

ELEPHANTS AND RHINOCEROS

SIR,—In the *Field* of March 5th your correspondent, "J. B.," gives an extract from a letter he received from a friend in Kenya. The tale describes how a herd of elephants were friendly with a pair of rhinos and a calf. The narrator meets "papa" rhino at close quarters one day and the rhino dies. Three days later the sportsman visits the spot, and "found that the elephants had returned to their dead pal, and carried the remains some 300yds. into the forest, which they thought a more appropriate burial ground."

This is a pretty story of elephantine sentiment, but is quite incredible. The undertakers were doubtless hyenas, as these animals often drag bones into cover before they start feeding. Within the three days the vultures probably picked the bones clean if any flesh was left on them, for they soon arrive on the spot if they can see a carcass. I have never seen or read of a case of elephants removing the remains of their own kind, and the skulls and bones of elephants remain for years in the place where they died, except when they had been removed by hyenas and jackals.

Belmont,
Moffat, N.B.

Yours truly,
DENIS D. LYELL.