

"Why, truly, you are a gallant knight, and merit the cross of honor, were there one to give."

"Oh, that's not all, master. I've fired five times since you left."

"Possible? what success?"

"Five."

"Five more! But you're jesting?"

"You'll see them to-morrow."

"Show me the tongues?"

He showed me them. "Horrible," said I to myself. "He has five and I only three. Why did not I remain longer?"

"Call me toad now."

"Oh! but, my friend, do you still think of that?"

"Do I still think of it?"

And my companion regarded me with an air that surprised me—and then I overheard him holding the following soliloquy:

"Shall I do it? I can—he is unarmed; I have a good gun—toad—eh?"

I did not know what to think; I began to feel alarmed; for I knew him to be of an extremely vindictive disposition, inclined to take offence at the least trifle, and he was not likely to look upon the epithet I applied to him in a moment of anger as a slight injury. However, a moment afterwards I heard him continue.

"No—I'll try him otherwise; but if he refuses, I'll stretch him at my feet. Chum," and turning towards me, "stay there, master," said he.

I stopped.

"You insulted me, a short time ago—a thing you had no right to do—and if you do not apologise this instant, I'll fire through your brains."

And he covered me with his gun.

"John," said I, you surely would not take the life of your master."

"Make haste, or I fire!"

"I," said I to him, "I apologise to my servant—do you think to intimidate me?"

I had not time to finish my sentence—zing! a bull whizzed past my ear. I jumped forward to seize the gun, but John disappeared like a flash of lightning. I made use of my legs to try and catch him, but without success. I lost sight of him in turning a slight rise in the ground.

"He is a demon," said I; "such audacity! I never thought him capable of it. But he has not got off yet. People don't escape here, as they do in a city."

I walked on, looking carefully around me at each pace; for he might have concealed himself behind some ambush and have fired on me as he would on a deer. In a short time I perceived something white glimmering in the indistinct light of the moon, and making its way towards me. I thought, however, I might be mistaken, and I rubbed my eyes several times to make certain. I looked at it; the phantom seemed to be stealing softly over the snow—the nearer it came, the more I became convinced that it was supernatural. I was, however, far from being superstitious or believing in spirits; still fear seemed to take possession of me in spite of itself.

I stopped—the phantom placed itself immediately before my eyes and stared at me. I endeavoured to test its reality. I tried to touch it, but my hand seemed lost in space. The hair of my head began to bristle—my tongue parched—I trembled violently, my legs shook under me, I tried to rid myself of its presence, but the ghost stalked on by my side. I tried to speak, but my tongue was dumb. I rubbed my eyes again—it was still there. I was dying with fear—when suddenly—

"What happened?" said the speaker, turning to me.

"I don't know," I replied; the ghost disappeared; or, perhaps you spoke.

"Nothing of the kind."

"Well, do you believe in spirits now?"

"You will be able to judge in a moment, my friend, whether I have reason to do so, or not."

Our speaker arose and having re-filled and re-lit his pipe sat himself down again and looked at us in silence.

"Ah, well," on my showing some impatience at his delay, "I was dying with fear when suddenly—"

"I awoke," said he, "and the apartment rang with a peal of laughter."

"My encounter with John and the ghost were the productions of a dream, and I found myself in my ditch of snow, the cold reality before me. It was fearfully cold, and the snow had hardened around me. I was completely benumbed and sick to the very heart; I raised myself—the weather was clear and the wind had fallen. The day had just begun to dawn. As I had suspected I found myself enclosed between two hills. With much difficulty I managed to walk around my excavation during a whole hour, in order to warm myself. I had much trouble in recovering from my torpor. At last I tried to climb one of the hills in order to ascertain the locality, for I had scarcely any idea of where I was; but I tried in vain. I made a desperate stride and fell. I was surprised to feel my limbs so feeble. I, who many times had clambered up rocks, steeper and higher than these; all my efforts were futile, and I beheld myself obliged, at last, to take a long winding to arrive at the desired point. I then found that I was only three miles from my dwelling, but I could no longer walk; I felt my limbs benumbed to an extent I had never experienced. It was cold—oh! excessively cold—I could not put one foot before the other.

I stretched myself upon the snowy crust and waited for death; for that I was going to perish I made certain. About half an hour passed. I no longer felt chilled; indeed I experienced—the most agreeable sensations. I enjoyed a sort of existence bordering on ecstasy or enchantment—a sweet repose we rarely feel. When I perceived two hunters not far from me, I made a sign to them, they came, and I explained my situation; they took me by the arms, and dragged me home.

Gentlemen, my feet were frozen. I have now but one toe remaining; judge of my misfortune. I, who had the reputation of being the best sportsman on the coast, can no longer share in the pleasures of the chase.

As he had finished his story, we thanked him, and the dance and fun was revived.

NOTES ON LIONS.

LIONS appear to be monogamous. The lioness carries her young five months, and has two or three at a birth. According to Jules Gerard, the cubs begin to attack animals, as sheep and goats, that stray into their neighbourhood, as early as from eight to twelve months old. About two years old they are able to strangle a horse or camel, and from this time until maturity (about eight years), he adds, they are truly *ruinous* neighbours. They kill not only to obtain food, but apparently to learn to kill. The age to which lions attain appears doubtful: Pompey, the lion in the Old Tower of London Menagerie, reached his seventieth year; and fifty years has been sometimes given as the ordinary limit reached by them; but this, most likely, is over the mark. Dr. Livingstone has observed that they appear to suffer from loss of teeth as they advance in years. A great number of these animals would appear to have existed in the earlier ages of man's history, and must have presented an important obstacle to the spread of the human race.

Taking Holy Writ as the earliest record to which we now have access, it is remarkable how often the lion is referred to in a figurative manner by the writers. In the original text, we find various names used to distinguish the lion at different periods of his existence. Thus (according to Dr. Kitto), we have *gur*, a lion's whelp, as in Jeremiah li. 38, and Ezekiel xix.; *chephir*, a young lion just leaving his parents, the most destructive period of his existence, see Psalm xci., and Ezekiel xix. 3 and 6; *ari*, a young lion having just paired, as in 2d Samuel xvii. 10, and Numbers xxiii. 24; *sachel*, a mature lion, as in Job iv. 10, Hosea v. 14, and Proverbs xxvi. 13; and *laish*, a fierce or black lion, as in Job iv. 10, and Proverbs xxx. 30. Regarding the last expression, we may remark, that black lions—that is, those with a blackish muzzle, and black tips to the hairs of the mane—are to this day accounted the most formidable both in North and South Africa.

Lions appear to have been the object of special worship at Leontopolis in ancient Egypt; and

in one of the Egyptian bas-reliefs, to which Sir G. Wilkinson assigns an antiquity of three thousand years, some Egyptians are represented hunting with tame lions, much in the style chetahs are used to this day in the Deccan.* If not one of the animals universally regarded as sacred in ancient Egypt, the lion still seems to have been a universal favourite, for in every possible form of ornament we find the head and claws reproduced in water-spouts, chair-legs, and sword-handles.

M. Gerard has remarked that, in North Africa (besides a considerable destruction of human life), the damage done by carrying off and killing cattle cannot be estimated at a lower figure than three hundred pounds per annum for each lion.

Lions appear to attack game by seizing the flank near the hind-leg, or the throat below the jaw—points which instinct seems quickly to teach dogs of all kinds to assail, when in pursuit of the larger animals. Dr. Livingstone, while bearing witness to the enormous strength of the lion, truly wonderful when compared with his size, remarks, however, that all the feats of strength, such as carrying off cattle, that have come under his observation, had been performed by dragging or trailing the carcass along the ground. The tales of lions never devouring game save when killed by themselves, are unfounded. We have ourselves seen a family of lions (they often hunt in families) in the Transvaal territory quarrelling, like a pack of hungry hounds, over the putrid carcass of a horse, which had died of Paardsikté (pleuroneumonia) a few days previously, while the plains around were teeming with those countless herds of migrating game (antelopes and quaggas), of the numbers of which it is so difficult to convey an idea to the fireside traveller.

A point where imagination has wrought wonders is in the matter of the lion's voice. This fancy has been also demolished by Dr. Livingstone. 'To talk of the majestic voice of the lion,' he writes, 'is merely so much majestic twaddle. I have never found any one who could fairly distinguish between the roar of the lion and that of the ostrich, although the former appears to proceed more from the chest. To this day,' he adds, 'I am unable to distinguish one from the other, except by knowing that the former roars by night, and the latter by day only.'

Jules Gerard is, however, more enthusiastic in his appreciation of the vocal powers of his favourites. He remarks, that the sound of a lion's voice a league off, appears to an inexperienced observer as if close at hand; and that he has frequently tracked lions at a distance of three leagues (nine miles), by the sound of their voices; he also testifies to a certain musical grandeur in the sound.

Naturalists have generally considered the Asiatic lion as a distinct species from the African, but this appears by no means well decided. There are several varieties of the African lion. The Arabs in North Africa distinguish three—the yellow, the gray, and the black; and M. Gerard states, that while individuals of the two former varieties have been known to roam over immense tracts of country, specimens of the black-maned lion have been found to inhabit one spot for over thirty years. Mr. Gordon Cumming, on the other hand, whose opportunities of observing these animals were only second to those of Jules Gerard, states that he is satisfied that the two varieties of South African lion (the *Vaal*, or yellow, and the *Blaauw* or *Zwaart*, or black) are one and the same species at different ages; that their manes *invariably* become darker as they increase in years; and that the thickness of the coat, and the luxuriance of the mane, appear to depend on the nature of the cover frequented by the animals, being always greater where there is least shelter.

* The ancient Egyptians seem to have been very successful in utilising the *Felina* generally. In several bas-reliefs, fowling is represented accompanied by cats in place of dogs, and in one, an animal, apparently of that kind, is depicted in the act of retrieving. A tame lion may often be still met with in Cairo, though lions in a state of nature are not found nearer, we believe, than Abyssinia in the present day.