrous animals.* I learned from these people, that the Kuruman River, which rises in the Bechuana country, joins the Gariep a little below King George's Cataract; but that in the lower part of its course it is often dry for years together, like the Hartbeest torrent, on the southern side.

Being now somewhat tired of zebra's flesh, I endeavoured to obtain a little variety by bartering some of it with the Korannas for a piece of dried gemsbok; but the exchange was far from improving our fare,—the gemsbok was so tough that I preferred the zebra. Jacob, who had now sufficiently recovered his strength and spirits to crack a joke, observed, that if we lived much longer in this way, eating zebra to zebra, we should in time grow striped. This was considered good wit by the *beau monde* of the Gariep banks. Witteboy and the Korannas laughed heartily at Jacob's *jeu d'esprit*, nor was I so fastidious as to refuse joining in their simple merriment.

16.—This morning was ushered in by the signs of an approaching thunder-storm. On this account, and also further to recruit our horses, we resolv-

* The figure in the vignette is copied from a drawing of a young hippopotamus, sketched upon another occasion.

ed to spend another day with the Korannas. Like them, we took refuge from the coming tempest, and the deluge of rain which we expected with it, under the thickest foliage of the large willow-trees. A few days before, on the Hartebeest River, we should have been most grateful for a hearty drenching; now we rejoiced when a change of wind carried off the lowering clouds in a different direction, to refresh, probably, some distant spot of the thirsty wilderness.

At noon I bathed in the river, and found myself greatly refreshed by it. On examining the banks, I observed with regret, the impracticability of leading out the water for irrigating the adjoining lands by dams and ditches,—the usual and only method of cultivating the soil in the interior of Southern Africa. The great elevation of the banks above the ordinary channel of the stream, along the whole course of the Gariep, so far as I have surveyed it, seems to preclude all prospect of success in any scheme of this sort, upon the plan commonly practised; but whether advantage might not be taken of its natural overflowings to effect in some measure the same object, or whether some simple machinery, similar to the Egyptian wheel, might not be here successfully employed in irrigation, I do not feel competent to decide. It is a problem, in all appearance, not likely soon to be solved.*

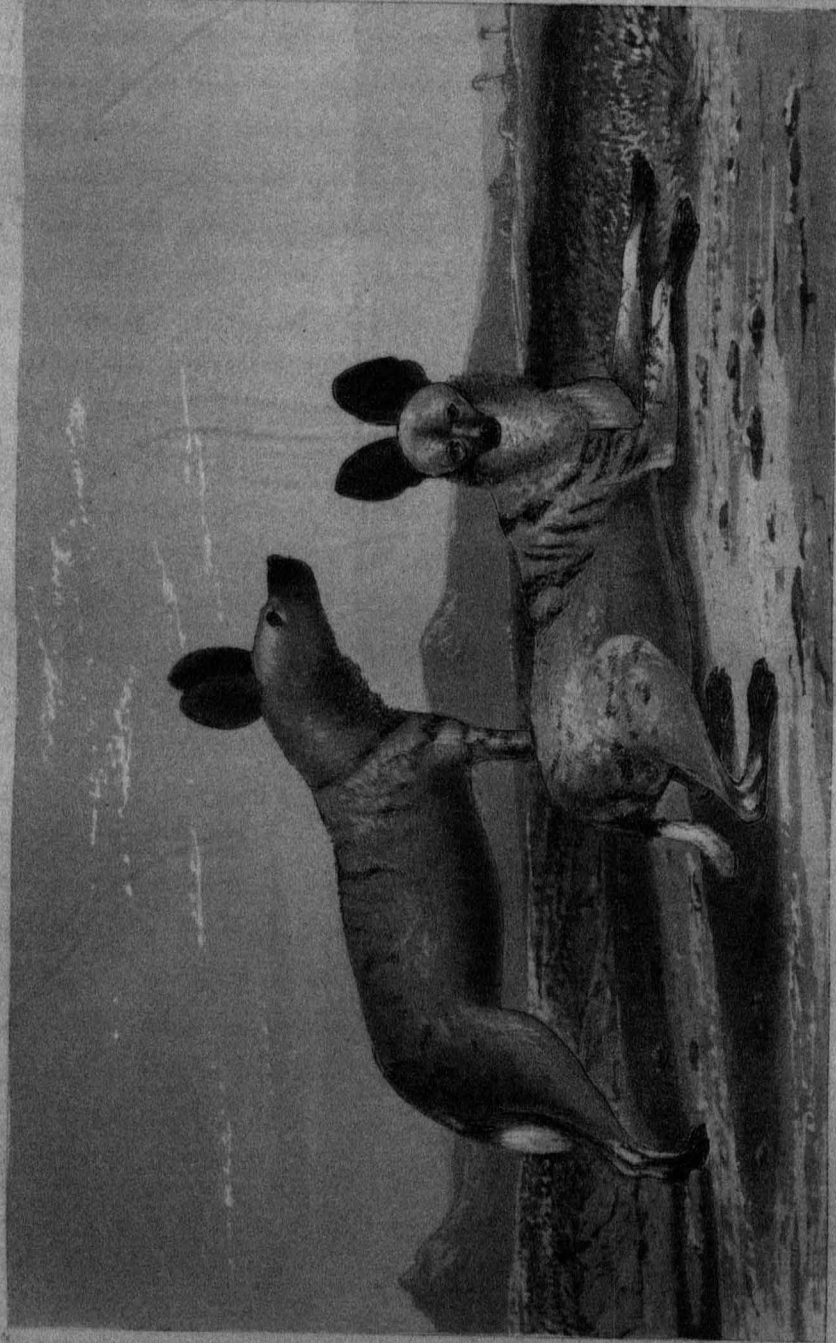
In the course of the day I prevailed upon some of the Korannas, by a small present, to swim across the river, in order to bring me a supply of milk from their kraal. They returned in the evening with a wooden vessel filled with sour milk, which I divided with my Hottentots, and after our tasteless fare of dried zebra-flesh, we considered it a very delicious treat.

* The inhabitants of Griqua Town, under the direction of the Missionaries, have, however, I understand, lately undertaken to lead out the waters of the Gariep for irrigation in the ordinary manner near their chief settlement. Not having seen the spot fixed upon, I can form no opinion in regard to its practicability: but the attempt is at all events highly creditable to their enterprise.

None of the tribes of Southern Africa, either in the interior, or on the coast, have any thing in the shape of a canoe or boat. The method they adopt for passing a large river, and which I now saw practised, is very simple. Each man has a beam of wood with a peg at one end : grasping the peg with one hand, he sits astride, or lays himself flat upon his log, and paddles himself against the stream with his feet and other hand. This is a very inartificial contrivance, but it seems sufficient for every purpose required by these indolent children of nature.

During the course of the day I had much conversation with some of the most intelligent of the party with whom we were now associated, Witteboy and Jacob acting as interpreters. The following is a brief epitome of the information I obtained on this and other occasions, respecting the Koranna tribe or nation.

The Korannas are a race of pure Hottentots, who have attached themselves to the vicinage of the Great River, and from whose principal branches they seldom or never emigrate to any considerable distance. They are found along the whole course of the river, from the spot where I now was, upwards towards its sources, as far as it has yet been explored by Europeans. They are divided into a great number of independent clans, or *kraals*, as they are termed in the Colonial phrasology. The party I was now with enumerated above thirty of these, who, in their own language, are distinguished by different appellations, indicative of some peculiarity in the materials of their dress, or mode of subsistence. A chief or captain presides over each clan or kraal, being usually the person of greatest property ; but his authority is extremely limited, and only obeyed so far as it meets the general approbation. When ancient usages are not in the way, every man seems to act as is right in his own eyes. They are a pastoral people, and some of their kraals possess large herds of cattle, and also some sheep and goats. Their flocks of the latter, however, are not numerous, though they thrive remarkably well, and attain



WILD DOGS OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Illustrated by H. G. Shaw, London.

Chambers, 1891.

a large size. The difficulty of protecting them from the wild animals,* and of driving them from place to place in their frequent migrations, probably operates to prevent them from augmenting their flocks to any considerable amount. Many kraals possess neither sheep nor goats, but only cattle; and some few, as we have seen, having lost their cattle, have retrograded from the pastoral to the hunter, or Bushman state.

The Korannas are continually roaming from place to place, according as the want of pasturage, or caprice, may dictate; and their moveable huts, composed of a few sticks, and a covering of mats, are carried along with them on their pack-oxen, which are uncommonly docile and well-trained.

Their language differs considerably from that of the Bushmen, but nearly resembles the dialects of the colonial Hottentots and the Namaquas. My guides, therefore, understood them with ease, while they could only understand such of the Bushmen fully as had been accustomed to visit the Colony. Their dress consists merely of the carosse, with an apron of skins for the females, and a sort of pouch used by the men, which last but indifferently serves the purposes of decency. This is indeed the original dress of all the Hottentot tribes, and has been described with sufficient minuteness by former travellers.

In personal appearance, the Korannas are superior to any other race of Hottentots. Many of them are tall, with finely shaped heads, and prominent features, and an air of ease and good-humour about them which is very prepossessing. They are, in fact, a mild, indolent, and unenterprising race, friendly to strangers, and inclined to cultivate peace with all the tribes around them, except the Bushmen,—towards whom they bear inveterate

* The most destructive of the beasts of prey to sheep and goats are the Wild Dogs, (already mentioned at page 229,) numbers of which infest the banks of the Gariep, and plague the poor Korannas, not less than the Border boers. The annexed engraving gives a very accurate representation of these curious animals.

animosity, on account of their continual depredations on their flocks and herds. Their wars with the Bushmen are said to be prosecuted with such rancour, that quarter is seldom given on either side, either to old or young. The weapons of both these tribes are similar,—only those of the Korannas are superior in size and workmanship, and their poisoned arrows are occasionally feathered.

Their only manufacture, besides their mats, arms, and dress, consists of some coarse earthenware, and a few wooden vessels carved with much labour out of solid blocks of wood. Their knives and hatchets are purchased either from the Bechuanas or the Boors, for they do not work in iron.

The Koranna women have seldom more than four or five children. If they happen to have twins, (an event which rarely occurs,) one of them is destroyed in the same manner as with the Bushmen.

The disgusting marriage ceremony which Kolben says was practised among the colonial Hottentots in former times, has no existence among the Korannas; but a sort of aspersion with "holy water," such as he describes, is said actually to take place when the young men attain the age of puberty, and this custom probably gave rise to Kolben's story. The only marriage ceremony among the Korannas, that I could hear of, consists of a feast given by the bridegroom, and by the relatives of the bride, to all the kraal, if their wealth is sufficient to admit of it. They are fond of festivity, though rather averse to slaughter their cattle, except on great occasions; living usually on the milk alone, with the aid of wild roots, and the game they kill in hunting. They are fond of singing and dancing by moonlight, and of amusing each other by relating fictitious adventures around their evening fires. Like all the other South African tribes, the Korannas possess the art of making a very intoxicating sort of mead or hydromel, by fermenting it with the juice of a certain root, of which, however, I was unable to procure any specimen. Some of the colonial Hottentots possess this secret, and frequently sell por-

tions of the fermenting substance to the farmers for a large allowance of spirits or tobacco. The Garipe tribes do not, however, appear to have the means of frequently indulging to excess in this inebriating beverage.

The Korannas are very subject to consumption, (as, indeed, are all the Hottentot tribes,) and more particularly to a disease called the blood-fever, which carries off great numbers of them. This distemper is thought by some to be owing to their frequent and sudden immersions in their favourite river, when they return profusely perspiring from the chase. By others it is ascribed to the unwholesome qualities of the water at certain seasons. It generally breaks outwardly in boils in some parts of the body, and, in this case, they make an incision round the part, and apply, with success, the gall and fat of some animals. But if it breaks inwardly, there is no remedy, and the patient dies. This fever is confined to the banks of the Garipe, and rages with the greatest virulence in the months of February and March. For cuts and bruises they use the leaves of the buku, and one or two other plants, with good effect.

They have no religious ceremonies, and but very faint ideas of any state of futurity. Some of them say, that they had a tradition from their forefathers, that after death the spirits of men ascended, through a narrow gate in the clouds, into another world, where they existed after death, but that few put any faith in this tradition. But all allowed, that until the missionaries came among them, they had no clear idea of a supreme God, nor of a state of future rewards or punishments.

They are much addicted to a mischievous sort of witchcraft, or sorcery, somewhat similar to that of the Caffer tribes, by means of which they often grievously torment each other; and sometimes, as it is said, resort to worse than imaginary charms, and deal in philtres and poisons.

Their method of interment is the same as that peculiar to the other Hottentot tribes,—with the exception, perhaps, of the Bushmen. They first dig a grave in the usual form, and then excavate a recess in the one side of it,

into which the corpse is introduced, wrapped in the carosse which the individual wore when living. The vacancy is then filled up with large stones and earth, to protect the body from the hyænas.

The Koranna clans, on the upper part of the Gariep and its branches, are all in amity or alliance with the Griquas, with whom they combine against the Bushmen, who are regarded as the Ishmaelites of Southern Africa. Through this connexion some of them have become possessed of fire arms. Some clans, also, are in strict alliance with the Matlhappee tribe of Bechuanas, and have frequent intermarriages with them. Those lower down the river have, of late years, suffered very severely from the depredations of the robber Africaner, and other banditti who now swarm along the banks of the Gariep, and many kraals have been entirely deprived of their cattle. In this condition they are more destitute even than the Bushmen themselves; for though the poorer class of Korannas are accustomed at all times to live partly by hunting, and on insects and wild roots, they seem to have less ingenuity and perseverance in the pursuit of those precarious means of subsistence, than the crafty and enterprising sons of the desert, who depend on no other resources; and they are, consequently, reduced, in seasons of scarcity, to the extremity of misery, as has already been shown in the description of those whom we found on the Hartebeest River. It must, however, be allowed, that in the digging of pitfalls for the Hippopotami, and other large animals, the Korannas display a degree of industry and perseverance, (considering their implements,) not less remarkable than the Bushmen, and little to be expected from the general indolence of their disposition.



CHAPTER VI.

DEPARTURE FROM WATERFALL STATION. — SUFFERINGS FROM HEAT, THIRST, AND HUNGER.—BUSHMAN VENGEANCE.—PELLA.—DESPAIR OF THE HOTTENTOTS.—NAMAQUA ENCAMPMENT.

AUG. 17.—At sunrise, when we prepared to proceed on our journey, we found our old horse reduced by the purgative effects of the bad water he had drunk in the Bushman country, to the last degree of exhaustion. He was quite incapable of accompanying us, and we were consequently forced to abandon him to his fate. He was now too miserable an object even to be food to the natives; and the probability is, that he would fall a prey to the ravenous hyænas in a night or two. Having made some trifling presents to each of the Korannas, they now came to take leave of us with much ceremony, and cheered us cordially as we rode off.

Having emerged from the wooded banks of the river, we passed some hills of smooth naked rock, each, to appearance, composed of an

entire stone. In front, and to the left, the boundless desert plain then again stretched itself before us; while on the right the rugged Gariep ridge, skirted by the river and its woody banks, extended to the westward as far as the eye could reach. As we advanced, the country near the river became so rugged and inaccessible, that my guides considered it requisite to bend our course more to the south-west, with the view of falling in again with the Gariep at Pella, a Missionary station in the Namaqua country, about two days' journey below this. At that place we calculated on obtaining every necessary refreshment to recruit us for the rest of my projected excursion.

The plains which we now entered upon were entirely destitute of water, and only a few straggling gemsboks and springboks were browsing on the withered herbage. The occasional and precarious thunder-showers are, it appears, sufficient to maintain the hardy grasses of these regions, which, rushing up into hasty vegetation after rain, and as suddenly fading again under the parching drought, afford pasturage either in a green or withered state to myriads of wild animals, who migrate from place to place, according to the course of the seasons, and the abundance or scarcity of grass and water. It is from these tracts that the destructive flocks of *trek-bokken*, or migratory springboks, pressed by the long droughts, occasionally inundate the northern parts of the Colony.

At four P. M., after a long and dreary ride of about forty miles, we reached the bed of a river, near the bottom of a ridge of secondary mountains. Not being able to find any native appellation for either the river or mountain, I named the latter after the Earl of Morpeth, and the former after my worthy friend, Mr. Pillans. We found a band of Korannas encamped at Pillans River; but they had come from the banks of the Gariep merely to hunt, and had brought no provisions

with them, and only a little water in calabashes, none of which they could spare to us. After a search of about a mile up the bed of the torrent, however, we found a pit containing water, though so very brack that we could scarcely drink it. The pit, too, was so deep and narrow, that our horses could not get access to it, and with much labour and difficulty we lifted water in a tortoise shell, and poured it into the cavities of the rocks, from whence they eagerly licked it up with their parched tongues. Here we took up our residence for the night, and after turning out our horses to graze, resorted to our knapsack to cook our supper. What was my chagrin, to find that my too generous—my most improvident attendants, had given away almost the whole of our dried zebra flesh to the Korannas at the waterfall,—and that we were once more on short allowance, with this wretched water! To add to our privations, the night was exceedingly cold; and as we could not find wood to make a comfortable fire, we were frequently awakened by the chill piercing blast, and by the howling of the hungry hyænas. The Hottentots and I agreed in naming this “Miserable Station.”

18.—Unable to find repose, we started about four A. M., and pursued our journey by moonlight. After an hour's ride, however, the Hottentots got so cold in the extremities, that they said they could not proceed. We therefore halted, kindled a fire, and waited till sunrise. The Africans, of all classes, are less capable of sustaining cold than Europeans, and much more readily affected, also, by atmospherical moisture.

We had passed the Morpeth ridge before we halted. These hills run from S. E. to N. W., terminating about twenty-five miles to the right on the Gariep. The Gariepine Walls were still the most prominent object on our right. Another extensive plain again lay before us, bounded far in the distance by another ridge of hills (similar to those we had just passed,)

which I called Carlisle ridge, in honour of the respected nobleman of that name.* On our left, in the direction of the Colony, the desert plains were bounded only by the horizon.

At sunrise we continued our march. The heat of the sun in the plains soon became as insupportable as the cold had been but a few hours ago; such are the sudden transitions of temperature. The excessive prevalence of nitre has, perhaps, no inconsiderable effect in increasing the nightly cold of these regions. We unsaddled after three hours' ride, and turned out our horses to graze; but though the plains were covered with dry herbage, they were unable to browse for want of water. Here we breakfasted on our last piece of zebra.

Our distance from Pella was still more than fifty miles, but seeing no prospect of obtaining either food or water before we arrived there, we resolved to make a grand push to reach it this day, if our jaded horses could possibly carry us through. Pushing on again, therefore, we speedily came to the brink of a long valley, extending between us and the foot of the Carlisle Mountains, about fifteen miles across. It was, like the plains we had left, entirely destitute of water. We descended into it through some naked ravines of calcareous gravel, and found the heat, on reaching the bottom, quite overpowering. Water now appeared to us the most valuable and desirable of all objects. We saw some wandering Bushmen at a distance, but too remote to overtake and question on this subject. Our horses became at every step more exhausted; and at length, just as we got across this 'burning valley,' as we called it, one of them finally gave up, and we were forced to abandon him to his fate, a prey to the lions and hyænas. We now began to be seriously alarmed for our safety. To stop here was impossible. The horses could not support thirst another day; and if they

* This ridge is termed "Kaabas Mountains" in Mr. Campbell's first journey.

failed before we reached water, we must perish ourselves. We threw away in desperation our pack-saddle, our powder-flasks, and every thing that we could possibly spare to lighten us, for our horses were now reduced to three, and these, from their previously exhausted condition, and particularly from the want of water, could not be expected to hold out many hours longer. The horse is an animal far less able to endure thirst than the ox; and on this account the latter is much preferred by travellers in dry countries.

At sunset we gained the foot of the Carlisle Mountains. Their height was apparently about 2000 feet, and I expected we should have to climb them with our weary steeds. I found, however, that my guides knew better, having been instructed by the Korannas to cross by a narrow pass which winds through the midst of them. This we happily succeeded in finding, and it led us through without a single step of ascent. It was one of the most bold and picturesque defiles I have ever seen,—winding through the bowels of the mountains, which rise on either hand in abrupt precipices, at least 1000 feet in height, and looked as if it had been originally torn by some convulsion of nature, through the solid mass of rock. It was twilight when we passed through, which increased the sombre and solemn effect of the scenery with its rocks and caverns rising around us in dim perspective. This *poort*, or pass, has received an appellation, signifying in the Namaqua and Bushman tongues, “Howling of the big men,” from a circumstance which is said by the natives to have occurred at a distant period. A party of Boors had left the Colony to survey the banks of the Gariep, in hopes, perhaps, of discovering in these remote regions a land flowing with milk and honey, with none to dispute their occupation of it, but the feeble and famished natives. Whether they had committed any aggressions on the Bushmen in their route I did not learn, but they were waylaid in this defile on their return by the crafty and vindictive savages, and many of them slain by showers of stones and poisoned arrows :

and from the dismal howling they made in their flight, the pass received its name. This story is at least an evidence of the feelings which the arrogant oppressions of the white men have excited among the tribes of the desert.*

On emerging from this gloomy ravine, (where we were not altogether free from apprehension of meeting from the Bushmen a reception similar to that of the boors), the twilight was closing around, and we could just perceive that an extensive prospect opened to the westward, over a plain sprinkled here and there with detached hills. We now considered ourselves in Namaqualand, and steered our course direct for Pella, keeping the Carlisle Mountains close upon our right. Holding on as fast as the darkness and deplorable condition of our horses would permit, we travelled along, exhausted with thirst, hunger, and fatigue. Every hour seemed three times its usual length, and every minute I expected our horses would give up and leave us abandoned in the desert. One of them was so much exhausted, that whenever we came to a piece of sandy ground it dropped down as if it had been shot, with Witteboy on its back.

* The following verses are designed to express the sentiments with which these persecuted tribes may be supposed to regard the Colonists :

SONG OF THE WILD BUSHMAN.

LET the proud Boor possess his flocks,
And boast his fields of grain ;
My home is 'mid the mountain rocks,
The desert my domain.
I plant no herbs nor pleasant fruits,
Nor toil for savoury cheer :
The desert yields me juicy roots,
And herds of bounding deer.

The countless springboks are my flock,
Spread o'er the boundless plain
The buffalo bends to my yoke,
And the wild horse to my rein :

After travelling nearly three hours in this miserable fashion, my Hottentots imagined that we must now be in the immediate vicinity of Pella. But hour after hour elapsed, and still we travelled on. We knew we could not miss the place, from its position at the foot of the mountains; but it seemed as if we were continually moving without getting nearer the much wished-for asylum, where all our sufferings we hoped would terminate. Thus we travelled onward for other three tedious hours. At length, with a joyful voice, Jacob called out "Water!" I looked down and caught the glimmering reflection of a star, at my horse's feet. The two Hottentots had already flung themselves from horseback, and were lying flat on their bellies, sucking in the refreshing moisture which oozed through the sand in a scarcely per-

My yoke is the quivering assagai,
 My rein the tough bow-string;
 My bridle curb is a slender barb—
 Yet it quells the forest king.

The crested adder honoureth me,
 And yields, at my command,
 His poison bag, like the honey bee,
 When I seize him on the sand.
 Yea, even the locusts' wasting swarm,
 Which mightiest nations dread,
 To me brings joy in place of harm,
 For I make of them my bread.

Thus I am lord of the Desert Land,
 And I will not leave my bounds,
 To crouch beneath the Christian's hand,
 And kennel with his hounds:
 To be a hound, and watch the flocks,
 For the cruel white man's gain—
 No! the swart Serpent of the Rocks
 His den doth yet retain;
 And none who there his sting provokes
 Shall find its poison vain!

T. P.

ceptible streamlet. I was soon beside them, and for several minutes all was silent save the sound made by our horses greedily sucking up the water beside us. I thought we should have actually drained the little fountain dry before we ceased. Never was relief more seasonable.

We were now aware that we were in the immediate vicinity of Pella, but as it was very dark, and long past midnight, and we were excessively fatigued, we made fast our horses, and flung ourselves down beside them, supperless as we were, and without a fire.

19.—Too wearied and cold to sleep, I watched impatiently for the return of day to light us to the friendly horde of Namaquas, and the hospitable mansion of their missionary pastor. And as soon as daybreak began to glimmer over the mountains, I listened eagerly for the crowing of cocks, the bark of dogs, the lowing of cattle, or some other cheering evidence of the neighbourhood of men. But all was still and silent. As the dawn advanced, and objects became more distinct, we found ourselves within two hundred yards of a house. I started up, and advanced to it; but what was my dismay to find the whole station totally deserted. Not a human being, nor a living creature remained! The hearts of the Hottentots sank within them, and I saw deep dejection overspread their countenances. As for myself, though naturally of an elastic and sanguine temper, I confess, I now also felt appalled, and could with difficulty repress the conviction that we were really doomed to perish for want in this drear and desolate country.

On examining the place in search of something to quell the cravings of nature, I found a small neat building erected to serve the double purpose of church and school, and near it the habitation of the Missionary. The Namaquas themselves live, like the Korannas, in huts covered with mats, which they carry with them on pack-oxen, when they remove from place to place. I found abundance of fine water, sufficient to irrigate a few gardens, and was at a loss to account for the desertion of the station, or whether to ascribe it

to the failure of the pasturage, or to the plundering inroads of Africaner and his robber gang. How to discover where the Missionary and his flock were fled, or where else to find succour, was now the difficulty which I knew not how to surmount.

After ransacking every nook, and even committing a sort of sacrilege, by breaking into the little chapel, we returned to the spot where we had halted, without being able to find any thing in the shape of food, or any clue to direct us in the pursuit of the roaming inhabitants.

My Hottentots were exceedingly dejected. This was the place they had all along looked forward to for refreshment, and supplies for the rest of our journey. Every previous hardship they had supported with comparative patience; but their courage and confidence were now utterly gone, and they told me bluntly that they would follow me no farther. They had made up their minds, they said, to start about noon, as soon as the horses were a little rested and refreshed, and would endeavour to make their way back to the Colony, by the nearest route; riding the horses as far as they could carry them, and when they fell, to cut them up for food, and continue their journey on foot. It was in vain that I represented to them the desperate nature of such a project; that to the Colony was a journey of several days, even on fresh horses; that our exhausted ones could not possibly, without refreshment, carry us a single day longer; and that they could never get through the wilderness on foot: while, on the other hand, by proceeding perhaps only a few hours farther westward, we could scarcely fail of falling in with the Missionaries, or with some hordes of friendly Namaquas, where we should find food and shelter; or, at the worst, we were now within easy reach of the Gariiep, and might find game on its banks, or kill one of our horses to support us there, till we could hear tidings of the Missionaries or Namaquas. It was in vain, however, that I thus reasoned with them. They told me doggedly, that they had made up their minds not to remain in this frightful country to

perish at last of thirst or hunger ; and that I might do as I chose, but they would start for the Colony at noon.

The obstinacy of my men disconcerted me more than any thing that had yet occurred. I wandered to the neighbouring heights, and gazed over the solitary plains ; but not a human being—not a living creature met my view. I returned to the Hottentots, and found them, to my surprise, cooking something on the embers. On inquiry, I found it was a piece of zebra skin, which we had brought with us, to make shoes for the feet of the horses lamed by the flinty roads. This skin, having been beaten between two stones to make it tender, and the hair singed off, I joined them at breakfast on it, and found considerable relief from this sorry fare, coarse, and unpalatable as it was.*

Noon was now approaching, when the Hottentots had fixed to leave me, unless I agreed to accede to their plan, and accompany them back to the Colony ; a plan, not only subversive of all my schemes for farther exploring the country, but, in our circumstances, attended with imminent danger of perishing in the wilds. I seated myself at a little distance from them, weighing in my own mind, whether it would be preferable to agree to their proposal, or remain here without them, and attempt to search out some Namaqua kraal, by following the course of the Gariep. While thus sadly ruminating, I turned my eyes to the south-west, and beheld two people approaching. I called joyfully to the Hottentots, and Witteboy and I immediately set off to meet them. They proved to be two Griquas, or Bastard Hottentots, belonging to a hunting party at some distance, who had come here in search of water. They had no provisions with them, but they gave us the grateful information, that Mr. Bartlet, the missionary, was now at a

* The vignette prefixed to this chapter will convey to the reader a pretty accurate portrait of my Hottentot guides, as they were wont to sit at ease by our evening watch-fires—smoking and chatting by turns. It is engraved from one of Dr. Heurtley's admirable sketches.

place called t'Kams, about twenty miles to the westward. This was joyful news to us. Twenty miles was, indeed, a dreary journey for men so hungry, and with horses so much exhausted as ours; but it was nothing to the difficulties we had just before contemplated. My Hottentots again willingly submitted themselves to my orders, and proceeded with alacrity to saddle our horses, in order to leave the desolate station of Pella.

This missionary station (belonging to the London society) is placed in a very low situation under the Carlisle, or Kaabas mountains, which rise here in frowning grandeur, almost perpendicularly, to the height of about 2000 feet. This ridge terminates at the Gariep, about half an hour's walk from Pella. The river flows through a narrow and rocky pass, forming a rapid between the Carlisle and Gariepine ridges. The situation of Pella seems well selected, but I believe the great prevalence of saltpetre in the soil renders it but little productive for vegetables. I observed, however, several ebony trees, which had been transplanted from the banks of the river, growing here in great luxuriance. Along the Gariep, both the black and white ebony is found in abundance.

After a tedious journey of about five hours, (our horses not being able to move faster than a walk,) we espied the cattle and encampment of the missionary and his people,—the most pleasing sight we had beheld since we left the Colony. On our approach Mr. Bartlet came forth to meet us, and gave me a most cordial welcome, though he seemed not a little surprised at my visit, and at my strange appearance. Being ushered into his little hut, I explained the occasion of my journey, and the nature of the privations I had lately endured. Some meat and tea were immediately prepared for me; and as I expressed a great longing for bread, some corn lately procured from Kamiesberg was ordered to be ground, and a cake to be prepared. Corn is no where raised in this country, and bread is consequently accounted rather a luxury than a necessary of life, even with the Missionaries.

In order to regale my Hottentots after their late sufferings, I purchased a whole sheep, and gave it to them 'to revel upon to their hearts' content. In regard to myself, Mr. Bartlet's hospitality left me nothing to desire. When the worthy man was informed of the route by which I had come, and the difficulties I had encountered, he seemed greatly surprised, and was most kind and assiduous in his attentions to promote my comfort. A good supper was prepared for me, at which I again partook of bread, that best staff of life. I then retired to rest, and once more enjoyed the luxury of a comfortable bed and sound repose, without apprehension of danger through the night, or anxiety for the morrow.

20.—A bright and beautiful spring morning awakened me to survey this pastoral station. It is watered by a spring from the rugged mountain which overhangs the encampment. The adjoining plains are covered with grass which grows all in separate tufts, like the hair on the head of a Hottentot. From this feature the spot derives its name *t'Kams*, a term signifying "tufted grass," in the Namaqua dialect.

Only a small party of from thirty to forty Namaquas were at present residing with the Missionary. When his congregation are all collected at Pella, they amount to about 400 souls; but the severe droughts, and consequent failure of pasturage, force them occasionally to disperse themselves in divisions over the country wherever a spring of water exists with grass in the vicinity for their flocks. It was on this account that Pella, though well supplied with water, was at this time entirely deserted. Such an unsettled and roving life is undoubtedly very adverse to the progress of civilization; but the nature of the country is such, that a people like the Namaquas must be nomadic, and the Missionaries must of necessity accompany them in their wanderings. As soon as rain falls, the pastures at Pella will instantly spring up, and the scattered divisions of the people will again be re-assembled.

Mr. Bartlet was now living in a small cabin covered with mats, in the

same simple fashion as his followers. This worthy man was unwearied in his attention to me, and, to recruit my wasted strength, had a fresh meal served up to me every two or three hours; so that I soon made up for my former privations, and felt myself so much recovered in the course of this day, that I made arrangements to proceed on my journey the following morning.

I spent the whole day in walking about and conversing with Mr. Bartlet, and in taking notes of the information I obtained from him, and the most intelligent of his people, respecting the present state of the Namaqua tribes, and of the country they inhabit. This information, together with what I have elsewhere collected on the same subject, will be found condensed into the following chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

THE NAMAQUAS. — EXTENT AND CHARACTER OF THEIR COUNTRY. —
MANNERS AND MODE OF LIFE.—HEAT OF THE CLIMATE.—VENO-
MOUS REPTILES AND INSECTS.—THE ROBBER AFRICANER.—THE DA-
MARA NATION.—DISORDERLY STATE OF THE BASTARD POPULATION
ALONG THE BANKS OF THE GARIEP.

THE Namaquas are a race of Hottentots inhabiting the country adjoining to the coast on both sides of the Gariep. They are a pastoral people, resembling the Korannas, and the aboriginal tribes of the Colony in their general characteristics; living chiefly on milk; addicted to a roaming life; and of a disposition mild, indolent, and unenterprising. Mr. Barrow visited some of their kraals in the vicinity of the Kamiesberg, during his excursions in the Colony thirty years ago, and his brief notices, written with his usual felicity, and power of observation, still afford the only account of this people worthy of perusal. It falls now to my office to fill up a little more fully the sketch so ably and accurately drawn by him.

The country of this tribe is usually distinguished on the maps by the names of Great and Little Namaqualand. The latter division, whatever may have been its original extent, is now confined to the acute angle, extending

between the sea-coast and the Gariep, and bounded on the south and east by the Koussie River, and the Carlisle mountains. Great Namaqualand is a country of a much larger and more undefined extent. It extends about 200 miles northward, from the banks of the Gariep, and about the same distance eastward, from the sea-coast, towards the interior. From the Bechuana country it is separated by an extensive tract of desert, totally uninhabitable on account of the want of water. On the north it is bounded by the country of the Damaras. A great part of this territory consists of an extensive plain, or valley, watered, or rather drained, by a stream, called the Fish River by Vaillant, and erroneously described in his map, and in Burchell's, on his authority, as falling into the sea to the northward of Angra Pequena Bay. This river I have ascertained to be a branch of the Gariep, and have distinguished it by the name of my friend and partner Mr. A. Borradaile. It joins the Gariep at no great distance from the mouth of that river, and after heavy rains is said to be a stream of great magnitude; but, like other occasional rivers, its channel seems to be for the greater part almost empty, and only re-appears here and there in stagnant pools. Such as it is, however, it is, next to the Gariep, the principal river of the Namaqua country; and in the dry season its banks are resorted to by a great number of the natives. Another river of some importance, called the Kooisip, is described as falling into the sea farther to the northward; but as I could not obtain any very distinct intelligence of its course or character, it is not inserted in the map. Altogether, Namaqualand is a dry and desolate country, enlivened only here and there by a few permanent fountains, which supply the natives and their cattle in the seasons of drought, which are long and frequent. The great valley of *Borradaile* is divided from the sea-coast by a range of rugged hills of no great elevation, which seem to run on to the ridge which I have named the Gariepine walls.

The soil of Namaqualand is in general light and sandy, and thinly clothed