

Nouteiro, Rose  
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## PREFACE.

additional recollections; and this must be my apology for an occasional change of tense.

I have purposely refrained from touching upon the delicate and difficult subject of political matters, nor have I ventured upon any geographical description of the country, leaving such subjects to be gathered from works compiled by wiser heads than mine, but have simply endeavoured to truthfully represent my own actual observations and experiences, I fear in a most erratic and unscientific manner.

Many improvements have taken place from time to time in the town of Lourenço Marques since I began this little book and since the advent of the railway, itself the greatest improvement; and mention of these will be found in Chapter XII.

I have thought it best not to give the names of any friends, but my sincere thanks are due to them for the many kindnesses shown me during my five years of solitude.

R. M.

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cage ; but although it readily ate bananas and sweet potatoes and bread, it died in two days, so he gave it to me, and I skinned it at once.

I find that the best way to preserve large moths is to drop a little chloroform on their heads whilst in the net, and before they recover put them into a little bottle containing cyanide of potassium, which not only kills quickly, but prevents them from becoming stiff. I sometimes can get them into the poison-bottle without chloroform, and they are insensible at once. Moths should always be touched as little as possible by the fingers, as their scales rub off so very quickly, particularly on the back of the thorax ; they also have a bad habit of spreading themselves out flat and creeping along in the net, instead of folding back their wings like the right-minded and sensible butterfly.

I think you will allow that by the time the moths are disposed of I have well earned my evening meal, especially as I rarely taste anything all day but a morsel of dry biscuit or a handful of roasted ground-nuts, and generally

have been on my feet about thirteen or fourteen hours without a break, for I seldom sit down even to my breakfast, as I find I can do so many things whilst eating it.

After dinner I either play or read a little, and often cannot help falling asleep over my book ; or perhaps I have a visit from a neighbour or two, and then the piano is sure to be put into requisition ; but there is not much visiting up on the hill during the hot season, and I often do not even see a white face for more than a fortnight.

My piano is a never-failing source of wonder to the raw Kafirs, and whenever my boys have a friend from afar to visit them they always come and ask me to allow the visitor to see and hear the white man's instrument. I once played a lively tune to a very little, shrivelled-up old woman, eighty years old at the very least, and, to my astonishment, she became so excited that she began to sing, and danced all over the room.

Ladies are very scarce. I believe there are now two or three Portuguese ladies living in town ; but as I speak very little Portuguese and they



speaking no English, and do not even understand it, and are, moreover, very particular about etiquette in dressing, &c., visits of ceremony would be a farce, even if I had daytime to spare for the purpose; so unless a lady happens to pass through the place to or from the Transvaal or Mozambique, I have no chance of a gossip with one of my own sex.

I always try to go to bed early, but often just when I am preparing for it I find that moths are beginning to fly in, attracted by the light; so I sit up a little longer to catch them, or if the night is not too windy, put a candle-lamp on the verandah with a sheet under it, and taking out my net and a chair, wait for them outside.

One evening, whilst thus waiting, I walked to the end of the verandah to look at the lovely full-moon (which always seems brighter and larger than in England), but, to my amazement, I saw a *new moon*! For a moment I thought I must be going to have an attack of fever, as I knew I had been watching the moon at its full the previous evening, and remarking how huge it looked and

how rapidly it rose over the brow of the hill. Suddenly I thought it must be an eclipse, so, leaving the moths to the bats, I watched the beautiful sight until the shadow passed, and the full-moon shone out brightly again in all its loveliness.

Of course, there are many other things besides those I have mentioned which have to be done in the course of the day, and for which time has to be made somehow—mending dresses and nets, which are constantly getting torn by the many thorny plants and creepers in the bush, and many little household matters a lady is forced to see to herself.

In the busy season I must confess I often put on linen, and even dresses, *rough dried*; but when I have leisure I sprinkle and fold the clothes and pack them up neatly in canvas, then I call the boys to dance and stamp on the bundle, and after about half-an-hour's stamping the clothes look as if they had been nicely mangled. I call this my "Kafir mangle."

In the cool season I make all the boxes in which to pack the insects for shipment; some I

him and try to bite him, he lashing out savagely all the time. At last the donkey tried to get into my lap, and was lying right over the pommel when some Kafirs appeared and dragged him forcibly away.

The musical instruments of these parts are very primitive, and only of three kinds. One consists of a stick nearly four feet long and three-quarters of an inch in diameter, slightly bent in the form of a bow by a piece of thin brass wire tightly stretched across and secured at both ends; a small gourd, having the hollow part outside, is fastened to the middle of the bow by a short piece of wire looped over both stick and wire—a small pad, made of palm leaf, being placed between the stick and gourd to prevent them touching. When played, the bow is held in the middle by the left hand, some of the fingers being on each side of the connecting wire securing the gourd, which is pressed against the chest of the player. The long wire is then tapped alternately on each side of the loop with a little cane, producing a minor third; but if the

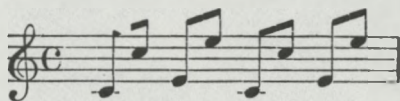


backs of the fingers are slightly raised so as to touch the wire a different note can be made. An instrument somewhat like this is described in my husband's "Angola and the River Congo," vol. i., p. 139.

Another is still more simple, consisting of a piece of cane about two feet long, and only slightly bowed by a string of twisted horsehair, a few rude holes being cut inside the bow for about half its length. This instrument is played by the lips being pressed against the horsehair and cane over the holes, and then tapping or picking at the horsehair with the finger-tips or nails; the note thus formed is high or low according to which hole the lips are over, the lowest sound being at the extreme end of the bow. No particular melody is ever played on either of these instruments, which become very monotonous after being heard daily and hourly, for the Kafir is so fond of his tune that he always likes to keep his instrument handy to take up whenever he has a moment's leisure.

The gourd instrument is the favourite, and boys sent on errands constantly go along cheerfully tapping its wire, and often singing some doggerel verse composed about their masters or their work.

The third instrument is a piece of thick cane three-quarters of an inch in diameter and three feet long, having a fine string made of the twisted hairs from an ox-tail stretched along its entire length, but not touching the cane. At one end of the string a flat piece of quill an inch long is tied, and the lips being placed on this and the breath sucked in and out seemingly by a great effort, a loud and appalling noise is produced, best represented as follows—



and more resembling the hee-haw of a donkey than anything else. Of course all these instruments vary in size, and sometimes the cane is ornamented. I have only described those in my own possession. These Kafirs also make a

horrible noise at their feasts, &c., by blowing through a bullock's horn, but this I think cannot be called a musical instrument.

They certainly are not a musical tribe, for though they are always whistling or singing, most of their chants are monotonous and melancholy, and usually in a minor key. I often hear the cheerful bugle-calls whistled in minor! Even the crow of the Kafir cocks is melancholy, the last note being very much prolonged, and running down the scale till it dies away.

Some rather melodious songs or chants that I remember hearing some years back seem quite to have died out.

The songs of the Chobi tribe are much more musical. I heard one of their chants sung in unison by about a hundred voices, and it was quite imposing at a little distance; a mighty stamp was occasionally introduced also in unison with good effect. This song had a rapidly played accompaniment on the "Kafir piano," an instrument belonging to more northern tribes, with "keys" which are tapped by pieces of stick



after the fashion of the harmonicon. Another chant is melodious enough to be introduced into English chant books.

I am told that the Kafirs here rather look down on the Chobis, though they are so much more intelligent; but decidedly my Chobi boy Jack, on the other hand, spoke with contempt of many of their ways and manufactures, especially of their musical instruments. He thought their custom of marking the graves with pots and baskets most objectionable—why, he could not explain—telling me, at the same time, that in his country the earth was always made quite smooth over graves, and dead leaves scattered on them, so that in a little while no one remembered where they had been. He also took pains to point out to me that the hanging baskets made by his people were much stronger, and more evenly and finely plaited, than those manufactured at Poulana or Mahota, which is decidedly the case; and I am inclined to think that some prettily carved wooden dishes, jugs, and spoons that I possess may be Chobi work, as

they were brought in by natives on their way to the Cape.

All Kafirs seem to have one strange custom in common—that of spitting after inhaling a bad smell. Those hereabouts too always try to spit on a dog who barks at them, the superstition being that if the saliva touches the dog it cannot bite. There is also some superstition about digging a grave for a white man, which they very much dislike doing, some also objecting to carry the body ; but I trust this objection will not be felt when my horse is buried, as when I leave I am resolved that a merciful bullet shall prevent his ever falling again into cruel hands. No doubt many other superstitions are held, but they have not reached my ears.

The fetish man is employed here, as in other places, to smell out thieves or to foretell the result of a journey, which he does by throwing about a number of little bones ; and he is also called upon to pray for rain after a long drought.

On these occasions a long procession of the

"On the arrival of the SS. *Natal* from Zauzibar we were glad to leave Mozambique on the 11th April, arriving off Quillimane, against the strong monsoon, on the 13th. The pilot having been afraid to come out, we waited till day, when Captain Travers took his ship in without him, and again ascending the river, anchored off the town on the evening of the 14th.

"We had another delightful run on shore, and left next day, reaching and crossing the bar of Inhambane on the morning of the 17th. The town of Inhambane is situated on the southern bank of a wide arm of the sea but a few miles from the bar, and there seemed abundance of water at high tide and no danger from the breakers, &c.

"The view of the town is very picturesque indeed, as it is built on high ground which is wooded. The country around is very pretty, but the ground generally is of rather loose sand, and not to be compared in fertility with that of Quillimane.

"The native population must be very large,



and the huts are higher and better built than any to be seen elsewhere. The country yields abundance of cocoa-nuts, mandioc, sweet potatoes, Indian corn, and other native produce, the plantations extending for miles around, and amongst the many fruit-trees and palms the native huts are prettily dotted.

“After three hours’ stay we again steamed away, and landed at Lourenço Marques at midnight of the 18th April.

“It would take too long to enter into the consideration of the principal points that suggest themselves even on a hurried visit like the one I have described, but it may be stated conclusively that the whole Portuguese possession of Mozambique is unrivalled as a new field for commerce and industry, but at the same time its value is reduced to practically almost nothing from the total want of protection to property and capital by the Portuguese Government, the nominal holders of the country.

“Nothing can exceed the kindness and civility of the Portuguese everywhere on the East Coast,

both officials and civilians, and during their long stay in the country they have implanted these good qualities in the natives to a remarkable degree. They are everywhere on the most friendly terms with the natives, partly from good-nature on both sides, and partly from want of strength on the part of the Portuguese to force the natives to anything either good or bad. It is this want of strength that completely paralyses the development of the country. No one will venture to send goods into the interior, to establish cotton or sugar-cane plantations, or enter into any other industry, from the certainty that the Government is absolutely powerless to protect them in the slightest degree in case of any disturbance or attack, or indemnify them for any loss. Even in the towns there are only a few wretched black soldiers, upon whom no dependence whatever can be placed, even for simple patrol or police duties. At the same time nothing could be easier than to supply the necessary protection and confidence, as a comparatively small force would keep the

negro tribes everywhere in complete subjection. This is not the case at Delagoa Bay, where a stronger force is imperatively required, surrounded as it is by warlike Kafir tribes, and where at present we have not even a police force, and the few black soldiers now here are confidently believed to be the principal actors in a few petty burglaries and robberies that have lately taken place.

“As to the effect of the slave trade, or the complicity of the Portuguese in it being the bane of the country, &c., it is simply ridiculous moonshine. It is the phlegmatic apathy of the Government in not supplying the necessary money, and in paying their officials badly, often abandoning them for months without pay to their own resources, and making their stay and duties in Africa more a punishment or forcible transportation than anything else. It is Portugal who must be blamed for all this; her conduct to her colonies is simply disgraceful and without excuse, as she is prosperous and her credit is good; and but a moderate outlay, to be repaid



a thousandfold in a few years, would open her rich African colonies to the trade of the world, and she would no longer be reproached, as she is now, with the fable of 'The Dog in the Manger.'"

THE END.

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