

creasing in loudness to the third, when his voice dies away in five or six low muffled sounds, very much resembling distant thunder. At times, and not unfrequently, a troop may be heard roaring in concert, one assuming the lead, two, three, or four more regularly taking up their parts, like persons singing in a catch. Like our Scottish stags at the rutting season, they roar loudest in cold frosty nights; but on no occasion are their voices to be heard in such perfection, or so intensely powerful, as when two or three strange troops of lions approach a fountain to drink at the same time. When this occurs, every member of each troop sounds a bold roar of defiance at the opposite parties; and when one roars, all roar together, and each seems to vie with his comrades in the intensity and the power of his voice.—The power and grandeur of these nocturnal forests concerts is inconceivably striking and pleasing to the hunter's ear. The effect is greatly enhanced when the hearer happens to be situated in the depths of the forest, at the dead hour of midnight, unaccompanied by any attendant, and ensconced within twenty yards of the fountain which the surrounding troops of lions are approaching. Such has been my situation many scores of times; and though I am allowed to have a tolerably good taste for music, I consider the catches with which I was then regaled as the sweetest and most natural I ever heard. As a general rule, lions roar during the night; their sighing moans commencing as the shades of the evening envelope the forest, and continuing at intervals throughout the night. In distant and secluded regions, however, I have constantly heard them roar as late as nine and

ten o'clock on a bright sunny morning. In hazy and rainy weather they are to be heard at every hour in the day, but their roar is subdued. It often happens that when two strange male lions meet at a fountain a terrific combat ensues, which not unfrequently ends in the death of one of them.

The habits of the lion are strictly nocturnal: during the day he lies concealed beneath the shade of some low bushy tree or wide spreading bush, either in the level forest or on the mountain side. He is also partial to lofty reeds or fields of long rank yellow grass, such as occur in low lying valleys. From these haunts he sallies forth when the sun goes down, and commences his nightly prow. When he is successful in his beat, and has secured his prey, he does not roar much that night, only uttering occasionally a few moans: that is, provided no intruders approach him, otherwise the case could be very different. I remember a fact connected with the lion's hour of drinking peculiar to them—they seem unwilling to visit the fountains with good moonlight. Thus, when the moon rose early, the lions deferred the hour of watering until late in the morning—and when the moon rose late, they drank at an early hour in the night.

Owing to the tawny color of the coat with which nature has robed him, he is perfectly invisible in the dark, and although I have often heard them loudly lapping the water under my very nose, not twenty yards from me, I could not possibly make out so much as the outline of their forms. When a thirsty lion comes to water, he stretches out his massive arms, lies down on his breast to drink and makes a loud