

seem, therefore, to have contributed not a little to the great degree of dread which, since the arrival of the colonists, the lions have of mankind.

The lion's method of taking its prey, as described above, is not, however, probably, so universal as to be without exception. Soon after my arrival at the Cape, I heard speak of a married woman, who, somewhere in the Carrow country, was killed at her own door by a lion, which likewise ate up her head; though others, indeed, thought she came by her death in a different manner. Several farmers related to me the following singular freak of a lion at Camdeboo.

A few years ago a farmer on horseback, with a led horse in hand, met with a lion, which had laid itself down in the public road where the farmer was to pass. Thus circumstanced, he thought it most advisable to turn back, but found the lion had taken a circle, and laid itself in his way again; he was therefore obliged to turn back again, and so alternately backwards and forwards. Whether the lion was scared away by several other travellers coming up or no, I cannot say that I recollect; for I find, that I have forgot to make a minute of the story, probably, because I did not think my authority sufficiently to be depended upon. The following occurrence however, I think I may relate, as being tolerably well authenticated, and serving to shew the cowardice and insidious disposition of the lion.

An elderly Hottentot in the service of a Christian, near the upper part of Sunday river on the Camdeboo side, perceived a lion following him at a great distance, for two hours together. Thence he naturally concluded, that the lion only waited for the approach of darkness, in order to make him his prey; and in the meantime, could not expect any other than to serve for this fierce animal's supper, inasmuch as he had no other weapon than a stick, and knew that he could not get home before it was dark. But as he was well acquainted with the nature of the lion, and the manner of its seizing upon its prey, and at the same time had leisure to ruminate on the ways and means in which it was most likely that his existence would be put an end to, he at length hit on a method of saving his life, for which, in fact, he had to thank his meditations on death, and the small skill he had in zoology (or, to speak plainly, his knowledge of the nature of animals). For this purpose, instead of making the best of his way home, he looked out for a *kisprani* (so they generally call a rocky place level and plain at top, and having a perpendicular preci-

pice on one side of it), and sitting himself down on the edge of one of these precipices, he found, to his great joy, that the lion likewise made a halt, and kept the same distance as before. As soon as it grew dark, the Hottentot sliding a little forwards, let himself down below the upper edge of the precipice upon some projecting part or cleft of the rock, where he could just keep himself from falling. But in order to cheat the lion still more, he set his hat and cloak on the stick, making with it at the same time a gentle motion just over his head, and a little way from the edge of the mountain. This crafty expedient had the desired success. He did not stay long in that situation, before the lion came creeping softly towards him like a cat, and mistaking the skin-cloak for the Hottentot himself, took his leap with such exactness and precision, as to fall headlong down the precipice, directly close to the snare which had been set up for him; when the Hottentot is said, in his great joy, exultingly to have called out, *ikatsi!* an interjection of very extensive import and signification.

This is not the only instance of lions in Africa being ensnared in the midst of their leap. In the out houses and waste grounds about farms, where a lion has been upon the watch for some animal and missed it, or where they have other reasons to expect him, they set up the figure of a man close by the side of several loaded guns; so that these discharge themselves into the body of the beast, at the very instant that he springs or throws himself upon the dressed figure.

As this is done with so much ease and success, and as they hardly ever think it worth while in Africa to take lions alive, they seldom give themselves the trouble of catching them by means of pit-falls. From all the most credible accounts I could collect concerning the lions, as well as from what I saw myself, I think I may safely conclude, that this wild beast is frequently a great coward; that is, very deficient in point of courage comparatively to his strength. On the other hand, however, he often shews an unusual degree of intrepidity, of which I will just mention the following instance as it was related to me.

A lion had broken into a walled inclosure for cattle through a latticed gate, and done a good deal of damage. The people belonging to the farm, were well assured of his coming again by the same way; in consequence of which, they stretched a line directly across the entrance, so thick set with loaded guns, that they must necessarily discharge themselves into the lion's body.