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AFRICAN GAME TRAILS

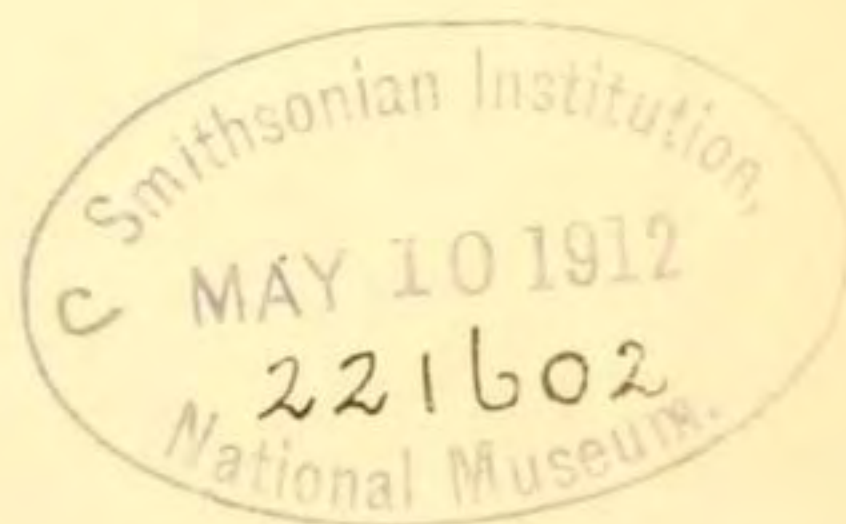
AN ACCOUNT OF THE AFRICAN
WANDERINGS OF AN AMERICAN
HUNTER-NATURALIST

BY THEODORE ROOSEVELT

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY KERMIT ROOSEVELT
AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE EXPEDITION, AND FROM
DRAWINGS BY PHILIP R. GOODWIN

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lack of which they despise as weakness. Any little change or excitement is a source of pleasure to them. When the march is over they sing; and after two or three days in camp they will not only sing, but dance when another march is to begin. Of course at times they suffer greatly from thirst and hunger and fatigue, and at times they will suddenly grow sullen or rebel without what seems to us any adequate cause; and they have an inconsequent type of mind which now and then leads them to commit follies all the more exasperating because they are against their own interest no less than against the interest of their employer. But they do well on the whole, and safari life is attractive to them. They are fed well; the government requires that they be fitted with suitable clothes and given small tents, so that they are better clad and sheltered than they would be otherwise; and their wages represent money which they could get in no other way. The safari represents a great advantage to the porter, who in his turn alone makes the safari possible.

When we were to march, camp was broken as early in the day as possible. Each man had his allotted task, and the tents, bedding, provisions, and all else were expeditiously made into suitable packages. Each porter is supposed to carry from fifty-five to sixty pounds, which may all be in one bundle or in two or three. The American flag, which flew over my tent, was a matter of much pride to the porters, and was always carried at the head or near the head of the line of march; and after it in single file came the long line of burden-bearers. As they started, some of them would blow on horns or whistles, and others beat little tom-toms; and at intervals this would be renewed again and again throughout the march; or the men might sud-

denly begin to chant, or merely to keep repeating in unison some one word or one phrase which, when we asked to have it translated, might or might not prove to be entirely meaningless. The headmen carried no burdens, and the tent-boys hardly anything, while the saises walked with the spare horses. In addition to the canonical and required costume of blouse or jersey and drawers, each porter wore a blanket, and usually something else to which his soul inclined. It might be an exceedingly shabby coat; it might be, of all things in the world, an umbrella, an article for which they had a special attachment. Often I would see a porter, who thought nothing whatever of walking for hours at mid-day under the equatorial sun with his head bare, trudging along with solemn pride either under an open umbrella, or carrying the umbrella (tied much like Mrs. Gamp's) in one hand, as a wand of dignity. Then their head-gear varied according to the fancy of the individual. Normally it was a red fez, a kind of cap only used in hot climates, and exquisitely designed to be useless therein because it gives absolutely no protection from the sun. But one would wear a skin cap; another would suddenly put one or more long feathers in his fez; and another, discarding the fez, would revert to some purely savage head-dress which he would wear with equal gravity whether it were, in our eyes, really decorative or merely comic. One such head-dress, for instance, consisted of the skin of the top of a zebra's head, with the two ears. Another was made of the skins of squirrels, with the tails both sticking up and hanging down. Another consisted of a bunch of feathers woven into the hair, which itself was pulled out into strings that were stiffened with clay. Another was really too intricate for description, because it included

the man's natural hair, some strips of skin, and an empty tin can.

If it were a long journey, and we broke it by a noon-day halt, or if it were a short journey, and we reached camp ahead of the safari, it was interesting to see the long file of men approach. Here and there, leading the porters, scattered through the line, or walking alongside, were the askaris, the rifle-bearing soldiers. They were not marksmen, to put it mildly, and I should not have regarded them as particularly efficient allies in a serious fight; but they were excellent for police duty in camp, and were also of use in preventing collisions with the natives. After the leading askaris might come one of the headmen; one of whom, by the way, looked exactly like a Semitic negro, and always travelled with a large dirty-white umbrella in one hand; while another, a tall, powerful fellow, was a mission boy who spoke good English. I mention his being a mission boy because it is so frequently asserted that mission boys never turn out well. Then would come the man with the flag, followed by another blowing on an antelope horn, or perhaps beating an empty can as a drum; and then the long line of men, some carrying their loads on their heads, others on their shoulders, others, in a very few cases, on their backs. As they approached the halting-place their spirits rose, the whistles and horns were blown, and the improvised drums beaten, and perhaps the whole line would burst into a chant.

On reaching the camping ground each man at once set about his allotted task, and the tents were quickly pitched and the camp put in order, while water and firewood were fetched. The tents were pitched in long lines, in the first of which stood my tent, flanked by those of the other white men and by the dining-tent.

In the next line were the cook tent, the provision tent, the store tent, the skinning tent, and the like; and then came the lines of small white tents for the porters. Between each row of tents was a broad street. In front of our own tents, in the first line, an askari was always pacing to and fro; and when night fell we would kindle a camp-fire and sit around it under the stars. Before each of the porters' tents was a little fire, and beside it stood the pots and pans in which the porters did their cooking. Here and there were larger fires, around which the gun-bearers or a group of askaris or of saises might gather. After nightfall the multitude of fires lit up the darkness and showed the tents in shadowy outline; and around them squatted the porters, their faces flickering from dusk to ruddy light, as they chatted together or suddenly started some snatch of wild African melody in which all their neighbours might join. After a while the talk and laughter and singing would gradually die away, and as we white men sat around our fire the silence would be unbroken except by the queer cry of a hyena, or much more rarely by a sound that always demanded attention—the yawning grunt of a questing lion.

If we wished to make an early start we would breakfast by dawn, and then we often returned to camp for lunch. Otherwise we would usually be absent all day, carrying our lunch with us. We might get in before sunset or we might be out till long after nightfall; and then the gleam of the lit fires was a welcome sight as we stumbled toward them through the darkness. Once in, each went to his tent to take a hot bath; and then, clean and refreshed, we sat down to a comfortable dinner, with game of some sort as the principal dish.

On the first march after leaving our lion camp at

Pooha I shot a wart-hog. It was a good-sized sow, which, in company with several of her half-grown offspring, was grazing near our line of march; there were some thorn-trees which gave a little cover, and I killed her at a hundred and eighty yards, using the Springfield, the lightest and handiest of all my rifles. Her flesh was good to eat, and the skin, as with all our specimens, was saved for the National Museum. I did not again have to shoot a sow, although I killed half-grown pigs for the table, and boars for specimens. This sow and her porkers were not rooting, but were grazing as if they had been antelope; her stomach contained nothing but chopped green grass. Wart-hogs are common throughout the country over which we hunted. They are hideous beasts, with strange protuberances on their cheeks; and when alarmed they trot or gallop away, holding the tail perfectly erect, with the tassel bent forward. Usually they are seen in family parties, but a big boar will often be alone. They often root up the ground, but the stomachs of those we shot were commonly filled with nothing but grass. If the weather is cloudy or wet they may be out all day long, but in hot, dry weather we generally found them abroad only in the morning and evening. A pig is always a comical animal; even more so than is the case with a bear, which also impresses one with a sense of grotesque humour—and this notwithstanding the fact that both boar and bear may be very formidable creatures. A wart-hog standing alertly at gaze, head and tail up, legs straddled out and ears cocked forward, is rather a figure of fun; and not the less so when, with characteristic suddenness, he bounces round with a grunt and scuttles madly off to safety. Wart-hogs are beasts of the bare plain or open forest, and though they will

often lie up in patches of brush, they do not care for thick timber.

After shooting the wart-hog we marched on to our camp at Bondoni. The gun-bearers were Mohammedans, and the dead pig was of no service to them; and at their request I walked out while camp was being pitched and shot them a buck; this I had to do now and then, but I always shot males, so as not to damage the species.

Next day we marched to the foot of Kilimakiu Mountain, near Captain Slatter's ostrich farm. Our route lay across bare plains, thickly covered with withered short grass. All around us as we marched were the game herds, zebras and hartebeests, gazelles of the two kinds, and now and then wildebeests. Hither and thither over the plain, crossing and recrossing, ran the dusty game trails, each with its myriad hoof-marks—the round hoof-prints of the zebra, the heart-shaped marks that showed where the hartebeest herd had trod, and the delicate etching that betrayed where the smaller antelope had passed. Occasionally we crossed the trails of the natives, worn deep in the hard soil by the countless thousands of bare or sandalled feet that had trodden them. Africa is a country of trails. Across the high veldt, in every direction, run the tangled trails of the multitudes of game that have lived thereon from time immemorial. The great beasts of the marsh and the forest made therein broad and muddy trails which often offer the only pathway by which a man can enter the sombre depths. In wet ground and dry alike are also found the trails of savage man. They lead from village to village and in places they stretch for hundreds of miles, where trading parties have worn them in the search for ivory, or in the old

days when raiding or purchasing slaves. The trails made by the men are made much as the beasts make theirs. They are generally longer and better defined, although I have seen hippo tracks more deeply marked than any made by savage man. But they are made simply by men following in one another's footsteps, and they are never quite straight. They bend now a little to one side, now a little to the other, and sudden loops mark the spot where some vanished obstacle once stood; around it the first trail makers went, and their successors have ever trodden in their footsteps, even though the need for so doing has long passed away.

Our camp at Kilimakiu was by a grove of shady trees, and from it at sunset we looked across the vast plain and saw the far-off mountains grow umber and purple as the light waned. Behind the camp and the farmhouse near which we were rose Kilimakiu Mountain, beautifully studded with groves of trees of many kinds. On its farther side lived a tribe of the Wakamba. Their chief, with all the leading men of his village, came in state to call upon me, and presented me with a fat, hairy sheep of the ordinary kind found in this part of Africa, where the sheep very wisely do not grow wool. The headman was dressed in khaki, and showed me with pride an official document which confirmed him in his position by direction of the government, and required him to perform various acts, chiefly in the way of preventing his tribes-people from committing robbery or murder, and of helping to stamp out cattle disease. Like all the Wakamba, they had flocks of goats and sheep, and herds of humped cattle; but they were much in need of meat, and hailed my advent. They were wild savages, with filed teeth, many of them stark naked, though some of them carried a blanket. Their

heads were curiously shaved, so that the hair-tufts stood out in odd patterns ; and they carried small bows, and arrows with poisoned heads.

The following morning I rode out with Captain Slatter. We kept among the hills. The long drought was still unbroken. The little pools were dry and their bottoms baked like iron, and there was not a drop in the watercourses. Part of the land was open, and part covered with a thin forest or bush of scattered mimosa-trees. In the open country were many zebras and hartebeests, and the latter were found even in the thin bush. In the morning we found a small herd of eland, at which, after some stalking, I got a long shot and missed. The eland is the largest of all the horned creatures that are called antelope, being quite as heavy as a fattened ox. The herd I approached consisted of a dozen individuals, two of them huge bulls, their coats having turned a slaty blue, their great dewlaps hanging down, and the legs looking almost too small for the massive bodies. The reddish-coloured cows were of far lighter build. Eland are beautiful creatures, and ought to be domesticated. As I crept toward them I was struck by their likeness to great clean, handsome cattle. They were grazing or resting, switching their long tails at the flies that hung in attendance upon them and lit on their flanks, just as if they were Jerseys in a field at home. My bullet fell short, their size causing me to underestimate the distance, and away they went at a run, one or two of the cows in the first hurry and confusion skipping clean over the backs of others that got in their way—a most unexpected example of agility in such large and ponderous animals. After a few hundred yards they settled down to the slashing trot which is their natural gait, and disappeared over the brow of a hill.

The morning was a blank, but early in the afternoon we saw the eland herd again. They were around a tree in an open space, and we could not get near them. But instead of going straight away they struck off to the right and described almost a semicircle, and though they were over four hundred yards distant, they were such big creatures and their gait was so steady that I felt warranted in shooting. On the dry plain I could mark where my bullets fell, and though I could not get a good chance at the bull, I finally downed a fine cow ; and by pacing I found it to be a little over a quarter of a mile from where I stood when shooting.

It was about nine miles from camp, and I dared not leave the eland alone, so I stationed one of the gun-bearers by the great carcass and sent a messenger in to Heller, on whom we depended for preserving the skins of the big game. Hardly had this been done when a Wakamba man came running up to tell us that there was a rhinoceros on the hill-side three-quarters of a mile away, and that he had left a companion to watch it while he carried us the news. Slatter and I immediately rode in the direction given, following our wild-looking guide ; the other gun-bearer trotting after us. In five minutes we had reached the opposite hill-crest, where the watcher stood, and he at once pointed out the rhino. The huge beast was standing in entirely open country, although there were a few scattered trees of no great size at some little distance from him. We left our horses in a dip of the ground and began the approach ; I cannot say that we stalked him, for the approach was too easy. The wind blew from him to us, and a rhino's eyesight is dull. Thirty yards from where he stood was a bush four or five feet high, and though it was so thin that we could distinctly see him

through the leaves, it shielded us from the vision of his small piglike eyes as we advanced toward it, stooping and in single file, I leading. The big beast stood like an uncouth statue, his hide black in the sunlight; he seemed what he was, a monster surviving over from the world's past, from the days when the beasts of the prime ran riot in their strength, before man grew so cunning of brain and hand as to master them. So little did he dream of our presence that when we were a hundred yards off he actually lay down.

Walking lightly, and with every sense keyed up, we at last reached the bush, and I pushed forward the safety catch of the double-barrelled Holland rifle which I was now to use for the first time on big game. As I stepped to one side of the bush so as to get a clear aim, with Slatter following, the rhino saw me and jumped to his feet with the agility of a polo pony. As he rose I put in the right barrel, the bullet going through both lungs. At the same moment he wheeled, the blood spouting from his nostrils, and galloped full on us. Before he could get quite all the way round in his headlong rush to reach us, I struck him with my left-hand barrel, the bullet entering between the neck and shoulder and piercing his heart. At the same instant Captain Slatter fired, his bullet entering the neck vertebrae. Ploughing up the ground with horn and feet, the great bull rhino, still head toward us, dropped just thirteen paces from where we stood.

This was a wicked charge, for the rhino meant mischief and came on with the utmost determination. It is not safe to generalize from a few instances. Judging from what I have since seen, I am inclined to believe that both lion and buffalo are more dangerous game than rhino, yet the first two rhinos I met both



Philip R. Goodwin.
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Drawn by Philip R. Goodwin from photographs, and from descriptions furnished by Mr. Roosevelt.

charged, whereas we killed our first four lions and first four buffaloes without any of them charging, though two of each were stopped as they were on the point of charging. Moreover, our experience with this bull rhino illustrates what I have already said as to one animal being more dangerous under certain conditions, and another more dangerous under different conditions. If it had been a lion instead of a rhino, my first bullet would, I believe, have knocked all the charge out of it, but the vitality of the huge pachyderm was so great, its mere bulk counted for so much, that even such a hard-hitting rifle as my double Holland—than which I do not believe there exists a better weapon for heavy game—could not stop it outright, although either of the wounds inflicted would have been fatal in a few seconds.

Leaving a couple of men with the dead rhino, to protect it from the Wakamba by day and the lions by night, we rode straight to camp, which we reached at sunset. It was necessary to get to work on the two dead beasts as soon as possible in order to be sure of preserving their skins. Heller was the man to be counted on for this task. He it was who handled all the skins, who, in other words, was making the expedition of permanent value so far as big game was concerned, and no work at any hour of the day or night ever came amiss to him. He had already trained eight Wakamba porters to act as skinners under his supervision. On hearing of our success, he at once said that we ought to march out to the game that night so as to get to work by daylight. Moreover, we were not comfortable at leaving only two men with each carcass, for lions were both bold and plentiful.

The moon rose at eight, and we started as soon as she was above the horizon. We did not take the

horses, because there was no water where we were going, and furthermore we did not like to expose them to a possible attack by lions. The march out by moonlight was good fun, for though I had been out all day, I had been riding, not walking, and so was not tired. A hundred porters went with us so as to enable us to do the work quickly and bring back to camp the skins and all the meat needed, and these porters carried water, food for breakfast, and what little was necessary for a one-night camp. We tramped along in single file under the moonlight, up and down the hills, and through the scattered thorn forest. Kermit and Medlicott went first, and struck such a pace that after an hour we had to halt them so as to let the tail end of the file of porters catch up. Then Captain Slatter and I set a more decorous pace, keeping the porters closed up in line behind us. In another hour we began to go down a long slope toward a pin-point of light in the distance, which we knew was the fire by the rhinoceros. The porters, like the big children they were, felt in high feather, and began to chant to an accompaniment of whistling and horn-blowing as we tramped through the dry grass which was flooded with silver by the moon, now high in the heavens.

As soon as we reached the rhino, Heller with his Wakamba skinners pushed forward the three-quarters of a mile to the eland, returning after midnight with the skin and all the best parts of the meat.

Around the dead rhino the scene was lit up both by the moon and by the flicker of the fires. The porters made their camp under a small tree a dozen rods to one side of the carcass, building a low circular fence of branches, on which they hung their bright-coloured blankets, two or three big fires blazing to keep off

possible lions. Half as far on the other side of the rhino a party of naked savages had established their camp, if camp it could be called, for really all they did was to squat down round a couple of fires with a few small bushes disposed round about. The rhino had been opened, and they had already taken out of the carcass what they regarded as titbits and what we certainly did not grudge them. Between the two camps lay the huge dead beast, his hide glistening in the moonlight. In each camp the men squatted around the fires chatting and laughing as they roasted strips of meat on long sticks, the fitful blaze playing over them, now leaving them in darkness, now bringing them out into a red relief. Our own tent was pitched under another tree a hundred yards off, and when I went to sleep, I could still hear the drumming and chanting of our feasting porters; the savages were less at ease, and their revel was quiet.

Early next morning I went back to camp, and soon after reaching there again started out for a hunt. In the afternoon I came on giraffes and got up near enough to shoot at them. But they are such enormous beasts that I thought them far nearer than they were. My bullet fell short, and they disappeared among the mimosas, at their strange leisurely-looking gallop. Of all the beasts in an African landscape none is more striking than the giraffe. Usually it is found in small parties or in herds of fifteen or twenty or more individuals. Although it will drink regularly if occasion offers, it is able to get along without water for months at a time, and frequents by choice the dry plains or else the stretches of open forest where the trees are scattered and ordinarily somewhat stunted. Like the rhinoceros—the ordinary or prehensile-lipped rhinoceros

—the giraffe is a browsing and not a grazing animal. The leaves, buds, and twigs of the mimosas or thorn-trees form its customary food. Its extraordinary height enables it to bring into play to the best possible advantage its noteworthy powers of vision, and no animal is harder to approach unseen. Again and again I have made it out a mile off, or rather have seen it a mile off when it was pointed out to me, and looking at it through my glasses, would see that it was gazing steadily at us. It is a striking-looking animal and handsome in its way, but its length of leg and neck and sloping back make it appear awkward even at rest. When alarmed it may go off at a long swinging pace or walk, but if really frightened it strikes into a peculiar gallop or canter. The tail is cocked and twisted, and the huge hind-legs are thrown forward well to the outside of the fore-legs. The movements seem deliberate, and the giraffe does not appear to be going at a fast pace, but if it has any start a horse must gallop hard to overtake it. When it starts on this gait, the neck may be dropped forward at a sharp angle with the straight line of the deep chest, and the big head be thrust in advance. They are defenceless things, and, though they may kick at a man who incautiously comes within reach, they are in no way dangerous.

The following day I again rode out with Captain Slatter. During the morning we saw nothing except the ordinary game, and we lunched on a hill-top, ten miles distant from camp, under a huge fig-tree with spreading branches and thick, deep-green foliage. Throughout the time we were taking lunch a herd of zebras watched us from near by, standing motionless with their ears pricked forward, their beautifully striped bodies showing finely in the sunlight. We scanned the

country round about with our glasses, and made out first a herd of eland, a mile in our rear, and then three giraffes a mile and a half in our front. I wanted a bull eland, but I wanted a giraffe still more, and we mounted our horses and rode toward where the three tall beasts stood, on an open hill-side with trees thinly scattered over it. Half a mile from them we left the horses in a thick belt of timber beside a dry watercourse, and went forward on foot.

There was no use in trying a stalk, for that would merely have aroused the giraffe's suspicion. But we knew they were accustomed to the passing and repassing of Wakamba men and women, whom they did not fear if they kept at a reasonable distance, so we walked in single file diagonally in their direction; that is, toward a tree which I judged to be about three hundred yards from them. I was carrying the Winchester loaded with full metal-patched bullets. I wished to get for the Museum both a bull and a cow. One of the three giraffes was much larger than the other two, and as he was evidently a bull I thought the two others were cows.

As we reached the tree the giraffes showed symptoms of uneasiness. One of the smaller ones began to make off, and both the others shifted their positions slightly, curling their tails. I instantly dropped on my knee, and getting the bead just behind the big bull's shoulder, I fired with the three-hundred-yard sight. I heard the "pack" of the bullet as it struck just where I aimed, and away went all three giraffes at their queer rocking-horse canter. Running forward I emptied my magazine, firing at the big bull and also at one of his smaller companions, and then, slipping into the barrel what proved to be a soft-nosed bullet, I fired at the latter again.

The giraffe was going straight away and it was a long shot, at four or five hundred yards; but by good luck the bullet broke its back and down it came. The others were now getting over the crest of the hill, but the big one was evidently sick, and we called and beckoned to the two saises to hurry up with the horses. The moment they arrived we jumped on, and Captain Slatter cantered up a neighbouring hill so as to mark the direction in which the giraffes went if I lost sight of them. Meanwhile I rode full speed after the giant quarry. I was on the tranquil sorrel, the horse I much preferred in riding down game of any kind, because he had a fair turn of speed, and yet was good about letting me get on and off. As soon as I reached the hill-crest I saw the giraffes ahead of me, not as far off as I had feared, and I raced toward them without regard to rotten ground and wart-hog holes. The wounded one lagged behind, but when I got near he put on a spurt, and as I thought I was close enough I leaped off, throwing the reins over the sorrel's head, and opened fire. Down went the big bull, and I thought my task was done. But as I went back to mount the sorrel he struggled to his feet again and disappeared after his companion among the trees, which were thicker here, as we had reached the bottom of the valley. So I tore after him again, and in a minute came to a dry water-course. Scrambling into and out of this, I saw the giraffes ahead of me just beginning the ascent of the opposite slope; and touching the horse with the spur, I flew after the wounded bull. This time I made up my mind I would get up close enough; but Tranquillity did not quite like the look of the thing ahead of him. He did not refuse to come up to the giraffe, but he evidently felt that, with such an object close by and

evident in the landscape, it behoved him to be careful as to what might be hidden therein, and he shied so at each bush we passed that we progressed in series of loops. So off I jumped, throwing the reins over his head, and opened fire once more; and this time the great bull went down for good.

Tranquillity recovered his nerve at once, and grazed contentedly while I admired the huge proportions and beautiful colouring of my prize. In a few minutes Captain Slatter loped up, and the gun-bearers and saises followed. As if by magic, three or four Wakamba turned up immediately afterward, their eyes glistening at the thought of the feast ahead for the whole tribe. It was mid-afternoon, and there was no time to waste. My sais, Simba, an excellent long-distance runner, was sent straight to camp to get Heller and pilot him back to the dead giraffes. Beside each of the latter—for they had fallen a mile apart—we left a couple of men to build fires. Then we rode toward camp. To my regret, the smaller giraffe turned out to be a young bull and not a cow.

At this very time, and utterly without our knowledge, there was another giraffe hunt going on. Sir Alfred had taken out Kermit and Medlicott, and they came across a herd of a dozen giraffes right out in the open plains. Medlicott's horse was worn out, and he could not keep up, but both the others were fairly well mounted. Both were light men and hard riders, and, although the giraffes had three-quarters of a mile the start, it was not long before both were at the heels of the herd. They singled out the big bull—which, by the way, turned out to be an even bigger bull than mine—and fired at him as they galloped. In such a headlong, helter-skelter chase, however, it is no easy matter to

score a hit from horseback unless one is very close up ; and Sir Alfred made up his mind to try to drive out the bull from the rest of the herd. He succeeded ; but at this moment his horse put a fore-foot into a hole and turned a complete somersault, almost wrenching out his shoulder. Sir Alfred was hurled off head over heels, but even as he rolled over, clutching his rifle, he twisted himself round to his knees and took one last shot at the flying giraffe. This left Kermit alone, and he galloped hard on the giraffe's heels, firing again and again with his Winchester. Finally, his horse became completely done out and fell behind ; whereupon Kermit jumped off, and, being an excellent long-distance runner, ran after the giraffe on foot for more than a mile. But he did not need to shoot again. The great beast had been mortally wounded, and it suddenly slowed down, halted, and fell over dead. As a matter of curiosity we kept the Winchester bullets both from Kermit's giraffe and from mine. I made a point of keeping as many as possible of the bullets with which the different animals were slain, so as to see exactly what was done by the different types of rifles we had with us.

When I reached camp I found that Heller had already started. Next morning I rode down to see him, and found him hard at work with the skins ; but as it would take him two or three days to finish them and put them in condition for transport, we decided that the safari should march back to the Potha camp, and that from there we would send Percival's ox-waggon to bring back to the camp all the skins, Heller and his men accompanying him. The plan was carried out, and the following morning we shifted the big camp as proposed.

Heller, thus left behind, came near having an un-

pleasant adventure. He slept in his own tent, and his Wakamba skinners slept under the fly not far off. One night they let the fires die down, and were roused at midnight by hearing the grunting of a hungry lion apparently not a dozen yards off in the darkness. Heller quickly lit his lantern, and sat up with his shotgun loaded with bird-shot, the only weapon he had with him. The lion walked round and round the tent, grunting at intervals. Then, after some minutes of suspense, he drew off. While the grunting had been audible, not a sound came from the tent of the Wakambas, who all cowered under their blankets in perfect silence. But once he had gone, there was a great chattering, and in a few minutes the fires were roaring, nor were they again suffered to die down.

Heller's skinners had learned to work very well when under his eye. He had encountered much difficulty in getting men who would do the work, and had tried the representatives of various tribes, but without success, until he struck the Wakamba. These were real savages, who filed their teeth and delighted in raw flesh, and Heller's explanation of their doing well was that their taste for the raw flesh kept them thoroughly interested in their job, so that they learned without difficulty. The porters speedily christened each of the white men by some title of their own, using the ordinary Swahili title of Bwana (master) as a prefix. Heller was the Bwana Who Skinned; Loring, who collected the small mammals, was named, merely descriptively, the Mouse Master, Bwana Pania. I was always called Bwana Makuba, the Chief or Great Master; Kermit was first called Bwana Medogo, the Young Master, and afterward was christened "the Dandy," Bwana Merodadi.

From Potha the safari went in two days to

McMillan's place, Juja Farm, on the other side of the Athi. I stayed behind, as I desired to visit the American Mission Station at Machakos. Accordingly, Sir Alfred and I rode thither. Machakos has long been a native town, for it was on the route formerly taken by the Arab caravans that went from the coast to the interior after slaves and ivory. Riding toward it, we passed herd after herd of cattle, sheep, and goats, each guarded by two or three savage herdsmen. The little town itself was both interesting and attractive. Besides the natives, there were a number of Indian traders and the English Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner, with a small body of native soldiers. The latter not a long time before had been just such savages as those round about them, and the change for the better wrought in their physique and morale by the ordered discipline to which they had submitted themselves could hardly be exaggerated. When we arrived, the Commissioner and his assistant were engaged in cross-examining some neighbouring chiefs as to the cattle sickness. The English rule in Africa has been of incalculable benefit to Africans themselves, and indeed this is true of the rule of most European nations. Mistakes have been made, of course, but they have proceeded at least as often from an unwise effort to accomplish too much in the way of beneficence, as from a desire to exploit the natives. Each of the civilized nations that has taken possession of any part of Africa has had its own peculiar good qualities and its own peculiar defects. Some of them have done too much in supervising and ordering the lives of the natives, and in interfering with their practices and customs. The English error, like our own under similar conditions, has, if anything, been

in the other direction. The effort has been to avoid wherever possible all interference with tribal customs, even when of an immoral and repulsive character, and to do no more than what is obviously necessary, such as insistence upon keeping the peace, and preventing the spread of cattle disease. Excellent reasons can be advanced in favour of this policy, and it must always be remembered that a fussy and ill-considered benevolence is more sure to awaken resentment than cruelty itself; while the natives are apt to resent deeply even things that are obviously for their ultimate welfare. Yet I cannot help thinking that with caution and wisdom it would be possible to proceed somewhat farther than has yet been the case in the direction of pushing upward some at least of the East African tribes, and this though I recognize fully that many of these tribes are of a low and brutalized type. Having said this much in the way of criticism, I wish to add my tribute of unstinted admiration for the disinterested and efficient work being done, alike in the interest of the white man and the black, by the government officials whom I met in East Africa. They are men in whom their country has every reason to feel a just pride.

We lunched with the American missionaries. Mission work among savages offers many difficulties, and often the wisest and most earnest effort meets with dishearteningly little reward; while lack of common sense, and of course above all, lack of a firm and resolute disinterestedness, insures the worst kind of failure. There are missionaries who do not do well, just as there are men in every conceivable walk of life who do not do well; and excellent men who are not missionaries, including both government officials and settlers, are only too apt

to jump at the chance of criticizing a missionary for every alleged sin of either omission or commission. Finally, zealous missionaries, fervent in the faith, do not always find it easy to remember that savages can only be raised by slow steps, that an empty adherence to forms and ceremonies amounts to nothing, that industrial training is an essential in any permanent upward movement, and that the gradual elevation of mind and character is a prerequisite to the achievement of any kind of Christianity which is worth calling such. Nevertheless, after all this has been said, it remains true that the good done by missionary effort in Africa has been incalculable. There are parts of the great continent, and among them I include many sections of East Africa, which can be made a white man's country; and in these parts every effort should be made to favour the growth of a large and prosperous white population. But over most of Africa the problem for the white man is to govern, with wisdom and firmness, and when necessary with severity, but always with a single eye to their own interests and development, the black and brown races. To do this needs sympathy and devotion no less than strength and wisdom, and in the task the part to be played by the missionary and the part to be played by the official are alike great, and the two should work hand in hand.

After returning from Machakos, I spent the night at Sir Alfred's, and next morning said good-bye with most genuine regret to my host and his family. Then, followed by my gun-bearers and sais, I rode off across the Athi Plains. Through the bright white air the sun beat down mercilessly, and the heat haze wavered above the endless flats of scorched grass. Hour after hour we

went slowly forward, through the morning, and through the burning heat of the equatorial noon, until in mid-afternoon we came to the tangled tree growth which fringed the half-dried bed of the Athi. Here I off-saddled for an hour; then, mounting, I crossed the river bed where it was waterless, and before evening fell I rode up to Juja Farm.

It was sent back to camp in company with the wounded beater, after the wounds of the latter had been dressed ; they were not serious, and he was speedily as well as ever.

The rivers that bounded Juja Farm, not only the Athi, but the Nairobi and Rewero, contained hippopotami and crocodiles in the deep pools. I was particularly anxious to get one of the former, and early one morning Judd and I rode off across the plains, through the herds of grazing game seen dimly in the dawn, to the Athi. We reached the river, and leaving our horses, went down into the wooded bottom, soon after sunrise. Judd had with him a Masai, a keen-eyed hunter, and I my two gun-bearers. We advanced with the utmost caution toward the brink of a great pool ; on our way we saw a bushbuck, but of course did not dare to shoot at it, for hippopotami are wary, except in very unfrequented regions, and any noise will disturb them. As we crept noiselessly up to the steep bank which edged the pool, the sight was typically African. On the still water floated a crocodile, nothing but his eyes and nostrils visible. The bank was covered with a dense growth of trees, festooned with vines ; among the branches sat herons ; a little cormorant dived into the water ; and a very small and brilliantly coloured kingfisher, with a red beak and large turquoise crest, perched unheedingly within a few feet of us. Here and there a dense growth of the tall and singularly graceful papyrus rose out of the water, the feathery heads, which crowned the long smooth green stems, waving gently to and fro.

We scanned the waters carefully, and could see no sign of hippos, and, still proceeding with the utmost caution, we moved a hundred yards farther down to another lookout. Here the Masai detected a hippo

head a long way off on the other side of the pool, and we again drew back and started cautiously forward to reach the point opposite which he had seen the head.

But we were not destined to get that hippo. Just as we had about reached the point at which we had intended to turn in toward the pool, there was a succession of snorts in our front, and the sound of the trampling of heavy feet and of a big body being shoved through a dense mass of tropical bush. My companions called to me in loud whispers that it was a rhinoceros coming at us, and to "Shoot, shoot!" In another moment the rhinoceros appeared, twitching its tail and tossing and twisting its head from side to side as it came toward us. It did not seem to have very good horns, and I would much rather not have killed it, but there hardly seemed any alternative, for it certainly showed every symptom of being bent on mischief. My first shot, at under forty yards, produced no effect whatever, except to hasten its approach. I was using the Winchester, with full-jacketed bullets; my second bullet went in between the neck and shoulder, bringing it to a halt. I fired into the shoulder again, and as it turned toward the bush I fired into its flank both the bullets still remaining in my magazine.

For a moment or two after it disappeared we heard the branches crash, and then there was silence. In such cover a wounded rhino requires cautious handling, and as quietly as possible we walked through the open forest along the edge of the dense thicket into which the animal had returned. The thicket was a tangle of thorn bushes, reeds, and small, low-branching trees; it was impossible to see ten feet through it, and a man could only penetrate it with the utmost slowness and difficulty, whereas the movements of the rhino were very little

impeded. At the far end of the thicket we examined the grass to see if the rhino had passed out, and sure enough there was the spoor, with so much blood along both sides that it was evident the animal was badly hit. It led across this space and into another thicket of the same character as the first, and again we stole cautiously along the edge some ten yards out. I had taken the heavy Holland double-barrel, and with the safety catch pressed forward under my thumb, I trod gingerly through the grass, peering into the thicket and expectant of developments. In a minute there was a furious snorting and crashing directly opposite us in the thicket, and I brought up my rifle, but the rhino did not quite place us, and broke out of the cover in front, some thirty yards away, and I put both barrels into and behind the shoulder. The terrific striking force of the heavy gun told at once, and the rhino wheeled, and struggled back into the thicket, and we heard it fall. With the utmost caution, bending and creeping under the branches, we made our way in, and saw the beast lying with its head toward us. We thought it was dead, but would take no chances, and I put in another, but, as it proved, needless, heavy bullet.

It was an old female, considerably smaller than the bull I had already shot, with the front horn measuring fourteen inches as against his nineteen inches; as always with rhinos, it was covered with ticks, which clustered thickly in the folds and creases of the skin, around and in the ears, and in all the tender places. McMillan sent out an ox-waggon and brought it in to the house, where we weighed it. It was a little over two thousand two hundred pounds. It had evidently been in the neighbourhood in which we found it for a considerable time, for a few hundred yards away we found its stamping

ground, a circular spot where the earth had been all trampled up and kicked about, according to the custom of rhinoceroses; they return day after day to such places to deposit their dung, which is then kicked about with the hind feet. As with all our other specimens, the skin was taken off and sent back to the National Museum. The stomach was filled with leaves and twigs, this kind of rhinoceros browsing on the tips of the branches by means of its hooked, prehensile upper lip.

Now, I did not want to kill this rhinoceros, and I am not certain that it really intended to charge us. It may very well be that if we had stood firm it would, after much threatening and snorting, have turned and made off. Veteran hunters like Selous could, I doubt not, have afforded to wait and see what happened. But I let it get within forty yards, and it still showed every symptom of meaning mischief, and at a shorter range I could not have been sure of stopping it in time. Often under such circumstances the rhino does not mean to charge at all, and is acting in a spirit of truculent and dull curiosity; but often, when its motions and actions are indistinguishable from those of an animal which does not mean mischief, it turns out that a given rhino does mean mischief. A year before I arrived in East Africa a surveyor was charged by a rhinoceros entirely without provocation; he was caught and killed. Chanler's companion on his long expedition, the Austrian Von Höhnel, was very severely wounded by a rhino, and nearly died. The animal charged through the line of march of the safari, and then deliberately turned, hunted down Von Höhnel, and tossed him. Again and again there have been such experiences, and again and again hunters who did not wish to kill rhinos have been forced to do so in

order to prevent mischief. In such circumstances it is not to be expected that men will take too many chances when face to face with a creature whose actions are threatening and whose intentions it is absolutely impossible to divine. In fact, I do not see how the rhinoceros can be permanently preserved, save in very out-of-the-way places or in regular game reserves. There is enough interest and excitement in the pursuit to attract every eager young hunter, and, indeed, very many eager old hunters; and the beast's stupidity, curiosity, and truculence make up a combination of qualities which inevitably tend to insure its destruction.

As we brought home the whole body of this rhinoceros, and as I had put into it eight bullets, five from the Winchester and three from the Holland, I was able to make a tolerably fair comparison between the two. With the full-jacketed bullets of the Winchester I had mortally wounded the animal; it would have died in a short time, and it was groggy when it came out of the brush in its final charge; but they inflicted no such smashing blow as the heavy bullets of the Holland. Moreover, when they struck the heavy bones they tended to break into fragments, while the big Holland bullets ploughed through. The Winchester and the Springfield were the weapons one of which I always carried in my own hand, and for any ordinary game I much preferred them to any other rifles. The Winchester did admirably with lions, giraffes, elands, and smaller game, and, as will be seen, with hippos. For heavy game like the rhinoceroses and buffaloes I found that for me personally the heavy Holland was unquestionably the proper weapon. But in writing this I wish most distinctly to assert my full knowledge of the fact that the choice of a rifle is almost as much a