

sky on the second of February presaged anything but genial results. Thus an ancient Anglican rhyme assures us that—

"The hind had as lief see
His wife on a tier,
As that Candlemas Day
Should be pleasant and clear."

To the same tenor is a medical proverb still current in North Britain—

"If Candlemas is fair and clear,
There'll be two winters in the year."

And once more, in the "Country Almanack" for 1867, we are instructed as follows, under the head of February—

"Foul weather is no news, hail, rain and snow
Are now expected, and esteemed no woe,
Nay, it is an omen bad, the yeomen say,
If Phœbus shows his face the second day."

From the early hour at which we go to press it is, of course, impossible for us to speculate upon the aerial phenomena of Candlemas 1857. We trust, however, that *Dau Phœbus*, will, for this day only, keep his countenance under a veil, presuming always, that the above cited vaticinations are tinged with veracitude.—*Toronto Times*.

A NIGHT'S ADVENTURES.

FROM ANDERSON'S "EXPLORATIONS IN SOUTH-WESTERN AFRICA."

Notwithstanding my anxious desire to reach the Ngami—the goal of my wishes—I determined, before finally leaving Kobis, to devote one more day, or rather night, to the destruction of the denizens of the forest. But the adventure nearly terminated fatally; and the night of the 15th of July, will ever be remembered by me as one of the most eventful epochs of my life; for, in the course of it, I was three several times in the very jaws of death, and only escaped destruction by a miracle.

From the constant persecution to which the larger game had of late been subjected at Kobis, it had become not only scarce, but wary; and hearing that elephants and rhinoceroses still continued to resort to Abeghan, I forthwith proceeded there on the night in question. Somewhat incautiously, I took up my position—alone, as usual—on a narrow neck of land dividing two small pools; the space on either side of my "skarm" being only sufficient for a large animal to stand between me and the water. I was provided with a blanket, and two or three spare guns.

It was one of those magnificent tropical moonlight nights, when an indescribably soft enchanting light is shed over the slumbering landscape; the moon was so bright and clear that I could discern even a small animal at a considerable distance.

I had just completed my arrangements, when a noise, that I can liken only to the passage of a train of artillery, broke the stillness of the air; evidently came from the direction of one of the numerous stony paths or rather tracks, leading to the water, and I imagined it was caused by some waggons that might have crossed the Kalahari. Raising myself partially from my recumbent posture, I fixed my eyes steadily on the part of the bush whence the strange sounds proceeded; but for some time I was unable to make out the cause. All at once, however, the mystery was explained by the appearance of an immense elephant, immediately followed by others amounting to eighteen. The towering forms told me at a glance that they were all males. It was a splendid sight to behold so many huge creatures approaching with a free, sweeping, unsuspecting and stately step. The somewhat elevated ground whence they emerged, and which gradually sloped

towards the water, together with the misty night air, gave an increased appearance of bulk and mightiness to their naturally giant structures.

Crouching down as low as possible in the "skarm," I waited with beating heart and ready rifle the approach of the leading male, who, unconscious of peril, was making straight for my hiding place. The position of his body, however, was unfavorable for a shot; and, knowing from experience that I had little chance of obtaining more than a single good one, I waited for an opportunity to fire at his shoulder, which, as before said, is preferable to any other part when shooting at night. But this chance, unfortunately, was not afforded till his enormous bulk towered above my head. The consequence was, that, while in the act of raising the muzzle of my rifle over the "skarm," my body caught his eye, and, before I could place the piece to my shoulder, he swung himself round, and, with trunk elevated and ears spread, desperately charged me. It was now too late to think of flight, much less of slaying the savage beast. My own life was in imminent jeopardy; and seeing that if I remained partially erect, he would inevitably seize me with his proboscis, I threw myself on my back with some violence; in which position, and without shouldering the rifle, I fired upwards at random towards his chest, uttering, at the same time, the most piercing shouts and cries. The change of position, in all human probability, saved my life; for, at the same instant, the trunk of the enraged animal descended precisely on the spot where I had been previously crouched, sweeping away the stones (many of a large size) that formed the fore part of my "skarm," like many pebbles. In another moment his broad fore-feet passed directly over my face.

I now expected nothing short of being crushed to death. But imagine my relief, when, instead of renewing the charge, he swerved to the left, and moved off with considerable rapidity—most happily without my having received other injuries than a few bruises, occasioned by the falling of the stones. Under Providence, I attribute my extraordinary escape to the confusion of the animal caused by the wound I had inflicted on him, and to the cries elicited from me when in my utmost need.

Immediately after the elephant had left me I was on my legs, and, snatching up a spare rifle lying at hand, I pointed at him, as he was retreating, and pulled the trigger; but to my intense mortification, the piece missed fire. It was matter of thankfulness to me, however, that a similar mishap had not occurred when the animal charged; for, had my gun not then exploded, nothing, as I conceive, could have saved me from destruction.

During this incident, the rest of the elephants retreated into the bush; but, by the time I had repaired my "skarm," they reappeared with stealthy and cautious steps on the opposite side of the pool, though so distant that I could not fire with any prospect of success. As they did not approach nearer, I attempted to stalk them but they would not allow me to come to close quarters, and after a while moved off altogether.

Whilst pondering over my late wonderful escape, I observed at a little distance a huge white rhinoceros protrude his ponderous and mishapen head through the bushes and presently afterwards he approached to within a dozen paces of my ambuscade. His broadside was then fully exposed to view, and, notwithstanding I still felt a little

nervous from my conflict with the elephant I lost no time in firing. The beast did not at once fall to the ground, but from appearance I had every reason to believe he would not live long.

Scarcely had I reloaded when a black rhinoceros of the species *Keitloa* (a female, as it proved) stood drinking at the water; but her position, as with the elephant in the first instance, was unfavorable for a good shot. As, however, she was very near me, I thought I was pretty sure of breaking her leg, and thereby disabling her; and in this I succeeded. My fire seemed to madden her; she rushed wildly forward on three legs, when I gave her a second shot, though apparently with little or no effect. I felt sorry at not being able to end her suffering at once; but as I was too well acquainted with the habits of the rhinoceros to venture on pursuing her under the circumstances, I determined to wait patiently for daylight, and then destroy her with the aid of my dogs. But it was not so.

As no more elephants or other large game appeared, I thought after a time it might be as well to go in search of the white rhinoceros, previously wounded; and I was not long in finding his carcass; for my ball, as I supposed, had caused his almost immediate death.

In hastening back to my "skarm," I accidentally took a turn in the direction pursued by the black rhinoceros, and by ill-luck, as the event proved, at once encountered her. She was still on her legs but her position, as before, was unfavorable. Hoping, however, to make her change it for a better and thus enabled me to destroy her at once, I took up a stone and hurled it at her with all my force; when, snorting horribly, erecting her tail, keeping her head close to the ground, and raising clouds of dust by her feet, she rushed at me with fearful fury. I had only just time to level my rifle and fire before she was upon upon me—and the next instant, while instinctively turning round for the purpose of retreating, she laid me prostrate. The shock was so violent as to send my rifle, powder-flask, and ball pouch, as also my cap, spinning in the air; the gun, indeed, as afterwards ascertained, to a distance of fully ten feet.

On the beast charging me, it crossed my mind that, unless gored at once by her horn her impetus would be such (after knocking me down, which I took for granted would be the case) as to carry her beyond me, and I might thus be afforded a chance of escape. So, indeed it happened; for, having tumbled me over (in doing which her head, and forepart of her body, owing to the violence of the charge, was half buried in the sand), and trampled on me with great violence, her fore quarter passed over my body. Struggling for life, I seized my opportunity, and as she was recovering herself for a renewal of a charge, I scrambled out from between her hind legs.

But the enraged beast had not yet done with me! Scarcely had I regained my feet before she struck me down a second time, and with her horn ripped up my right thigh (though not very deeply) from near the knee to the hip; with her forefeet, moreover, she hit me a terrific blow on the left shoulder near the back of the neck. My ribs bent under the enormous weight and pressure, and for a moment, I must, as I believe, have lost consciousness—I have at least very indistinct notions of what afterwards took place. All I remember is, that when I raised my head, I heard a furious snorting and plunging among the neighboring bushes.

I now arose, though with great difficulty