

KILL : OR BE KILLED

THE RAMBLING REMINISCENCES
OF AN AMATEUR HUNTER

by

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by the Author and others*

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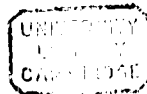
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THE AUTHOR AT GONDOKORO



difficulty that I persuaded him to speak of that adventure ; but, finally, he did so, while I recorded his words as he talked. Here, then, is his own version of what happened on that amazing journey :

The tales I had heard of Lake Bangweolo from the Awemba tribe, on my former motor-car journey across Africa, had made me most anxious to explore this mysterious sheet of water in the heart of North-Eastern Rhodesia. According to them, this lake enjoyed a most sinister reputation among the native tribes residing both near and far. They declared that it was studded with islands, on which were to be found mammoth elephants and immense giraffes ; while in its waters were huge sea-serpents and other strange creatures. From the surface, hot springs rose like fountains into the air ; and pestilential winds, sweeping across the nearby swamps, carried death to all who ventured near the lake's shores. I gathered from the Awemba that Bangweolo and its vicinity was no health resort : rather a Dante's Inferno.

These people insisted that no natives, who had ever ventured upon the waters of this lake in their frail canoes, had again been seen or heard of : they had just vanished. Bangweolo was regarded by some local tribes as a sort of Hades, where departed souls suffered continually the most dreadful torments ; while others again believed it was the approach to a Paradise, where the spirits of their dead relatives enjoyed a perfect life under the benign protection of their gods.

After making all due allowances for their imagination and local native superstitions, Lake Bangweolo sounded sinister but worth investigating.

The lake was known to be surrounded by miles upon miles of thick and impenetrable marshes, and the swamps thickly clothed with tall papyrus reeds and rushes. This all rendered any chance of exploring its waters a matter of great difficulty. But the more obstacles placed in my path, the more I looked forward to the adventure. Any expedition into unknown regions would be deadly tame and devoid of all pleasurable thrills if all was smooth sailing. I was perfectly well aware that we should have to endure many severe hardships and swallow many keen disappointments ; but what of that ? No adventure is worth calling such unless it possesses those two characteristics.

The great prize which I hoped to secure, in addition to being



AN EXCEPTIONAL RHINO HORN



PHOTOGRAPHING A CHARGING RHINO (DEAD!)



They knew exactly what to do, when, and how to avoid any waste of time or effort. They were experts. Their team work would be difficult to excel.

As soon as they got fairly close to the ugly beast, one of the terriers ranged alongside to the right of the boar's head, while the other two kept close up to the stern. Then one of the hindmost dogs seized a favourable moment to race in and grab hold of a hind leg in his mouth. He held on and tugged like grim death, all four feet planted on the ground and being dragged along in the wake of the beast. The boar slackened speed, and then, before he could halt and swing round for attack, in ran the other terrier and fastened his teeth into the other hind leg. At the same moment, the leading dog rushed in and fastened on to the boar's right ear. All three now held on like limpets, pulling strongly backwards.

Suddenly the boar would go down, the dogs having jerked him over on his side by united effort. Almost too quick for the eye to follow the movements, the terrier let go of the ear and grabbed hold of the boar's throat. He made no mistake about it, and had his teeth well into the wind-pipe before those cruel tushes could get in their deadly work.

At the same instant, the two dogs on the hind legs let go and ran in to bite furiously at the overturned hog's belly. The fight was pretty fierce and strenuous while it lasted; but, before I had trotted up to the scene, it was all over. The wart-hog's throat had been torn to shreds, and the beast was partially disembowelled. A merciful bullet from my revolver ended the hog's life.

I have never seen the equal of those three little dogs. They were a mass of scars from gashes by wicked tushes; but, no matter how severely injured, nothing could stop them returning to their sport. One by one, however, they were killed by a savage boar or sow. That was inevitable.

One evening in Nairobi, I happened to be at the Norfolk Hotel with a party of cheery sportsmen. The conversation was all connected with big game shooting, and drifted into an open debate on the various methods of hunting. The mention of wart-hogs brought forth a suggestion from me that it might prove entertaining to ride them down with revolvers. I instanced Blayne Percival's innovation, just tried out successfully, of riding down lions in this manner. My proposal was received with a frigid silence; then someone laughed, more in disdain



Photo by Dr. J. R. Magoon

THREE RHINO HEADS



KILLED IN SELF-DEFENCE



nor left, and oblivious to the wild scene of enthusiasm around the fallen lion.

It was the signal that all was ended. Soon the trophy would be collected and borne in triumph to the *manyatta* for the rightful owner; and the carcass of the lion would be left for the scavengers of the veld to feast upon.

That day holds a memory which can never grow dim.

CHAPTER XX

THE STUPIDITY OF THE RHINO

OF all the major game in Africa, the rhinoceros furnishes the most fruitful topic for dispute among hunters. Opinions as to this beast's dangerous characteristics are seldom in agreement. Many big game hunters of my acquaintance, all men of wide experience in Africa, place him fourth on the list of really dangerous animals; but I know others, of equal knowledge and experience, who think he holds premier place. I have never been able to accept this latter view; but every hunter is entitled to his own opinion on this subject.

One thing alone about the habits of the rhino is conceded universally; and that is, he is the cause of much bad language on many occasions and can be an unmitigated nuisance.

Although not personally ranking the rhino as really a danger in normal circumstances, or as a serious menace to either human life or property, yet I am quite prepared to admit that he can be a most formidable foe. He can supply the hunter with many unpleasant moments, if so minded. His contrariness is so often exercised at the wrong moment, and he is as full of whims as a spoilt child.

The besetting sin of the rhinoceros is an insatiable curiosity. It cannot be curbed or cured. Largely on account of his extremely poor vision and this highly developed curiosity, coupled with arrant stupidity, the rhinoceros is inclined to follow the dictates of his keen sense of smell whenever danger lurks in the immediate vicinity. Given the scent, no matter how faint, of something strange and suspicious, and he will instantly advance in that direction to investigate. He does not wait to see what it may be, for he depends upon his nose rather than his eyesight. A whiff of man-tainted wind, and he feels compelled to satisfy his curiosity at once: and does so. A rhino never waits for trouble to come to him, but goes out to

meet it more than half way. He much prefers to start a fight than to have one forced upon him.

The rhino is a blundering, brainless fathead, and always has been; nothing will ever teach him even a modicum of common sense. Yet he is a real sportsman and will always give you a good run for your money. He is utterly fearless. Challenge, no matter how unwittingly, his presence; and he will offer battle at once and in a most determined fashion. Of all the wild game in Africa, not one single other species is so consistently set on meeting danger at once, and face to face.

This strong trait in his character may account for the fact that so many men insist that he is ugly, useless and highly dangerous; and should be exterminated ruthlessly. Granted that rhinos and cultivated lands do not mix well, yet he is perfectly well aware of this fact and has now taken himself beyond the reach of advancing civilization. It was not always so.

The first Traffic Manager of the Railways in Kenya, A. E. Cruickshank, told me a most amusing story of a rhinoceros in the early days after construction work was completed.

A few Indian railway employees started some vegetable gardens at Kiu. One of them planted some *Bhang*, or hemp, in addition to cabbages and the like. When mixed and smoked with tobacco, it has much about the same effect as opium, and Indians are very partial to the smoking of this drug. Some of his crop had grown to maturity and was ready for harvesting, when an old bull rhino turned up one morning and started in to sample some of the cabbages. He passed on to the *Bhang*, and its flavour seemed to meet with his entire approval. He devoured the entire crop.

After this meal, the rhino became very drowsy and selected the front door of the Indian's house as the ideal spot for a noontime siesta. There were no windows, and only this one door. The Indian coolie, shivering with fright within the hut, found his only means of escape completely blocked by the bulky form of the rhino. He was forced to remain where he was, while hoping that the animal would soon seek pastures new.

For several hours the rhino slept contentedly as he leaned up against the doorway of the hut. Awakening refreshed, however, he ambled off slowly into the bush, sampling some more cabbages in passing. The Indian was only too delighted

to see the last of him, and wasted no vain regrets on the mangled remnants of his garden.

The Indian station-master, who was a bit of a tartar, fined the innocent victim of this rhino for dereliction of duty. That was, of course, grossly unfair. The coolie complained to the Traffic Manager, who remitted the fine on hearing the facts. The man then demanded compensation for his destroyed crops. This was refused.

The number of casualties resulting from encounters with infuriated rhinos do not warrant the assumption that he is a real menace to mankind. In all my years of wandering about Africa, I have only met three men who have been injured at all seriously by charging rhinos—Major Stigand, Benjamin Eastwood and Colonel Eric Smith. They all survived to relate their experiences, but two of them, Eastwood and Colonel Smith, lost an arm. Stigand received a nasty tear from the horn across his chest. But I have heard of a number of Africans who have been gored or killed by one of these animals.

In the light of my personal experience, I am unable to deny that the rhino is not only ready always for a first-class row, but is invariably inquisitive to an uncomfortable degree. When you can smell but not see any danger threatening, it is only natural either to advance and locate it or else make yourself scarce. The rhino prefers the former line of action, largely so that he can deal suitably with the situation. He cannot be blamed for this truculent attitude. Self-preservation is nine points of the law in civilization, and holds good just as strongly among animal life in the wild regions.

I have said that he is a crass idiot, and will never learn. That is absolutely true. The elephant is unique among beasts of great bulk in that, with its growth in size, there has also been a marked development in brain power. In order to demonstrate this fact, I will draw comparisons between the elephant and rhinoceros; for the latter is the animal nearest to the elephant in point of size.

Both species are found in the same regions of Africa, and in bulk are more nearly equal than any other terrestrial creatures. But the elephant is the wisest, while the rhinoceros is the most stupid of all animals. Both formerly wandered freely over the plains of the Kenya Highlands; but, in the past half-century, a marked change has taken place in the habits of these two beasts. The elephant has learned from experience far more

readily than has the rhinoceros. As a general rule, therefore, it will be found that the former no longer lives in the open country, whereas the rhinoceros continues to roam the plains and risk being completely exterminated.

An elephant will cross the open spaces at night time only, usually, for he is perfectly well aware that danger lurks there during the sunlit hours of the day. No elephant, in regions where they are hunted regularly, would be so foolish as habitually to spend his days on the open plains. But that is exactly what the fool rhinoceros does. The former animal is wisdom personified; the latter no more than a brainless, chump-headed dunce.

Moreover, the sight of both beasts is very indifferent. In consequence, the elephant has quickly learned to take refuge in those areas where sound and scent count for far more as protective measures than good eyesight. Both animals depend almost entirely upon ears and noses for warning against, and the location of, danger threatening them; and both sadly need a visit to a first-class oculist. In many respects the elephant surpasses the rhinoceros in powers of vision; but neither of them can boast of even moderately good eyesight. It is well for all hunters that neither of these animals wears spectacles, though it might prove an amusing sight. Their powers of scent and hearing, however, are so highly developed as to compensate for their defective vision.

The black rhinoceros formerly inhabited Africa from the Cape to Abyssinia and Somaliland. By retreating to the cover of the dense thorny forests or uninhabited areas of southern Africa, this species has, so far, escaped entire extinction at the hands of ruthless butchers. A few exist in the game reserves of South Africa, and of late years steadily have been increasing in numbers. Isolated specimens still can be found in the bushlands of the north-eastern portion of the Transvaal and in the two Rhodesias; and a fairly large number are known to inhabit the forests in the southern area of Portuguese East Africa. But they are only seen in anything approaching large numbers in Central and Eastern Africa, and even further northwards.

The few surviving specimens in South Africa are now strictly protected. They are breeding there, and thus will prevent any possibility of extinction, as will happen probably to the few remaining survivors of the "White" species in Zululand and in the Nile regions.

The last black rhino shot in the Cape Province, according to Hall, was an old bull killed not far from Port Elizabeth in 1853. In the Orange River Colony, the last one recorded as shot was in 1842 at Rhenoster Kop, on the south side of the Vaal River. This spot later earned fame in the Boer War, and will be linked in history with the name of the elusive Boer General, Christian De Wet.

It is rather an interesting fact that the "White" rhinoceros subsists almost entirely on grass, while the black species lives off the leaves of trees and shrubs.

The rhino feeds during the evening, night and early morning; but, occasionally, may be seen on the move on cloudy or rainy days. Like most animals in the wild state, these ungainly beasts are never found at any great distance from water, to which they resort to drink during the evening and also at dawn. After the early morning drink the rhino wallows in the mud, which subsequently cakes all over his body and helps to smother the ticks which attach themselves to the softer or thinner portions of his skin.

By habit, the rhino sleeps during the hot hours of the African day; and, if a hunter or safari suddenly awakens him, he resents this in no undecided manner. A peeved rhino can be very liverish indeed! Nobody likes to be disturbed suddenly in the midst of a pleasant siesta; and there is no reason why a rhino should like it any more than a human being. How distressingly obnoxious an awakened rhino can be, I will explain later.

Both species are quite easy to stalk if their bird sentinels do not happen to be on duty. The experienced hunter, before attempting to get within easy range for a fatal shot, first examines his intended quarry very carefully with a pair of field-glasses. Should he detect any of these birds on the beast, he knows that he must approach with the utmost caution. After a long and tedious stalk, the hunter is frequently detected by the birds, and at once the alarm is raised by them. Thus, more often than not, a trophy is lost.

Should these birds be perched on the back of the rhino, the hunter stalks the animal rapidly. So long as he keeps on the proper side of the wind and takes reasonable care not to expose himself, he will almost certainly get within easy shooting distance.

When disturbed, the black species moves off with the head

well elevated; and if a cow is accompanied by her calf, the latter follows the parent instead of preceding it. This is in marked contrast to the habit of the "white" rhino mother and her calf.

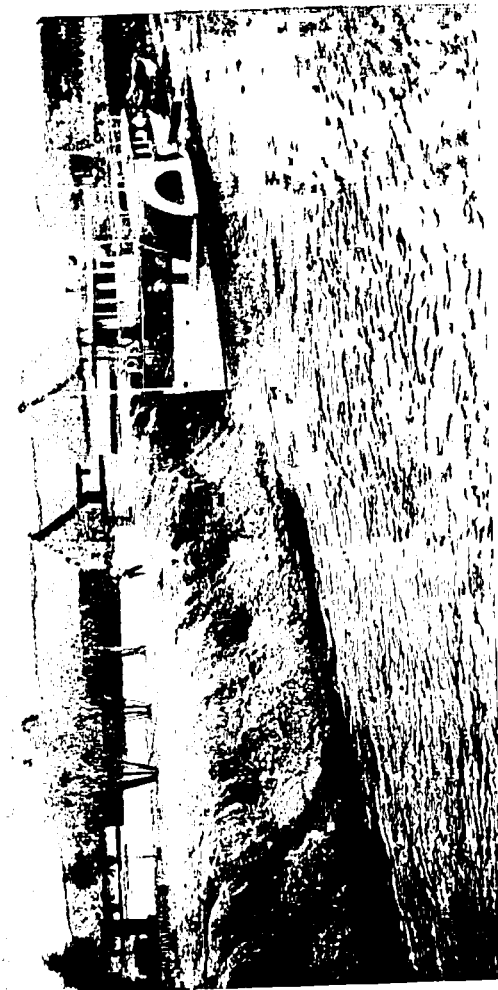
The black rhino differs also from the meek and inoffensive "white" species in the matter of temper. The former is morose, irritable and always uncertain in attitude. When wounded, frequently he charges down upon his persecutor; but if the hunter is able to get out of the way of the charging beast, usually but not always, the rhino passes straight on and does not turn to seek out the attacker. He has often been known to charge without the slightest provocation through a safari, a team of oxen or donkeys in a wagon, or even a camp. While doing so he lunges right and left viciously with the cruel horn, and can inflict serious casualties in a very short space of time.

When warned of danger by the bird sentinels, the rhino charges off more or less blindly. As likely as not, he proceeds straight for the hunter, who imagines that he has been seen and the charge is a deliberate one. But such is not always the case by any manner of means.

During my residence in Kenya, and even before that time, it was quite common for a rhino to charge a railway train when crossing the plains between Nairobi and Tsavo. In 1906, when a passenger on the mail-train from Mombasa, an intrepid old bull rhino did so, but came off a mighty poor second in the encounter. He must have suffered from a sore head for weeks afterwards. It is to be hoped that it taught him a salutary lesson; but it is expecting too much of a rhino to look for any show of real intelligence.

On the Athi and Kapiti Plains there used to be quite a large number of rhino; and often I have seen them quite close to the railway track when passing through this area on a train. When the rails were being laid down through this region, a rhino charged a locomotive drawing a few trucks from railhead camp to Simba.

Sam Pike, a veteran engine-driver, told me of his adventure with a wealth of picturesque detail. It was a highly entertaining story. They left Simba to load up with material for the gangs engaged on construction work, and Pike had allowed a number of Wakamba hunters to have a free ride in the empty trucks. He had taken his shot-gun with him in the cab of the engine,



KIRO, A BELGIAN POST ON THE NILE



A KAVIRO FISHMAN

in the hope of getting some guinea fowl. At a point about a couple of miles or so from Simba, an old bull rhino attempted to cross the track ahead of the train. Pike saw it, and put on a burst of speed. He just managed to cut off the animal's advance, and blocked its passage across the railway.

Enraged by this baulking of its desires, the rhino charged full tilt at the engine and tried to drive its horn into the side of the tender. Naturally, it made no impression. Pike fired both barrels of his shot-gun into the rhino at point-blank range. The only effect was still further to anger the big beast. It now raced alongside the train, and tried repeatedly to charge the engine off the track. Fearful that the animal might get mixed up with the wheels and bring the train to grief, Pike put on more steam and gradually drew ahead.

When the rhino came abreast of the Wakamba hunters, they seized upon this rare opportunity with delight. They started to pump arrows into the beast as fast as they could shoot, but it still raced beside the train and struggled to overtake the engine. It seemed to be obsessed by a grim determination to wreck the locomotive, which each additional arrow imbedded in its hide served only to intensify.

From Simba camp, the railway engineer, R. O. Preston, watched this unique race between train and rhino. He was keenly interested, and not a little amused. By the time that the rhino got close to Simba camp, it had a mass of arrows sticking into its thick hide. According to both Preston and Pike, it resembled a gigantic, bounding porcupine. Scarcely a square inch of its great bulk was free from an imbedded arrow, for the Wakamba had not wasted a second in using the beast as their unconventional target.

At the outskirts of the camp, the unusual race ended abruptly, for Preston gave the beast a pretty hot reception with his magazine-rifle. All in all, what with the arrows and now the bullets, the rhino had had enough. Pike won that race by a short head. The rhino turned about and galloped off into the bush, looking exactly like an immense pin-cushion. That was the last they ever saw of the beast.

What might really be interesting would be to know how that old rhino explained his condition to his wife when he met her again after his day out. I am thinking it would take some explaining!

Preston told me of another amusing experience he had when

at the construction camp at Mtoto Andei. Early one morning he was awakened by a camp-guard and informed that the hospital tent—fortunately unoccupied at the time—had been dragged off into the bush and the night watchman discovered almost dead from fright close to the wreckage. He hastened to the spot to investigate, and found the Indian watchman just recovering consciousness.

The man told him that a rhino had come up while he was sitting beside the camp-fire. He had no other weapon than a long bush-knife, and struck at the beast with this. The enraged rhino thereupon rushed straight forward and tossed him into the air. He stated that he did not know what happened after that, for he fainted from sheer fright.

Preston came to the conclusion that the rhino, after first tossing the Indian, had charged full into the tent, got his horn entangled in the ropes and canvas, and carried off the tent on his head into the bush. The wreckage was found a little distance away.

The watchman was fortunate enough to escape with no worse injuries than a broken collar-bone, a severe bruising and shaking. He had been very badly frightened, however, and insisted on being repatriated to India forthwith, or somewhat sooner. No doubt, on arrival in his native village in India, he posed as the immortal hero of a deadly combat with a rhino in the African night, in which he completely worsted and killed the savage beast. We can rest assured that the story lost nothing in his version of this strange affair.

When the railway had been built as far as Sultan Hamoud, rhinos were unpleasantly plentiful in that neighbourhood. In actual fact, they became a regular nuisance in disturbing the work of laying down the rails and preparing the track ahead. At odd moments during the day, they made a habit of turning up to see how the work was progressing and to stare at the Indian coolies from a rather uncomfortably close range. No man in the world can concentrate on the work in hand, let alone in laying down a railroad track through virgin land, if he is being closely watched by a rhino from a distance of a few hundred yards. Such brutes make a distinctly unpleasant "gallery" for those chiefly concerned!

When selecting a site for a camp, it is never wise to pitch your tent on an old rhino path. I did so on one occasion, but am never likely to repeat such an act of folly. I was on safari

with John Egerton, and we had camped for the night in typical rhino country. The bush was cut up in every direction by old rhino paths; and, not suspecting any trouble, we had our tents pitched in the centre of the broadest one. We had marched far and for many hours that day, and the sun had been terrifically hot. We felt disinclined, therefore, to ask our native porters to clear the ground for our camp site. They had been carrying sixty-pound loads, and were probably as tired as we were; and a little consideration for your human beasts of burden is just as essential as for your animal transport.

In the middle of the night a rhino walked down that path, collided with our tent and wrecked it completely, and then passed on over it on his or her way. I never did know its sex. It does not matter, in any case.

Neither of us was hurt, but both were very irate at being so rudely awakened and at the damage done to the tent. I struggled out from under the wreckage, grabbing my rifle as I did so. There chanced to be a full moon, and I could see the black stern of the brute lumbering off into the bush. Beyond sending a bullet after the beast to hasten its departure, I could not take action. Angry as I was at the rhino's senseless destruction, I had no inclination to hurt it. We might have fared far worse than we did!

Like the elephant and buffalo, the rhino is a one-coloured beast; and its colouration pattern is that which is most visible in either green or yellow bush country. But I have often failed to perceive one, even for some time after Hamisi had done so and pointed it out to me. In each case, the rhino was standing quite motionless about fifty to eighty yards from us, either in scanty bush or else in open grassy plains among ant-hills.

I have observed that they usually stand immobile when first disturbed, waiting to see if they can locate the danger. It is possible, of course, that they are really trying to evade being seen by remaining perfectly still; but I am inclined to think this is not so, and primarily they are searching for hint of the danger threatening them. Nobody can really say for certain, for the mind of a rhino is indeed difficult to fathom. I have often wondered if it has a mind at all, except to cause the maximum amount of trouble to those who cross its path.

Once, near Nairobi, I was out hunting lions with Hamisi. The latter suddenly called my attention to a grey mass on the plains, and whispered: "*Kifaru, Bwana!*" On creeping near

to it with great caution, I saw that it was a big rhino and fast asleep. He was lying down on the ground, with his legs doubled up under him. It was not until we had approached to within fifty yards or so of the beast that he awakened suddenly. He twisted his head to and fro, but did not appear either to have seen, heard or scented us. All at once, he rose to his feet and stood facing us, contemplating the advisability of charging. I did not want to harm him, merely to observe what he would do. I stood ready to fire in case of need, and waited. Several minutes went by, and he still seemed undecided. Then he walked slowly forward to us, and broke into a trot. This meant real business, and I could not afford to be inquisitive any longer. I aimed deliberately, and killed him with the first bullet.

Very often a rhino, wounded in the vitals, will perform a curious death waltz. In the case of a mortally wounded beast, this is generally a sure sign of death being very imminent; but is not always so. It is much safer to take no chances, and shoot again to kill.

As the animal falls down dead, you may often hear it utter a curious screaming whistle, not unlike the escape of steam from a small engine. I have heard this several times; but not on every occasion.

CHAPTER XXI

A RHINO'S "CONTEMPT OF COURT"

IN the latter part of 1904 I was sent down to Makindu to prosecute in a most unsavoury criminal case, in which the four Indian accused were to be tried by Ranald Donald, a noted Indian shikari and then Town Magistrate of Nairobi. There were many witnesses for the prosecution and the trial detained us at Makindu for three or four days. It is on the railway between Mombasa and Nairobi, on the Tsavo Plains, and was a noted area for big game and bird shooting. Lion, rhino and even buffalo were constantly found hereabouts.

Each morning, before the Court sat, Donald and I went out for a couple of hours' bird-shooting. We enjoyed wonderful sport and had large bags—greater and lesser bustard, spur fowl, guinea fowl, sand grouse, and both quail and snipe figured in our list each day. On our return to Makindu, we consigned the birds by the first train to Nairobi for distribution among our friends.

On our last morning, a fool rhino butted into the picture and completely spoiled our outing. I would not have minded that so much, but could not forgive his greater sins. We were armed with nothing more deadly than shot-guns, as we had no desire to hunt big game; and, furthermore, had not anticipated any danger. Our gun-bearers had not accompanied us, but Donald's two sporting little fox-terriers completed our party.

I had just brought down a brace of sand grouse, when a much disturbed rhino bull charged full tilt at me from an adjacent path in the bush. Neither of us had the slightest suspicion that one of these beasts was anywhere close at hand. He caught us quite unprepared for action.

There was only one thing to do in the circumstances, and that quickly. I ran for the nearest tree and shinned up it as fast as possible, unmindful of the cruel thorns. Even these were

preferable to a rhino's horn in my body. Unfortunately, I dropped my valuable shot-gun in my haste to get out of the way of that rhino. I only just managed it. Once safely up in the tree, I had time to look round for Donald. He also had climbed up into a nearby tree, and I saw that he had his gun with him. He called across to me that he had only one cartridge left in the breech, and had dropped his ammunition-bag when getting into the tree.

"Better save it to tickle up this fool rhino, in case we're marooned here too long," I shouted back.

"A lot of use small bird-shot would be," he laughed.

We had abandoned our morning's bag of birds, and now the rhino advanced warily to sniff at the heap. Very quickly he had made mincemeat of them. Then he turned his attention to my shot-gun, and tossed it into the air with his horn. When it landed on the ground, he stamped savagely upon it. I groaned aloud, for that weapon was a Daniel Frazer, which had cost me sixty guineas in Edinburgh and was my most prized possession. Time and time again the brute repeated this little act of pleasantry; and, by the time he had finished amusing himself with it, my shot-gun was not worth sixpence. I could have wept!

I wondered what had happened to the two fox-terriers, for there was no sign of them. Later, we discovered that they had considered discretion the better part of valour, and had made a bee-line for the Dak Bungalow at Makindu. Wise little dogs!

The rhino now came forward to sniff round the base of my tree. We both climbed higher. Unfortunately, we were in long-thorned Acacia trees and our perches were confoundedly uncomfortable. For some days afterwards I was engaged in picking out these toothpick thorns from my body, and so was Donald.

Another hour dragged by, and still we were held prisoners. I was fast growing cramped in my legs and arms, and the thorns were beastly painful. If it is true that we are all descended from the ape family, I have no desire to revert to type if this was a sample. As for my temper, it was very severely frayed; and with good reason. The absurdity of our predicament did not appeal to the streak of humour in my system. All I wanted was to be revenged on our cantankerous foe, and then return to Makindu: neither was possible. And we were both long overdue in Court.

I called out to Donald and suggested that it was about time for him to tickle up the rhino's posterior with his sole remaining cartridge. I wanted my breakfast, and to complete that criminal trial. Donald was not having any, and firmly declined to carry out my suggestion.

The rhino appeared to have come to an anchor for the rest of the day; another hour dragged by slowly, and he seemed to be asleep. By this time both of us had our fill of being imprisoned in tree-tops. We were thirsty and hungry, bored and angry, full of sharp thorns and cramped, and wanted to be rid of that pestilential rhino. Once again I proposed that my companion in misfortune should fire at the rump of the beast, and see if this would have the effect of making him move on his way. This time, Donald agreed to expend his last cartridge in a desperate throw for release.

The rhino was probably more startled by the sudden report of the gun than hurt by the pellets, for the hide is so tough that the latter could not have done more than glance off it. The remedy, however, was instantly effective. The ugly brute woke up and snorted angrily; and then, to our immense relief, rushed off into the bush.

We gave him a good fifteen minutes to make himself scarce before climbing down from our thorny perches. Having retrieved our wrecked property, we hastened back to Makindu for breakfast-lunch combined. On the way, we kept a watchful eye for our late tormentor or any of his ilk, but saw no more rhino on that weary tramp.

Immediately we had eaten and the trial was completed, we decided to go back after that most annoying rhino. We both wanted revenge for the indignities inflicted upon us; and, furthermore, were convinced that the brute would be recognized with ease. We had been given ample time to take in every single characteristic of that rhino's personal appearance. After two hours' tracking, we located him in the bed of a small nullah. He went down to Donald's first shot.

Neither of us had the slightest compunction in killing him, and knew his sentence of death was wholly deserved. He had been guilty of gross "Contempt of Court."

If I am not likely to forget the rhinos of Makindu, there were two other men still less likely to do so; that is to say, if their story is genuine.

This unrehearsed comedy occurred in the early days of

railway construction, and the details were related to me by Dr. Stewart in Nairobi. I have his word for its truth, and he always enjoyed a reputation for being the soul of veracity. Some time afterwards, I also heard the tale from a railway engineer and was assured that Larkin, the other actor in the hilarious scene, had sworn to the facts.

It was Stewart's first encounter with a rhino. The narrative of his experiences would have ruined his reputation for truthfulness had it not been for Larkin's staunch corroboration of every single detail. True or not, it is a curious and amusing adventure, and, as such, deserves being recorded. I do so, as nearly as possible, in the words of Dr. Stewart.

The doctor and Larkin, a South African railway engineer, had gone out shooting from the railhead camp on the Makindu River. After trudging for a couple of hours or so through the bush without seeing any game to shoot, Larkin decided to climb up into a tree for a better view of the surrounding countryside.

With the assistance of Stewart, he grasped a low hanging branch and swung himself upwards. Presently, he spotted a large greyishblack object coming straight in their direction through the scrub. In order to see it better, he climbed out along a branch. It snapped suddenly under his weight, and deposited him unceremoniously in a thick and thorny bush. Now Stewart climbed up into the tree, while Larkin struggled to free himself from his uncomfortable nest in the thorn-bush. At that moment, a large rhino passed quite close to the two men and seemingly without knowing of their presence.

Badly scratched and his khaki clothing torn to shreds, Larkin finally extricated himself from the bush. Keen as mustard now, he picked up his rifle and set off on the trail of the vanishing rhino. Stewart jumped down from the tree and followed him.

The rhino was making for the railhead camp. Stewart, noting this fact, suggested that they should keep the animal going in that direction and not attempt to kill the beast until quite close to the outskirts of the camp. He argued that this would simplify the labour of bringing in their trophy. Larkin agreed. All went well at first, for the rhino kept straight on in the desired direction, while the two sportsmen followed quietly in the rear. Both were blissfully unmindful of the danger if the beast faced about and reversed the route of its constitutional.

About half a mile from camp, the rhino left the dense bush



Photo by Fred A. Parrish

A BULL HIPPO YAWNING

and emerged on to a grassy plain; and now made off in the opposite direction. This was too much for the hunters. Stewart fired at the broad stern of the beast, the only target offering, in the hope of thereby turning it once more toward the camp. The rhino seemed to be completely staggered by this sudden violent assault in the rear portion of its anatomy, and stood still. No doubt it was wondering who had taken such an unfair advantage and kicked it so hard. The beast stood without movement for some considerable time, chewing the cud of reflection.

Larkin was nonplussed by this unaccountable behaviour. The two men began to shout their loudest in the hope that the rhino would move on again, and toward the camp. As their combined vocal efforts had not the least effect, they began to bombard it with big stones; but this also proved fruitless. Larkin now broke off a stout sapling, and approached cautiously to their quarry. He belaboured the rhino's rump with all his strength, but without moving it. As all these drastic measures proved ineffective, the two sportsmen decided to kill the beast where it stood.

Just as they were about to shoot, the rhino made up its mind to move onwards. It went off slowly, and away from the camp. This contrariness annoyed Larkin, and he ran after the beast, grabbed hold of its small tail, and strove to swing round the huge beast in the desired direction. The rhino positively declined to answer to its helm, and from a slow walk now broke into a sharp trot. Larkin hung on firmly to the tail, and still fought to swing the beast's body so that the head pointed toward the camp. Stewart trotted along behind this unique procession, carrying both rifles on his shoulders and wondering what would be the ultimate conclusion of their strange adventure.

They had not progressed far in this manner when the rhino appeared to throw off its stupor and realize that all was not normal at the rear. It halted abruptly, and wheeled round to investigate this unaccountable drag on its tail. In so doing, it swung Larkin completely off his feet; but he hung on to the tail like a leech. At the same instant, the rhino got a whiff of the doctor's wind.

That was when the real trouble started!

Stewart hurriedly sought cover behind a convenient bush, and was only just in time to get his rifle ready when the beast

charged home at him. There was no mistaking the rhino's intentions, he assured me. Larkin, in acute anxiety for his own safety, yelled out to the doctor not to fire as the bullet might hit him instead of the animal.

Fortunately, the big brute came to a halt just beside the bush behind which the doctor was hidden. It appeared to be listening intently. Then, after a few minutes of immobility, it got another strong whiff of Stewart's wind and started to chase him round the bush. The hunt continued for some considerable time, the rhino enjoying the game of "here we go round the mulberry bush" far more than either Stewart or Larkin. The doctor led, closely pursued by the rhino, while Larkin brought up the rear of the procession. He was still firmly clinging to the rhino's tail. Round and round they sped, without a word being spoken by either man. The angry rhino was snorting at intervals, while both men gasped for breath; and it looked like being the animal's race. Finally, completely winded and exhausted, Stewart made a desperate dive into the thorny bush.

The rhino, with Larkin still attached grimly to its rudder, rushed on past the bush. It had not seen the doctor's sudden manœuvre to shake off that relentless stern pursuit. Larkin stated afterwards that he was just about all in and could scarcely keep his feet on the ground, but he dare not let go of the tail, for he felt more or less safe as long as he clung to the stern of the beast.

Suddenly losing the doctor's scent, the huge beast came to an abrupt halt. This was the chance Stewart had been hoping to get. Picking himself out of the bush, he took steady aim and sent a bullet into the neck of the rhino. The animal let out a whistling sound as of the escape of steam, crumbled and went down on its side. It did not move again.

Running up to his kill, Stewart found Larkin in a state bordering on collapse, but still automatically clinging to the beast's tail and with a stare of desperation in his eyes. The doctor assured him that all was well now, and the rhino dead. But Larkin declared vehemently that he was at the safest end of the brute, and intended to remain there.

It was some time before Stewart could persuade his companion to relinquish that tenacious grip on the defunct animal's tail.

Practically all my own meetings with rhinos have not been of my seeking. I seldom have had any particular wish to slay

them and, in most instances, merely acted in self-defence or to protect my property. Too often for my liking I have been the object of an unprovoked charge or wanton attack. My experience has been that they are more wilfully vindictive than actually dangerous. If the hunter keeps his wits about him, the odds are largely in his favour. The rhino's great weight—about three tons—is detrimental to any fast speed, while its defective eyesight is a severe handicap.

If the wind is blowing toward you when charged, the odds are that you can safely stand your ground and get in an effective death-shot. But a rhino is never an easy animal to kill, for its hide is like the armoured sides of a battle-cruiser. The neck is the most vulnerable spot at which to aim, for then you are almost certain to break the spinal vertebræ.

To my way of thinking, the most curious thing about a rhino is that you generally bump into one when least expecting to do so. You may often hunt its known habitat for days on end and never even get a glimpse of one; and yet one fine day, when thinking of anything but such a beast, you walk right into a rhino. For example, once when actually searching for a very fine bull which had been reported to be haunting the Stony Athi River, I devoted seven days out of a fortnight's leave to hunting for it. I never even got a sight of the beast.

On a number of other occasions, I have encountered a rhino on the open plains or in bush country when not desiring either to hunt or kill a specimen. In the majority of cases, they insisted on giving battle and generally made themselves such an unmitigated nuisance, that I had to put a stop to their nonsense. If only they had left me alone, I should not have interfered with them or taken their lives. Only their arrant stupidity and vindictive nature sealed their death-warrants.

I can quote a number of illustrations of this spirit of aggressiveness on the part of rhino, but the following instance will serve.

I was returning to Nairobi from Fort Hall, and was near El Donyo Sabuk, when I was attacked by a rhino when not even hunting but engaged solely on my lawful occasions. When least expected, a bull appeared from behind a clump of mimosa trees and advanced menacingly towards my safari. He was too far away to have seen us, but probably either had caught a whiff of man-tainted wind or had heard my porters' lusty chanting. This old and cantankerous bull appeared to strongly.

resent our presence in his private preserves, and straightway gave vent to his displeasure.

If I had been given any choice in the matter, I should most certainly have side-stepped any argument with that beast, even one with an exceptionally fine and long frontal horn as had this specimen. It was not to be. He was simply spoiling for a fight, and shouting aloud for trouble. He got both.

His ponderous and determined advance at a walk soon changed into a fast trot; and then he raised his head, held his tail erect, and charged full gallop at my safari. Rather than have any of my porters injured, I tried to head him off by firing a shot close to his head. I might just as well have saved that cartridge. Instead of turning him, the whine of the bullet past his ears seemed to make him even more furious; and he increased his speed. My Wakikuyu porters had halted to watch the rhino, seemingly in two minds whether to stand fast or bolt to cover.

Head well down now, he was obviously bent on real mischief. I fired again, and hit him at the base of that long and thin frontal horn, but the shot neither turned nor stopped the brute. He held on his way, straight for the centre of the safari. This proved too much for the nerves of the Wakikuyu. They dropped their loads to the ground and incontinently sought refuge in some nearby trees. Hamisi shouldered up to me, the spare rifle thrust forward ready for the lightning exchange of weapons, and stood ready to fight it out with that infuriated beast. Trust Hamisi not to run from danger!

The rhino was on top of us far too rapidly for a chance to hit him in a vital spot. That opportunity had been missed owing to my reluctance to injure the brute. He reached my abandoned loads, braked down on his wild gallop, and halted to investigate this strange litter on the veld. I fired a glancing shot at his rump, in the hope of making him desist and seek pastures new. The idea of my personal effects being converted into playthings for a fool rhino made no appeal at all, but I did not want to kill him. It was his room I desired, not his company.

The slight flesh wound seemed to make him all the more determined to wreck everything in sight. He proceeded to do so in a most thorough and methodical fashion. Every time that I advanced to drive him away from my property, he turned round and drove me away. Often I had to run hard and seek cover

behind a convenient tree, while Hamisi ran for another. Promptly, the rhino halted mid-way and returned to my loads, which he seemed to prefer as toys. Judging by the howls and shrieks of glee from my porters in the surrounding "gallery" of trees, the undignified retreat of Hamisi and myself afforded them the most intense amusement.

All my well-intentioned efforts to frighten away the beast having failed signally, and now being exceedingly weary of his unwelcome attentions, I fired from behind the cover of my tree and brought him down. Another bullet at close range ended his vicious life. It served that persistently pugnacious beast right! And he had provided me with one of the best rhino trophies that ever fell to my rifle.

It was some time before I could re-assemble my grinning porters, gather up the scattered remains of my baggage, and resume my march to Nairobi. The damage this idiot rhino had committed was considerable. My valise was badly torn, the ridgepole of my tent broken in three pieces, and—unkindest thrust of all—my only bottle of whisky had been shattered and the contents spilled out on the thirsty veld. I could have sat down and howled, for there was no chance of replacing it until a week later.

And I do so enjoy my daily "sun-downer"!

During the Sotik Punitive Expedition in 1905, I was out on patrol with a brother officer. He had only recently arrived in Kenya to join the King's African Rifles, and as yet had no experience of big game shooting. We were marching ahead of our men, each carrying a sporting rifle. Without any warning whatsoever, a big bull rhino charged viciously over the top of a ridge and headed straight for us. We had neither seen nor heard him until he breasted the ridge, some thirty yards away. The instant my sights came on I let rip, and down he came on his knees and stomach. We stood still, waiting for him to rise again; but he was dead.

My companion was hugely elated, even though it was not his trophy. The rhino had fallen in such a position that it made a most realistic picture of a beast actually charging over the summit of the ridge. He begged me to take a photograph of him as he took a close-up of a charging rhino. I complied, and the resulting negative was a lifelike record of what he had hoped to get.

No doubt, he sent that snapshot to his best girl in England,

with a graphic account of how he had faced a charging rhino, armed only with his camera, and taken a snapshot of it before the beast was killed by a companion. The photograph would have deceived most people.

Perhaps I do him a grave injustice, but it was a most tempting chance to pose as an intrepid photographer of wild animals of the dangerous type.

And human nature is ever frail!

CHAPTER XXII.

"WHITE" AND BLACK RHINOS.

BURCHELL'S "white" rhinoceros is really misnamed in so far as colour is concerned.

They are not white at all. They differ from the black or common variety of the species in that they are square-lipped, in temperament and in the nature of their food. How the name "white" rhinoceros came to be applied to this rare species is uncertain, for it is of a dark slate-grey colour and, by no stretch of the imagination, is it white. Selous told me that, when standing in the open with the sun shining full on their backs, in the early morning they do appear to be white when viewed from a distance. I later found this to be so, when observing these creatures in the Lado Enclave of the Belgian Congo (now Mongalla Province of the Sudan).

Quite possibly, seeing them thus upon the grassy veld, the old Boer hunters bestowed upon them the name of *witte rhenoster*, and it stuck. On the other hand, the name may have arisen from the animal's habit of wallowing in whitish clay, which is so commonly found on the bottoms of pools and water-holes in Africa. On emerging from its mud-bath, the sun and air rapidly dried the clay on the hide, which then showed up white when viewed from any great distance.

"Square-lipped" rhinoceros would have been a much more appropriate name for this species, and more correctly have described it. The upper lip of this beast is square and not of a proboscis-like nature as in the black variety.

At one time they were common on the grassy country of the open plains in South Africa, between the Orange and Zambezi rivers, but have never been recorded south of the former river. At the present time, the only surviving specimens in the Union of South Africa are a very small number in the game reserves of Zululand, and in the coast lands of Portuguese East Africa a few may still be found. It was formerly thought that the

Zambezi was the most northerly limit of the "white" rhino, but they have been found and shot, however, in the north-east section of the Congo, in the southern portions of the Sudan to the west of the Nile, and in a few other isolated parts of Equatorial Africa. In no case are they ever found very far from a river or water-hole.

Before the advent of the European colonists to South Africa, it is known that the "white" rhino was quite commonly found beyond the Orange River. The earliest writings of hunters and travellers teem with accounts of the slaughter of considerable numbers of these animals. During the course of one single day's trek with an ox-wagon, it was common for the trekkers to see anything from fifty to a hundred of this now very rare species.

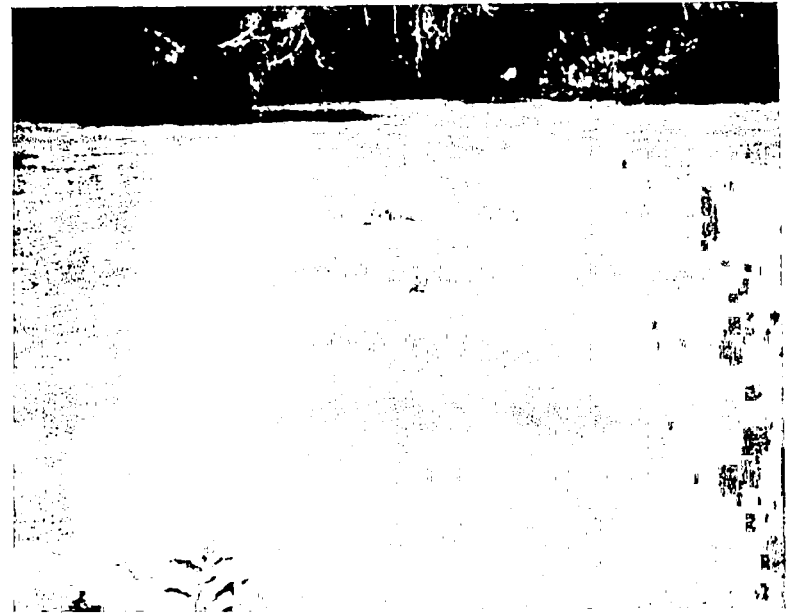
Between the years 1840 and 1850, these prehistoric-looking animals were recorded as abundant in suitable localities in the Limpopo River and Lake Ngami regions of southern Africa. Search as you may, none will now be found outside the game reserves in Zululand and in those other scattered areas already mentioned.

If we may judge by the writings of the majority of European hunters at the beginning and in the middle of the past century, game animals were slaughtered for the sheer lust of killing. For example, two hunters, whose names are often quoted in natural history works, mention having killed ninety rhinos during one short trip; and the majority of the victims were of the now almost extinct square-lipped species. Another hunter recorded having killed sixty of them in one single season. This is not sport, but sheer butchery. It is indefensible.

Even in the remote districts where the European hunter had not then penetrated, this senseless slaughter was carried on by natives who had somehow obtained possession of arms and ammunition.

The last known specimen to be killed in southern Africa of this "white" rhinoceros, other than those preserved in Zululand, was shot in Mashonaland, Southern Rhodesia, toward the close of the last century. They are now completely extinct in the Rhodesias, and almost so elsewhere.

The "white" rhinoceros is always an inhabitant of the open grassy plains and wide valleys, and feeds chiefly, if not entirely, on grass. They associate in pairs or small family groups, generally speaking; but sometimes travel solitary. Though not



TWO HIPPO IN THE MIRUI RIVER



ONE COMES UP TO INVESTIGATE



now grouped in numbers, formerly they must have congregated in very large bodies in restricted areas, if we can trust the old records to be accurate.

With the sole exception of the elephant, the "white" rhinoceros is the largest of all the land animals. An adult bull often stands from six feet to six feet nine inches at the shoulder, measures nearly fourteen feet from the tip of the nose to the root of the tail, and has a circumference of fully twelve feet. There are two horns, the frontal, or nose one, being more slender usually, longer and less acutely curved, than in that of the black variety of this species. Sometimes the frontal horn is straight, and even inclined forward. This horn often grows to a length of about four and a half feet. The posterior horn is generally shorter than the frontal one.

Unlike the black variety, the "white" rhino has a very prominent hump over the withers, and an even larger one on the neck. The huge misshapen head differs in all respects from that of the more common variety.

Realizing how extremely rare and how near to complete extinction is this variety, though I saw more than a couple of dozen during my hunting trips in the Congo near the Nile, I refused to shoot a single specimen. Often I side-tracked them purposely, rather than be drawn into any argument likely to force me to shoot in self-defence. I am most tremendously glad now of that spirit of forbearance. The trophies, as it has transpired, would have been an encumbrance to me and not an asset, and I should have killed, therefore, without legitimate reason.

Instead of hunting and shooting them, I found ample reward in observing their habits in a natural environment.

Several times, during the hot hours of the day, I have stumbled upon a small group of these rare beasts asleep, and gave them a wide berth. I have also seen them feeding in the early, cool hours of the morning. At times, I met them in parties of three or four, but mostly they were solitary or a pair.

On one day, I came across a bull, cow and calf feeding in an open glade. They must have heard my approach before I saw them. While they stood hesitating what course to pursue, to bolt or charge, three others suddenly dashed out of the cover and raced away. My small family followed their example. I let them go. I had sworn to myself not to shoot one unless it was quite imperative—the animal's life or mine. I kept my vow,

despite the strong temptation to break it. The bull had offered a very generous target, and was a wonderful trophy. I am glad that I refrained from shooting him.

These animals progress at a rapid trot, with the head carried low and the long anterior horn almost parallel with the ground. Although, at a trot, it can outdistance any man on foot, yet it is easily overtaken, so Selous assured me, when ridden down on horseback. That is one reason why they became such easy victims of the old-time hunters in southern Africa. Kermit Roosevelt, when hunting them on foot in the Congo, below Rejaf, actually kept up with them when they made off at a fast trot, and got his trophy. I know of no other man who can say the same.

The family group, just mentioned, provided me with an interesting lesson in the maternal instincts of the cow of this variety. When they bolted off, the mother ran in behind her wee calf and guided it on the course to take by the tip of her horn, which she gently pressed on the small scrap's rump as occasion dictated. In this way she was able to keep it in full view and, at the same time, protect it from a rear attack. As I have already stated, the calf of the black variety follows the mother when escaping from danger.

The "white" rhino is timid and generally quite inoffensive, but when wounded and brought to bay, it has been known to charge the hunter.

The old Boer hunters of South Africa, as well as the natives, killed these beasts for the sake of their horns and hides. The former were sold as curios, and made into walking-sticks, whips, knife-handles, combs and so forth; while the latter were converted into sjamboks and wagon-whips.

Selous said that the eyesight of this species was as poor as that of the black variety, and he was often able to walk up openly to within thirty or forty yards of them in the veld without, apparently, attracting their attention. Their sense of smell, however, is very acute, while their hearing seems to be rather indifferent.

An elephant poacher in the Congo, who had shot several of this rare species, told me that, when real hard pressed, the "white" rhino breaks into a lumbering gallop. When a hind leg is broken it is unable to run, but with a broken shoulder it can travel for a considerable distance at a gallop. He also told me that he was once forced to kill a most savage cow,

accompanied by a very small calf. When the mother was dead, the calf refused to leave her body and stubbornly resisted all efforts to drive it away. The little orphan charged boldly, directly my friend tried to approach, and it was only with the combined efforts of himself and a number of natives that the wee beast was captured. It lived for only two days in captivity.

Other hunters have told me of almost identical experiences with calves of the black variety.

The view seems to be generally prevalent that the black rhino is also being exterminated rapidly; but there is ample evidence to the contrary. What is much more likely is that he is retiring before the closer settlement of his former stamping grounds. Though they can never be said to have been endowed by Nature with any marked degree of intelligence, they have the sense to realize that, if remaining near the rim of civilization, their ultimate destruction is inevitable. Consequently, they leave their old-time haunts on the open grassy plains, and hide further away in the forest glades or in sparsely uninhabited regions. As long as they keep well away from human settlements and behave themselves properly, there is no reason at all why they should not be protected from the senseless butchery to which they have been subjected in the past.

There is plenty of room for the rhino in the unsettled and undeveloped areas, and it is to be hoped that he will not become wholly extinct. He is no beauty, and useless to man's needs, but he still has his rightful place in the clever scheme of Nature's own devising.

Personally, I have no particular liking for the rhinoceros, the more especially when I remember how they have wantonly broken up my safaris and damaged my property; but I am not so utterly vindictive as to wish to see the rhino family quite exterminated. I confess to a strong liking for seeing wild fauna of all varieties in their natural surroundings, and have always been a staunch supporter of all sane policies of game preservation. Just so long as they keep themselves clear of men and their works, I can find no excuse for butchering them ruthlessly. Of late years, they have displayed an intelligent desire to keep beyond the rim of advancing settlement. Fool he may be, but, at least, he shows that much common sense.

One of the most amazing adventures with a rhino was that experienced by the "Buffalo" Jones cowboy expedition. I

met Means, one of the cowboys, shortly after his return to America, and he told me about it.

There were seven Europeans in the party and five trained cow-ponies, to say nothing of a small pack of dogs and hundreds of native porters. Besides "Buffalo" Jones, there were two more cowboys, Means and Loveless; a photographer, my old friend Cherry Kearton; an American journalist, Guy Scull; and two professional hunters, Ulyate and his son.

Guy Scull was a fellow-guest at Sagamore Hill, Colonel Theodore Roosevelt's home at Oyster Bay, and told us that the three cowboys were first-class experts at their work, being quick, fearless and superb horsemen. They had to possess all those qualities for the job in hand. Their adventure remains unique in the annals of big game hunting.

The lassoing of the rhino must have been crammed full of thrills, even in comparison with their many other exciting experiences. They put up a bull in a valley of the Sotik country and Jones dashed in at the beast, being closely followed by Means and Loveless. The rhino went off at full speed down the valley, with the three cowboys in hot pursuit. Means told me that they galloped over two miles before the rhino halted, about turned and prepared to give battle.

After a brief consultation, Jones rode forward to make the big beast charge. The rhino watched him with its little pig-eyes flashing with anger. Without any warning, it suddenly charged full at Jones. It was very quick off the mark. The cowboy leader of the expedition swung his pony out of the way and galloped off, closely followed by the determined and aggressive rhino. Means now took a hand in the game, and succeeded in throwing his rope round the rhino's head. The noose settled down on its neck, and he was able to check the mad rush temporarily; but, a few minutes later, the rope broke under the severe strain, just like a thin piece of twine.

For over an hour the three cowboys chased and baited that rhino on the veld, each taking it in turns to be pursued by the beast in order to give the others a chance to lasso it. At last, one of them caught the rhino's hind leg, and this time the rope held. The huge animal dragged man and horse after it. Time and time again it charged first one and then another of the daring horsemen, but always failed to get home. The rope round the hind leg still held, while Loveless stuck manfully to the other end.

Means now dashed in and drew the beast in a headlong charge after him, whereat ensued a prolonged and terrific battle for victory. Scull told us that men and horses behaved splendidly, but the rhino was too much for them. Repeatedly they roped it, but the beast either towed them or else soon broke the rope. For five hours the final issue was always in doubt. Then the rhino showed palpable signs of being exhausted, and Jones decided to make the animal surrender.

He planned to get it roped to a tree. Loveless was sent off to get the brute on the run again, while Means roped it. His throw caught the beast by a hind leg. Yard by yard the huge beast was dragged and driven nearer to the selected tree. It was liberally bedecked with dangling rope-ends, but this one held. Finally, they got one end of the rope securely tied round a stout tree trunk, and the beast was captive.

The seemingly impossible had been made a fact. For the first time in history, a wild rhino stood roped to a tree in the middle of the Sotik plains. It was really an astounding performance, and deserves to be emblazoned in the annals of great adventures.

Not one of the party had any desire to kill any animal, and the only beast not released after being successfully roped was a lioness, as recorded earlier. Having achieved their object, they wanted nothing further from the vanquished except to set the rhino free to go on its way. But the gallant, stubborn captive was still too full of fight. Nobody could get near to unloose the rope from the hind leg. Every time they tried to do so, it promptly charged.

When it was dark, their fruitless efforts were abandoned. They left the rhino in command of the field of battle, still glowering savagely, snorting and making short rushes at them. If it could have got near, it would have killed them.

Means said that the beast was the real hero of that severe duel, and all had the greatest possible respect for the gallant fight it had made. Its courage was outstanding.

On the following morning, they all returned to the spot to make another attempt to release the beast, but the rhino had broken the rope and departed. They did not see it again.

After the cowboys had gone back to camp, the rhino probably soon recovered wind and strength. For a time, possibly, it stood still, harnessed to the tree and sunk in "prehistoric thought," as Kermit Roosevelt so picturesquely described a

rhino's pensive attitude on the plains. Then a quick jerk at the rope, and it was once more free to roam its customary haunts, but took with it many scars of that unique trial of strength, in the shape of a great number of dangling rope-ends.

Not long after my arrival in Kenya, I went off on a hunting expedition with a friend through the Uasin Guishu Plateau. I was forced, much against my will, to kill three rhinos in a group—father, mother and three-quarter grown son.

For some unknown reason, they persisted in disputing my safari's line of march. Probably they picked up our wind from a distance, for they approached us suddenly over a rise. We had not even known they were there. For several minutes they stood and watched us thoughtfully as we trailed past their grandstand, and we were under the impression that they intended to leave us severely alone, even as I proposed to give them a wide berth. This was not snobbishness on my part, simply that I did not want rhino trophies, good as the bull's horns were. I have wished often since then that they had acted more wisely. I hated to kill the family.

But their inborn curiosity got the better of them, and induced all three to investigate us more closely. They began to walk towards us in a rather threatening manner. I held my rifle ready for action, though loth to take the initiative. All I wanted was to proceed on my safari without let or hindrance.

When they had got uncomfortably close and still showed no inclination to sheer off, I asked my companion to shoot into the ground in front of the beasts. I hoped this would serve to turn them away from the safari. Often this plan has the desired effect; but, in this instance, it did not answer. The three of them at once charged full at my porters. I have no very great objection to the unwelcome attention of a solitary animal, but three rhino charging in a row is a most unpleasant crowd. I fired across their bows, but this only seemed to speed up their rush. They were as obstinate as mules, and obviously bent on breaking up my safari. This was more than I would brook, and so was forced to take defensive measures.

I killed the grand old bull with my first shot, and hoped this might force his wife and son to beat a hasty retreat from the danger zone. This was expecting too great a measure of intelligence from any member of the rhino family. The cow and her big son charged home on my porters, who promptly dropped their loads and fled to cover. My companion fired at the cow,

and hit somewhere but did not stop her charge. Then his rifle jammed. The rest of that fight fell on my shoulders, with Hamisi standing stolidly at my elbow.

Seeing that the pair really intended serious business, I killed the cow just as she tossed my roll of bedding skywards. Her fool son, meanwhile, got home on a chop-box filled with Fortnum and Mason's choicest delicacies. He wrecked this and three others of tinned provisions, a case of whisky that I had been commissioned to carry to the District Commissioner, and my tent. He was old enough to have known better, the overgrown lout. But the mischief was done before I was able to get a good shot at a vital spot. At last, he ambled up close to his dead mother in search of more toys, and I put a bullet into his heart. Damn his eyes!

I had used every device to scare them off us before shooting to kill. Their nonsensical display of ill-manners had to be checked and punished severely. They had been their own worst enemies. Had they not shown themselves over the brow of that ridge, I should never have known of their presence in our vicinity. Then they could have continued to roam the bush to their heart's content.

Stupid, stupid rhino!