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THE VICTORIA FALLS.

A FEW PAGES

FROM THE

DIARY

OF

EMIL HOLUB, M.D.,

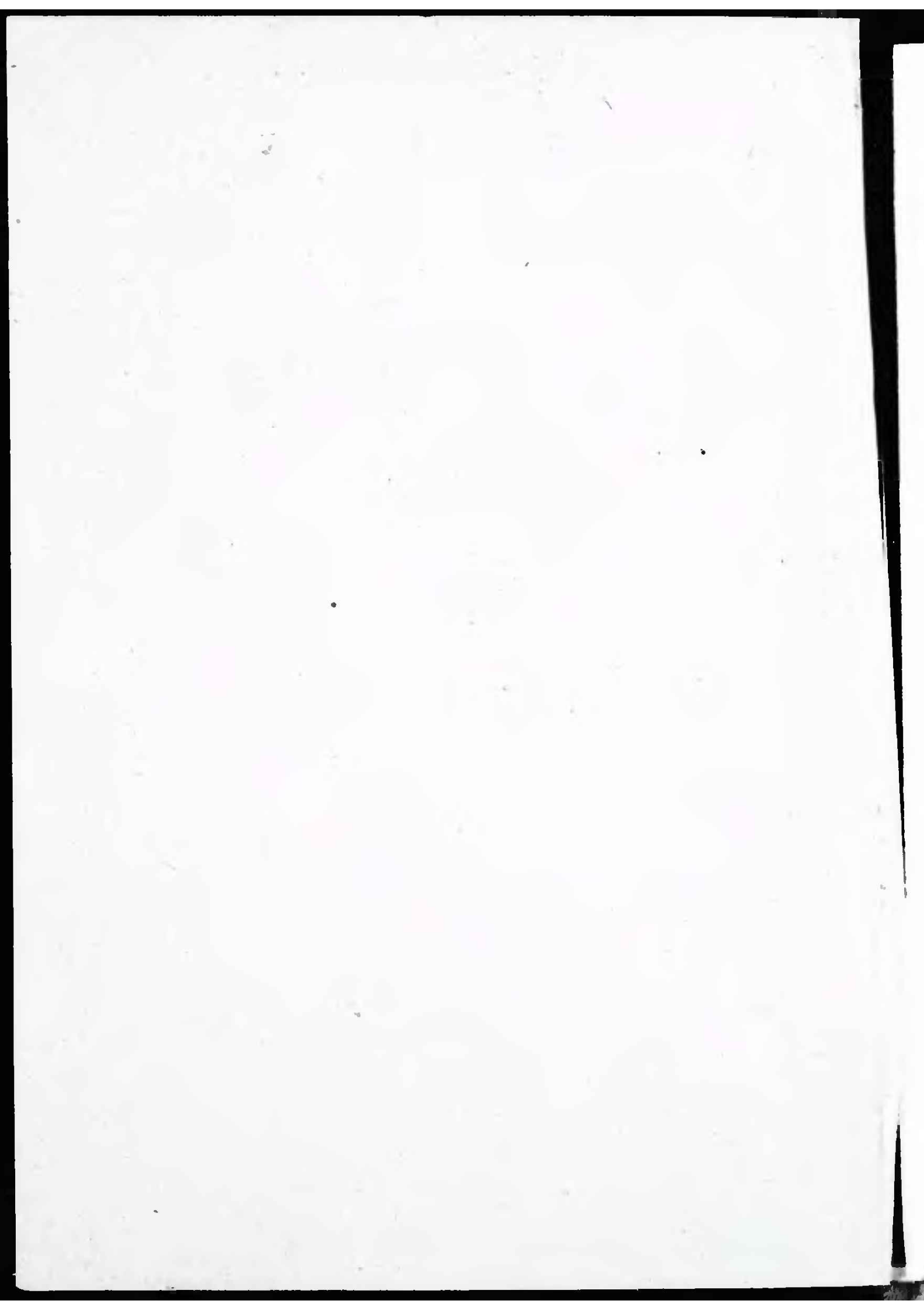
WRITTEN DURING

*His Third Trip into the Interior of
Southern Africa.*

GRAHAMSTOWN:

T. AND G. SHEFFIELD, PRINTERS, "EASTERN STAR" OFFICE.

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THE VICTORIA FALLS.

CHAPTER I.

THE VICTORIA FALLS.

A DULL and equally violent roar from the east, sometimes suddenly interrupted by the wind, then again suddenly rising, similar to the sound of distant thunder, struck upon my ear, as I, on the 17th September, 1875, passed down the valley of the Matopa River. At first it seemed to me a delusion; however, with each step the sound increased audibly, and I involuntarily felt a thrill of pleasure pass through my body. My spirits suddenly revived, and I vigorously strode on, forgetting the pain I had endured during the whole morning from my wounded feet. The dull roar which had met my ear was the first messenger of that wondrous phenomenon which the most meritorious of African explorers had named, in honour of Her Most Gracious Majesty, the "Victoria Falls."

On the following morning, as the sun wheeled his golden chariot over the summits of the mountains of the Katonga country, and I, absorbed in mute admiration, saw the most magnificent natural scenery unroll its charming picture before my eyes, I stood on the edge of a forest, which is the highest I yet had the opportunity of observing in South Africa.

A gentle shower fell over me, and sprinkled the leafy crowns of the gigantic trees, whose sturdy limbs were entwined with the delicate tendrils of vines and creepers behind me, as well as the thick foliage of the palms at my right, so that their broad leaves glistened with thousands of pearly drops. These, again, fell on the soft velvet of the verdant moss, forming small rippling streams, urging their way through the saturated turf, to be precipitated over the bare and slippery edge of the precipice into the dark abyss, about four hundred feet deep, opening a few yards before me. There

they join the foaming flood with its myriads of similarly glistening drops, sparkling eyes of the fair water nymphs, from which flood they had been separated, as in rushing from the opposite rugged cliff, into the boisterous depth below, they were converted into dense fog, which, rising in the form of thick columns of smoke, again fell in copious showers to refresh the vicinity of the magnificent falls. I stood on the brink of a prodigious rock-trough of nature, about four hundred feet deep, equally wide in the middle, and about one mile in extent from east to west, with sides consisting of steep precipitous rocks.

The southern edge of the precipice on which I stood is cleft asunder, and turning off to the right, forms a kind of winding passage around me. The opposite rocky wall is higher than the one on which I stood. It is the precipice over which the waters of the Zambezi throw themselves, thus forming the Victoria Falls. On its western and eastern parts it is quite steep and uninterrupted, whilst the middle displays large projecting cliffs, on which the rolling waters break, and then in cascades fall to join the rapid current below, whilst on both sides they crash over the smoothly-worn edge without further impediment. The water does not fall in an uninterrupted volume over the steep precipice, but is divided into alternate narrow and broad streams, caused by the many rocky islands rising along the border of the abyss. The smaller islands are quite barren; the larger ones, on the contrary, are covered with luxuriant tropical vegetation, of which the creeping plants and wine-palms still more contribute to the beauty of the natural scenery which unfolds itself so unexpectedly to the eye, imparting to the whole a certain air of wild grace. Several groups of larger islands, similarly adorned, emerge from the back ground. If the eye falls on these lovely islands, which so agreeably contrast with the azure firmament, and then lowers itself a little to the playful waves around them, these appear only slightly agitated, and slow in their undulating motion. But the waves increase in rapidity as they approach the chasm, and here and there dash against a rock, by which the stream is frequently interrupted in its great breadth above the falls, causing the angry element to foam and throw the white spray high in the air, then to hasten with redoubled force towards the bottom of the yawning abyss. Where most of the charming islands adorn the border of the chasm on its western part, a gradual declivity is perceptible, as the stream there greatly increases its rapidity, hastening towards the ridge, where it abruptly descends in a white foaming sheet, making a strange and pretty contrast to the dark ground of the rocks as it unites with the boiling waters beneath, with a thundering rush. While the bottom of the abyss cannot be seen from the southern edge (where I stood), the

noise is still more confusing. Besides the dull roar, as of thunder, which is produced by the dashing of the rolling streams against the projecting cliffs, and the rapid current below, a kind of whizzing may be distinguished, which is the effect of clouds of spray issuing from the volumes of water in different places. Through the turmoil of the strong current, heightened by the apparent conflict of the elements in the deep abyss, the resounding of the dashing waves in the rocky trough only increases the thundering roar. It appears as if the spectator were stationed on the brink of a chasm where a fierce combat of destruction seizes upon nature. A sentiment of dread and terror attacks the senses, but if he raise his eyes with the rising vapour, until it meets the lovely islands and the blueish waves above the falls, and then follows these from their playful course to the tumultuous streams as they madly dash to the fall, then again the loveliness and grandeur of nature have such influence over the senses that the feeling of terror is changed to one of admiration. In order to render itself still more impressive to the spectator, another element lends its aid to contribute still more to this grand sight. It is the wind which crowds the watery vapours now here, then there, as they alternately rise and fall; at times, when rising, becoming so dense as to hide one part of the falls from the eye, or again they wrap them in a transparent veil, often beautifully tinged by the forming of a lovely rainbow, and when falling, they exhibit the falls in their magnificence and grandeur.

The Victoria Cataract presents so much loveliness and beauty in unison with terror and awe, so sublimely mingled, that they fill the mind with admiration, at the same time clearly showing man's nothingness and vanity.

CHAPTER II.

THE ZAMBEZI BELOW THE VICTORIA FALLS.

I HAVE mentioned that the Zambezi throws its waters into a deep, rocky trough. The falls therefore differ from many other cataracts, in not flowing into a plain or valley.

The river precipitated in the rocky trough joins the tumultuous waters below, which flow from here through a deep ravine for many, many miles before the country declines and the steep banks lower themselves to a similar appearance to that presented above the falls. If the Victoria Falls are looked upon as a wonderful phenomenon, the flowing off of the waters deserves equal admiration.

Some thousands of years ago, when by the geologic changes of the earth in this zone the rocky trough of the cataract was torn open, the immense narrow defile must also have been formed through which the waters of the Zambezi now flow off. I cannot say that this ravine was opened by gradual excavation caused by water, for its immovable walls may be said to have originated thousands of years ago, for nothing can now be traced of the rolling off, sinking, or sudden descent of these huge rocks. If I say that the flowing off of the Zambezi is worthy of admiration, I do so for a double reason. I allude to the scenery which here presents itself to the eye, and to the circumstance, how it is possible that the Zambezi so expanded at the fall that the volume of water precipitated over the steep, rocky wall, can flow off in so narrow a defile.

The water when flowing out of the rocky trough passes a kind of narrow poort as high as the south bank of the river, and from here, as far as I could observe, into a ravine, which only widens at few places, especially where steep defiles wind between.

The ravine may be traced thus: From a southern direction, about three hundred yards from the poort, it suddenly turns west-south-west, and about one thousand steps further on an acute angle changes to the south-east for about one thousand one hundred yards, then turns to the south for a short distance, and again in the form of an acute angle changes to a south-western direction for about one thousand two hundred yards, then winds again its path

southwards, for some three or four hundred yards, and turns, cutting an acute angle, once more to the south-east, &c., &c.

Such a ravine, running for miles in its zigzag course, from three hundred and four hundred feet deep, and about as wide on the upper edges, becoming considerably more narrow towards the bottom, is alone something very interesting.

If we now picture the walls of this ravine we see them in some places perpendicular, dark brown, barren of all vegetation; in other places steep, but here and there displaying small crevices, clothed with a lovely green, intermingled with large bright red blossoms, so that the rocky wall appears prettily veined with alternate red and green; other parts, again, exhibit steep, narrow, dark, naked clefts of rock, deeply cutting into the wall of stone, or we see similar rents, only a little widened, trailing to the bottom of the ravine, with a carpet of the most luxuriant vegetation, such as nature alone can produce; some of them, running from the edge of the ravine, unite into a larger one, and present a still more attractive picture. We again observe in some parts the rocky wall not only cleft and perpendicular but also declining in steps and in the form of a cascade, and then either bare or covered with vegetation.

Of such a formation are the lengthened parts of the rocky walls described by the zigzag ravine (about one thousand yards long), but the shorter parts, running in a southerly direction, present a still more interesting structure. I shall make an attempt to bring these parts before the eye and mind of the reader.

I mentioned that such a short southern passage is connected with the trough by a poort, through which the Zambezi throws its waters. The western rocky bank of the passage in which I stand begins with the western wing of the poort, a narrow acutely projecting rocky wall producing a simicircular inlet in the passage, which western bank otherwise consists of an almost perpendicular bar, and smooth, dark, rocky wall. If we observe the eastern bank opposite to me, we see that it half consists of a huge solid rock in the form of a truncated cone, partly forming the poort and trough in which the Zambezi falls, covered in its two upper-thirds with the most luxuriant tropical vegetation; it is so fairy-like, and beautiful, that it appears like, what I imagine, the suspended gardens of Semiramis must have been. A pity it is that the trees and rocky steps of this massive natural tower are not inhabited by other animals besides monkeys and birds, so as to bring the fictitious picture of the "Past" more vividly before the enchanted eye. Adjoining this rocky tower we see a round inlet, formed by two cliffs running down to the bottom of the ravine.

We find a rock similarly shaped, but more square, at the second point of the zigzag. It forms the western bank of the southern

transom between the lengthened south-eastern and south-western part of the ravine.

It is separated from the firm land on which I stand by a deep, dry, rocky defile. This gigantic rock, over three hundred feet high, appears to be isolated, surrounded on three sides by water (north-east and south), and as neither its platform or its steep walls are covered with any vegetation, it looks like a silent abandoned castle built of rock, in which all life seems to have been banished by some magic spell. Centuries have passed over it without any trace of age. Vainly have most of the elements united their forces and conspired against it. How often has the lightning hurled its thunderbolts against its flat, venerable head! The sovereign of the winds, Æolus, with his assistants, rush and roar furiously against its isolated, dark, rocky walls, and at its foot rages and dashes the third element, the foaming and whizzing billows of the Zambezi, breaking against the unyielding base. But all in vain! There stands the mighty giant now basking in the sunshine, now enjoying the freshening cool of the night; and as the wind, instead of cooling him with its breath, bespatters him with dust and sand, he leaves it to the rain to cleanse his flat crown and steep sides. If, besides the formation of the lengthened parts of the deep zigzag ravine above mentioned, we imagine the formation of the shorter southern cross-arms just described to resemble both gigantic rocks now alluded to, the whole scene will appear all the more fascinating to the eye and mind when we look down to the bottom of the ravine through which gushes the tumultuous dark blue stream.

I might say that a new and more attractive picture meets the eye every one hundred and fifty yards as we proceed along the steep bank. The billows of the Zambezi, forced to flow in so narrow a passage, seem enraged at being obliged to obey; they press with vigour and dash with fury against the rocky walls. Wave after wave, shock after shock, follow each other, thousands during an hour, milliards since the ravine burst open, and still the mighty rocky walls remain unshaken, and the bed of the ravine has not become broader, although so many innumerable drops, so many powerful volumes of water have broken on the prominent ledges of the rocks, which on the acute-like turnings of the ravine oppose as in ridicule the stream with low strap-shaped peaks. How they madly, but vainly, dash against them, and in their rage foam and whiz! There, where their flow is more calm, and where inlets cause a quiet circular motion, the dark blue of the water is particularly striking, and tells of the great depth of the ravine, which is quite necessary in order to receive the extended mass of water above the falls.

Truly the flowing-off of the Zambezi below the Victoria Falls is as worthy of admiration as the falls themselves.

CHAPTER III.

THE SURROUNDING COUNTRY OF THE VICTORIA FALLS.

WHILE the Zambezi in many places flows through plains, the country surrounding the Victoria Falls is a pleasant and hilly landscape, especially the part bordering on the southern bank.

It belongs to one of the most agreeable landscapes which I have had, until now, the opportunity to observe in my travels in Africa, and is watered by a great many rivers and rivulets which unite with the Zambezi above and below the Victoria Falls. The western part belongs to Khama, the Bamanquato Chief, the eastern to La Bengola, the King of the Matabele, and is inhabited by a small tribe, which alternately acknowledges the latter and Khama, sometimes both and sometimes neither, but Sepopo, as ruler.

If the traveller advancing from the south towards the Zambezi is weary of the monotony of scenery of the Sandy Pool Plateau, his servants and span worn by the deep sand and the obstacles of the almost uninterrupted forest, they are suddenly most agreeably surprised on their arrival at the source of one of the rivulets above-mentioned. A certain poisonous plant, which is dangerous to the cattle of the traveller in the months of October, November, and December, and scarcity of water, tend to make the traveller still more averse to the Sandy Pool Plateau, so that the hilly country might appear most welcome to him for many reasons, were it not for the two great obstacles which here conspire both against man and beast—the tsetse and fever. The latter rages mostly from the month of November until the end of April, while only the western part of the country (the source of the Dejkha River and that of the Pandama-Tenka River) can be traversed by cattle without danger of being affected by this destructive insect.

This country would be well adapted for colonization, if these two oppositions did not present themselves. Yet I hope, when opportune, to treat this matter more in detail, and show the means which I think will mitigate these two evils. This country would become a fine colony; and, because embellished by the "Victoria Falls," the name of "Albert Colony" would be appropriate for it. It is very fertile, and indisputably qualified for the cultivation of rice or cotton.

I have mentioned that this part of the country is irrigated by numerous affluents of the Zambezi, which in a course of fifteen to seventy miles receive many smaller tributaries from the right and left, most of which contain the purest flowing water throughout the year. There is so much beauty, united with wild grace, on the upper courses of these rivulets, that if one could imagine the gigantic Boabab trees, to represent our beech and oak, and in the mind see them overshadowing the translucent waters (they generally grow on declivities and elevations), it would carry one back to the margins of those murmuring crystal brooks, such as we meet in our own northern Continent, although the luxuriant vegetation, hidden beneath the fluid mirror of these African brooks, charms still more the mind and eyes. I have alluded to them in my several publications on "Hunting Elephants on Foot in the Tsetse District," where I described those hunting scenes to have taken place in this hilly country. Shall I continue my theme in a general description, as I have done until now, or shall I devote special attention to the fluvial element, and bring it before the mind of the reader as it presented itself before me, as it revived so often my drooping spirits, borne down by the weight of care and hardships, and made me almost happy when I could impart new life to my weary eyes, by gazing into the calm, clear flood?

Let us imagine ourselves in one of those lovely valleys. Follow me cautiously, dear reader, through the high grass, that we may reach the edge of yonder lakelet, and prostrate ourselves on the soft grass of its bank without disturbing its gay inhabitants, observing as closely as possible the strange, yet interesting, realm beneath its placid surface.

At either side and before us, slender reeds overtop the glassy surface. They appear broader under the water, and form groups, as it were, of long, green, annulated columns, here and there in close concrecence, in other places scattered like the remains of a verdant column forest. Between these we see dense dark-green, or rare semi-transparent grottoes and caves, real passages, sometimes cloudy layers produced by a tender substance, rising from the bottom of the lakelet. It is the delicate green texture of the spreading Alga. To the left the slight web of this cryptogamous plant decorates the edge of the bank as far as the place where the water flows away into a small stream, full of the above-mentioned grottoes, caves, and passages, while it forms a kind of ruin, overgrown with moss, to our right.

From the yellowish sandy bottom of the brook, rises the dark-green Alga texture, dense, broad, and in the form of a round hillock, from which project two unequal, straight, cylindrical towers, consisting of the same tender structure, which are connected in the

lower parts by a kind of ram art, broken by an opening resembling a Gothic port. Then, again, the short-leaved water plants, or the larger ones with their lacerated leaves and blossoms, interweaving their beautiful broad leaves with the fragile Alga, and slender reeds intermingled with the round spiral stem of the water-rose, peep forth from the smooth surface of its cerulean bed. The whole exhibits a picture of water scenery glowing with the most delicate shades of a lovely green.

A gentle current passes through the water of the lakelet, and by its soft touch produces a slight quiver in the grottoes and towers formed by the delicate tendrils of the Alga, while it almost imperceptibly moves the leaves of the water-plants, and gently causes their bright yellow blossoms to heave and sink under the surface, and all this is done so gradually and softly that at first it does not seem as if these tender plants made the slightest movement, while it only produces the slight tremor in the next moment more perceptible.

Thus delusion and reality powerfully affect the mind and eye; yet one is still more enchanted when a small fleecy cloud, rapidly gliding past the disc of the sun, produces a momentary shade, causing different refracted lights to break forth above, and especially below, the surface, so that the lovely texture of the Alga appears now distinctly, now veiled, and suddenly overshadowed, only more plainly displaying its dark outlines. Such a cloud has just passed over us, and the submarine vegetation again presents itself in all its verdant splendour. But more life than that of vegetation reigns under the smiling surface of the limpid brook. Yonder in the grotto formed by the dark-green Alga, two dark objects appear to move,—two shad-fish chasing each other in sprightly sport. Sometimes they approach the surface, then again sink, first swimming together and then behind each other, playing with their long beards. The free parts of the water are occupied by several striped sprats, which are as immovable as the large broad leaves, and only by the slight movement of their breast fins show that they are living creatures, only too well enjoying the broad sheet of clear water.

But what is that yellowish black-veined object yonder which seems half concealed by the stems of the reeds, and partly reclines on the tender web of the Alga? We strain our eyes to distinguish it more plainly. It is a water leguan, who is lying in wait for some of the finned inhabitants of the lakelet, to catch them up if they approach him too near. And between these sport the smaller animals, who lead quite a busy life, such as water-bees, and water-beetles, swimming up and down the pool. After having provided themselves with shining air bubbles, with sufficient air for their short submarine visit, they dive into the cool and refresh-



ing element. The reeds and leaves are beset with larva of the dragon-fly, which, like jugglers, creep up the vertical stems of the reeds, and cling to the drooping leaves.

I often watched this submarine realm, and in spirit passed with its inhabitants such a happy life, that my mind forgot what had but a few moments before like a heavy burden oppressed it.

Nature has a powerful, irresistible charm, and if man devotes more time to observe her more closely, he will find repose, consolation, encouragement, and satisfaction all concentrated in her. He will even enjoy an unexpected happiness if she had caused him, perhaps, a short time ago, distress through her fellow-creature, or affliction and sorrow by the effect of the rolling thunder, or the influence of her other elements.

In my description of elephant hunting I warned hunters of the dangers of the lakelets containing troubled waters, as the common resort of crocodiles. I recollect an occurrence which has reference to this. It happened in 187-, on the upper Pandama-Tenka River, close to the station bearing the same name, and concerns Dr. Bradshaw.

Dr. Bradshaw had taken a walk up the valley, when he was seized by thirst, and imprudently bent down to drink from one of these pools. As he was cooling his parched lips in the cold water, in a prostrate position, his eye caught sight of some dark object apparently moving towards him from under the disturbed surface. Anticipating no good, he threw his head back, sprang up, and retreated. He had hardly done this when the head of a tolerably large crocodile emerged from the pool, in the exact spot where the doctor a moment before had quenched his thirst. The doctor determined to rid the lakelet of its hideous inhabitant, and several times stopped near by with his double-barrelled gun, until he found the crocodile quietly reposing so near the surface that he was able to despatch it with two shots. Another crocodile, inhabiting a pool in the vicinity of the former, attacked one of Westbedh's donkeys while drinking, with which this trader used to bring Kafircorn from the Zambezi to his station on the Pandama-Tenka River. The attacked animal was strong, but the crocodile was as yet only half grown, so that the donkey could easily resist its enemy. However, the reptile managed to deprive the animal of all the flesh surrounding its mouth, so as to make the naked jawbone plainly visible, in consequence of which the poor animal was obliged to be shot. Crocodiles are never found in rapids, or rocky river beds, neither in shallow water, nor places where the water is very clear and pure whilst deep; broad and calm waters may in these small rivulets undoubtedly be marked as the abodes of these huge reptiles. Large rivers such as the Zambezi, with clear water, abound with crocodiles, with the exception of their rapids.

The hills separating the valleys are either rocky, wooded, and serrated, or flat, broad, and very often miles in extent before they are low enough in their decline to form the valleys or beds of other rivulets. They generally consist of grassy plains or dense forests, which contain many tropical trees and shrubs, and among these we find many producing eatable fruits—the Mupura tree, covered with a yellowish fruit, and ripe in the months of September and October; Okerate, with a small yellowish-brown fruit, as well as the Mororo, a small bush, with an exceedingly well flavoured fruit, and ripe in January and February; Tshe-Mohura, containing seeds similar to those of *nux vomica*; Musumuso, Mohoamy, Makuluany, Sibuja, and about thirty more. Some of the trees are used for various purposes by the natives, for the building of canoes, for oars, assegai handles, different kinds of hurdle work, mats, baskets, nets, ropes, etc., for work in wood, such as pots, dishes, musical instruments, etc. The fruit of some is used for snuff doses, and other articles. The stems and roots of several shrubs are used for healing purposes, and generally attended with success; of these the Mororo, which is given as an antidote for snake-bites, is especially worthy of notice.

As the valleys mostly contain moist soil, they would, as an attempt at Pandama-Tenka sufficiently showed, prove very fertile; and, to recall my former words, they are especially adapted for the cultivation of rice and cotton.

If I pronounce the country, in reference to Botany, rich and promising, I must say something similar in favour of its Fauna. We find any amount of game here, which I shall note down with regard to their frequency in the following order:—Quagga, Zebra, Zulu Hartebeest, Orbeke, Duijker, Stembuck, Buffalo, Rietbuck, Bush and Vlakvark, Bastard Eland, Harrisbuck, Elephant, Eland, two species of white and three of black Rhinoceros, Giraffe, Waterbuck, and Blue Wildebeest. Besides these, the rocky parts of the country, and the banks of the rivers overgrown with tall reeds, abound with animals of prey.

The Ornithologist and Entomologist would find here rich matter for their respective studies. The following genus of birds are specially represented:—Ospreys, different kinds of Falcons, Owls, Singing birds, from the finely plumaged Roller to the insignificant Gnat-magper, Honey-searchers, Cuckoos, King-fishers, Snipes, Sanderlings, small Herons, and Wild-ducks. The Entomologist will be most agreeably surprised by the discovery of many new species of beetles and butterflies.

The geological structure is richer than in many South African countries, when compared with the extent of the latter. In parts of the country through which I travelled I found the rocky hills to

a great extent consisting of "Melaphyr," often its inclusions very beautiful, iron ore, iron, green and sandstone slate beds, etc. Yet, according to the report of hunters and traders, it appears in greater varieties in parts of the country not visited by me. I found metal mines worked in several places by the natives, as for example in the upper Leshumo Valley, near the Falls, etc.

In the whole, the scenery and nature of the valleys, which are mostly caused by the rocky declivitous hills, especially there where tributary valleys, forming an acute angle, join the larger ones, as well as their chief characteristics, which consist alternately of broad and narrow defiles, tend to make the country most attractive.

CHAPTER IV.

THE INHABITANTS.

I HAVE mentioned that the southern hilly country of the Falls is inhabited by a small tribe which sometimes acknowledges Khama, sometimes La Bengola, at other times the ruler of the Marutse as its King, just whichever seems most advantageous and convenient. In reality, the western or smaller portion of the country belongs to Khama, the Bamanquato King, whilst the eastern is a part of the Matabele country. The tribe which inhabits this small tract of land is called Manansa, but it is also known by the nickname Maslapatan. About fifteen years ago this tribe was considerably larger, and inhabited numerous villages. The Manansa are looked upon with disdain by all tribes which live in their neighbourhood, such as the Matabele, Betshuana, and Makalaka, as well as by those which constitute the Marutse kingdom. The chief trait in their character is a certain cowardice, and it is chiefly this which causes them to be looked upon with such contempt by the other natives. Although the Manansa are not tributary either to the Matabele or Bamanquato, they are treated more scornfully than the Makalaka and the different slave tribes of the Matabele, or the Masarwa and the Makalahari, the vassal tribes of the Betshuana. Their good nature

and decided aversion to combat are considered as unexampled cowardice by the neighbouring tribes, and this is the reason for their contemptuous treatment of their unfortunate neighbours. If, for example, the Matabele—as they are wont to do—or some other tribe, make a predatory visit to this country, the Manansa would retreat as speedily as possible, and if flight were in vain, they would not stand up in defence of their rights, but, without further resistance, deliver all their property to their enemies, and declare themselves their most obedient and devoted subjects. When Sekhomo's or Masheng's people were their aggressors, in former times, they would content themselves with receiving a tribute of ivory; if Moselikatze's warriors, they chiefly aimed at making boys their captives; whilst La Bengola's subjects (Matabele) grasp at everything in their way, if they are not sent to accompany a white man by their King, as in the case of Major S——, in '75, when La Bengola gave strict orders not to molest the Manansa, for fear of bringing too much displeasure on himself. When such a command has not been given, the Manansa are maltreated in every possible manner, and even white hunters, hunting in the hilly country surrounding the Falls, are subject to the insolence of the roving Matabele. Once, when I met one of these predatory troupes, they openly declared they would kill all my servants if I would not give them something in exchange for the life of each boy. If a Manansa happens to see any Matabele approaching from a distance when on a hunting excursion, or otherwise employed, he leaves everything behind him, and immediately makes his escape. When I once questioned a Manansa about the cowardice of his tribe, he answered, with a good-natured smile, "Yes, you see, Nage, we give in when the Matabele or Sepopo's subjects want to kill us; we put our assegais and battle-axes aside and say, 'We acknowledge that you are stronger and more powerful, and therefore we, the weaker ones, will not raise our weapons against you. There are our goats, in yonder vessels our corn, if you wish for them. Our wives will prepare butshuala (beer) if you thirst for it. If you want to know where the elephant and buffalo quench their thirst, we will show you, for we do not love to see the blood of others flow.'"

The Manansa formerly lived under the command of a King, whom they called the "Great Chief." When the Matabele first made their appearance in this country, this "Great Chief" was their first victim. They would not believe his friendly words, but considered them hypocritical, and thought it was but a deceitful snare into which he was trying to lure them.

Without much ceremony, the poor man was thrown to the ground, his body cut open with assegais, and his heart torn out,

with the remark that he possessed two, in other words that it was false.

By the depredations which were repeated so often, this tribe was greatly diminished, being partly killed, led away in bonds as slaves, or by escaping to Sepopo, the Ruler of the Marutse kingdom (who has since been killed), or to Mochuri, the Chief of the Batoka and Wanke, Chief of the north-eastern Makalaka (north bank of the Zambezi). I endeavoured to learn whether those inhabiting the country which I treat of in my theme were placed under some particular Chief. I received evasive answers until I was assured that they acknowledge the son of the murdered "Great Chief" as their rightful Ruler, and that he now inhabits a small district touching the boundary of Wanke's kingdom, on the northern bank of the Zambezi, and that those who still live in the country which I have described, and which is also claimed by Khame and La Bengola at the same time, cannot part with their love for their old native country, notwithstanding all the danger and ill-treatment they are here exposed to. As for me, I prefer the Manansa to most of the Betshuana, and in every respect to the Makalaka and Matabele, as servants. Of all the servants that I hired, and others which I had opportunity of observing, I found the Manansa the most faithful and attached. The Manansa have many peculiar customs, in which they greatly differ from their neighbours. The manner of their match-making, as well as many of their prejudices, greatly enriched my diaries with interesting annotations. Their language is a link between the Betshuana and Matonga.

Grahamstown, 28th May, 1879.

