

flow of bubbles than his adversary. This habit generates consumption, from which many die. Though on my arrival the country was steeped in this vice, it is now, happily, passing away, while Zululand, Portuguese Tongaland and Swaziland are still suffering from it.

The list of domestic animals is not long. Horned cattle are the most numerous and most highly prized. The Tongalands are now the best stocked districts in South Africa. They breed a "scrub" cattle, but keep them in good condition. The grazing, too, is good.

Wife payment is their principal use, five head being the price of a wife; but the market price has now become two head of cattle (worth \$50 each) and one hundred and fifty dollars in cash. This amounts to the five head. Goats also are extensively bred, and they, too, are used for wife payment, \$2.50 being allowed for a kid and \$5 for a full-grown animal. Every kraal has its barnyard fowl, and they also share in the honour of wife-payment, at the rate of twenty-four cents each. The fowl are used also for food and for sacrifice to the ancestral spirits. There are a few sheep raised, and among them is the strange "fat-tailed" species. Horses cannot live, but donkeys do, and are, next to the native himself, the common beast of burden.

The miserable Kaffir dog abounds in every kraal, and cats, a late introduction, are now becoming common. They generally sell for forty-eight cents, but I bought my last one in exchange for the head of an old hoe that was knocking about the yard. The first one, however, was given to me as a present, along with a monkey which used to nurse the cat in its arms and care for it like a mother.

Polygamy is the common practice. A man may take to himself as many wives as he can pay for. The average number per man is, perhaps, about three or four. They have to provide his food, each a different kind, especially for the evening meal, and advance on their knees as they present it.

At my advent the chief had, so he said, forty-six wives. To date he has taken about sixty. On paying him a medical visit recently, and happening to inspect his private hut—shut away by itself in a separate stockade in the edge of the forest—I observed a piece of fresh beef hanging from the roof. I asked where he got it, and he said it was from an animal slaughtered the day before in honour of his latest wife. The wedding festivities had been conducted at some distant part of the country.

"How is it," I asked, "that you were not at the wedding?"

"Oh!" he replied, "I sent one of my body-guard in my stead, and he brought back that meat as my receipt and seal."

"How many wives have you now, Ngwanasi?" I next enquired.

"I don't know," he carelessly answered.

"Let us count them, then," I suggested; and, taking out pencil and paper, I jotted down, as he called them off, the numbers at his half-dozen kraals scattered through the country. He could account for only thirty-six, though we counted them over twice.

"How is this?" I asked. "When I came into your country four years ago you told me you had forty-six, and you have taken about a dozen more in the meantime—where are the rest?"

The only explanation he vouchsafed was that they had run away to the Portuguese territory, from which he could not recover them. But the truth is, I suspect, he had failed to pay for them, and they had simply returned to their homes. This their native law permits them to do under such circumstances.

As with us, their courtship may be brief or protracted—it depends largely upon the lover's ability to pay for his fiancée. But much of this wife-purchase business is done on credit, and results often in endless "courting" by the parents!

These girls generally marry whom