

# BIG GAME HUNTING IN AFRICA AND OTHER LANDS

The appearance, habits, traits of character, and every  
detail of

WILD ANIMAL LIFE

with

Thrilling, Exciting, Daring and Danger-  
ous Exploits of

Hunters of Big Game  
in Wildest Africa

and other parts of the World

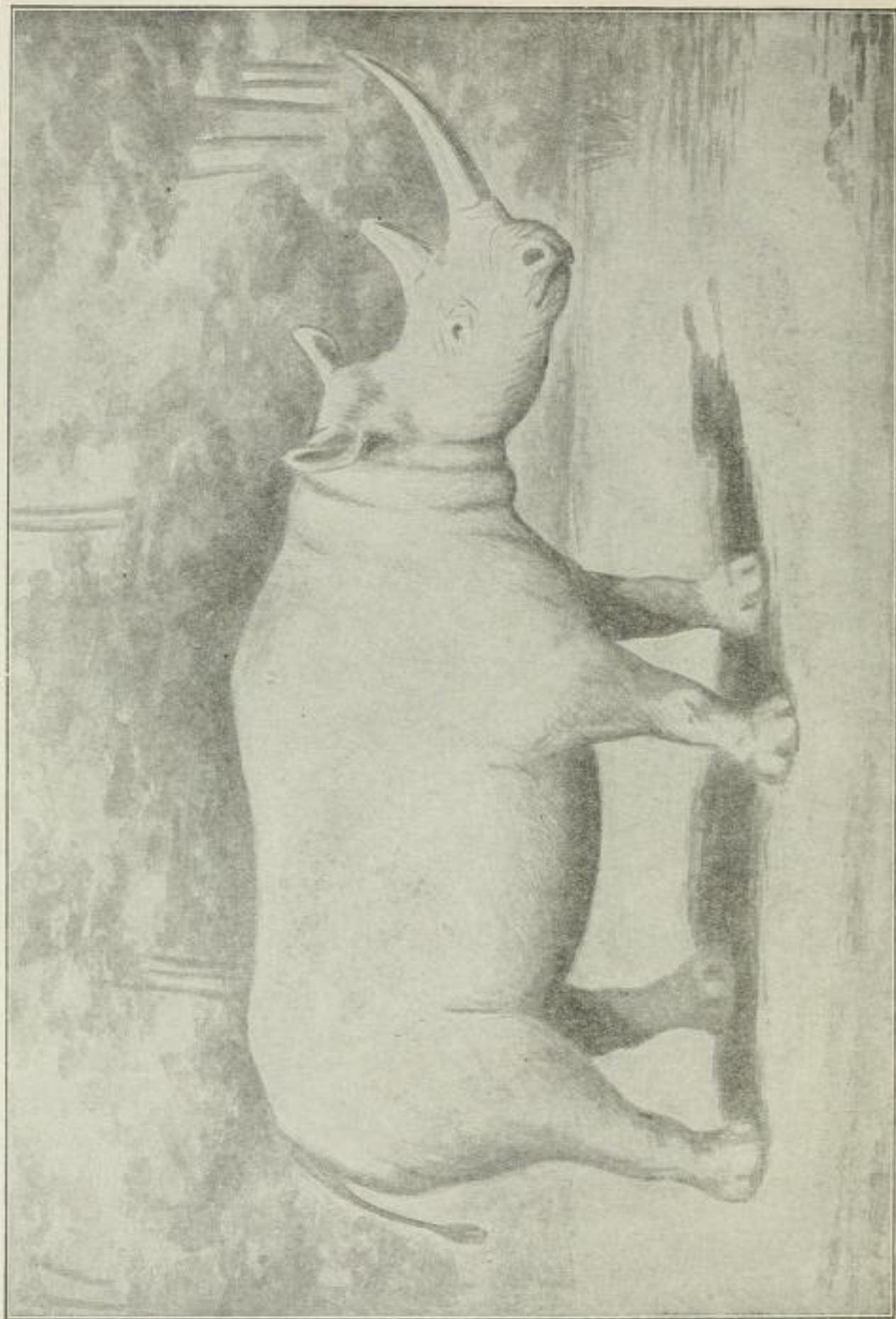
By

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*Noted Author and Traveler* *Renowned Hunter and Naturalist*

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of wild animals taken in their native African homes



THE GREAT TWO-HORNED WHITE RHINOCEROS IN CENTRAL AFRICA



L75



SHOOTING A BULL RHINOCEROS ON THE AFRICAN VELD.

secondly, (perhaps) because he holds the latter responsible for being brought to bay. And when once shot, if the wound is not through heart or brain, the beast advances, increasing its pace with the reception of each additional bullet. The last thirty or forty yards is covered like a whirlwind—the swiftest thing on earth—and the momentum sometimes carries the great brute right to the feet of the hunter with a bullet through the heart.

### BLIND CHARGE OF THE BLACK RHINOCEROS.

On at least two different occasions Mr. Roosevelt dropped his lion as the beast was making one of its whirlwind charges, and upon one occasion saved the life of his pony man. He also experienced the almost equally terrific charge of the black rhinoceros—about as resistless, but shorn of some of its dangers from the fact that the rhino's sight is so bad; his charge is therefore literally blind. He gets the "tainted air" of some human "vermin" and forthwith lowers his ugly head and horns and charges in the direction of the obnoxious thing, whether it be a hunter's safari, a body of Masai warriors or a company of the King's African Rifles. Everything and everybody scatters before the awful brute, who blunders through the wreck, right on, seldom returning to the same attack. The rhinoceros loves to lurk in dark jungles, or forests, and no other of the big beasts is so given to charging with less provocation than he; among them all he seems the most "possessed of the devil." The white rhinoceros is a most rare animal, as compared with his black brother of East Africa, and few of this species have been shot within recent years. One of the lucky hunters to bring a white rhino to his game bag was Captain Richard Dawson, of the British Coldstream Guards, who made the shooting in July, 1909, in the Sotik district, northwest of Kijabe, where the Roosevelt party was operating at the same time, hoping especially for similar good fortune.

### TERRIFIC ONSLAUGHT OF THE BUFFALO.

As the rhino's sense of smell is remarkably acute, so is the buffalo's sense of hearing, as well as his eyesight. He selects more awful places in which to hide and quietly listen than does the rhino to dilate his nostrils for "tainted air." He hides in great papyrus swamps, jungles of elephant grass or dense forests. The lone bull buffalo is a terrible animal and often charges without provocation, and will often hunt the



hunter, coming upon him unawares and tossing him into eternity. A wounded buffalo has a nasty trick of appearing to run away as if panic-stricken; then, after dashing away for a mile or so, well out of sight, circling round and returning to the trail. Then hiding in the high grass or forest, he patiently awaits the coming of the hunter in the hope of charging him unawares. As his vitality equals his cunning, and both are backed by an awful strength, the buffalo is considered, next to the lion, the most dangerous of the big beasts.

### SABLE ANTELOPE.

The sable antelope is mentioned here because, albeit not of large size among his kind, he is one of the most dangerous. He has long spear-like horns and is usually hunted with a pack of dogs. A herd of sable antelope when finally brought to bay is certainly a noble sight, and after the first encounter their pursuers are careful indeed of the distance they keep between their bodies and those death-dealing horns. In spite of their nimbleness more than one good dog is usually impaled in a hunt, and the sportsman himself has even met death by coming in too close. The sable antelope is smaller than the roan and his coloring is different, though the shape of the body is quite similar in the two species.

### HARTBEESTS AND GNUS (WILDBEESTS).

Perhaps of all the soft-skinned beasts of big caliber in Africa the hartbeests and gnus are the hardest to kill. The wildbeests are not so difficult to stalk, but their vitality and staying qualities are something phenomenal. When sound they will invariably outrun a horse, and even when shot through the lungs they have been known to gallop out of sight.

The hartbeests are a species of antelope named "hard beasts" by the Dutch, who had the first long experience with them in South Africa. The British often varied their christening by calling them "nasty beasts"; and all because the creatures posted their sentries in such a wonderful manner that it was almost impossible to get within fair shooting distance of a herd. The three varieties common to British East Africa are Jackson's, Coke's and Neumann's. They are all of a rich fawn color of varied shades and also vary somewhat in the shape and size of the horns, Jackson's hartbeest carrying the heaviest and longest.



# HUNTING THE RHINOCEROS

Colonel Roosevelt Reported Killed by a Rhinoceros—Exciting Fight with This Ferocious Beast—The Natives Praise Bwana Tumbo—Interesting Facts About the Rhinoceros.

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Early in November the telegraph wires flashed the exciting news to all parts of the civilized world that Colonel Roosevelt, the now famous game slayer, had been killed by a rhinoceros while hunting on the Guas Inghishu Plateau in the Kisumu province of British East Africa. It is known that the rhinoceros hunt is a dangerous pastime and that scores of European sportsmen have lost their lives in pursuing this ferocious brute. No wonder, then, if all Mr. Roosevelt's friends felt uneasy when this story reached them. Mrs. Roosevelt received the news, and notwithstanding the unlikelihood of the truth of the report and successive denials, she spent several days and nights of intense anxiety, scarcely closing her eyes and saying over and over again, "It is not true; I do not believe it."

But at the next moment she was imagining all kinds of horrors and feeling that she could not be tranquil until she really heard from her husband directly.

Meanwhile neither the Colonial office in London nor the State Department at Washington, nor the Smithsonian Institution, where inquiries were made, had got any information about the rumored accident. Messages were dispatched to the telegraph nearest the hunting party, and at last the following reassuring news was received over the transatlantic cable from the British commissioner at Eldama: "Roosevelt was in excellent health October 23 and news of the party received October 30 reported all well. If anyone in the party is sick we, the nearest medical help, have received no news of such sickness."

While this story, which probably had been let out by New York financiers, was setting the whole world afire, the Colonel was beating the bush in the Eldama ravine in search of bergo, a rare specimen of antelope, which no white man ever has bagged, and as one of his black-skinned beaters put it, "No rhino get Bwana Tumbo," adding with a broad grin: "Bwana Tumbo get rhino quicker."

Nevertheless the rumor might have been true, for the two-horned rhinoceros of East Africa is a most dangerous beast. The Colonel has bagged



several of these gigantic survivors of time past. One large bull fell by a missile from his Winchester barrel in the vicinity of Machakos, while hunting on the Kapiti Plains. The party was beating the bush for lions, when suddenly a colossal rhino was discovered on the plains. Standing like a huge rock on the "velt," his unshapely form throwing an uncanny shadow over the grass, which he was devouring, he was a tempting quarry to our bold sportsman. The monstrous outlines of the great beast stood out most strikingly in the red glow of the scorching tropical sun. As though moved by a sudden impulse he swung round and stood for a moment motionless, as though carved in stone, its head well raised, so that the two formidable horns almost pressed against the back of its massive neck and swerved towards the Colonel. There is something peculiarly awe-inspiring and menacing about these weapons of the rhinoceros. Not that they really make him a more dangerous customer for the sportsman to tackle, but they certainly give that impression. The thought of being impaled, run through, by that ferocious dagger was by no means pleasant to our former President.

There was not much time for reflection, however, for an instant later the big bull came for him full pelt, spitting and snorting and thundering down in its unwieldy fashion, but at an incredible pace. For a moment the Colonel's life hung by a thread. Nothing could save him but a well-aimed bullet. And this time the bullet found its billet. It came straight from the ex-presidential rifle and penetrated the neck of the on-rushing beast—a bull of unusual size which, tumbling head foremost, just like a rabbit, dropped dead almost at the proud hunter's feet.

To see the rhinoceros grazing or resting in the midst of the bare "velt" or to stalk them all by himself or with a native follower to carry a rifle for him was as fascinating an experience as Mr. Roosevelt could desire. At the same time it is one of the most dangerous forms of modern sport. An English writer remarks with truth that even the bravest man cannot always control his senses on such occasions—that he is apt to get dazed and giddy. He knows that the slightest unsteadiness of his hand may mean his destruction. He has to advance a long distance on all fours, or else wiggle along on his stomach like a serpent, making the utmost use of whatever cover offers, and keeping note all the time of the direction of the wind, as the animal's scent is acute. He has to keep on his guard all the time against poisonous snakes and he has to turn to his hunter's instincts as to how near he must get to his game before he fires. A distance of more than a hundred paces is very hazardous—above all, if the hunter wants to kill outright.





Photograph, Underwood.

## EAST AFRICAN BULL RHINOCEROS.

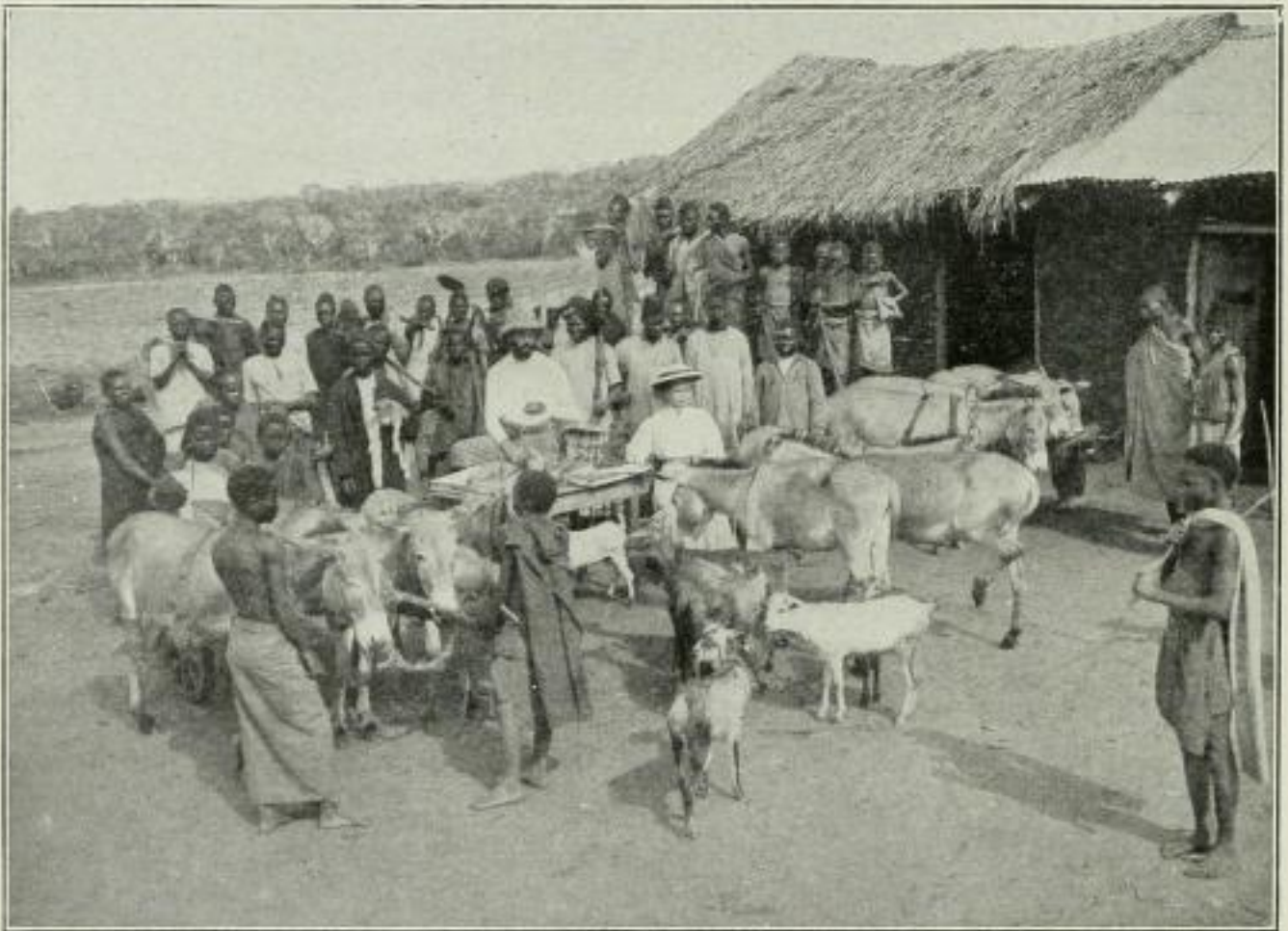
One of our illustrations is a photographic reproduction of a huge bull-rhinoceros killed in British East Africa. Its largest horn measures  $53\frac{1}{2}$  inches in length. A formidable sight indeed!

There are many ways in which a hunter may be surprised by a rhinoceros, says a famous American sportsman. As he was penetrating the high grass of the "velt" he suddenly perceived, fifty paces in front of him, a huge dark object—a rhinoceros. It had not become aware of him yet, nor of the peril awaiting it. It got up and turned right in his direction. There was no going either forward or backwards for him. The grass encumbered his legs, the old growth mingling with the new into an inextricable tangle. The moment was full of excitement. He tried cautiously to retreat, but his feet were entangled and he slipped. Instantly he jumped up again. The rhinoceros had heard the noise of his fall and was making a rush for him. It was not easy to aim effectively, but he fired. The ringing notes of his rifle rang out like a bird in the air and the next instant he saw the huge beast disappearing over the undulating plain, the bullet having struck one of his horns and been turned aside, startling the rhino and causing him to abandon his intended charge.

Another striking encounter with a rhinoceros is thus described by the same traveler and sportsman.



"Deep-trodden paths led down to the waterside. We follow them through the brushwood, I leading the way, and thus reach the stream. The rush and the roar of the river resounds in our ears, and we catch the notes, too, of birds. Suddenly right in front of me the ground seems to quicken into life. My first notion is that it must be a gigantic crocodile; but no, it is a rhinoceros which has just been bathing, and which now, disturbed, is glancing in our direction and about to attack us or take to its heels, who can say? Escape seems impossible. Clasp my rifle I plunge back into the dense brush-wood. But the tough viscous branches project me forward again. Now for it. The rhinoceros is 'coming for us.' We tumble about in all directions. Some seconds later we exchange stupefied glances. The animal has fled past us, just grazing us and bespattering us with mud, and has disappeared from sight. How small we felt at that moment I cannot express!"



From photograph.

EAST AFRICAN RUBBER FARM.

One of Col. Roosevelt's most extended hunting expeditions in the Sotik District and around the beautiful volcanic Naivasha lake was undertaken to



give him an opportunity to acquire a white rhinoceros for the National Museum. This variety is very rare and the former President was very anxious to secure a specimen before they are totally extinct. This district is dotted with small and large farms where many Boer and German farmers have settled down peacefully side by side of the English residents. The Colonel visited several of the planters and was hospitably entertained in their homes. He found that most of these settlers had erected comfortable houses of stone or wood covered with solid thatch roofs, which offered an excellent protection against the scorching rays of the equatorial sun. He often partook of their frugal meals, and informed himself about their condition and occupations. Not a few of them he found engaged in raising the rubber tree, which thrives exceedingly well in this hot climate. One of our illustrations shows one of these rubber plantations established by a German couple with their native help. This country is slowly being colonized by French, Portuguese, Belgians, Germans, Boers and English and almost every nationality on the earth, and it is only a question of time when it will be a white man's country, the natives existing only in the backwoods and on government reservations, as our American Indians.

The rhinoceros is favorite game both in India and Africa. It has a ferocious disposition and is hard to kill. The easiest and least dangerous method is for the hunter to conceal himself and shoot it when it comes to drink at the pool. The true sportsman prefers to hunt it on horseback with dogs.

As the eyes of the rhinoceros are very small, it seldom turns its head and therefore sees nothing but what is before it. It is to this that it owes its death, and never escapes if there be so much plain as to enable the horses of the hunters to get before it. Its pride and fury then makes it lay aside all thoughts of escaping, except by victory over its enemy. For a moment it stands at bay; then at a start runs straight forward at the horse which is nearest. The rider easily avoids the attack by turning short to one side. This is the fatal instant; a naked man who is mounted behind the principal horseman, drops off the horse, and, unseen by the rhinoceros, gives it, with a sword, a stroke across the tendon of the heel, which renders it incapable either of flight or resistance.

Several travelers have mentioned that there are certain birds which constantly attend the rhinoceros, and give him warning of approaching danger. Their accounts were either received with silent contempt, or treated with



open ridicule, as preposterous extensions of the traveler's privilege of romancing. I can bear witness to the truth of these reports. Once while hunting the rhinoceros in Africa, I saw a huge female lying in the jungle asleep. My first thought was to photograph her and then attack her. I began to crawl toward her, but before I could reach the proper distance several rhinoceros-birds, by which she was attended, warned her of the impending danger, by sticking their bills into her ear, and uttering their harsh, grating cry. Thus aroused, she suddenly sprang to her feet, and crashed away through the jungle at a rapid trot, and I saw no more of her.

These rhinoceros-birds are constant attendants upon the hippopotamus and the four varieties of rhinoceros, their object being to feed upon the ticks and other parasitic insects that swarm upon these animals. They are of a grayish color, and are nearly as large as a common thrush; their voice is very similar to that of the mistletoe-thrush. Many a time have these ever-watchful birds disappointed me in my stalk, and tempted me to invoke an anathema upon their devoted heads. They are the best friends the rhinoceros has, and rarely fail to awaken him, even in his soundest nap. "Chukuroo" perfectly understands their warning, and springing to his feet, he generally first looks about him in every direction, after which he invariably makes of.

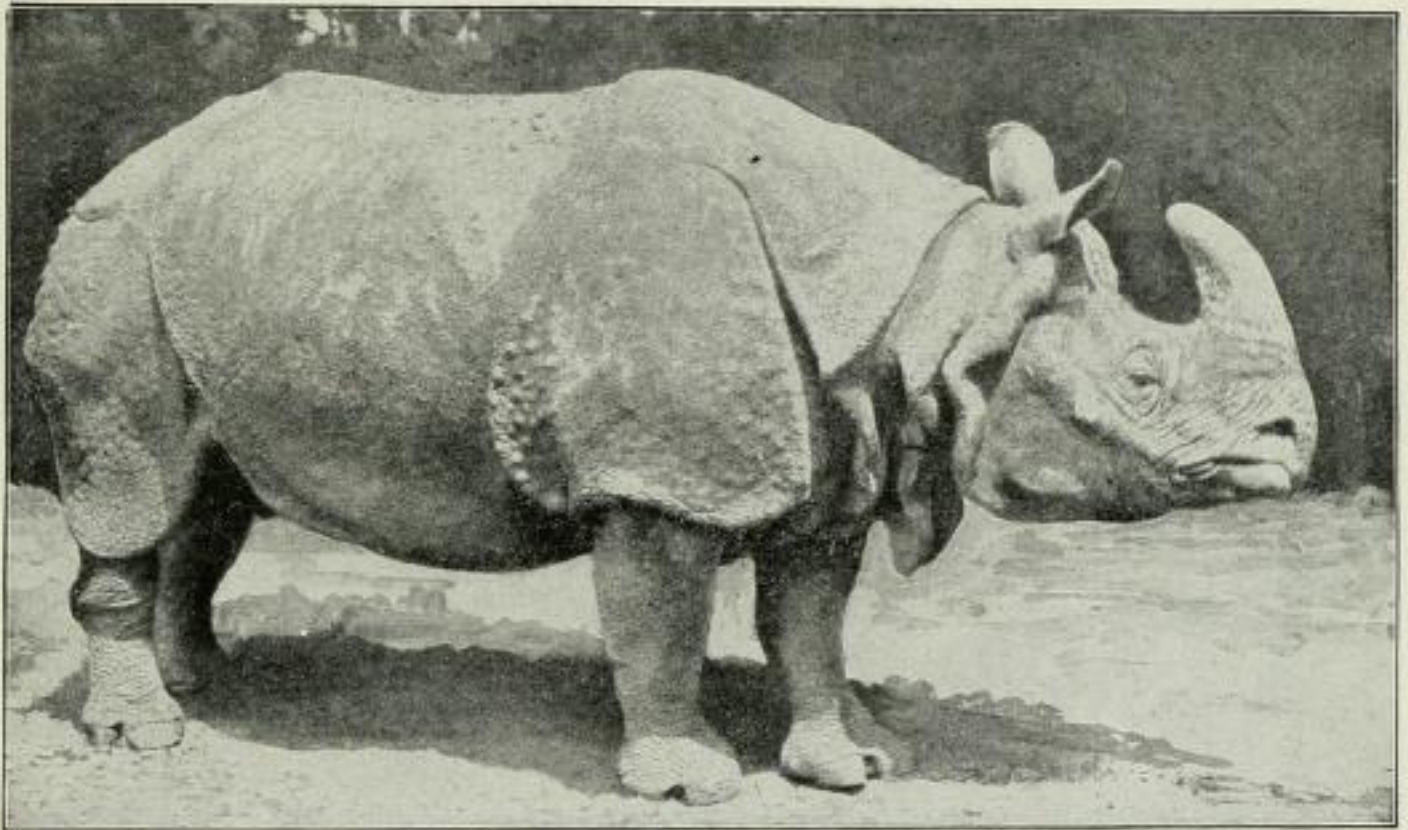
Next to the elephant in size, comes the rhinoceros, which with the hippopotamus, lays claim to bulk and ferocity unequalled by any other member of the animal kingdom. The rhinoceros is found in the rivers of Central Africa and Southern Asia. It can only live in tropical climates.

The length of the rhinoceros is usually about twelve feet, and this is also nearly the girth of its body. The skin, which is of a blackish color, is disposed, about the neck, into large plaits or folds. A fold of the same kind passes from the shoulders to the fore legs; another from the hind part of the back to the thighs. The skin is naked, rough, and covered with a kind of tubercles, or large callous granulations. Between the folds, and under the belly, it is soft, and of a light rose-color. The horns are composed of a closely-packed mass of horn fibers, growing from the skin, and having no connection with the bones of the skull, although there are prominences on the latter beneath each horn. Although the African species are entirely dependent on their enormous horns, as weapons of offense and defense, the Asiatic kinds, in which the horns are smaller, seem to rely chiefly upon their sharply-pointed lower tusks, which are capable of inflicting



terrific gashes. All are mainly abroad at night, and while some resemble the tapirs in frequenting tall grass-jungles and swampy districts, others seem to prefer more or less open plains. Their food is entirely vegetable; but whereas some species live almost exclusively on grass, the food of others consists mainly of twigs and small boughs of trees. At the present day these animals are restricted to South-Eastern Asia and Africa.

The single-horned rhinoceros is not exceeded in size by any land animal except the elephant, and in strength and power it gives place to none. Its nose is armed with a formidable weapon, a hard and solid horn, some-



GREAT INDIAN RHINOCEROS.

times more than three feet in length, and, at the base, eighteen inches in circumference; and with this it is able to defend itself against the attack of every ferocious animal.

The body of the rhinoceros is defended by a skin so hard as to be almost impenetrable, except in the under parts, by either knife or spear.

Some hunters have created the impression that the hide of the rhinoceros will turn a leaden bullet and sometimes an iron one. This is a popular error, for a common leaden ball will pierce the hide at a distance of thirty or forty paces, especially if a double charge of powder be used, which is the



custom with all rhinoceros hunters. The most deadly aim is just behind the shoulder. The skull is too thick and the brain pan too small for a successful shot at the head.

I once had an excellent opportunity to observe the fighting quality of the rhinoceros in conflict with other animals. It was in the province of Oude. I had become separated from my men and had lost my bearings. Night overtook me, and I decided to camp on the banks of a lagoon beneath



INDIAN RHINOCEROS FIGHTING AN ELEPHANT.

a huge peepul tree. How long I had slept, I know not, but the moon was almost perpendicular when I awoke, and it was as bright as day. A sudden harsh scream was the cause of my rousing up. I knew it well.

It was the trumpet of an elephant!

Instinctively I bounded to my feet, and looked around me in consternation. I was in the midst of a herd of wild elephants!

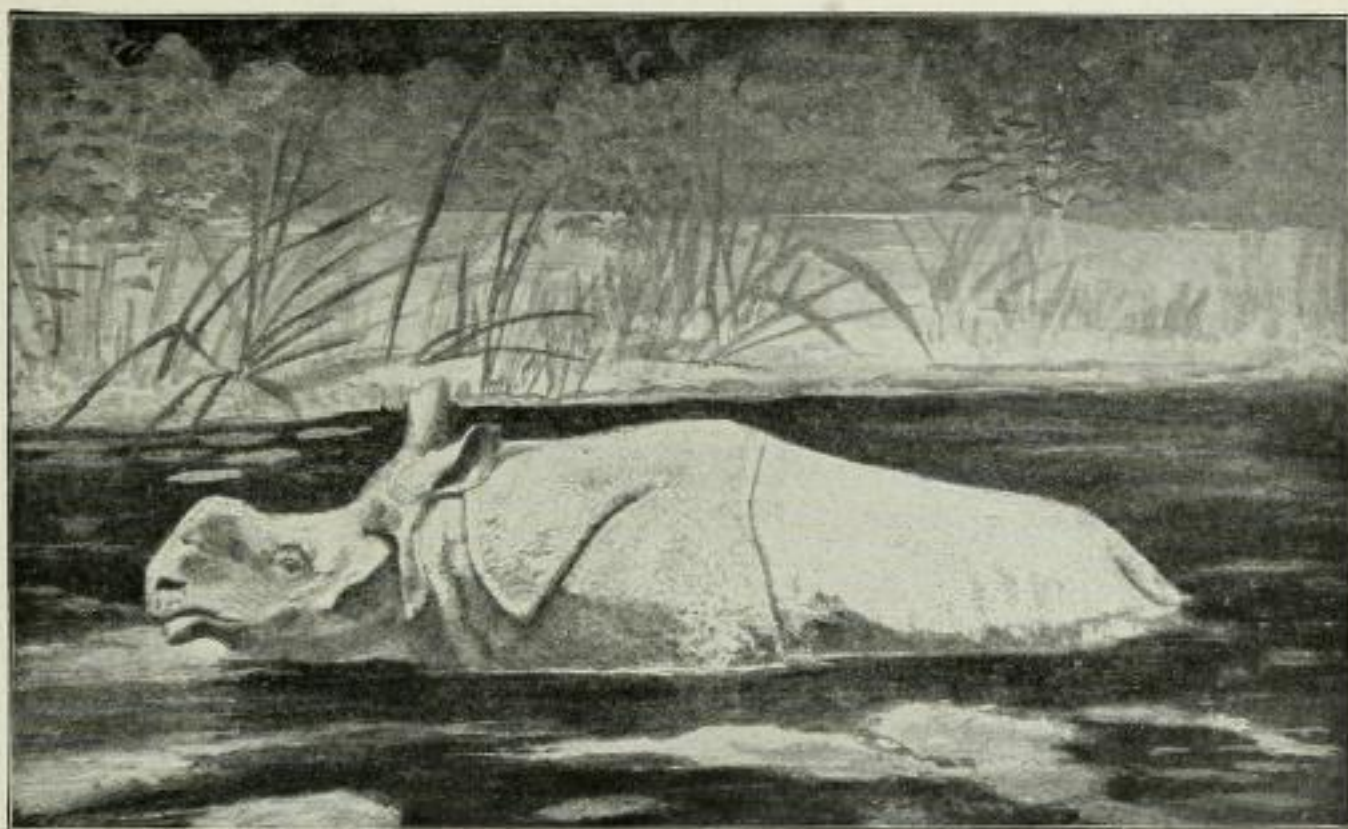
The danger of my position flashed on me in an instant. The wild



elephant is a dangerous brute at the best of times, but at night, and in herds, he tramples over everything, and feels more at home and free from danger than in the day, apparently.

But these elephants did not seem to be aware of my presence. They were evidently excited about something else, and had not observed me, asleep in the shadow of the peepul.

They were rushing about in the open ground, most of those I could see being females, as I knew by the absence of the tusks, and some sort



INDIAN RHINOCEROS AFTER SHEDDING ITS HORN.

of contest seemed to be going on among them. What it was, I could not see at first.

At last a chorus of trumpeting and vicious pig-like squeals broke out from the center of the moving mass, and I saw the female elephants scatter right and left in dismay.

Then I discerned a terrible conflict. A huge bull elephant rushed forward, with his trunk curled up tightly behind the long formidable tusks out of harm's way, striving to pierce a strange antagonist.

A long, low, uncouth-looking beast, of some five feet in height at the



shoulder, and shaped much like an immense hog, was running full tilt at the old elephant.

The short, upright horn on the snout, the contour of the animal, and the loose folds of skin that covered his ribs, proclaimed that most dangerous of all animals, the Indian rhinoceros.

If it had been alone, and I had met it, I should have counted myself lost, such is the sullen and vindictive nature of this horrible beast. It is the only animal known that will attack man habitually, wherever met, and all the other wild beasts of India fear and avoid it.

But for the present the attention of the rhinoceros was fully engaged. Besides the old bull now charging at him, another younger one was skulking around to take him in the rear, and a third lay close by, with his entrails gushing out of a frightful wound inflicted by the deadly horn. As I looked, the old bull elephant made his charge, that seemed as if it would carry everything before it.

But the rhinoceros, with surprising agility for a creature of such unwieldy appearance, leaped actively to one side, and, running around, tried hard to get in at the unprotected flank of the elephant. The latter as sharply threw his hind-quarters around, and received the pig-like brute on his tusks. But, deprived of the impetus of his charge, he was unable to pierce the tough hide of the rhinoceros, which is thick enough to turn a leaden bullet at close quarters.

Then the two stood head to head for some minutes, the rhinoceros striving to wriggle his way between the forelegs of the elephant, to use his horn with effect. The elephant, on his part, strove hard to pin the rhinoceros to the earth, but in vain.

Presently I noticed the second elephant. He was charging, and close to the rhinoceros. The latter saw him, too, and suddenly broke away from his first antagonist, rushing to meet the second. The young bull charged gallantly, but he was not up to the tricks of his wily adversary. The rhinoceros swerved, as he came, and the excited elephant missed his mark, lumbering past in vain effort. Not so the rhinoceros. As quick as thought he rushed in at the unguarded side of his heedless foe, and I could see him working away at the elephant's side, like a pig rooting. The elephant gave a hoarse roar of pain, and tried to turn, but the active rhinoceros was too quick for him, and he fell down, helpless and dying.

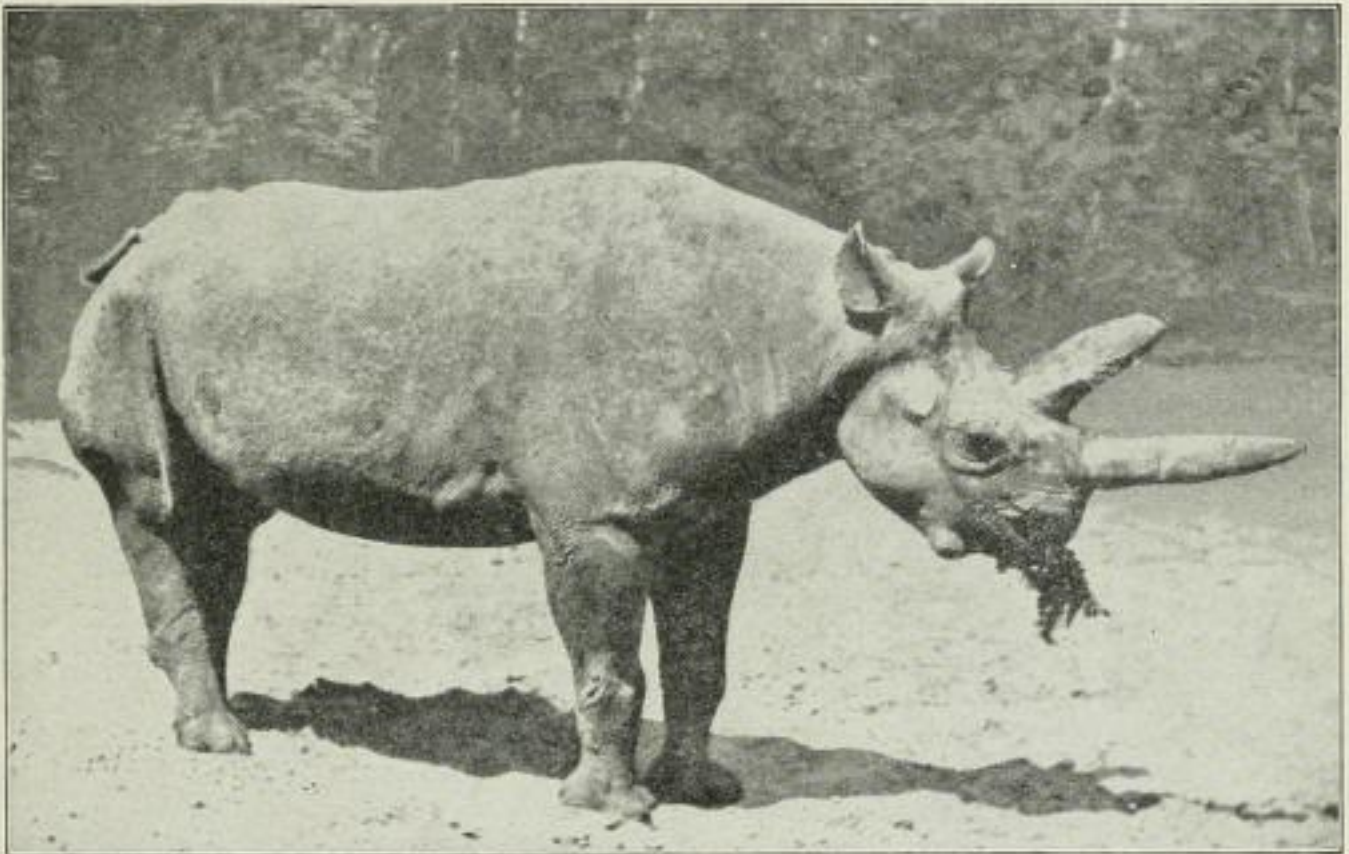
And now came the turn of the old bull. Cautious and wary, he watched his opportunity, and rushed at the rhinoceros from the side. The latter,

owing to his engagement with his other enemy, and his somewhat defective vision, did not see him till too late.

The great bull elephant thundered on like an avalanche, and in an instant more the terrible tusks, nearly seven feet in length in the clear, as I judged, were buried in the side of the redoubtable rhinoceros.

A shrill squeal of pain from the latter, and he tried in vain to extricate himself. The battle was over. He had slain two elephants, and died game himself.

I cannot tell you the absorbing interest with which I had watched this



TWO-HORNED AFRICAN RHINOCEROS.

curious conflict. True I was an unwilling spectator, for I did not dare to move out of the shadow of the tree, for fear of attracting notice. Now, however, an idea struck me.

Excited and furious as the old bull was, it was probable that the flush of his victory might make him tenfold more dangerous to me.

The battle had moved so close to me, during the vicissitudes of its varying fortune, that the last elephant, in his fall, had almost brushed the foliage of a bush I stood behind. My resolution was taken in an instant.



I must kill the old bull, or be killed myself almost inevitably. He was not ten feet from me, and striving to pull clear from the body of the rhinoceros, which he had pinned into the very ground.

I ran round the fallen elephant, and, before he could draw clear, I stood almost touching his temple with my rifle.

One flash! It was enough! Struck through the brain, the old bull dropped instantaneously, and I was safe!

The female elephants, panic-stricken at the noise and the flash, scattered in all directions in dismay.

In five minutes I was alone!

In Southeastern Africa both species of rhinoceros generally leave their lairs about four o'clock in the afternoon, or, in districts where there are many human beings, somewhat later. They commence feeding in the direction of their drinking places, to which they travel by regular beaten paths, and arrive at the same somewhere about dark. If the drinking place is a mudhole they frequently refresh themselves with a roll, after drinking their fill. They then start for their favorite thorn feeding grounds, where they remain till daybreak, when they generally again drink. At an earlier or later hour after this, the time being to some extent dependent on the freedom of the district from human intrusion, they retire to their sleeping places, which they reach at any rate before the heat of the day. The lair is always in an extremely sheltered and deeply-shaded spot, and so heavily do they slumber that a practiced stalker could almost touch them with the muzzle of a gun, unless they are awakened by the birds which always accompany them.