

THE UGANDA PROTECTORATE

AN ATTEMPT TO GIVE SOME DESCRIPTION OF THE PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY, BOTANY, ZOOLOGY, ANTHROPOLOGY, LANGUAGES AND HISTORY OF THE TERRITORIES UNDER BRITISH PROTECTION IN EAST CENTRAL AFRICA, BETWEEN THE CONGO FREE STATE AND THE RIFT VALLEY AND BETWEEN THE FIRST DEGREE OF SOUTH LATITUDE AND THE FIFTH DEGREE OF NORTH LATITUDE

BY

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etc., etc.*

IN TWO VOLS.

WITH

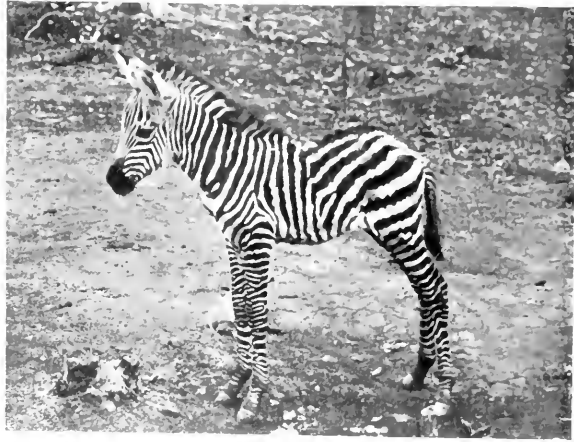
- 506 ILLUSTRATIONS FROM DRAWINGS AND PHOTOGRAPHS
BY THE AUTHOR AND OTHERS
48 FULL-PAGE COLOURED PLATES BY THE AUTHOR
AND
9 MAPS BY J. G. BARTHOLOMEW AND THE AUTHOR

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PATERNOSTER ROW

1902

creature wound its trunk round the neck of the bottle, tilted it up, and absorbed the contents. For several weeks the elephant thrived, and became a most delightful pet. It would allow any one to ride on its back, and seemed to take pleasure and amusement in this exercise. It would find its way through diverse passages into my sitting-room, not upsetting or injuring anything, but deftly smelling and examining objects of curiosity with its trunk.



228. A YOUNG ZEBRA

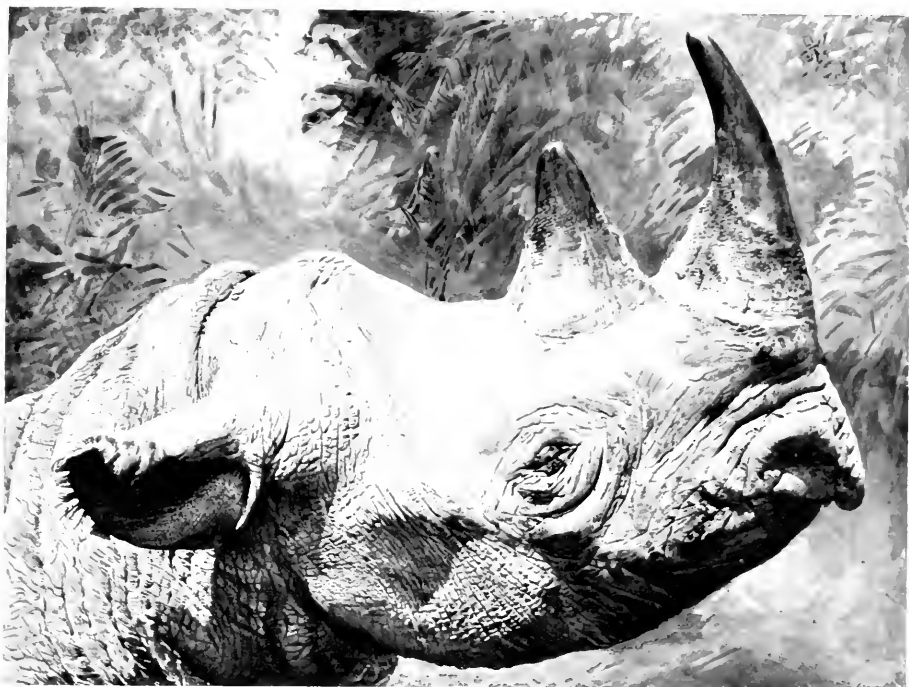
At the same time we had in captivity a young zebra, which was also to be the pioneer of a domesticated striped horse. These two orphans, the elephant and the zebra, became greatly attached to each other, though perhaps there was more enthusiastic affection on the part of the elephant, the zebra at times getting a little bored with constant embraces. Alas and alack! both elephant and zebra died eventually from the unwholesomeness, to them, of cows' milk. Several other elephants of the same age—that is to say, about four to six months old—were delivered into my hands, but all eventually died. Cows' milk appears to give these creatures eventually an incurable diarrhoea, while all attempts at that early age to substitute for milk farinaceous substances have also resulted in a similar disease. I do not say that it is impossible to rear young elephants by hand, for we have not made a sufficient number of experiments, but it is very difficult. I therefore favour the plan of attempting to catch elephants of perhaps a year old, at which age they do not require milk as an exclusive diet. One specimen of this age was caught, and was readily tamed, and for aught I know is still alive in captivity. As to young zebras, they must be reared with asses as their foster-mothers.

I am afraid that blustering creature, the rhinoceros, can be turned to no useful purpose in the future of Africa, but he is such a grotesque survival from the great mammalian epoch that he should be steadily preserved from extinction. The rhinoceros, however, is a handful, to use a colloquialism. All along the route of the Uganda Railway game is being carefully protected, with the agreeable result that antelopes, zebras, and ostriches graze close to the line, as fearless of man as if they were in an

English park. Much the same condition may be observed in parts of the Protectorate off the beaten track, where British sportsmen have not had an opportunity to harry and destroy. But in all these countries the rhinoceros is not tamed by this tolerance, but is apt to become a dangerous nuisance by charging at all and everything at a moment's notice when it is playful or out of temper. Thus amongst a people like the Masai it is much dreaded. The Masai do not eat—and therefore do not kill—game. They fear no wild beast but the rhinoceros, because all other creatures, if they are let alone, seem to experience, as a rule, no desire to attack human beings. The rhinoceros, however, makes absolutely unprovoked charges, and occasionally gores a man before he has time to get out of the way. Fortunately these huge beasts are very stupid and very blind. They probably can see little or nothing with any clearness that is ten yards away from them. They are guided entirely by their sense of smell, which, however, is extraordinarily keen. If the rhinoceros is out of temper, and gets wind of a human being or some other form of animated life, he will suddenly charge “up the wind.” Mr. Doggett once saw a male ostrich nearly felled and gored by a rhinoceros which was seized with a fit of unprovoked wrath. The ostrich was so completely taken aback at the charge that it only eluded the rhino's horn by a close shave. It is rare that the rhino deflects from this line of charge to the right or to the left; therefore, any one who is on his guard can jump aside and let this steam-engine of an animal plunge snorting on its reckless career. The rhinoceros, however, is often very timid, and so far as my small experience of its habits is concerned, rarely, if ever, charges the sportsman because it has been shot—unless, of course, the latter approaches imprudently close to a wounded animal. Rhinoceroses are seen in ones and twos, or at most there may be a bull, a cow, and a calf together. However abundant they are in a district, they never seem to go in herds, and more often than not are seen grazing apart from one another.

The rhinoceros of which a picture is here given is the ordinary pointed-lipped, black rhinoceros of Africa, which ranges, or used to range, from Cape Colony to Abyssinia and Nubia, and thence, perhaps, across Africa westward to Lake Chad and Eastern Nigeria. So far as I am aware, the rhinoceros has not been found to exist in Africa west of the Central Niger, if, indeed, it gets much farther west than Lake Chad.* This is curious, if true; because the other big beasts of the African fauna, though, like the rhinoceros, they mostly avoid the Congo and West African forests, stretch in their distribution right across Africa, from Abyssinia to Senegal.

* Rhinoceroses swarmed in the countries to the north of Lake Chad in the days of the Romans. This fact was reported by the exploring Roman expedition under Septimus Flaccus, sent south of Fezzan towards Lake Chad at about A.D. 10.

226. A MALE RHINOCEROS (*DICEROS BICORNIS*)

The two exceptions, however, to this rule seem to be the zebra and the rhinoceros. Not infrequently the East African rhinoceroses produce horns of extraordinary length. The record, I believe, is forty-seven inches for the front horn. I obtained from the north-eastern part of Uganda (Karamoja country) a horn measuring forty-three inches long. It is always said by the natives that these very long horns are grown by old females. I do not know whether this is true, but I only know in my own experience that I have never seen the head of a male pointed-lipped rhinoceros bearing an exceedingly long front horn, though his front horn is always thicker and larger at the base than it is in the female. Female horns are not only long, but slender, and sometimes the extremity is a little thicker than the diameter of the horn lower down—that is to say, the long front horn, instead of tapering to a point, becomes very slender, and then expands into a spatulate tip. It is difficult to see of what use this very attenuated horn can be, as it looks too slender to be of much use as a weapon of offence with such a heavy mass behind it. I am inclined to believe that all these very long horns coming from the Uganda Protectorate belong to the (miscalled) white rhinoceros, the rhinoceros

with the square-cut, non-prehensile upper lip. The existence of the square-lipped rhinoceros in the Nile Province of the Uganda Protectorate is now proved. The animal is probably found eastwards as far as the vicinity of Lake Rudolf, and also in the Western Province of Uganda, in Buddu, and Karagwe. Speke and Stanley both shot "white" rhinoceroses in Karagwe and Ankole in the 'sixties and 'seventies.

As already mentioned, the horse tribe in Uganda is represented by the



230. YOUNG GRANT'S ZEBRA, UGANDA

Nubian wild ass in the north and north-east, Grevy's zebra in the north-east and east, and Grant's zebra everywhere except in forest.

The common hippopotamus is still found in every river with water enough to cover his recumbent body, and in nearly every lake or marsh in the Uganda Protectorate. The animal is very dangerous to navigation at the north end of Lake Albert and on the Upper Nile. He is consequently not much protected by the Game Regulations (purposely), as there is no immediate danger of his becoming extinct; for in the vast marshes of Kioga and Kwanya he will long be preserved from the white man's rifle, and will be out of the way of steamer routes. I have noticed among the hippopotamuses of the Victoria Nyanza a marked development

of white bifurcated bristles on the muzzle. It is the last vestige of the hair which once covered this animal's body before it took so markedly to an aquatic existence. It is just possible that the natives' stories of a huge pig in the Semliki forests may point to the extension of the range of the Liberian or pygmy hippopotamus (a forest-loving animal) right across through the forest zone from the west coast of Africa to the Semliki River. The Belgians state that there is a very small hippopotamus in the south-western part of the Congo Free State.

As regards the pig family, that group of artiodactyles is represented in the Uganda Protectorate by the Ethiopian wart-hog in the west and centre and south-east, and by the Elian's wart-hog in the north-east; also by the bush-pigs, or river-hogs. Of these there are the common East African species, which is widely distributed throughout the Protectorate, and the red river-hog of West Africa, which is found in the Semliki Forest.

It may be of interest to mention that the camel as a domestic animal has penetrated into the Rudolf and Nile Provinces of the Uganda Protectorate, though this creature in pre-historic times was once found in Algeria and Arabia. There is nothing to show that it was ever indigenous to tropical Africa.

The giraffe is found at the present day in the Eastern Province of the Uganda Protectorate, in the northern part of the Central Province, and in the districts east of the Nile. So far as I know, in the north and south-east of the Protectorate the species or variety of giraffe is that known as the northern or three-horned, the ordinary form of giraffe which is found right across the Sudan from Abyssinia to Senegambia. (In the Niger and Benue districts it is replaced by a distinct and very tall species, *Giraffa peralta*.) But in the north-eastern part of the Protectorate, about Lake Baringo and Mount Elgon, the male giraffes possess five horn-bumps or ancient horn-cores. I first heard of this peculiarity from a Goanese ivory-trader; but as he had no specimen to show me, I did not attach much importance to his remarks. In the month of May, 1901, we were returning from a journey round Mount Elgon, and for the first time in the Uganda Protectorate I found myself among large herds of giraffe. I was anxious to secure good specimens for the British Museum. Mr. Doggett and myself therefore shot two males and two females. I was surprised to notice that each of the males had five horn-bumps,* the females being restricted to three. The four heads thus procured are now in the British Museum at South Kensington. I give here a photograph of a male five-horned giraffe as it lay on the ground just after

* The two extra "horns" are two parallel bumps or knobs rising from the ridge at the base of the skull, close to the first vertebra. They are occipital as compared with already existing parietal and frontal protuberances.



334. YOUNG MALE OF FIVE-HORNED GIRAFFE