

[From Cumming's Hunting Adventures in South Africa.]

CONFLICT WITH AN ELEPHANT.

IN a few minutes one of those who had gone off to our left came running breathless to say that he had seen the mighty game. I halted for a minute, and instructed Isaac, who carried the big Dutch rifle, to act independently of me, while Kleinboy was to assist me in the chase; but, as usual, when the row began, my followers thought only of number one. I bared my arms to the shoulder, and, having imbibed a draught of aqua pura from the calabash of one of the spooners, I grasped my trusty two-grooved rifle, and told my guide to go ahead. We proceeded silently as might be for a few hundred yards, following the guide, when he suddenly pointed, exclaiming, "Klow!" and before us stood a herd of mighty bull elephants, packed together beneath a shady grove about a hundred and fifty yards in advance. I rode slowly toward them, and, as soon as they observed me, they made a loud rumbling noise, and, tossing their trunks, wheeled right about and made off in one direction, crashing through the forest and leaving a cloud of dust behind them. I was accompanied by a detachment of my dogs, who assisted me in the pursuit.

The distance I had come, and the difficulties I had undergone to behold these elephants, rose fresh before me. I determined that on this occasion at least I would do my duty, and, dashing my spurs into "Sunday's" ribs, I was very soon much too close in their rear for safety. The elephants now made an inclination to my left, whereby I obtained a good view of the ivory. The herd consisted of six bulls; four of them were full grown, first-rate elephants; the other two were fine fellows, but had not yet arrived at perfect stature. Of the four old fellows, two had much finer tusks than the rest, and for a few seconds I was undecided which of these two I would follow; when, suddenly, the one which I fancied had the stoutest tusks broke from his comrades, and I at once felt convinced that he was the patriarch of the herd, and followed him accordingly. Cantering alongside, I was about to fire, when he instantly turned, and, uttering a trumpet so strong and shrill that the earth seemed to vibrate beneath my feet, he charged furiously after me for several hundred yards in a direct line, not altering his course in the slightest degree for the trees of the forest, which he snapped and overthrew like reeds in his headlong career.

When he pulled up in his charge, I likewise halted; and as he slowly turned to retreat, I let fly at his shoulder, "Sunday" cussing and yeaning, and giving me much trouble. On receiving the ball the elephant shrugged his shoulder, and made off at a free, majestic walk. This shot brought several of the dogs to my assistance which had been following the other elephants, and on their coming up and barking another headlong charge was the result, accom-

panied by the never-failing trumpet as before. In his charge he passed close to me, when I saluted him with a second bullet in the shoulder of which he did not take the slightest notice. I now determined not to fire again until I could make a steady shot; but, although the elephant turned repeatedly, "Sunday" invariably disappointed me, cussing so that it was impossible to fire. At length, I gasped, I became reckless of the danger, and, springing from the saddle, approached the elephant under cover of a tree and gave him a bullet in the side of the head, when, trumpeting so shrilly that the forest trembled, he charged among the dogs, from whom he seemed to fancy that the blow had come; after which he took up a position in a grove of thorns, with his head toward me. I walked up very near, and, as he was in the act of charging (being in those days under wrong impressions as to the impracticability of bringing down an elephant with a shot in the forehead), stood coolly in his path until he was within fifteen paces of me, and let drive at the hollow of his forehead, in the vain expectation that by so doing I should end his career. The shot only served to increase his fury—an effect which, I had remarked, shots in the head invariably produced; and, contesting his charge with incredible quickness and impetuosity, he all but terminated my elephant-hunting forever. A large party of the Bechuanas who had come up, yelled out simultaneously, imagining I was killed, for the elephant was at one moment almost on the top of me: I, however, escaped by my activity, and by dodging round the bushy trees. As the elephant was charging, an enormous thorn ran deep into the sole of my foot, the old Badenoch brogues, which I that day sported, being worn through, and this caused me severe pain, laming me throughout the rest of the conflict.

The elephant held on through the forest at a sweeping pace; but he was hardly out of sight when I was loaded and in the saddle, and soon once more alongside. About this time I heard Isaac blazing away at another bull; but when the elephant charged, his cowardly heart failed him, and he very soon made his appearance at a safe distance in my rear. My elephant kept crashing along at a steady pace, with blood streaming from his wounds; the dogs, which were knocked up with fatigue and thirst, no longer barked around him, but had dropped astern. It was long before I again fired, for I was afraid to dismount, and "Sunday" was extremely troublesome. At length I fired sharp right and left from the saddle. he got both balls behind the shoulder, and made a long charge after me, rumbling and trumpeting as before. The whole body of the Baman gwato men had now come up, and were following a short distance behind me. Among these was Mollyeon, who volunteered to help; and being a very swift and active fellow, he rendered me important service by holding my sidgey horse's head while I fired and killed

I then fired six broadsides from the saddle, the elephant charging almost every time, and pressing us back to the main body in our rear, who fled in all directions as he approached.

The sun had now sunk behind the tops of the trees; it would very soon be dark, and the elephant did not seem much distressed, notwithstanding all he had received. I recollected that my time was short, and therefore at once resolved to fire no more from the saddle, but to go close up to him and fire on foot. Riding up to him, I dismounted, and, approaching very near, I gave it him right and left in the side of the head, upon which he made a long and determined charge after me; but I was now very reckless of his charges, for I saw that he could not overtake me, and in a twinkling I was loaded, and, again approaching, fired sharp right and left behind his shoulder. Again he charged with a terrific trumpet, which sent "Sunday" flying through the forest. This was his last charge. The wounds which he had received began to tell on his constitution, and he now stood at bay beside a thorny tree, with the dogs barking around him. These, refreshed by the evening breeze, and perceiving that it was nearly over with the elephant, had once more come to my assistance. Having loaded, I drew near and fired right and left at his forehead. On receiving these shots, instead of charging, he tossed his trunk up and down, and by various sounds and motions, most gratifying to the hungry natives, evinced that his demise was near. Again I loaded, and fired my last shot behind his shoulder: on receiving it, he turned round the bushy tree beside which he stood, and I ran round to give him the other barrel, but the mighty old monarch of the forest needed no more; before I could clear the bushy tree he fell heavily on his side, and his spirit had fled. My feelings at this moment can only be understood by a few brother Nimrods who have had the good fortune to enjoy a similar encounter. I never felt so gratified on any former occasion as I did then.

By this time all the natives had come up; they were in the highest spirits, and flocked around the elephant, laughing and talking at a rapid pace. I climbed on to him, and sat enthroned upon his side, which was as high as my eyes when standing on the ground. In a few minutes night set in, when the natives, having illuminated the jungle with a score of fires, and formed a semicircle of bushes to windward, lay down to rest without partaking of a morsel of food. Matchuho would not allow a man to put an assagai into the elephant until the morrow, and placed two relays of sentries to keep watch on either side of him. My dinner consisted of a piece of flesh from the temple of the elephant, which I broiled on the hot embers. In the conflict I had lost my shirt, which was reduced to streamers by the waist-thorns, and all the clothing that remained was a pair of buckskin knee-breeches.

[From *The Ladies' Companion*.]

LETTICE ARNOLD.

By the Author of "TWO OLD MEN'S TALKS," "EMILIA WYNDHAM," &c.

[Concluded from page 178.]

CHAPTER VII.

Bless the Lord, oh my soul! and all that is within me
bless his holy name:

Who forgiveth all thy iniquities and healeth all thy
diseases,

Who saveth thy life from destruction, and crowneth
thee with loving kindness and tender mercies.

MRS. FISHER.

I MUST now introduce you to Mrs. Fisher. She is so great a favorite of mine, that before I relate what became of Myra, I must make you acquainted with this lady.

Mrs. Fisher was a respectable gentlewoman-like personage of about fifty-four, of a grave, authoritative and somewhat severe aspect; but with the remains of very extraordinary personal beauty which she had once possessed in an eminent degree. She was somewhat above the middle size, of an erect, firm, full figure, her hair now gently turning gray, drawn over her finely proportioned forehead; her eyes large, and of a fine color and form—clear and steady; her mouth expressive of sense and temper; and her dress in character with the rest. Mrs. Fisher was always handsomely dressed in silks of the best description, but in slight mourning, which she always wore; and on her head, also, a cap rather plainer than the mode, but of the finest and most expensive materials: nothing could be more dignified and complete than her appearance.

When first Myra was introduced to her she was both daunted and disappointed; the gravity, amounting almost to sternness, with which Mrs. Fisher received her, and explained to her the duties she was expected to perform, awed in the first place, and mortified in the second. The establishment of this fashionable modiste, with which Myra had associated nothing but laces and ribbons, dresses and trimmings, embroidery and feathers, flattery and display, struck cold and dull upon her imagination. She was introduced into a handsomely but very plainly furnished sitting-room, where not one trace of any of those pretty things were to be seen, and heard of nothing but regularity of hours, persevering industry, quaker neatness, attention to health, and the strictest observance of the rules of what she thought quite a prudish propriety.

Mrs. Fisher's life had been one of vicissitude, and in its vicissitudes, she, a strong, earnest-minded woman, had learned much. She had known sorrow, privation, cruelly hard labor, and the loneliness of utter desolation of the heart. She had, moreover, been extremely beautiful, and she had experienced those innumerable perils to which such a gift exposes an unprotected