

I. S. N. 41

BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA

AN ATTEMPT TO GIVE SOME ACCOUNT OF A PORTION OF
THE TERRITORIES UNDER BRITISH INFLUENCE
NORTH OF THE ZAMBEZI

By

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H.M. COMMISSIONER AND CONSUL-GENERAL IN BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA

WITH SIX MAPS AND 220 ILLUSTRATIONS

REPRODUCED FROM THE AUTHOR'S DRAWINGS OR FROM PHOTOGRAPHS



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therefore propose to repeat my diatribes in this book. But it should be added that what I object to is not the drinking of good wine or beer, but the consumption of spirits. Whisky is the bane of Central Africa as it is of West Africa, South Africa and Australia. I dare say brandy is as bad as whisky but it has passed out of fashion as a drink, and therefore it has not incurred my animosity to the same extent as the national product of Scotland and Ireland.¹ Moreover, brandy is invaluable in sickness. If any spirits are drunk it seems to me that gin is the least harmful, as it has a good effect on the kidneys. In hot climates like that of Central Africa whisky seems to have a bad effect on the liver and on the kidneys.

I do not suppose these words will have much effect on my readers.



IVORY AT MANDALA STORE (AFRICAN LAKES COMPANY)

Alcoholic excess is our national vice, and while we are ready enough to deplore the opium-eating-or-smoking on the part of the Indians or Chinese,—a vice which is not comparable in its ill effects to the awful abuse of alcohol which is so characteristic of the northern peoples of Europe,—we still remain indifferent to the effects of spirit-drinking which has been the principal vice of the nineteenth century. The abuse of wine or beer, though bad like all abuses, is a relatively wholesome excess compared to even a moderate consumption of spirits. Though I think of the two extremes total abstinence is the better course to follow in Central Africa, I do *not* recommend total abstinence from all forms of alcohol. I think, on the contrary, the moderate use of wine is distinctly beneficial, especially for anæmic people.

Trading with the natives on a large scale is, as I have said, chiefly confined to two or three large companies—the African Lakes, Sharrer's, the Oceana Company and Kahn & Co. But a small amount of barter chiefly for provisions

¹ Which alone, I believe, among strong waters develops the poisonous Fusel Oil.

is still carried on by all Europeans residing in the less settled parts of British Central Africa. The imported trade goods consisted chiefly of cotton stuffs from Manchester and Bombay, beads from Birmingham and Venice, blankets from England, India and Austria, fezzes from Algeria and from Newcastle-under-Lyne, boots from Northampton, felt hats from various parts of England, hardware and brass wire and hoes from Birmingham, cutlery from Sheffield, and various fancy goods from India.

The trade products which British Central Africa gives us in exchange for these goods and for much English money in addition are: Ivory, coffee, hippo. teeth, rhinoceros horns, cattle, hides, wax, rubber, oil seeds, sansevieria fibre, tobacco, sugar (locally consumed), wheat (ditto), maize (ditto), sheep, goats and poultry (ditto), timber (ditto), and the *Strophanthus* drug.



KAHN AND CO'S TRADING STORE AT KOTAKOTA

It only remains to say a few words about the relations between the Europeans and the natives. I am convinced that this eastern portion of British Central Africa will never be a white man's country in the sense that all Africa south of the Zambezi, and all Africa north of the Sahara will eventually become—countries where the white race is dominant and native to the soil. Between the latitudes of the Zambezi and the Blue Nile, Africa must in the first instance be governed in the interests of the black man, and the black man will there be the race predominant in numbers, if not in influence. The future of Tropical Africa is to be another India; not another Australia. The white man cannot permanently colonise Central Africa; he can only settle on a few favoured tracts, as he would do in the North of India. Yet Central Africa possesses boundless resources in the way of commerce, as it is extremely rich in natural products,—animal, vegetable and mineral. These it will pay the European to develop and should equally profit the black man to produce. Untaught by the European he was living like an animal, miserably poor in the midst of boundless wealth. Taught by the European he will be able to develop

although I have seen elephants at work in Hyphæne palm forests on the Congo actually being able to watch them from a boat working their will on these trees for the sake of the "ginger-bread" covering of the nuts, I cannot say I have seen them kneel down and uproot a tree with the tusk. One is a little puzzled sometimes to account for the enormous development of the two remaining upper incisor teeth, unless they were used for some such purpose as digging up roots. They are not so useful as defensive or offensive weapons that they should be worth development for this purpose alone. In killing animals much less in size than himself the elephant generally uses his trunk and feet, though I admit many cases occur—including one which took place a few months ago in England—where an elephant does deliberately slay his victim with his tusk. On the whole I am inclined to believe that where the elephant retains these huge teeth he uses them occasionally for digging in the ground. This belief is supported by the very distinct statements of such authorities as (the late) Sir Samuel Baker and Mr. F. C. Selous. The former writes "They (the acacia trees) are easily overturned by the tusks of the elephants which are driven like crowbars beneath the roots and used as levers, in which rough labour they are frequently broken It is nearly always the right tusk which is selected for this duty." Mr. Selous states that he has seen large areas of sandy soil ploughed up by the tusks of these animals in their search for roots.

Although nowhere very abundant, the ordinary two-horned rhinoceros is probably found pretty generally over all British Central Africa except on the high plateaux. But from all accounts it is absent from the south shore of Tanganyika and from the Nyasa-Tanganyika plateau. Unless, therefore, it can be proved to exist in the interior of the Moçambique district the rhinoceros will be another of those animals whose range is completely broken by the interposition of British Central Africa.¹ Is the so-called "white rhinoceros" (*Rhinoceros simus*) found north of the Zambezi? This is a question rather hard to answer in the negative or affirmative. I should not be surprised to hear that it was, though not within British territory but in the adjoining districts of Portuguese Zambezia. In 1892 an English trader, Mr. Harry Pettitt, gave me an extraordinary pair of horns which he had obtained in Portuguese territory to the south of the river Ruo. These horns were very similar in appearance to those of the "white rhinoceros," that is to say, both horns were of good length but the front one was extremely long, slender and directed forwards. There are specimens extant of the white rhinoceros in which the front horn is not directed forwards but is exactly vertical, or turned slightly backwards. Still I never remember to have seen a specimen of the ordinary two-horned rhinoceros which has the front horn directed forwards. The pair of horns to which I allude I sent to Mr. Sclater and I believe they are now in the British Museum.²

The zebra of British Central Africa is a singularly beautiful beast and should, if right were done, be made a type species under the name of *Equus tigrinus*³ with three sub-species or varieties—*E. tigrinus burchelli*, *E. tigrinus chapmani*, and *E. tigrinus granti*, to indicate in addition to the clear and perfectly striped Central African form the three other varieties which are marred in their beauty by intermediate faint stripes, and one of which

¹ Abundant evidence, however, of the existence of the Rhinoceros in the vicinity of Lake Rukwa was obtained by the Rev. Harwood Nutt of the London Missionary Society.

² Mr. Sclater suggests they may belong to a sub-species of Rhinoceros proposed by Dr. Gray, "Gray's Rhinoceros."

³ Namely *the striped horse, par excellence.*

(c.) If without holding any licence under these Regulations he kills, hunts, or captures any animal whatever within a game reserve, or is found within a game reserve under such circumstances as to show that he was in pursuit of animals, and was not lawfully employed there, he shall be liable to a fine not exceeding 5*l.*, or, in default, to imprisonment for one month, without prejudice to his liability to any other penalty under this Regulation.

9. Nothing in these Regulations shall be deemed to relieve any person from the obligation of taking out any licence which for the time being is required to be taken out for possessing or using a gun.

10. The Regulations of the 9th September, 1896, for the preservation of wild game in certain parts of the Protectorate are hereby repealed.

11. These Regulations may be cited as "The Game Regulations, 1897."

SCHEDULE I.

GAME RESERVES.

1. *The Elephant Marsh Reserve.*

Commencing at the junction of the Ruo and Shire Rivers, the boundary of the Elephant Marsh Reserve shall follow the right bank of the River Ruo as far as the Zoa Falls, and shall thence be carried along in a straight line in a north-westerly direction until it strikes the left bank of the River Shire opposite the junction of the Mwanza with the Shire; the boundary shall then cross the River Shire and follow the right bank of the Mwanza River up stream to a point distant from the Shire 12 miles in a straight line; thence the boundary shall run in a southerly direction, keeping always at a distance of 12 miles from the right bank of the Shire River until it reaches the boundary-line dividing the Lower Shire district from the Ruo. It shall then follow that boundary-line in an easterly direction until it strikes the right bank of the Shire River; the boundary shall then follow the right bank of the Shire River up stream to a point opposite the point of commencement, namely, the junction of the Shire and the Ruo Rivers.

2. *The Lake Chilwa Reserve.*

Commencing at the source of the River Palombe in the Mlanje district, the boundary of the Lake Chilwa Reserve shall be carried in an easterly direction to the source of the most southern affluent of the River Sombani, and from this point shall be carried along a straight line in an easterly direction to the Anglo-Portuguese frontier, which it shall follow to the shores of Lake Chilwa. The boundary shall continue along the shore of the lake southward, westward, and northward, as far as the confluence of the Likangala River. It shall then follow the course of the Likangala River up stream as far as the eastern boundary of Messrs. Buchanan Brothers' Mlungusi estate, thence along the said eastern boundary of the said estate southwards to a point on the left bank of the Ntondwe River. It shall then follow the northern boundary of Mr. Bruce's Namasi estate eastwards until the said boundary reaches the Palombe River, thence along the right bank of the Palombe River up stream to its source.

SCHEDULE II.

PART I.

Wild beasts in respect of which licence (A) is required:—

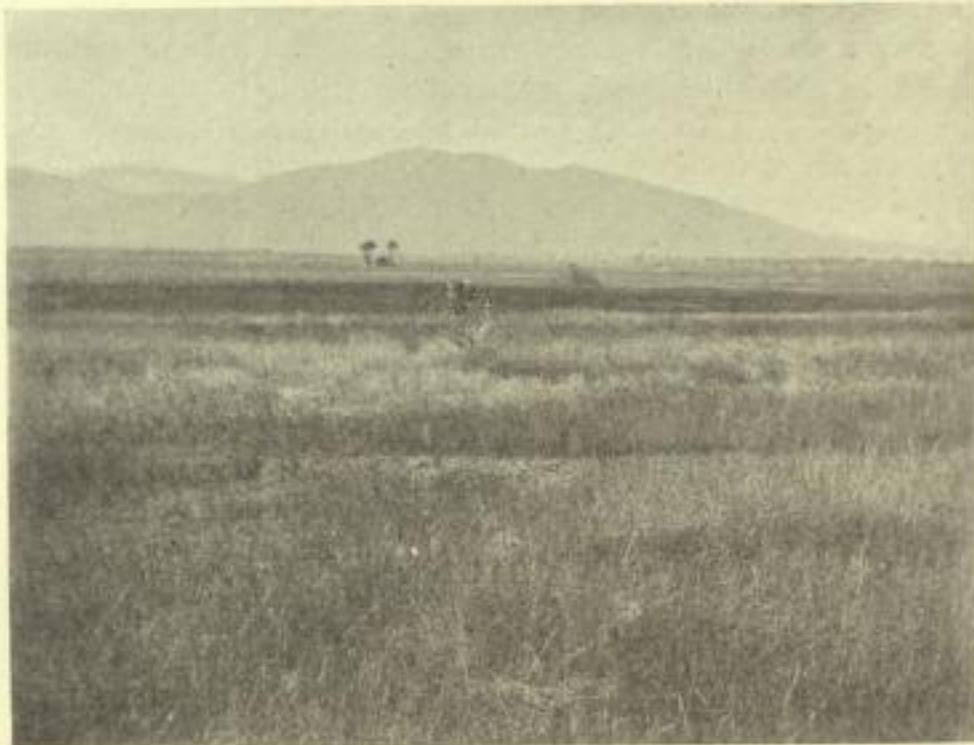
Elephant.
Rhinoceros.

Giraffe.
Gnu (Wildebeest).

PART II.

Wild beasts in respect of which licence (B) or licence (C) is required:—

Zebra.	Klipspringer.
Wart hog (<i>Phacochoerus</i>).	Reedbuck.
Bush pig (<i>Potamochoerus</i>).	Puku (<i>Cobus vardonii</i>).
Buffalo.	Senga Puku (<i>C. senganus</i>).
Eland.	Lechwe (<i>C. lechwe</i>).
Kudu.	Crawshay's Cobus (<i>C. crawshayi</i>).
Situtunga (<i>Tragelaphus spekei</i>).	Waterbuck (<i>C. ellipsiprymnus</i>).
Inyala (<i>T. angasi</i>).	Impala (<i>Epyceros melampus</i>).
Bushbuck (<i>T. scriptus</i>).	Hartebeest (<i>Bubalis</i>).
Duyker (<i>Cephalophus</i>).	Tsessébe (<i>Damaliscus</i>).
Oribi (<i>Ourebia</i>).	Sable antelope.
Sharpe's antelope (<i>Raphicerus sharpei</i>).	Roan antelope.



THE ELEPHANT MARSH

As to the Avi-fauna: it is a country singularly rich in bird life. Amongst the birds, however, occur the same curious gaps in the distribution of species and genera which are found to the south of the Zambezi and in East Africa but are wanting in this south-central part of the continent. The ostrich, and the secretary-vulture, three genera of true vultures, nearly all the genera and species of African larks and of bustards are represented in Africa south of the Zambezi, skip British Central Africa, and reappear again north of the Rufiji River extending thence northwards and westwards through East Africa, across the Sudan to Senegambia. There is a great paucity of species or genera amongst the guinea fowl; practically the only guinea fowl ordinarily found in British Central Africa is the common species, the origin of the domestic bird, though *Guttera edouardi*, the crested guinea fowl is met with near the Zambezi and on the Moçambique Coast. The sand grouse is only