

# “FARU, By S. H. CALLISEN BWANA! FARU!”

*The Rhino, Last of the Great Tertiary Mammals,  
Faces the Sunset of Its Race*

**D**ID you ever have your attention drawn to some rather unusual word which you had never noticed before; to find it cropping up again and again in your subsequent reading? My experience with the rhinoceros in Kēnya Colony (British East Africa) seems to have been of a somewhat similar nature. For two months I hunted in bush country where ordinarily rhino were painfully abundant. Every quarter mile or so one would come across fairly fresh signs and tracks, or the skulls of departed giants, but never a living beast. Then one day I saw an old codger, intent on some mysterious business of his own, go strolling across an open, grassy plain

near the Tana River. That broke the spell—all the rest of my stay in Africa was haunted by rhino. The country seemed fairly oozing with them. It became rumored about that I just naturally attracted them and that I constituted a menace to safaris. I admit I did have my share of them, but there is absolutely no truth in the rumor that a rhino was found in my canteen or that a pet one slept under my bed.

Now I, for one, have never been able to take the rhino seriously. They can be dangerous enough when they charge home, and there are plenty of fatalities to attest their deadliness; yet most of the stories about their ferocious animosity to man are pure fiction or the

result of slipshod observation. Stigand, in his splendid book, “Game of British East Africa,” estimates that only one out of every one hundred and fifty so-called charges by a rhino are premeditated with intent to kill. As proof of this, I consider the case of Martin Johnson, who has taken dozens and dozens of stills and moving pictures at close range, without the necessity of using a gun.

**T**HE natives, also, travel about, armed only with light spears and herd their cattle in the worst rhino country without finding them a menace. After all, a rhino is stupid, unbelievably slow-witted and dense. Its eye-

sight is feeble and its hearing none too acute; only its nose brings it warning of approaching danger. One sniff of some terrifying odor, however, and it comes thundering along like a Mack truck with a drunken driver. Providing you are not blocking its favorite exit, it will probably go galloping past, snorting like a young steam engine, and when very annoyed, tossing any small object in its path. In the open, this habit of making a blind rush when disturbed, is not so trying, for one can almost always see the brutes first and by taking proper care in regards to silence and the direction of the wind, circumvent them. Loud clamor disturbs them, and as they almost always try to escape up wind, one must be careful to pass on their lee side. If one observes these precautions, they will go on about their own affairs, blissfully unconscious of a whole string of porters marching past, a hundred and fifty yards distant. In bush country, on the contrary, they are a real nuisance. They appear to delight in standing behind a clump of thick bushes, totally concealed from the unwary traveler, but all primed for action.

UNDER these circumstances one is usually fairly on top of them before one realizes it, and in this case they may charge on sight as well as scent. I have sometimes felt that their dashing about is merely a matter of misplaced friendliness, but no one seems willing to agree with me, so I will not urge my arguments supporting

could hardly be considered as offering a third possible route. There being a woman in the party, we attempted to compromise, and set the gun-boys to shouting and blowing police whistles.

ORDINARILY this will frighten a rhino out of what few senses it can lay claim to, and cause its immediate and hurried departure. Not so with this one. When the first sounds of the fearsome hullabaloo smote upon its consciousness, it turned about, though a good one hundred and thirty yards away, and tried to make us out. With ears cocked forward and head held high it took a step or two toward us. The boys redoubled their din—contrary to all expectation it continued to advance slowly, showing no traces of anger but only puzzled bewilderment. Hoping always that it would change its mind, I withheld fire until it should definitely attempt to be nasty. At about sixty yards it stood stockstill and gazed at us intently, with outstretched muzzle, trying to pick up our scent. For almost a minute we looked each other over in silence, since the boys had given up whistling, being engaged in getting out spare ammunition. Again it took a few steps forward and I prepared to shoot; after all, when one is not alone one must set a limit to friendliness and playful inquiry on the part of several tons of bone and muscle. Luck was with the rhino, however, for its guardian spirit whispered in its ear that we were not worth troubling about, and so with one or two final snorts of disapproval,

when we were charged under just such circumstances. As we were almost up with the elephant herd Albert was loath to fire for fear of frightening them and undoing the work of weeks. Almost without thinking, he began to pick up stones and shy them at the rhino, in the vain hope of turning him. He registered a direct hit, but the rhino was not playing the game according to rules and increased his speed instead. We both fired at once—luckily I broke his neck, causing him to come down on his nose and turn an almost complete somersault. Albert was knocked over but escaped serious injury. "Your bloody rhino again!" was all he remarked bitterly, as he dusted himself off and dug out some thorns he had collected when he sat down unexpectedly.

Sometimes, as I have stated, one can go months without seeing a rhino and then again they beset one at every turn. On one occasion I was headed for the Lorian Swamp on my own, with a small safari. The trail followed the Vaso Nyiro River, since the long dry spell had dried up all traces of water except in the stream itself, and in the springs in the limestone outcrops on the southern bank.

EVERY last rhino for miles and miles had taken up its residence in this one region, where it could slake its thirst. On an average of three times a day the shout would go up, "Faru, Bwana! Faru!" Down would go the loads on the lava, smash, bang, any old way, while the porters swarmed up the stunted thorn trees. With two exceptions, the alarm was uncalled for, as the rhino merely cut across the trail and disappeared from sight in an

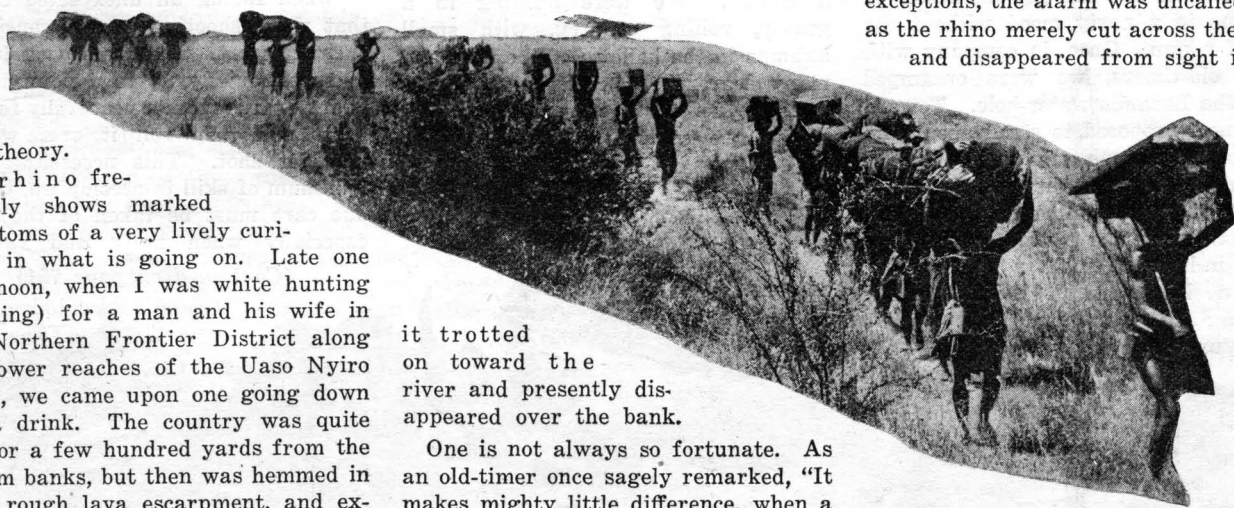
this theory.

A rhino frequently shows marked symptoms of a very lively curiosity in what is going on. Late one afternoon, when I was white hunting (guiding) for a man and his wife in the Northern Frontier District along the lower reaches of the Uaso Nyiro River, we came upon one going down for a drink. The country was quite flat for a few hundred yards from the stream banks, but then was hemmed in by a rough lava escarpment, and except for a few scattered bushes and a tree or two, perfectly open. Now the rhino was strolling along most deliberately, directly between us and camp, so that we had either to pass behind it and in so doing give it our wind, or cut between it and the river towards which it was headed. The lava escarpment was not a bit attractive and

it trotted on toward the river and presently disappeared over the bank.

One is not always so fortunate. As an old-timer once sagely remarked, "It makes mighty little difference, when a rhino steps on you, whether he does it out of pure cussedness or merely because he is in too much of a hurry to be polite." With one coming full tilt down a narrow path lined with an impenetrable mass of thorn scrub, one has little choice but to shoot and to shoot quickly. My partner, Albert and I were after elephant last Christmas

instant. After such an occurrence the safari presented a ludicrous sight. The porters swayed and groaned among the prickly branches like large over-ripe fruit, and much as they dreaded being trampled during a charge, they always found climbing down those vegetable pin-cushions an almost equally pain-



ful alternative. Nevertheless, descend they must and it is certain that our progress could have been traced by bits of human epidermis left on various trees along the path. The two exceptions mentioned are noteworthy. One rhino not only charged across our line of march, but returned for a second try and had to be deflected by a shot to the shoulder. The other paid with its life for smashing one of the chop-boxes to flinders and continuing its rampage in my direction until stopped by a solid bullet through the heart.

Nearly always a rhino can easily be swerved by a shoulder shot, since it will swing to that side on which it is wounded. When charging, its lowered head presents a very poor target, so that at close quarters a handy tree, not too thorny, makes a very strong appeal. There is nothing to be gained by killing indiscriminately. The horn and hide are of little value, and in order to keep these trophies, one must hold an expensive special license. All animals shot in self-defense have to be reported to the nearest game warden, and the horns brought in as proof.

**W**HEN one is out with a small safari and not likely to be in touch with civilization for some time, this is quite a nuisance. Unless one desires to bag a specimen the usual policy is to inflict only a flesh wound, when too close for comfort and safety. This does not seem to bother a rhino in the slightest, for it is a common occurrence to find them with inch deep sores on their flanks and dozens of huge scars.

Sometimes one can get the better of a rhino in a nasty mood without the aid of a gun. Once, in company with some old-timers, we were encamped near the Lasamis water-hole. Toward evening I proposed to stroll about and try to secure some guinea fowl for the larder, carrying with me only a single shot .22 caliber rifle. My little white dog trotted along in hopes of treeing a bird and barking at it frantically until brought

down. As I started, one of my friends called after me, jokingly, "Watch out for rhinos, N'dizi, you know how they love you!"

**D**ISREGARDING the warning I kept on, making my way up a dry gully and over the summit of a neighboring hill. As I was descending the far side, I suddenly heard the familiar steam-engine snort of a rhino, disturbed in its dreamy meditation of life and its manifold problems. Round some bushes it dashed and bore straight down on me. There was not a shrub higher than my head nearby, and only a very few of those. My gun was useless because of its tiny size and insignificant bullet. To tell the truth, I was so surprised and terrified that nothing entered my head except a vague notion of attempting a side-step at the last moment. But I never had to try pitting my agility against the rhino. Even as I stood expectant, my little dog rushed forward, barking loudly. To my utter amazement, the rhino no sooner became aware of the plucky white atom dashing towards it, than it turned, whirling about on its hind legs more nimbly than a polo pony, and made off in the direction whence it had come. I could see that strangely assorted couple—pursuer and pursued—go careering down hill and over the plain, until the dog was a mere white speck, bobbing along behind the huge grey bulk. An hour later the dog rejoined me, tongue lolling and panting, but triumphant.

The only other time I was really badly frightened by a rhino occurred when I first attempted to bag one for a trophy. We were hunting in a grassy, rolling country, with small swamps in the hollows of the hills and many clear, lovely brooks in the larger valleys. On our first morning in this region, we spotted a fine big rhino about a mile

away, walking slowly along a ridge, almost parallel to our own line of progress. I tried to head it off, but it was moving more rapidly than I imagined and it soon proved necessary to pick up its spoor and track it down—a simple enough proceeding in that type of country. The grass was almost waist high on the hillsides, but in the hollows it was well over one's head, and I should have been more cautious. Instead, I marched blithely along following the huge footprints, my entire attention riveted on the ground. This was all right when one could see some distance in advance, but I continued to do so after entering a patch of tall grass in a hollow. Suddenly my gun boy behind me whistled and pointed. There, some fifteen feet away, was the horn of a rhino, swinging from side to side, as the beast shifted about nervously, trying to make out its intruders. There was no outline visible, only a blur and this sinister, swaying black horn. Not being sure of my shot, I desired nothing more heartily than a little peace and quiet. It occurred to me that there were many other much more desirable locations in the neighborhood—so I left. Not that I actually turned and ran—that did not seem safe enough. No—I backed out of that little swamp as though I had been in the presence of royalty. If my quarry had possessed an atom of sense, it would have sat tight, but the old fool had to come waddling out to see what all the bother was about, and got a bullet through the heart for his pains.

**I**T is only in very bad country or when facing an unexpected charge that rhino shooting can be considered exciting sport. The usual procedure is to sneak quietly up to a point ten or twenty yards from a peacefully feeding beast and then roll it over with a shoulder shot. This necessitates the minimum of skill to accomplish, though due care must be taken of the wind, especially when puffy and varying.

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Two Rhinos were in view among the thorn bushes.

streamed in and out, to and from the Sanctuary; we never had even a shot, but what better sight was there than these honking "V"-shaped lines of geese winging through the clear winter air and alighting "free" in the Sanctuary.

We read of sportsmen getting their limit of geese before breakfast. We had actually bagged three birds in two days, but were none the less satisfied, as we felt we had earned them. I think the desire to kill ages with most sportsmen, and we can be almost as happy studying the birds.

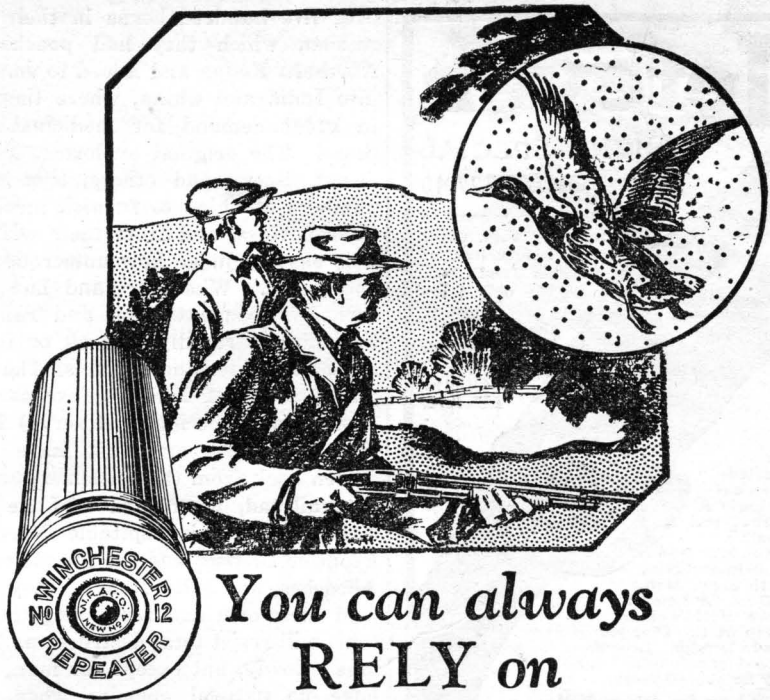
Protection has done much for the Nova Scotia geese. It is safe to say there are over ten thousand birds in the flock in question, and I do not suppose there are more than five hundred birds killed in the season at Port L'Herbert and Port Joli.

We left for home as the winter sun was setting red over the wooded "Goose Hills," the big spruce-girt bay of the Sanctuary, black with geese, and the clarion chorus of the honkers wishing us *au revoir*.

### "Faru, Bwana! Faru!"

(Continued from page 722)

On one occasion, a man with whom I was hunting desiring a trophy, walked to within about fifteen yards of a rhino dozing behind a patch of bush. In order to get a clear shot he had to step boldly into the open, exposing himself to his quarry. Even such a purblind beast could not help seeing him, for he was a big man and bulked large against the sky line. The rhino lifted its head suspiciously and snorted. My friend took aim with his '405 Holland and Holland rifle and pulled the trigger. The right barrel gave only a faint snap. He tried the left with the same result. The rhino became restive, swaying its head from side to side, but actually stood still long enough to allow the man to reload, this time firing successfully and with deadly effect. Of course this is an exceptional case, but it demonstrates how little real danger is ordinarily involved, and I give it because the usual bagging of a rhino is far too dull to warrant recording. Since they are so easy to slaughter, the colonial government has wisely put them on a special license, as already stated. This permit is issued at the rate of five pounds for one, fifteen pounds for two; no more than this number being allowed any individual during one year. Before being thus protected, the rhino were threatened with rapid extinction, as is proven by their heavy skulls, scattered everywhere about the countryside. Only a few years ago some Somali traders were apprehended with



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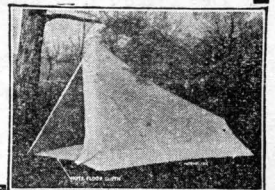
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over five hundred horns in their possession, which they had poached in Northern Kenya and hoped to smuggle into India and China, where they are in great demand for medicinal purposes. The original explorers, Teleki, Grant, Speke and others, shot great numbers of rhino to furnish meat for their porters, and from their writings it is easy to judge how numerous they once were. Wherever land has been turned into plantations and ranches, the rhino is rapidly shot off or forced to seek other feeding grounds. The vast plains south of Nairobi (except in a few parts of the Marsi Reserve) know them no more, and they have been driven back from the settlements along the railroad, northward to Lake Victoria. In the inhospitable Northern Frontier District and the forests of the Abedeers and Mt. Kenya, they still hold their own and for a long time to come will resist total destruction. They breed slowly, but except for man, they have no natural enemies when once half-grown.

ONE of the men I had out on safari was very desirous of securing a lion. These being rather scarce in the region in which we then found ourselves, we shot several zebra in the late afternoon, with the intention of visiting them the next morning, hoping that they might prove attractive bait. Sure enough, when we returned at sun up, there were the carcasses partially devoured and the soft earth everywhere impressed by the familiar pug mark. We followed the spoor across a plain towards some high, steep-sided hills. As near as we could judge, the party consisted of a lion, a lioness and two quarter-grown cubs. Their tracks lead us up into a V-shaped valley, hemmed in by cliffs—its floor strewn with boulders and over-grown with dense thickets of thorn. The prospect of meeting with lion under such conditions was not particularly inviting, especially as the lioness was almost certain to charge on sight. We wormed our way slowly and cautiously almost up to the head of the valley without avail. Suddenly, on our left, an animal roared, setting the echoes flying back and forth between the high rock walls, until it sounded like peals of thunder. We at once headed in the direction of the noise, which became momentarily louder and fiercer. Finally nothing but a thicket separated us from the raging beasts. With a few hurried instructions, "For the love of Mike, pick the lioness and bang her over first!" we crawled around the last obstruction, to find ourselves gazing at—a male and female rhino engaged in a tête-a-tête. We had all this while listened to a love song, without knowing that its blood-curdling quality hid a throb of

tender passion. My patron was grieved. He had his mind set on lions, and to find them transmuted into rhinos came as a bit of a shock. "I could have forgiven them," said he, "if they had been in a nasty mood and had encouraged murder, but really, one can't shoot a fellow for singing to his best girl!"

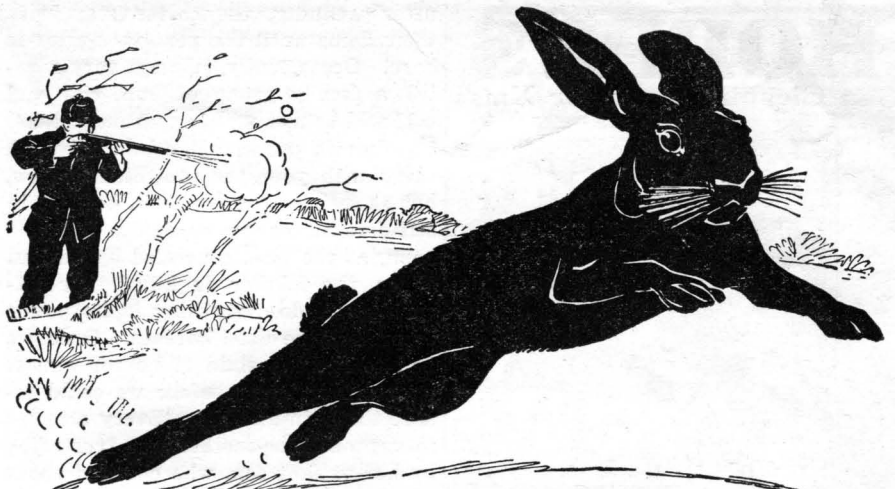
In the lava country and regions intersected by steep-banked streams, the rhino do the white traveler a distinct service. They are marvellous road-builders, and in their wanderings, generation after generation, in search of pasturage and water, they have tramped out splendid paths. The rough stones are gradually stamped into the surrounding soil and the river banks made negotiable by trails following easy gradients. Once a track has been established, the rhino will follow it almost regardless of consequences. Near the Shaba water-hole we pitched our camp on just such a path, neglecting the fact that we might have to receive unexpected visitors. We had left our tents before sunrise and were hunting Impalla on a nearby hill, when one of our personal boys came stumbling up to us. "Bwana! Bwana!" he gasped, "Faru makubwa wana tembelea kampi!" ("Master! master! A monstrous rhino is walking about camp!") We realized at once what had happened. A rhino, innocently intent on a drink to wash down his breakfast of thorn tree twigs, had come blundering down his private road, only to find it unaccountably blocked. We hurried to a vantage point on a hillside, and in a few minutes were able to look down upon the water-hole and follow the whole comedy through our field-glasses. By this time, the beast had drunk its fill and was about to return to its accustomed haunts. For the first time, apparently, it became aware of the bulky tents and the porters, who, having wisely climbed up some convenient trees, howled and shouted from their safe perches, daring it to come on and fight. One lone askari (native soldier) stood his ground, and as the rhino came lumbering along, took a pot shot with his service rifle. He missed his aim badly, but compromised by neatly puncturing the roof of the big tent a dozen yards beyond. Irrespective of this feat, the beast apparently felt that it had had sufficient excitement for one morning, and so broke into a wild gallop. A mile at top speed, and then it settled down into the slashing trot which rhino so often use when they feel called upon to see healthier regions. We watched for half an hour, following its progress across the gently sloping valley and along the base of a cliff-like hill. I have no idea just when it finally stopped, but it had travelled a goodly distance when it disappeared

in a bush-covered depression and was lost to view. Fifteen or twenty miles would not trouble it in the least, and it is quite possible that it sought out some other spring far away, where it could drink in peace.

ALL rhino seem to be more or less infested by a huge brown-backed tick, which lodges in their ears and wherever their hide is thin, as between their bodies and their forelegs and about the roots of their tails. These parasites, when present in large numbers, must be quite irritating, and it would be almost impossible for the rhinos to rid themselves of these pests, were it not for the kind offices of the tick birds. It is quite a common sight to see half a dozen of these busy little chaps, riding along on their friend's broad back and head performing the same functions as our common cow birds. Sometimes their chattering and nervous fluttering about give warning to the approaching traveler of a rhino lurking behind a bush, giving him an opportunity to escape an unpleasant encounter. They may also put the rhino on his guard, for they are quite easily frightened by the presence of man, and take flight long before their host is aware of an intruder. I have heard many stories and theories on this subject, but have never been able to come to any definite conclusions from personal observation.

Aside from this purely give and take companionship, rhino seem to be strongly inclined to a solitary existence. Fighting seems part of their crusty nature, and I have had abundant proof of their inherent unsociability. Once, observing the movement of some game herds, my partner and I were sitting perched on the top of a rocky kopji, from which, with our glasses, we could spy out miles and miles of lower country. Two rhino were in plain view below us. One was feeding on some thorn bushes, the other strolling along a regular path which would eventually bring the two beasts face to face. We sat and waited expectantly. Evidently the wind was so that neither was aware of the close proximity of the other until not more than ten or fifteen yards of fairly open country separated them. Suddenly the rhino that had been feeding, spied its neighbor and without a minute's hesitation dashed at him. The unwary wanderer was caught square in the ribs and almost knocked down. This unexpected attack proved so demoralizing that the aggressor triumphed completely, chasing the harmless newcomer out of sight over the next rise of ground.

WHEN two rhinos are observed together they almost invariably prove to be a cow with her calf. Even



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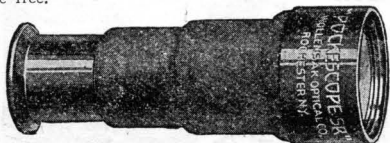
5 shot using the U. S. Army caliber 30, Mod. 1906 cartridges. Weight, 8 pounds. Length, 42 1/2 inches; barrel, 22 inches. Turned down bolt handle. Special price, \$10.45. Ball cartridges, hard nose, \$3.50 per 100. Web cart. Belt, 40 cents. Tents, cots, Messpans, canteens, Knapsacks, haversacks, Outing Suits, hats, helmets, Saddles, bridles, Bugles, lanterns, Modats, etc. 15 Acres Army Goods. Catalog 1925, 60th Anniversary issue, 372 pgs., fully illustrated, contains pictures and historical information of all American Military guns and pistols (incl Colts) since 1775, with all World War rifles. Mailed 50c. Est. 1865. Spec. New Circular for 2c stamp. Francis Bannerman Sons, 501 Broadway, New York City

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after weaning, the calves stay with their dams until the next youngster is born. Occasionally (though very rarely) a family group of bull, cow and calf will be met with, apparently living together in peace and equanimity. A rhino with young is protected by law, but sometimes the dam will be shot in self-defense or by accident, the calf being at the time concealed by bushes. When the mother is killed, her offspring will do everything in its power to protect the dead carcass. Once we had to leave a slain rhino for almost twenty-four hours before we could secure the horn and hide. Every attempt to approach the mother was frustrated by her valiant son, who charged about madly and drove off the gun-boys again and again. We were heartily sorry for what had happened, but as the calf was three-quarters grown, there is little doubt but that it survived.

The real trouble with the rhino lies in the fact that it is an anachronism. It belongs to geologic ages long past, when it flourished and was represented by many allied species, such as the

Elasmotherium and the Titanotherium. It has no right to continue on down into the present day, thus coming into contact with modern civilization, to which it cannot adapt itself. This antediluvian quality was most forcibly impressed upon my mind at the time of my last encounter with them, which occurred in the same region where I had seen my first rhino. I was returning to camp at the end of a long and successful day's shooting. An old cow rhino and her calf were strolling along, not very far distant and I sat down to watch them. They continued undisturbed through a series of grass-grown hollows, to the banks of a little stream. Here they drank in long sips, looking about between times. Their thirst quenched, they climbed a slight hill and then stood broadside. Behind them, the sinking sun fired the low-hanging rain-clouds. Black bulks, they stood; their strange shapes sharply outlined for a moment against the crimson background. Slowly they turned and made off westward, the last of the great Tertiary mammals, facing the sunset of their race,

## Remarkable Shots

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ing themselves in the sunshine, hailing their passing fellows, quacking with boisterous delight. The negro reached a place whence he could take a long "drag" on the unsuspecting hosts. His musket roared out—a fearsome sound, the detonation of which reverberated far up and down the river. As the hammer, pitted with innumerable powder-scalds, fell upon the cap, and as the antique weapon exploded, fire belched from certain cracks and holes along the thing's formidable length. But Paris was used to the gun. He rose calmly and stalked forward to retrieve his game.

WHAT made the shot remarkable was the number of big mallards that he secured. Some were wounded, but none of these escaped the negro. By the time he had finished, he had laid on the bank beside his musket thirty-four ducks. I once saw a famous sportsman kill twenty-six with two barrels, one on the water and one on the rise. But the feat of Paris Green is a record for his part of the country. The poet Browning complains that we never have "the time and the place and the loved one all together." Well, perhaps the cumulative feature is rare; yet in hunting it sometimes happens, and the result is likely to be a remarkable shot.

Into the greenwood, many years ago, a party of nine of us rode deer-hunting; and the occasion was rather ro-

mantic, for with us we had the wife of one of our hunters, who, report declared, was an excellent shot. She was dressed in a manner that is common enough to-day, but which then was considered daring in the extreme. Chamois knickers and a jaunty green coat; high hunting boots; a shirt with a soft collar; a Robin Hood hat with a feather stuck in it: we were so diverted that deer-hunting that day acquired an entirely new sort of fascination.

On the first drive, we strung the men along a big road, giving Maid Marian the last stand. What made her temerity complete was the fact that she insisted upon using a high-power rifle, whereas the men carried shotguns. I carried nothing but a whip—being a driver that day.

IN that first drive we started a one-horned stag—a wild-looking creature with one side of his head bare and the other decorated oddly with a tall and craggy beam. Parallel with the road ran a narrow sump, in the tail of which I jumped him. He started for the road, but veered when the first stander shot at him. Then he raced down the line of standers, every one of the male members of which emptied both barrels at him. I got into the open woods whence I could watch the whole performance. Fourteen barrels in all were fired at that fleeing buck, with no apparent effect other than to make him accelerate his speed. Then he came