



VITAL SHOTS ON THE ELEPHANT

Plate 1

THE DANGER SIGNAL, EARS PRICKED, TRUNK ALERT.
THE TWO FRONTAL SHOTS HAVE BEEN ROUGHLY SHOWN BY RINGS DRAWN ON THE
PHOTOGRAPH.

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BIG GAME SHOOTING IN AFRICA

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With one hundred & fifty
ILLUSTRATIONS



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SUDAN (Continued)

CHAPTER FIVE

THE WHITE NILE *pp. 162-167*

By COLONEL J. L. F. TWEEDIE, D.S.O.
Sometime District Commissioner

"A THOUSAND miles of shooting, good and varied sport on both banks, etc." So might run an advertisement on the prospects and pleasures of sport along the Nile south of Khartoum. For nowhere else in the world would it be possible to steam or sail through the heart of a country for such a distance, and so seldom be out of sight of game.

Save for a short and uninteresting tract between Kodok and the mouth of the Sobat, either one or other of the river banks is adjacent to good game country.

The first two hundred miles after leaving Khartoum is a veritable paradise for the wildfowler. It is impossible to convey adequately any idea of the vast throngs of Wild Geese, Duck, Storks, Pelicans and Waders of every sort, which forgather along the shoals and shallows of this desert stretch. When the railway bridge spanning the river above Kosti is reached, the scenery begins to change. Groves of "Sunt" and acacia fringe the banks. Crocodiles lie agape on the mud banks and the silence of the previous nights is broken by the grunting of Hippos.

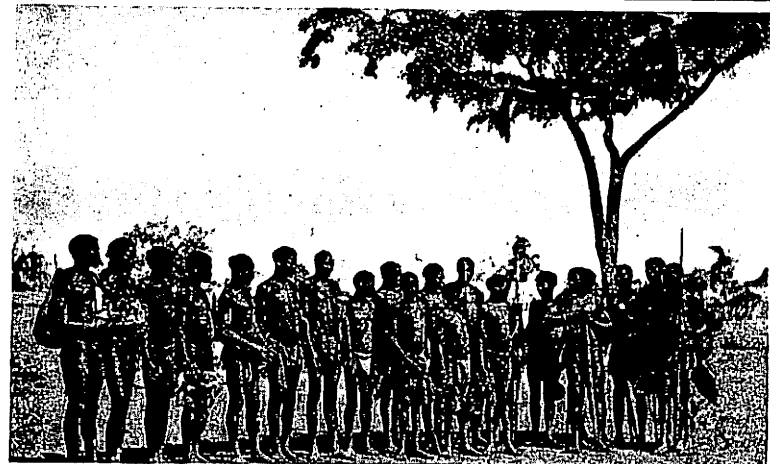
For the next two hundred miles or so the river runs its course through an excellent game country. Passing the Sobat River the Nile takes a westerly bend to Lake No: thence turns south again, traversing the Sudd region as far as Bor, when it again becomes possible to land at one's pleasure, with the prospect of acquiring a pair of first-class tusks, for all this land is famous Elephant country.

By this time the haunts of Buffalo, Roan, Hartebeest (two species), Tiang, Waterbuck, Mrs. Gray's Lechwe, White-eared Kob, Bushbuck, Reedbuck, Red-fronted Gazelle, Oribi, Situtunga, White Rhino have been passed, though, of course, it is extremely improbable that in a single trip warrantable heads of all the above would be added to the bag.

Lion are numerous all along the banks and the nightly concerts are a pleasurable feature of this river journey.

Of all its numerous tributaries the Bahr el Ghazal River is the most important, while the Bahr el Zeraf, though not a tributary, will, owing to the comparatively open nature of the terrain, afford as interesting a stretch as there is in the country.

Along the Bahr el Ghazal Situtunga are fairly numerous but seldom seen and more rarely shot. For one thing it is difficult to pick them up, as their pelts blend so well with the dry grass and tangle of dead papyrus stalks. With the exception of an occasional doe with fawn they feed singly and



Plates 31-32

WHITE NILE

- Top.* GIANT ELAND, T. DERBIANS CONGOLANUS.
NOTE THE MASSIVENESS OF THE HORNS OF THIS BULL AND THE FOREST COUNTRY HE INHABITS AS AGAINST THE HORNS AND HOME IN THE PLAINS OF THE COMMON ELAND.
- Bottom.* GROUP OF NYAM NYAM NATIVES AT WAU, S. SUDAN.
FROM SUCH MEN ARE ONE'S PORTERS RECRUITED.



THE WHITE NILE

Plates 36-37

Top. THE LATE CAPT. F. C. SELOUS HOLDING A GREATER BUSTARD. A PHOTO TAKEN ON HIS TRIP AFTER GIANT ELAND IN THE SUDAN.

Bottom. A GOOD WHITE RHINO. SHOT BY THE DUKE OF SUTHERLAND. VERY RARE AND LOCAL, AND STRICTLY PRESERVED. COMPARE THE SQUARE JAW WITH ROUNDER ONE OF THE BLACK SPECIES.

The same thing went on for quite a hundred yards. Every time we got too close he stopped and snarled, and every time he limped along we dogged him. Finally, he reached an old, worn-down ant-hill, and, walking on to the summit, surveyed the horizon. Faced by a burning hot plain and not a scrap of cover, he once more turned towards us with a snarl and his tail began to twitch. "Shoot," said my orderly, "he is going to charge." Now it was neck or nothing. Before he could hope to escape he must shake off his pursuers.

Fortunately for me I found myself standing close to one of those low, evergreen bushes, common to the Sudan, all stalk and thorns, but no leaves. I stepped behind this and took aim. It was no good, I could not keep the sights on his spotted hide, but it was no use hesitating, so I fired. A clean miss. Round he came, a succession of coughing grunts, straight at me. Would he jump the bush or come round? My orderly, stout fellow, held his fire; he quite understood that nothing but dire necessity would justify him in shooting. I was quite cool now. Another miss or failure to shoot dead, meant at the very least a severe mauling. I was determined to wait and blow him off the very muzzle of my rifle. On nearing the bush he turned off slightly to come round it; I leant forward and fired, catching him fair behind the shoulder and he fell dead within a couple of yards of his objective.

Now there is nothing strange in the following up and shooting of a wounded Leopard. The inexplicable part of it lies in the absolutely unprovoked charge with which the proceedings opened.

Thinking it over afterwards, I came to the conclusion that this animal had very possibly lost his fear of man; he may have been cornered and attacked by a native, to find that his innate fear of the species was unwarranted, and that once he got to grips the resistance was nil, and that man was the softest and easiest of victims. Many a man-eater, I am sure, is started on his fell career by a similar experience.

I confess I was annoyed with my orderly for firing his first shot, but the man was perfectly justified in doing so. He could not possibly be expected to wait and see what the Leopard was going to do next after knocking me over. It is only fair that I restate a well-established fact. The Sudanese soldier has his faults, and one is his extreme excitability. He may do the wrong thing, but one thing he will not do—leave his master in the lurch. For sheer staunchness and fidelity they may have been equalled, but they have never been surpassed.

Of White-eared Kob it is unnecessary to speak; they are to be found everywhere. Much has been written on the subject of their coloration. Why should one buck be black and another red, both mature specimens? I can add nothing to explain the mystery.

Both of those famous hunter-naturalists, Abel Chapman and F. C. Selous were puzzled by this variation in colouring.

There is one more species of Kob to be found. Abel Chapman, in his delightful book, *Savage Sudan*, on page 172 mentions the Woodland Kob he found on the south bank of Lake No, "practically all tawny, paler than anything hitherto seen, and devoid of the conspicuously white facial markings." Being uncertain that this Antelope belonged to another species, he refrained from shooting.