Edward S. Grogan

FROM THE CAPE TO CAIRO

THE FIRST TRAVERSE OF AFRICA FROM SOUTH TO NORTH

BY

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LONDON
HURST AND BLACKETT, LIMITED
13, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET
1900

CHAPTER V

CHIPERONI

THE Ruo, the main tributary of the Shiré river, which two rivers at their angle of confluence enclose Chiromo (native word, "the joining of the streams"), rises in the Mlanje Hills, whence it flows in two main streams which join about twenty-five miles north of its junction with the Shiré; ten miles south of this are the beautiful Zoa Falls.

As there was every prospect of having to wait some weeks for the errant loads, we made arrangements for some shooting, having heard great tales of the rhinoceros on Mount Chiperoni, which lies about forty miles east of the Ruo in Portuguese territory. And having been provided with porters by Mr. MacDonald, and obtained a permit from the Portuguese, which entitled us to carry a gun and shoot meat for the pot, we crossed the river and marched up towards Zoa.

The country was exceedingly dry and burnt up: consequently the little game that remained in the vicinity was concentrated near the water. After some hard days' work under an impossible sun, I shot a klipspringer, which curiously enough was down in the flat country, and fully twenty miles from the nearest hills. The bristly hairs reminded me of a hedgehog, and came out in great quantities during the process of skinning. They are exceedingly heavy in the hind-quarters, short in the legs, and have the most delicate feet imaginable. We both searched high and low for koodoo, which were reported to be plentiful, but without effect, though I found a couple of worm-eaten heads lying in the bush; and for some days we had no luck with sable, although there was much fresh spoor; but eventually I succeeded in bagging a fair bull. No antelope looks grander than an old bull sable, standing like a statue under some tree, his mighty horns sweeping far back over his shoulders; and the bristling mane gives a massive appearance to his shoulders; there is something suggestive of the goat about him, both in his lines and carriage: a giant ibex!

One evening some natives came to camp with a wonderful catch of fish,

amongst which I noticed four different species, one a long eel-shaped fish with a curious bottle snout, and very small teeth, the eye, entirely covered with skin, being almost invisible. There is a closely allied fish in the Nile. Another one resembled a bream with very large fins. A third resembled a carp with enormous scales, and was very poor eating. While the fourth, which I have never seen elsewhere, and which was unknown to Mr. MacDonald, who is a keen naturalist, resembled a heavily-built carp with large scales and prominent fins, and was of a beautiful green colour.

Sharp having decided to go to the north of Nyassa to arrange transport across the plateau, then returned to Chiromo, and I quickly followed. But a few days later I again crossed into Portuguese territory, and marched east along the telegraph line to M'Serrire on the Liadzi, a tributary of the Shiré.

The bush is dense from this village north to the spurs of Chiperoni, but towards the Shiré there are extensive plains. Here I was attracted one morning by vultures flying round in a circle, and going up to the spot discovered the remains of a bushbuck that had just been eaten by a lioness. Accordingly I followed round the edge of the bushes, knowing that after drinking at the river she would return for shelter from the sun, and a mile further on I found her return spoor. This I followed till suddenly she ran past and disappeared behind an ant-hill; a few hundred yards away there was a dense patch of reeds about half-an-acre in extent, and she was evidently heading for this; so knowing that she was certain to stop and look at me before taking cover, I rushed as fast as possible in pursuit, wishing to be near for the probable chance of a shot. But to my surprise she ran straight in, and I made a last spurt to try and cut her off into one corner, so that I might have a chance of beating her out; and dashing round the corner where she had disappeared, I ran right on to the top of her. We both sprang aside to avoid a collision, and so quickly did she vanish that I failed to get a shot. There was a little bay in the reeds, and, as lions invariably do, she had stopped with the intention of having a last look at me. I succeeded in beating her out by zigzagging slowly through, but although I was again within ten yards of her she was too quick, and I never got a shot: she finally dodged me round an ant-hill and disappeared. Very sore at being thus scored off, I shot a waterbuck and built a platform in a tree, hoping that she might return at night; but the mosquitoes were so terrible that I was compelled to leave my perch and find my way, as best I could in the dark, back to camp.

Feeling one's way through thick bush at night is a nervous amusement, and the knowledge that there is at least one lioness in the immediate vicinity is not encouraging: so that my nerves, strained to breaking point, almost gave way, when some bush-pigs, alarmed by my approach,

suddenly stampeded past me, one almost upsetting me in his efforts to escape.

The following morning, quietly strolling through some dense bush, I saw two grand bull sable browsing on the tender shoots of a massive creeper. I fired at the better of the two and they both galloped away; it was easy to follow their spoor in the soft peaty soil, and a quarter of a mile away I came on him lying dead, the shot having passed through both lungs. In the evening when tubbing, I was beset by bees who come in clouds for the moisture, and after an exciting and one-sided conflict I hurriedly withdrew, dashed in a state of nudity through the astonished village, and sought refuge in a hut. The stings induced a severe fever, and the next two days were spent in bed and indignant meditation.

Hearing that some old Cambridge friends of mine had arrived in Chiromo, I marched in and spent a jovial evening with MacDonald, who was entertaining them.

A new detachment of Sikhs arrived under Lieut. Godfrey. It was splendid to see the contrast between the manners of these magnificent men and those of the local nigger. The respect shown to all Englishmen by these gentlemen of gentlemen, coupled with their proud carriage and air of self-respecting-respectful independence, contrasted well with the slouching, coarse insolence of the hideous African.

A naïve individual arrived by the same boat for some official post, and asked whether it was usual to leave cards on the converted natives and their wives. He appeared to be a striking example of the appalling inaptitude of many of the officials chosen for the difficult and serious work they undertake.

Tales of rhinoceros and elephant fired me with the desire to make a trip to Chiperoni, a large mountain mass east of the Ruo; but my ignorance of the language made such an undertaking difficult, so that I wasted some days in endeavouring to find a companion. Preparatory to starting, it was necessary to make friends with the Portuguese official; the usual man was away, and his *locum tenens* was the captain of the gunboat, which was moored to the bank opposite MacDonald's house.

From previous experience, I had learnt that with Portuguese and natives everything depended on outward appearance; and, as my wardrobe was little calculated to inspire respect, I went round the town and gathered much gorgeous raiment, the finishing-touch being supplied by the doctor in the shape of a red and white medal ribbon, torn from a pocket-pincushion. Resplendent in such gauds, with a heavy riding-whip, spurs (I had noticed that spurs are indispensable to Portuguese polite society, even at sea), and balancing a No. 6 helmet on a No. 8 head, I was rowed across

the river in great pomp by the administration boat, midst the blare of trumpets and waving of flags.

The Portuguese officer, a delightful gentleman, received me with open arms, placed the whole country and all that was therein at my disposal, and gave me a "Viesky-soda," insisting on drinking the same thing himself, a stretch of hospitality that was attended with the direst results.

So the following morning, having given up all hopes of finding a companion, I collected a dozen raw niggers and a Chinyanja dictionary, and on November 10th crossed the Ruo and marched twelve miles to the Liadzi, a parallel stream to the Ruo, and also flowing into the Shiré; five miles further I forded the Zitembi, another parallel stream of some volume. This I followed up to a village called Gombi (little bank), which is perched on a small cliff at the junction of the Zitembi with a feeder. I had had considerable difficulty in obtaining guides, the natives being very surly, and absolutely refusing any information of the best means of reaching Chiperoni, or of the probability of sport, and at Gombi things reached a climax, the chief telling me that he wanted no white men in his country, that the Portuguese forced them to work for nothing, and demanded a 5 r. hut tax, that my men would obtain no food, etc. etc., *ad nauseam*. In thirty seconds he was prone, and taking a severe dose of hippo-whip before his astonished band of elders; he rose refreshed and brought me flour and fowls, guides to show me game, and a guide to Chiperoni for the morrow. In the afternoon I took a walk round and shot some meat, seeing plenty of fresh rhino, buffalo, eland, sable, and other buck spoor; the country seemed so promising that I decided, if unsuccessful at Chiperoni, to return for a few days. There was an albino woman in the village; all her children, to the number of five, were also albino, and at several other villages in the vicinity I saw specimens, which would argue a strong hereditary tendency. In many of the villages in the higher valleys there were numerous cases of goitre, some very pronounced, and an extraordinary number of lepers and idiots; due, I suppose, to the isolating influence of mountainous regions, through difficulty of communication, and the consequent tendency to in-breed. The whole of the next day I followed the Zitembi, till, at its junction with a large feeder, about twenty-four miles from Gombi, there is a village called Chirombo. The stream, which is a series of cascades, and lined with bamboo, is exceedingly beautiful, and, by a reconnaissance on the morrow, I ascertained that it rises on the north of Chiperoni. From here Chiperoni has quite an imposing effect. It is a terraced cone deeply scared by water-courses, and rises from the middle of a basin formed by a circle of less prominent peaks, the most important of which is Makambi to the west. Far away to the north-west were visible the heights of Mlanje, while to the east stretched an unending forest-clad plain that reaches to

Mozambique. Woods of mahobahoba (the wild loquat) and many flowering trees covered every rise, and the flat interior of the basin; and the glorious golds, reds, russets, and browns of our autumn, which in these climes beautify the landscape in spring, were at their richest, while a carpet of vivid green, and purple flowers lay spread beneath the shade. It was a beautiful country, cool, even at mid-day, cold at night, free from mosquitoes and flies, and every mile or so an ice-cold stream came tumbling down behind its curtain of ferns and orchids.

Marching round the southern face of Chiperoni for twenty miles, we came to a long ridge or arête which I followed till within 500 ft. of the summit, which is rocky and precipitous, but would offer no difficulty to a man without a load. Here I camped on a small plateau in a glade of mahobahoba; it was a delightful change after the sweltering heat of Chiromo, and I could imagine myself again in Switzerland as I looked out over miles of rolling upland and undulating forest. There were numerous signs of elephant which were feeding on the small sugary loquats, but I failed to find any, though I followed one spoor for many miles. From here we worked round to the east face, till, being short of food, I was obliged to follow one of the numerous streams down to the plain. Here was a considerable but scattered population with a large number of domestic pigeons, pigs, ducks, and cats; the pigs were the ordinary bush-pig, while the pigeons, which were blue rocks, must have been originally introduced by the Portuguese. The stream, which flows into the Misongwe, a tributary of the Shiré, is called the Machingiri, and there are numerous signs of rhino, though few antelopes; however, I managed to bag a good sable. As my boys were following very badly on the paths, I cut straight across to Gombi through the forest, a very long, waterless march, and on arrival found there was not one boy a hundred yards behind; after that I had no further difficulty with them. On the march I wounded an old bull buffalo, but owing to the lack of water, had regretfully to leave him, as the cover was very thick, and he kept breaking away in the wrong direction. At Gombi I decided to stop for a few days, and the next morning, after spooring a herd of sable for two hours, I shot three splendid bulls. Unfortunately, owing to the intense heat, I only succeeded in saving one mask, the others being already turned on arrival in camp.

I had told the chief, who was now most friendly, that I was going to shoot sable, and he came and asked me what I intended to kill the next day, and was much amused when I jokingly replied that I should bring home a rhinoceros.

With this end in view I started early at 5.30 a.m., and crossing the river, skirted along the foot of the hills, and killed a bull hartebeeste for the Mahomedan boys, who refuse to eat the meat of any beast that has not

had its throat cut before death. Although this is a great nuisance (as cutting the throat spoils the head skin) it is right to respect such customs, and I always made a point of killing something else, so that they should not suffer for their belief.

At 7.30 I found fresh rhinoceros spoor which I followed under a blazing sun till 12.30: the country had been very difficult, and I was just beginning to despair when I heard a snort, and, looking up, saw the rhino trotting round the corner of an ant-hill, behind which he had been sleeping. On seeing me he stopped, snorting, blowing, and stamping, looking exceedingly nasty. I was carrying my ·303, and turning round for my 4-bore, found that all my boys had bolted up a small thorn tree, from the branch of which they were hanging like a cluster of bees. They had thrown down the gun, and I was compelled to stoop down and grope about for it in the undergrowth; he continued blowing and snorting only fifteen yards away, and I felt very uncomfortable, as in my position I offered a magnificent target. However, at last I found the gun, and, firing past his cheek, hit him full on the edge of the shoulder; instantly there arose a very hell of sound, squealing, stamping, and crashing of bushes and grass; the smoke hung like a pall around me, and I thought he was charging. Having nowhere to run to, I stayed where I was, and suddenly his huge mass dashed past the edge of the smoke-cloud, and I saw him disappear at a tremendous pace into the grass. We followed hard, but though he bled freely and lay down several times, we did not come up to him again till 3 p.m., when we found him standing at ten yards distance in a bushy nullah far up in the hills. I fired the 4-bore at his shoulder, knocking him down, but he rose again, and tried to climb the far bank; so I fired the second barrel hurriedly; the cartridge split at the back, and I was knocked over a tree two yards behind. That stopped him, and three solid bullets from the ·303 finished him.

I found that the first shot had penetrated about 2 ft., smashing all the shoulder, yet he travelled for two and a half hours, over the steepest hills and through some precipitous water-courses.

In cutting off his head, I found an old iron native bullet in the muscle of his neck.

We were terribly exhausted from the desperate work in a pitiless sun, and hastily grilled a portion of his liver, which was excellent.

A twelve-mile trot brought us back to camp at 7 p.m., and the old chief turned out in state to meet me, and falling upon his knees, rubbed his face in the dust in token of admiration at my powers of prescience.

The natives departed in hundreds there and then to cut up the meat, and arrived early the next morning with the head intact; twenty boys carried it slung on a pole. Skinning it was a fearful business, and occupied me

AND I WAS COMPELLED TO STOOP DOWN AND GROPE.

till dark; toil that I have much regretted, since I find that the skull, skin and many other trophies and curios have been unfortunately lost in transit

The old chief again came to me and asked me what I was going to kill: I suggested eland for a change; and knowing that there were several herds near where I had killed the rhinoceros, I set off in that direction, my local guides carefully placing a bunch of leaves under a bush on the left-hand side of the path, a proceeding that they informed me ensured success.

The country was full of splendid hunting-grounds: the young grass was sprouting from the black peaty soil, and the new foliage of the trees afforded grateful shade, beneath which one could walk for hours without encountering any undergrowth.

The spoor of buffalo, rhinoceros, sable, and hartebeeste was plentiful, but nothing would satisfy me except eland, and it was not till mid-day that I found tracks fresh enough to follow. A six-mile burst brought me in sight of a herd of twenty, and I was creeping round under cover of some trees to obtain a good shot at the leading bull when a boy, who had followed me from the village, let off a dozen ear-piercing whistles to inform me that he too had seen them. Away dashed the eland, and any one who has once followed alarmed eland does not eagerly repeat the mistake. They usually keep up a steady trot till they are clear of the obnoxious neighbourhood, and when they do stand are so wary that approach is impossible. The offending native was an ordinary type of the creatures depicted in books as wonderful hunters and trackers. Personally I have never found a native of Africa who was anything but an abominable nuisance out hunting; and after many trials I strictly confined my hunting attendants to one or two gun-bearers whom I trained to act instantly on a definite set of signs, and never used them for any purpose except to occasionally follow obvious spoor when I wanted to rest my eyes; even then they needed watching or they would go wrong. The bushmen are, of course, an exception to this rule.

On my way back to camp I was startled by a deafening report and the shriek of a bullet past my head. The boy who was carrying my 4-bore had slipped the safety-bolt back, and the trigger had caught in a twig. He was, of course, carrying the gun loosely on his shoulder, and the effect of the explosion of fourteen drams of powder was terrific. It knocked him several feet off the path and stunned him, while the gun described a graceful parabola and landed, muzzle downwards, on a patch of soft soil, fortunately escaping damage.

A messenger arrived in the evening with a note to the effect that the stray baggage had arrived, and the following day I returned to Chiromo after a most enjoyable trip.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CHAMBESI

ON reaching Mambwe I had the good fortune to find Mr. C. R. Palmer, the assistant-collector, on the point of starting for the Chambesi, with the object of waking up one or two of the chiefs who had been tardy in sending in labour. His offer to take me with him, and his glowing description of the game to be found there were so tempting that next morning I found myself on the march to Tanzuka, a border village of the Mambwe: and on the following day we entered the country of the Awemba, a very powerful tribe apparently of Zulu origin. The difference between these people and the neighbouring Mambwe is as cheese from chalk: whereas the latter are of the ordinary dirty, stunted, cringing or insolent, ill-fed type of Central Africa, the former are of a very striking caste. Among the upper class are some magnificent specimens of the native, tall men of powerful build, with much of the well-bred carriage of the Zulu; their noses are straight and thin cut; their colour bronze, and their hair, which they wear in grotesque tufts down the middle of their head, is about the only one of those characteristics which make the nigger the most hideous of God's creations. Many of the young women, with their regular features, beautiful colour, and small delicate hands and feet, are extremely beautiful. Until the advent of the Chartered Co. they led the rollicking life of the old Zulus; herding cattle and depending for the meaner necessaries of life and the replenishing of their harems on the efforts of their neighbours. Far and wide they used to raid even to the Atonga country on the east coast of Tanganyika, and many and wonderful are the tales told of their stupendous forced marches, when the weaker members used to fall out and die from sheer exhaustion. All the chiefs of any standing maintain bands, composed of singers, drummers, and players on the castanets, in which they

take great pride. On the approach of any visitors to whom they wish to do honour, the band is sent forward to meet them; the leading part is usually taken by a man who sings the theme, some of them having remarkably fine voices, while the refrain is taken up by other men, playing drums of hollow wood with lizard or snake skin stretched over the apertures, and a chorus of boys rattling pods containing dry seeds; the whole is accompanied by grotesque dancing, the main object of which appeared to be to go as near falling down as possible without actually doing so. The strain, like most African music, plays on about three notes with untiring repetition, and, though rather pleasing at first, palls after the fourth or fifth hour. Should a chief light on any singer of unusual power, he promptly removes his eyes to prevent him from going elsewhere, and many men thus mutilated are to be seen in every district. In fact mutilation in various forms appears to be the chief recreation of these autocrats. Mr. Palmer told me of three youths who came in to him without their eyes, which had been removed by their chief, because he thought his people were getting out of hand; so to teach them that he was still master he had selected haphazard these three unfortunates. I also heard of some women who had had their ears, lips, hands, and breasts cut off, and who actually travelled a distance of about sixty miles immediately afterwards to the collector of the district. I myself saw many men who had similarly lost their ears, lips, hands, or privates, and sometimes all these parts.

Mr. Law, the able collector at Abercorn, known to the natives by the appellation of the "Just man" (and who, by the way, charged me £25 for my rhino about six hours before I sailed north), when on some punitive expedition in the Awemba country, captured a delightful example of the grim humour of these pleasing gentry. It consisted of a large sable horn rudely adorned and fitted with a mask, into which the patient's head was fitted, his throat having been previously cut with a ferocious-looking knife, chiefly remarkable for its bluntness; the blood spurting forth into the horn rang a bell, a performance that gave general satisfaction, with, I suppose, one exception. Some of their old kraals are veritable fortresses, consisting of an outer ringed palisade banked with clay and loopholed, inside a deep trench, and again an inner palisade similarly banked and loophooled, with, in many cases, a third palisade containing the chief's huts. The site is invariably selected on the edge of a dense thicket, into which the women and cattle are driven on the advent of strangers; nearly every respectable member of society has a gun imported by Arab traders from the north and Portuguese from the south, and there must be several thousand in the country. Such is the people who have been changed in half-a-dozen short years from a cruel murdering widespread curse into a

quiet agricultural fraternity; and by whom? By a mere handful of men with less than a hundred native police, agents of that oppressor of the native, the Chartered Company; and this without fuss and practically without bloodshed. Why do we not hear of these noble performances, instead of the monotonous theme of the nigger who was actually beaten (think of it) by some drunken prospector, or of the bold bad man who keeps a native woman? The chief industries of the country are pombe-[1] drinking and the making of bark cloth, which is a strong fibrous texture of a pleasing reddish-brown colour, made by beating out the bark of the fig-tree with little wooden hammers, till of the required thinness. A curious custom prevails here, and one that I have not noticed elsewhere in Africa, of wearing mourning for dead relatives; bands of cloth being tied round the head.

The following day we arrived at Changala's kraal; he is a large, powerful man, with a face expressive of determination and character. He came out two miles to meet us, carried on the shoulders of one of his men, as is the custom (for the chiefs never walk), with a following of two or three hundred people. He, as in fact did all the Awemba, gave us a very hearty reception, and I saw none of that sulky, would-be insolent air which so often pervades the meeting of white and black. Having amicably settled all outstanding questions with Changala, we visited Makasa, the big man of the country, whose head village lies about twenty-six miles south-east of Changala's. He is a portly old gentleman of unprepossessing countenance, and rather inclined to make trouble—at a distance; however, guessing our intentions, he had made great preparations for our reception. On arrival we found our tents already pitched and grass shelters built above them to keep off the sun; while large crowds of obsequious gentlemen came out to meet us and insisted on carrying in our machilas at a run, a form of attention that would not be appreciated by Accident Insurance Companies. His village, which cannot contain less than five hundred huts, is of the usual Awemba pattern, and is a great centre of the bark-cloth industry.

Tales of rhino and elephant galore raised our hopes to the highest pitch, and after a day's rest we launched forth into the game country—a triangular patch of country that lies at the junction of the Chambesi, and its main tributary the Chosi—camping near Chipiri, the original site of the French mission. Here we got our first glimpse of the Chambesi, which, flowing with a devious course into Lake Bangweolo, is the real source of the Congo. It rises between Mambwe and Abercorn, and at Chipiri is already a river of some size, flowing through a beautiful grass plain clothed with patches of waving spear-grass. The plain, varying in width from a

[1] *Pombe*: an intoxicating drink made from millet.

half to five miles, is hemmed in by forest, bush, and park land, dotted over with innumerable ant-hills, some 30 ft. in height, and is the haunt of countless herds of pookoo, two of which graced our larder shortly after pitching camp.

The tenacity of life of these beautiful little waterbuck is extraordinary. I believe one of those we killed, after receiving four shots from the ·303 and two from the ·577, would have got clear away, had it not been for a lucky seventh shot breaking a third leg; even then he made vigorous protests against the knife, knocking a boy down in his struggles. The next afternoon we moved further down the river to the Mafunso; and our carriers started a rhino on the path, the spoor of which we followed in thick brush, but getting our wind he departed with a derisive squeal, and, though I nearly came up with him again, I was compelled to give up the chase by nightfall and only found camp with considerable difficulty. Still further down the river we camped in a delightful hunting country, the Chambesi plain lying to our south, the vast plain of the Chosi to our east, and north, just behind the camp, strips of bush alternating with glades and groves of mahobahoba. The bush was ploughed up with rhino spoor, and that afternoon both Palmer and I unsuccessfully followed spoor of the morning. Never having seen roan antelope, I was very anxious to shoot one, and the following day started out with that intention. I found several fresh spoors, but failed to make anything of them, but on my way home I found recent lion tracks. These I followed for about two hours; at times it was very difficult, their soft pads leaving no impression on the carpets of dead leaves in the patches of bush, but I managed by casting round to pick the track up again when at fault, and eventually, hearing a low growl, I caught a glimpse of four yellow bodies disappearing round the end of a bush-covered ant-hill. I ran as fast as possible to the other side and almost into their midst; they had tried the old, old lion tactics of doubling. At sight of me they stood, and I put in a right and left; off they galloped, I in hot pursuit, following, as I thought, the first who had got a fair shoulder shot, and not wishing to lose sight of her, because of the thickness of some of the bush. I could just see her bounding round an ant-hill, and was making a desperate spurt to see if she would double, when I rushed round the corner of a bush right on to the top of a tail. I lost no time in skipping to one side; however, she was at her last gasp, gnawing her forepaw and making that peculiar deep gurgle, once heard, never forgotten, the lion's death-groan. I found she was the recipient of the first barrel, and the one I was following, which had dropped for a moment to my second barrel, must have crossed when I lost sight of them behind an ant-hill. Then to my disgust I remembered that I had had a solid bullet in my second barrel in case of an unexpected

rhino. I picked up her spoor and followed her all round the country for about three hours, but she was playing the fool with me, and though several times I must have been very near, I never obtained another sight of her. The other two, which were three parts grown, found her after a while, and their spoor led over the top of all the ant-hills, where they had stopped to watch me till I came too close. To judge by the blood, I had hit her too far back, and the solid bullet going right through would make very little impression. This was the second time I had dropped a right and left and lost one, and I was grievously disappointed. The one I killed was a superb lioness with unusually long hair, and she measured 8 ft. 5½ in., from tip to tip, in the flesh. Owing to the hot rainy weather I had much difficulty in curing the skin, but eventually made a complete success of it. I made a raised quadrangular frame, upon which I stretched the skin, with a grass roof to keep off the showers: then in default of any better preservative, I had wood-ash continually rubbed in by relays of niggers.

Making short afternoon marches and hunting in the morning, we gradually worked down the river to the Chosi junction, then up the Chosi, which is a fine stream about forty yards wide, with a large body of water, till we arrived at Kalungu, a small isolated village, and the only one between Makasa's village and the Chosi. Here I made a circuit of the plain in quest of roan, and after shooting a pookoo which went two miles with a shattered liver and a broken shoulder, and eventually drowned himself, I waded some swamps and emerged on a second plain. Here in the distance, I saw three huge unwieldy monsters slowly threading their way in and out of the numerous ant-hills, till they vanished behind one larger than the rest. I had left my glasses behind, and owing to the slight mirage could not be sure whether they were rhino or hippo. Having loaded the double 4-bore, I hurried forward, creeping from ant-hill to ant-hill, till at last I arrived in a line with the one behind which the brutes were still hidden. Crawling cautiously up, I climbed to the top, the big gun at the present, then peered over while my heart beat the devil's tattoo. There they were, not fifteen yards off, three of them, neither rhino nor hippo, but camp niggers, with three loads of wood by their sides, peacefully smoking a hubble-bubble. I looked at them, then back at the sickly grey face of my gun-bearer, his teeth chattering with fright, and then marched into camp, to find that Palmer had shot three splendid roan on the high road.

Turning out early the next morning I struck the spoor of the herd of roan, and after sixteen miles through water ankle-deep, came up with them; but they saw me first, and I only succeeded in dropping a good cow, which stood on an ant-hill to have a last look at me. I had arranged to join Palmer and the boys at Nondo, which lies at the junction of the Mwenda and Chosi, but found that he had gone further up the Mwenda

and camped at Chupi, which lies on the border of Luwala, the *pièce de résistance* of our trip. At Nondo the Chosi forms a wide pool, formerly the abode of numerous hippo till the advent of one of the French priests, who, with the characteristic Gallic interpretation of *le sport*, murdered the majority for the satisfaction, I suppose, of seeing them float down stream. The same enterprising individual with other kindred spirits organized a drive of the countless herds of pookoo on the plain. Huge fences were built at one end with funnel-shaped openings, where the gallant sportsmen stationed themselves, and, if report speaks true, slaughtered about two hundred; I wonder how many they wounded? Those feats of valour, coupled with sundry bags of lions and leopards by strychnine, should ensure a magnificent reception on their return to *la patrie!* Still, they appear to have done their slaughtering and poisoning in person, and their national views of sport perhaps differ somewhat from ours; but what excuse is there for a Hibernian, who brings a mob of native hunters to scour the country for heads and horns? By the side of the pool is an enormous pile of old hippo skulls that is regarded with superstitious awe by the natives, and close by is a sacred tree, the burial-place of some old chief, where quite a respectable herd of cattle has accumulated from the native offerings. East of the Chosi there is another Awemba god, who dwells in a thicket decorated by a wonderful collection of horns.

When a big chief dies, they smoke him for a year and then bury him in bark-cloth, and the general belief is that his spirit enters into a lion, an animal that they hold in superstitious awe, and refuse to kill.

From Chupi we launched forth into Luwala, a hitherto unexplored tract of country. During the rains it is under water, and is consequently quite uninhabited, a few natives only camping there for fishing purposes, as the waters begin to leave the plain. On the north and east it is bounded by the Chosi for a distance of about sixty miles, and on the west by a slight ridge covered with bush, through which numerous streams flow and lose themselves in the marshes, eventually draining into the Chosi by the Mwenda.

Unfortunately we were too late in the season, the rains having already broken, and were consequently unable to penetrate far from the west side; even there we were compelled to wade from camp to camp through water from 6 in. to 3 ft. deep. The natives told us that when the rains are drying up, immense numbers of game come out from the bush to feed on the new grass round the rapidly diminishing pools, and that often they could see as many as half-a-dozen rhino at a time. It is also a favourite haunt of the comparatively few elephant that still roam this country. On the first day's trek we crossed rhino spoor about four to five hours old, and as Palmer, who was out of form, was unwilling to risk a long

chase, I started off in pursuit. After following for about an hour, I passed quite close to a large herd of roan containing three or four magnificent bulls, which stood and watched me at about forty yards. I was sorely tempted, but stuck to my principle of never leaving a spoor except for something better. For some time he had been travelling very fast, but suddenly the spoor freshened, and from the side of an ant-hill I saw a great pink body in the distance moving slowly through the grass. It is curious how decidedly pink hippo and rhino look at a distance. As there were many large ant-hills about I followed the spoor right out and coming round the corner of one suddenly saw him about forty yards off just walking out into the huge bare plain; but the birds, many of which were on his back, saw me and gave the alarm. In turning he gave me my broadside chance and I fired the 4-bore burning fourteen drams and throwing a four-ounce spherical ball; then, as he swung round to bolt, I popped in a forward raking second barrel, which quickened his pace considerably. He rushed round in a half circle to try and get my wind, while I rained ·303 solids into him, which appeared to have about the same effect as hailstones. Immediately he got my wind he stopped short and faced me, then swayed from side to side, staggered, recovered himself, and finally with a shrill squeal, toppled over, kicking his four fat little legs in the air, and gave up the ghost, or the rhino's equivalent, there being nothing very spectral about these incongruous old survivals of the past. Choleric, dyspeptic, unsociable old fellows with a lordly contempt for, and fixed determination to suppress all such indecent innovations as guns, Cape wagons, and Mombasa railway-trains, they always remind me of those fire-eating, civilian-repressing, cheroot-smoke-belching Bagstocks that frequent Madeira, the Lake of Geneva, and other temperate and economical resorts, and who glare at all newcomers with that peculiar bloodshot ferocity only to be acquired by many years of curry, Bombay duck, and unlimited authority over servile millions. Owing to the difficulty of providing food for the large mob of Mambwe who had accompanied us to see in safety their old masters, the Awemba, the meat was very acceptable. The rhino was a large bull, and being particularly anxious to preserve the head, I took the trouble to cut through the hide all round to be sure of having sufficient neck-skin, and, to avoid any possibility of mistake, I left a boy by the carcase; yet in the evening, when they brought it in, my precious head arrived in two detachments, having been considerately hacked in two to facilitate carriage, a performance that the perpetrators, by the way, are not likely to repeat.

After floundering about the country for miles and camping on isolated ant-hills, surrounded by sheets of water, and as, owing to the continued rains in the hills, the water was daily rising, we were compelled to retreat north-west. Here we made two more ineffectual efforts to penetrate into

the interior, in the course of which I secured three roan, and Palmer found fresh elephant spoor, but as the animals were travelling he followed hard all day without success; so, cursing the rains, we marched to the Luchewe, the largest of the streams that flow into Luwala, and following its valley, arrived at Kyambi, the mission station of the Pères Blancs. Here, with their usual enterprise and abilities, they have constructed a splendid two-storied building with a large cloister-like verandah, and surrounded, as are all their other stations, by a solid fortified wall; outside they have collected a large village and laid out extensive irrigated gardens well stocked with bananas, limes, lemons, and other fruits. The priests, as they all are, were most charming hosts, thorough men of the world, and entirely free from the least suspicion of the cant that makes many of our own missionaries such unfortunate objects of pity or contempt. Their hospitality is famed throughout Central Africa, and is as boundless and inevitable as fate. Such are the social qualities of the remotest arm of that great pin-pricking machine that has lately come to grief in the corresponding north latitude; and it is these same qualities, and the ability at their back that make the Pères Blancs such rankling thorns in the side of the unfortunate British-Public-ridden administrators who have to do with them. Sleek-skinned Jesuitical adders in the grass, that is what they are; there is no getting away from the fact; and individually the most delightful men imaginable; but their calling and nationality make them sacred in the eyes of the thick-skulled, thin-skinned British Public, without whose ignorance-begotten approbation, experience-taught administrators are powerless to act. What would their reception be in Madagascar? "Git, and quick," in the words of the prophet. That missionary work is a means of developing (I purposely refrain from saying civilizing) a country, there can be no doubt; then why not divert the vast sums of money that the Fathers always seem to have at their control into those boundless tracts of Africa ruled by France? Are the inhabitants of the great Lakes of Africa so much more in need of salvation than the people of Nigeria and the West? And if their need is so desperate, why waste the precious hours in political meddling, trumping-up of ridiculous grievances, of which the sufferers themselves are found on inquiry to be ignorant, and buying women with contraband gunpowder, all of which time-devouring occupations I have myself witnessed them pursuing? By the way, I should be very sorry, as a Britisher, to be caught selling powder to natives either in the British or other spheres of influence. Rather a pretty combination: powder-running and slaving! Poor Stokes was hanged on the first charge; and yet, speaking at a venture, I would undertake to say that the priest, to whom in my presence both these charges were brought home, escaped with a polite request not to do it again.

But this is mild compared with the audacity of the principal of Kyambi, who, hearing of the death of the biggest chief in the neighbourhood, promptly marched in and claimed the chieftainship and the deceased's cattle, a move that was checkmated by the prompt measures of Mr. Mackinnon, the Collector. For two reasons I think it unlikely that they will ever succeed in plunging this country into war as they did Uganda; first, because, unlike the Waganda and Watoro, the people are not worked into religious enthusiasm by the presentation of little medals and chains, to which they attach very little value, but which work such wonders amongst the exquisites of the North; and, secondly, because both the French and English missions, in searching for healthy and convenient sites for their spacious and comfortable residences, have selected districts where there are very few natives, their respective parties being consequently insignificant. Nevertheless, as was humorously pointed out to me by one sufferer, their neighbourhoods make excellent training-grounds for rising administrators, as their aptitude at snatching at and distorting any incautious word or lack of a word is amazing; and they never let the ball stop rolling, with their weary reiteration of grievances and miscarriages of justice, a word on which with priestly subtlety they never cease playing, backing their opinion by superfluous, and, in view of recent legal expositions, untimely references to French law.

From Kyambi we marched straight into Mambwe, where we arrived drenched to the skin; and two days later I was down with an attack of fever that lasted till I reached the high lands of Kivu.

ance; still, the line is in good order and a great blessing to transport and station officers.

Here also I bade farewell to my porters, a very troublesome lot they were, and changed my mode of travel to mule-carts, which were a great improvement, more especially as my feet got so bad from gathered jigger-holes that I could hardly walk, even in soft shoes. Eventually I rode all the way to the railway.

The game has all left the neighbourhood of the high-road, so I saw little, except a few hartebeeste and Thomsoni, or an occasional ostrich, making fast time for the hills; but one day I saw a rhino asleep on the plain, and, stalking him carefully, got up to about thirty yards before he heard us. Two shots from a 4-bore, two 10-bore, and a few ·303 bullets did not stop him, as though the first shot from the 4-bore knocked him fairly off his legs, he was up and away in a twinkling. After going a mile or so he turned a complete somersault, but got up and bowled off again at a tremendous pace. The plain was six or seven miles long, and the last I saw was a black dot travelling towards Lake Rudolph.

Grantii, Thomsoni, zebra, ostriches, and hundreds of crested cranes were also to be seen, but water was a long way distant, and we had to leave them and hurry after the mule-wagons. Report said five lions had attacked the transport-stables two days before, and we promised ourselves a lion beat on the morrow; but on inquiry it proved to be a whisky-induced fairy-tale.

As I came into Naivasha, the shores of the lake were black with Masai flocks, thousands and thousands of sheep and goats, and dozens of Thomsoni. Alas! it was a preserve for the officers of the station, and they certainly want some sort of compensation for living in this country.

From Naivasha to the Kedong was a horribly dusty road, and then the windiest, dustiest, most uncomfortable camp in the two Protectorates, though it should be absolutely sheltered by the high hills of the Kedong escarpment. A perfect gale sweeps the valley, and brings up such clouds of dust and dried dung that even if the tent escapes a balloon-like flight, floor, bed, and clothes in the morning are inches deep in dust and *débris* and one's throat is like a dust-bin.

From here a long steep climb brought us on to the top of the escarpment and rail-head. A long straight line down the face of the hill is cleared for the wire railway, a temporary convenience till the graded line can be got ready.

Again the scene changes. Indians everywhere and crowds of white men, panting engines and clattering trucks, rails in the course of being unloaded by gangs of dusky workmen, and whole worlds of tents with U. R. in large letters. The moving of a railway-camp is a great business;

charpoys,[1] parrots, monkeys, native women, pots and pans, all piled high up on open trucks, until they look as if they must overbalance on to the line.

But the natives of the country—alas! they were skin and bone. A two-years' drought had driven them through starvation to death, by the thousand. I saw grown men and women scrambling for grains of rice that had accumulated on the filthy ground-sheets or bare floor of the Indians' tents, and women carrying huge planks by a strap round the forehead in order to earn a handful of food from the two hulking coolies whose work it was. Further down it was the same thing, everywhere emaciated, horrible-looking natives, and fat, greasy Indians; and all because you can't get a day's work out of an African buck-nigger, even though he be starving.

The railway itself is an excellent piece of engineering work, based upon a splendid survey, and the line is well laid and embanked in a very different manner to the Beira railway, near Umtali.

On reaching Nairobe on Sunday afternoon, one of the centre poles of my tent was missing, but I found a welcome shelter with the hospitable Mr. Grayson, who kindly saw me off next day, and became surety for my fare down to the coast. I offered to pay the station-master in sovereigns, but he said they did not take them as current coin. I asked him very naturally if they took them as blooming curiosities. Nairobe station is built on a flat plain, with a most inferior water supply, and the whole place will probably be a sea of mud in a wet season.

The Athi plain begins near here, the scene of those hair-raising adventures with man-eating lions, of which one has heard so much lately. Yet, though a few years ago the whole country swarmed with game, I never saw a beast near the line, and to my disgust no rhino charged the train, for I had understood such events were of almost daily occurrence.

For dust and discomfort the journey to the coast would be bad to beat. Everything is covered inches deep in reddish dust, which seems to penetrate even one's skin. The country was most uninteresting; there was no green anywhere, owing to the long drought, and nothing to be seen except a few starved niggers, planting their shambas in the hopes of rain coming some time. No liquor is allowed to be sold on the railway or within a mile of it, but shebeens, I am told, exist in great numbers outside this limit. Soda-water was a luxury which I met with here for the first time since leaving Blantyre, a year before.

One arrives at a station some time in the evening and gets a very good meal at one of George Stewart's stores, but there is no sleeping accommodation; so back to one's carriage and a bed on the dusty cushions, and

[1] Native Indian beds.

somehow to have become entangled, the motto of the former being, "Take care of the nigger's luxuries,and the white man's needs will take care of themselves," while "Find a healthy spot and our comforts, and the niggers may come along of themselves," seems to be acted up to by many of the latter.

We had a delightful trip, killing four rhino, and a good elephant,

UGANDA RIFLEMAN (MARCHING ORDER).

71 lbs. and 61 lbs. (broken tusks); but the giraffe turned out to be an unsociable old gentleman and not on view; we were always nearly coming on him, but never quite came. The country was full of rhino, the difficulty being to avoid them. One day natives came in to report an elephant in the Shuli country, and we hurried off to the spot. Here we found that he had killed a woman who had met him unexpectedly on the path;

unfortunately we failed to avenge her, as, after following for some hours, we lost the spoor owing to the hardness of the ground. The following morning they brought us news of buffalo, which turned out to be three rhino lying under a tree. They started off, making a great variety of strange sounds, and after a stern chase we slew the old bull, which stood 5 ft. 5 in. at the shoulder and measured 12 ft. in length. Unfortunately we had also wounded one of the cows during the bombardment, and so had a long tramp to finish her. On the morrow we again had news of buffalo, and this time found, but they escaped without a shot, Cape's ·303

UGANDA RIFLEMEN READY TO MARCH.

missing fire. For some reason or other they travelled hard, and just as we were coming close again, a confounded old cow rhino, which was evidently sleeping close to their track, charged Cape most viciously. Fortunately he turned her at three yards with a double-barrel from the ·303, and she rushed past me with a youngster, tail and nose in air and squealing like a steam-whistle, in hot pursuit. I dropped her with a spine-shot from my ·303, but to our annoyance she recovered after dragging her hind-quarters for fifty yards, and led us a long and exhausting dance in a desperate sun. She was a saucy old lady, but our battery was too much for her, and she never charged again, although after the first burst she made no frantic efforts to go away. A very long shot from Cape's

8-smoothbore glanced off her shoulder. Curiously enough, I had an exactly similar experience with my rhino on the Chambesi; the first shot from my 4-bore glanced off the shoulder, although a broadside shot at thirty yards and striking 18 in. below the ridge. Of course, both these guns fired spherical balls. In Cape's case I distinctly heard the bullet strike, and then again strike the trees far away. I regret to say we never caught

UGANDA RIFLEMAN (MARCHING ORDER).

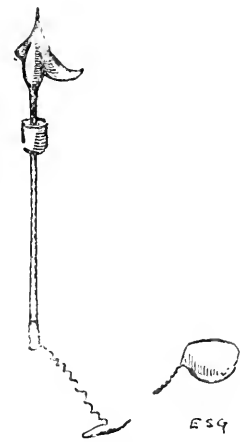
the calf; he stayed behind in the grass at an early stage of the fracas; he was the funniest-looking little chap imaginable, and reminded me of the mock turtle; if taught to follow he would have made quite a sensation in the Park. The elephant, which measured 11 ft. 6 in. at the shoulder, 58 in. round the forefoot, 18 ft. round the edge of the ear, 4½ ft. from the earhole to the outside edge, was chiefly remarkable for the complacent way in which he received a really extraordinary sequence of lead; we kept up

a running bombardment over about half-a-mile; and it was not till Cape put an experimental shot into his leg that we could induce him to take any notice of us. This brought him round sharp, and I popped a shot in, in front of the eye, which decided him to lie down. Even then he made desperate efforts to get up again, and would have succeeded had it not been for the slope on which he was lying, and the fact that his legs were up-hill.

About this time life became rather a burden, owing to the terrific storms that broke over us nightly. The first one removed my tent as you would a candle-extinguisher, and left me exposed to a torrent of ice-cold water (one can hardly call it rain, as it comes in one solid mass, like an inverted bath). This experience—and a more awful one I cannot conceive, and don't want to—made us both rather nervous, and the greater portion of the succeeding three nights was spent in anxious wakefulness, desperate hammerings at pegs and holding of poles, to the accompaniment of a running and not too polite commentary on Nature and her ways, sustained in a high falsetto to keep up one another's courage. But this became rather wearying, and we consequently returned to Wadelai. The Shulis, whose country lies to the east of the Lures, and extends from the Somerset Nile to about 4° north, are similar in appearance to their Lure neighbours. They hunt game by means of nets and regularly organized battues, and seem to be fair shikaris compared to the other people in this part of Africa. They appear to be braver than the Lures, who are the most abject curs. Near Mahagi I have seen elephant's droppings on the roofs of the huts, and the fields trodden flat, and this in spite of there being a number of guns in the country, while we did succeed in inducing some Shulis to follow the spoor of the murderous elephant above-mentioned, but at the chatter of a monkey they hurriedly disappeared, and it needed ten minutes to collect them again. They build very neat villages, laid out on a definite plan, and very superior to the primitive hayricks of the Lures. An outer ring of huts, with the spaces between stoutly palisaded, encloses alternate rings of grain-stores and huts, while the centre is occupied by a dining and jabbering place, formed by piling stout poles in tiers; these, like most of their other possessions, being stained with a kind of red clay. In some central position a large pigeon-loft is built, in which all the small babies are stowed and shut up for the night—a very excellent idea, and one that might be introduced at home. Many of the young bloods wear neat head-dresses made of human hair, with an outer layer of beads and culminating in a peak in front, which is tipped with an old cartridge-case or other gaudy object. They paint their bodies in gruesome patterns with red and white clay, and do not distress themselves about the proprieties. They still own considerable herds of cattle and enormous flocks of goats and sheep, and

their cultivations are very extensive. Numbers of chiefs came to pay their respects, glad of the opportunity of doing so without passing through Lure country, which they must do to visit Wadelai. One old gentleman arrived with a cane-bottomed chair, which he said had belonged to Emin; he also distinctly remembered Sir Samuel Baker. His two chief wives came and called on us; they were pleasant-featured women, and scrupulously clean, but their appearance was much spoilt by the inevitable piece of glass and enormous earrings. This wearing of a piece of glass in the lower lip is very curious, and peculiar, I believe, to the Shulis and Lures.

On October 22nd, giving up all hopes of my loads, I sent back my Manyema *viâ* Kampala, and embarking in my man-of-war with five trusty Watonga, my small boy from Ujiji, and my two WaRuanda, I started down stream once more, and, profiting by a strong current, made considerable progress and encamped on the left bank by one of the first villages of the Madi. The Madi are a fine race, closely allied to the Lures; they surround their villages with a dense thorn hedge, and the only means of ingress is through small holes 2 ft. high. They make beautiful arrows with barbs of a great variety of patterns.



HIPPO SPEAR, MADI, UPPER NILE.

Here the mosquitoes were terrible, and as they were small enough to penetrate the mesh of my net, sleep was out of the question, while my wretched niggers spent the night in reminiscences of the happy lands flowing with milk and honey now left far behind. On the following day the river widened considerably, in some places resembling a lake rather than a river. In the vicinity of Bora, the old Egyptian station, it must be at least four miles broad, and the current is almost imperceptible, except where the sudd is so extensive as to leave only one or two small channels. There are enormous numbers of hippopotami in these reaches, and they constitute a very real danger to navigation. One of the Uganda canoes, in emerging from the Unyama, a river opposite Dufilé, was attacked and only escaped by running into the sudd. Captain Delmé Radcliffe, the officer commanding this district, was attacked in the steel boat; and an infuriated old bull chased me for fully half-a-mile, at one time being within five yards of the stern, but a well-placed shot from my revolver eventually induced him to desist from the pursuit. The Madi attack them with a harpoon-head, fastened to the end of a shaft by a twist of the rope to which it is attached, and so arranged as to detach itself after the delivery

of the stroke from the shaft, which remains in the hand of the hunter, while the rope is free to run out until the float, which is tied to the other end, can be thrown overboard. The ridge of hills that commences at Wadelai gradually increases in height, till at Bora the hills become quite imposing; then they rapidly diminish, and a few miles south of Dufilé vanish completely, giving place after a few miles of level ground to some isolated kopjes. On the left bank a range of hills runs parallel to the Nile, opposite Wadelai, but at a distance of about twenty miles from the river; then they bend to the east and merge into the formidable peaks that dominate Dufilé and the Karas rapids. On the bank of the river and even in mid-stream there are some picturesque kopjes black with cormorants. In the vast wastes of weed and water through which one passes it is easy to trace the formation of the formidable barriers, which further north render navigation almost impossible. There is a small plant similar in form to our well-known London Pride, which grows in the water, and is entirely independent of the soil, deriving its sustenance from the water by means of a tangle of roots resembling seaweed, and which descend to a depth of 1 ft. 6 in. to 2 ft. This plant grows in enormous quantities at the mouth of the Semliki, and in the placid reaches of the Victoria Nile, and single plants and even large masses are carried by the wind and current, and eventually are caught by a snag, a bed of water-lilies, or a bank of sand; they are soon followed by others, and by degrees the mass becomes enormous. Then grass-seeds are dropped by birds or driven by the wind, and the mass is quickly matted by the grass; driftwood, plants, and refuse of all sorts soon accumulate, and the rotting remains and mud that settles from the stream form a solid bottom. Then comes the papyrus and the dense reeds, and what was originally a stick or a water-lily has in a few months become a solid island. There are numbers of Uganda kob and hartebeeste on the banks, but remarkably few ducks or geese. The neighbourhood of old Dufilé appears to be very densely populated, and at my camp, near the old site, I was visited by numbers of natives, who told me that the Belgian post was further down, below the commencement of the rapids, and that the Belgians had been recently fighting a tribe living in the hills.

The following morning, after narrowly escaping shooting the rapids, owing to a mistake in Bt.-Major Vandeleur's map, which transposes the river Unyama and the stream which flows in farther north, I reached Afuddu, a post built in the bottom of a crater several miles from anywhere, and surrounded by dense bush. A more concise summing up of Uganda methods than that afforded by the placing of Afuddu it would be difficult to conceive. Subsequent inquiries elicited the monstrous fact that the site had been chosen because of a magnificent shady tree which serves as

an open-air dining-room: in fine, two white men and a hundred odd Soudanese are condemned to live in a mosquito-bush situated in a hollow surrounded by hills, two hours from the river and off the main road to Fort Berkeley, for the shade afforded by a tree during meal-times. Naturally the site is now to be changed, which means the loss of a year's work. I was much distressed to find Lieut. Langton of the 21st Lancers, the O.C., in bed with black-water fever. Fortunately two days later Dr. Walker arrived from Lamogi, and when I left all danger was passed. The Commandant of new Dufilé sent over wine and other luxuries for the invalid, and sent me a most pressing invitation to go and shoot with him, which, owing to my anxiety to arrive at Fort Berkeley and obtain the latest news, I was unable to accept.

After three days' wallowing in the unheard-of luxury of glass, china, silver, milk and butter galore, for which Afuddu is justly famous, I set off with thirty Madi porters provided by a neighbouring chief, and crossing the line of hills north of the Unyama, camped on the Asua, which in the rains is a very formidable river. On the road I saw my first herd of giraffe, but owing to the necessity of avoiding delay, the country being uninhabited, and consequently foodless, I had to rest content with a long look through my binoculars. I was much impressed with their immense height and extraordinary action. The road to Fort Berkeley crosses the plateau several miles east of the Nile, and passes through a stony, inhospitable country, the haunt of numerous rhinoceros, antelope, and elephant. Scores of rocky streams flow west to the Nile. In the neighbourhood of the large hills, four days from Afuddu, their banks are clothed with dense masses of bamboo. The third day out we passed through the deserted fields and villages of a chief, Krefi, who, owing to some difference as to the porterage of food with the authorities at Fort Berkeley, has moved with all his people from the road towards the interior. This has been a sad blow to the transport of the region, as formerly a relay of porters and food were to be obtained, whereas now the porters from Afuddu have to do the whole five days to Alimadi's villages, and that without being able to obtain food on the road, an innovation which they naturally resent. At Alimadi's I found a detachment of Soudanese from Fort Berkeley buying food. Alimadi himself is a decent old nigger, and still owns a few head of cattle; I believe, the only herd in the vicinity that has survived the depredations of the Dervishes. Between here and Fort Berkeley the road traverses the sites of numerous villages, the inhabitants of which have either fled or been slain. Fort Berkeley is quite in keeping with the other stations on the Nile, having been carefully placed under a brow which commands the interior of the zariba. A swamp to the west between the fort and the river, and an extensive swamp to the south, add to the general salubrity

CHAPTER XXVII

BIG GAME AND ITS PURSUIT

UNDOUBTEDLY big-game shooting, like mountain-climbing, lobster-suppers, and crossing Piccadilly Circus, is an amusement that if persisted in will certainly end fatally. But the experiences of men like Sir Samuel Baker, Alfred Sharpe, F. C. Selous, and other giants among Nimrods, coupled with my own comparatively limited experience, have led me to believe that the danger has been much over-rated, and that more beasts have come to a violent end, and more sportsmen been within an ace of annihilation in the imagination than on the veldt. Lions and buffaloes, and, in a lesser degree, elephant, when fired at have a habit of moving towards the shot to investigate matters, especially if they have not previously caught the sportsman's wind. It is an unpleasant habit, and with a little imagination is easily transformed into a furious charge. Another shot, however, or a sudden movement will generally send them rushing off. I believe that this habit is the mainspring of nine-tenths of the bewildering adventures with which books of African travel are so freely larded.

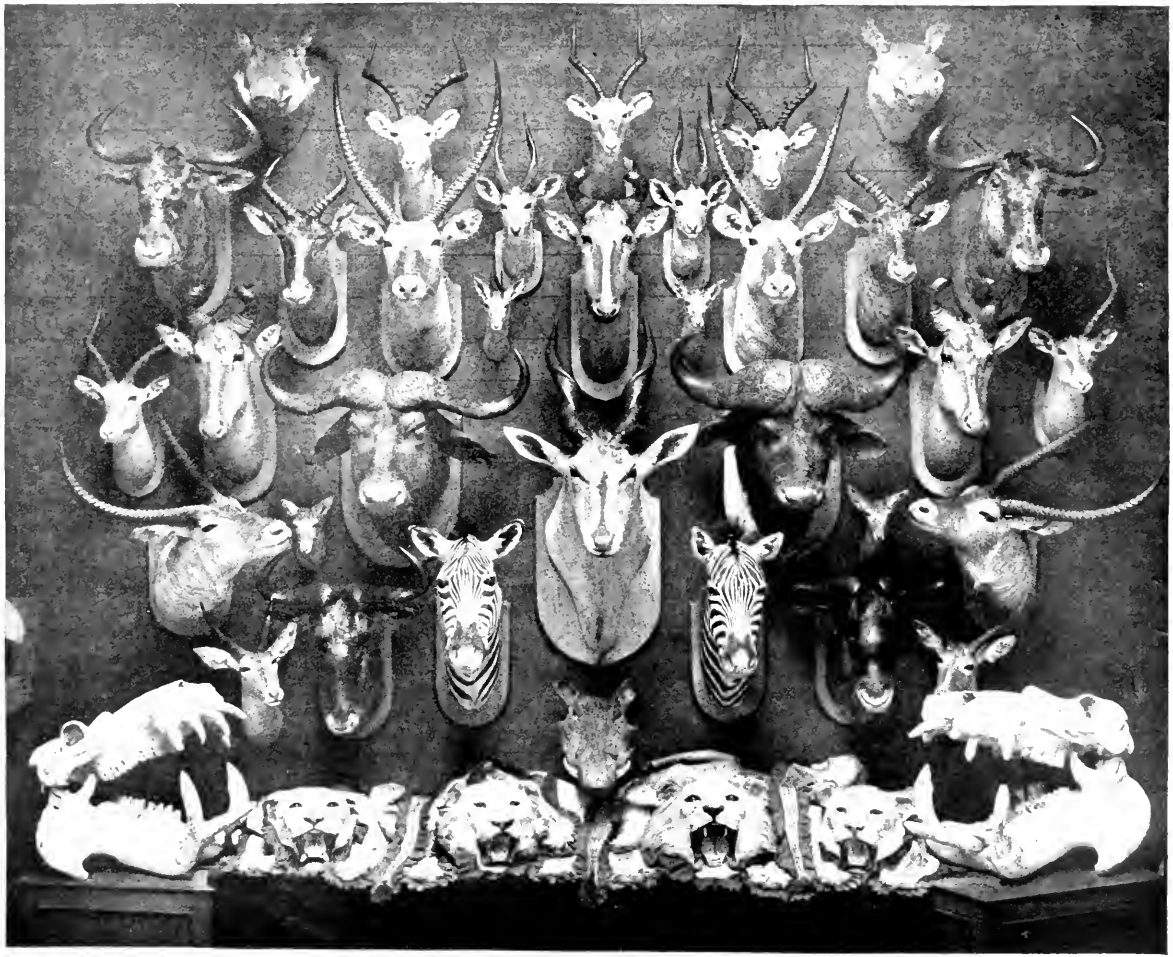
I have never played polo nor stuck pigs except semi-domesticated ones with a bayonet tied on to a sporting rifle with a pocket-handkerchief, but I have tried most other sports, and unhesitatingly place big-game shooting and mountain-climbing first. Climbing has the advantage in that every one is but a link in the chain, and there is the intense pleasure of co-operation, of working in unison with others to a desired end, whereas big-game hunting is generally a selfish amusement, as it is next to impossible to hunt with any one else. But perhaps success is more satisfactory: there is a solid satisfaction about sitting on one's first elephant or shaking the paw of one's first lion that one does not find on the top of a peak, and then one has not got to come down. In both there is the same glorious feeling of space, the same communing with Nature in her wild grandeur, the same gulp of excitement, the same fierce joy of life only to be had in grappling with death, and the same warm glow of vigorous manhood that is

unknown to those who dwell in cities. Poor fellows! how I pity those who have never felt the spirit of the Great Unknown, the awful exhilaration of primeval strife, those to whom the world is but a succession of walls and hedges. A herd of elephant thundering through some stupendous bamboo forest,—a lion roaring to the eddying mists,—the vast, vast shimmering wastes of weed,—the grass-fire lapping up endless miles of country,—the gaunt cold crags battling with a thousand storms:—to live and never to have seen one of these! Fresh from their breezy influence, how petty the things that make life seem,—the scandals, the fret and bitterness of competition, the envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. To the acid female, the torpid-livered man, and all those who are sodden with existence, I would say, Go forth, drink deep of the cup of solitude and space, cast off for a while the nagging restrictions of respectability! You must have distance to judge proportion. Slowly but surely things will assume their true significance; you will find that h's and top-hats are comparatively unimportant, the acrid taste will go, and the joy of mere life will return.

One of the most fascinating features of hunting in Africa is that one must do all the work oneself. Unlike India, where everything with the exception of pulling the trigger is done by natives, there are very few tribes who are of any assistance whatever. The satisfaction of having killed one's beast, so to speak, off one's own bat, is intense.

The few remarks that I intend to make practically only concern the four dangerous beasts,—elephant, rhinoceros, lion, and buffalo. With regard to antelope, either they have become so scarce that one feels it is a pity to kill them, or they are in such numbers that no skill is required, and consequently there is very little satisfaction to be obtained in hunting them. Stalking, such as is necessary in Scotland or Cashmere, is almost unknown in Africa; and during all my shooting I can only call to mind about a dozen instances where I had any trouble in bagging my beast from a stalking point of view. There is of course an immense amount of interest in obtaining a species that one has not yet shot; but after that, unless it be a very fine head, it is usually merely a question of obtaining meat, though undoubtedly a mournful interest attaches to the pursuit of what is occasionally the succulent alternative to a supperless evening.

But with the dangerous animals, more especially the elephant and lion there is an excitement that never palls, although the first keen edge soon wears off with familiarity. I say more especially the elephant and lion, because of the great variety of qualities that are necessary to ensure success in hunting them. Rhinoceros and buffalo belong to "the brute force and blooming ignorance" school of hunter; while to be successful with elephant and lion, the sportsman requires a combination of dash,



A SELECTION OF MR. SHARP'S TROPHIES.

subtlety, perseverance, endurance, coolness, and ready resource tempered by a thorough knowledge of the habits of his quarry. Under their different headings I shall endeavour to explain my meaning.

As to the comparative danger of their pursuit, I should place, first, the lion; secondly, the elephant; thirdly, the buffalo; and fourthly, the rhinoceros.

Elephant hunting seems to be the most dangerous when one is hunting, but lion hunting is in reality. Fewer lions than elephants by far have fallen to the rifle, yet there have been many more fatalities with the former. In the same way, buffalo hunting gives one the impression of being very desperate, but the number of casualties is very small in proportion to the enormous number of buffalo that have been killed. It is the fearful rapidity of a lion's charge and the extreme improbability of stopping such a comparatively small beast in the difficult country which he usually selects for his last stand, that constitutes the great danger of his pursuit. Very few men will care to leave such a desirable thing as a wounded lion, and they are consequently induced to take much greater risks than they would care to face in following up a less coveted beast. It is almost a case of killing or being killed (or at least mauled). I do not remember hearing of a case where a charging lion was turned by a shot. The front shot at a moving lion is extremely difficult, and the chance even of a well-placed shot glancing very great. He must be killed instantly, as there is no chance of dodging him, and a dying lion can do much harm. If the country is favourable, it is possible, though not always advisable, to run from an elephant, buffalo, or rhinoceros, but this is quite out of the question with a lion. However, a lion can be killed on the spot, while it is almost impossible with buffalo and quite impossible with rhino or elephant. All these three, however, can generally be turned by the shot, if the sportsman waits till they are close enough.

As to the vexed question of the respective merits of large-bore rifles and the modern small-bores, I unhesitatingly throw in my lot with the latter, the advantages of which are many and various, such as—

1. Greater accuracy and ease in handling.
2. Flatter trajectory and consequent minimizing of the results of judging distance wrongly.
3. Small weight of the cartridges.
4. Great number of shots that can be fired without effect on the nerves owing to lack of recoil.
5. Variety of effects to be obtained by the use of various bullets.
6. Penetration (so essential with elephant).

Our battery consisted of a double 4-bore burning fourteen drams of

powder, a double 10-bore paradox, a double ·500 magnum, two double ·303 express rifles, and an ordinary sporting pattern magazine ·303.

Both Sharp and I did all our shooting with the double ·303, and killed most things from an elephant to a plover. After nearly losing a rhinoceros and quite losing three good elephant with the 4-bore, I gave it up in disgust, and took to the ·303 even for heavy game, with the satisfactory result that I killed thirty-three elephant and only lost three afterwards.

Of bullets I consider that the following four are the most serviceable:

1. *Solid nickel-covered* for elephant, rhinoceros, hippopotamus.
2. *The Dum-dum* for buffalo, roan, and heavy antelope.
3. *The Jeffery's* for the antelope.
4. *The lead-nosed* for small antelope, and especially lions and leopards.

Their expanding properties increase in the order named. Personally, I should be inclined to dispense with the Jeffery's, as it does not always expand when required, but it has the immense advantage over the soft-nosed of greater accuracy at long ranges. I am certain from the erratic flight of the soft lead-nosed bullets at ranges of over three hundred yards that the lead tip mushrooms in mid air.

In judging of what bullet to use on a particular beast, it is necessary to combine as much penetration as possible with the certainty of the bullet not passing right through, and thereby wasting energy. Both points are equally important. A solid bullet passing through a buffalo (unless, of course, through a vital part) will have as much effect as a lead-nosed bullet fired at an elephant. One might as well prick the buffalo with a bodkin and bombard the elephant with mud. A curious point, and one that I have touched upon elsewhere, is the extraordinary explosive effect of the less expansive bullets, such as the nickel-coated and the Dum-dum upon light and non-resisting bodies.

In selecting a battery, it should always be remembered that there must be two departments—the offensive and the defensive. For my own part I should never again take more than a double ·303 and a double 12-bore paradox, and, if much elephant hunting were to be done, I should add a magazine ·303. A 12-bore is quite strong enough to stop a lion, and sufficient to turn an elephant or rhinoceros. It is the flash and smoke that does this and not the weight of metal. Hence the defensive weapon must always burn black powder.

The Lion.

Lion hunting is the prettiest and most fascinating of all the African sports. One is playing him at his own game, of which he is a master. Cunning must be pitted against cunning. Few things are more interesting

Society's collection, I see no reason why they should not be profitably employed for transport. The difficulty of feeding them, a point raised by Mr. Neumann, certainly would be no obstacle in Uganda, Toro, Unyoro, and many other parts of Africa.

The Buffalo.

Rinderpest has played such havoc with the buffalo that whereas a few years ago the Soudan, Somaliland, East Africa, the Semliki, the Albert Edward Plains, Mweru, the Chambesi, Nyassaland, Rhodesia, and Portuguese East Africa were literally black with the herds; now a very few isolated lots only survive, except in one portion of the Portuguese coast where they are still numerous. Unfortunately it killed off nearly all the cows, who run in herds, and it was only the solitary and useless old bulls who escaped; this will render recuperation almost impossible. Thus at one fell swoop, one of the grandest, gamest, and most useful of the African beasts was almost swept out of existence. I found the ·303 with Dum-dums quite sufficient for these massive beasts, but a good stopping rifle is a *sine quâ non*. The greatest care must be exercised in following up wounded beasts in cover. But I have never personally known of an unwounded buffalo being aggressive. Men who have shot large numbers have told me the same thing, so that I am inclined to think that the numerous tales of unprovoked aggressiveness may in the main be attributed to the habit that I have mentioned in the beginning of this chapter. If a buffalo does charge and there is anywhere to run to, such as a tree or ant-hill, I should say fire at once and run, and run hard. Of course if one is on a large plain, the only thing to do is to stand up to the brute, but one ought never in such cases to go near enough to provoke a charge.

It is very seldom that the largest bulls carry the best heads.

Rhinoceros.

I consider the rhinoceros an over-rated beast, and cannot think that he can be really dangerous in any but thick country. He certainly will charge unprovoked at times, but it is only a blundering resentment at the unwelcome scent of the intruder. A shot at close quarters will almost invariably turn him. I have seen a large number, although I have only shot half-a-dozen, but have never been charged by one. When I was hunting with Cape near Wadelai, he amused himself (at least I hope he

did, as he did not amuse me) by endeavouring to induce those that we saw to charge, but failed, with the exception of one old lady who blundered at him when disturbed in her siesta.

Acclimatization.

There is still a wide but rapidly decreasing scope for the experiments of acclimatization, and the application of such beasts as buffalo and zebra to domestic purposes. Large herds of zebra are still common in many parts of the country, and though the rinderpest has practically annihilated the buffalo, there is a tract of coast-line between the Pungwe and the Zambesi where they are still plentiful. Here I rejoice to say an effort is being made by the invincible pioneer, Mr. Lawley of Beira railway fame, who has at last succeeded in inducing the Portuguese to restrain the promiscuous shooting of years past, and having obtained the grant of a piece of land near the railway and in the buffalo country, is constructing an enclosure with the idea of driving the buffalo in on the Indian principle of catching elephant. Success will open up all the hitherto worthless fly country.

But besides these transport animals, there are many of the antelope and different kinds of buck which would thrive in countries like America and New Zealand. In the North Island of New Zealand especially, there are hundreds of miles of country which would hold thousands of head of game; reedbuck, bushbuck (especially), sable, waterbuck, eland, and numerous other kinds, would find the country admirably suited to their wants; and in the absence of lions, hyænas, Boers, and niggers, they would increase as rapidly as the red deer has done. A few thousands spent in importing these animals would be a better investment for the New Zealand Government than some of its harebrained schemes for providing for the indigent at the expense of the successful. For this attraction, added to its fishing, and its natural advantages of inimitable scenery and climate, would make the Britain of the South in twenty years, with their increased rapidity of access, the tourist resort of half the civilized globe.

The bushbuck is especially adapted to the purpose. It is a grand sporting little buck, which will not hesitate to charge home when wounded; its flesh is excellent, and its hide, both for beauty and strength, second to none. Those bush-clad ravines so common all over New Zealand, and useless for agricultural purposes, are the very beau-ideal of bushbuck cover. And above all, it is very easy to procure living specimens, as they are still common in Natal, where they are carefully preserved, while its retiring habits and the country it affects would ensure its rapid increase.

Once give it a good footing in that glorious New Zealand bush, and in twenty years there would be thousands. There are so many true sportsmen in the country, many of them having large estates where they could ensure its protection, that I feel certain there would be no difficulty in raising the necessary sum, if the Acclimatization Society, which has already done such invaluable work in introducing the trout and red deer, would take the lead.

A CONTRAST: THE SOUDAN AND UGANDA.