

removable when over-large or numerous or out of place. A few feet off from where it is set plant some slow-growing but permanent wall shrubs, such as myrtle and pomegranate, which will ultimately take its place, and meanwhile its lower boughs and shoots will be made to give way to the gradual upward growth of the choicer subjects. *Solanum jasminoides* is a less reasonable type. It has no respect for its neighbours, but where the climate suits it is so beautiful, flowering richly and bravely till October ends, that it must be allowed a place. Only one survived with me the 1917 winter. It has been rewarded by full liberty of action. But I shall not be sorry for the frost that ends its blooming season, when the knife can be applied that will force it back to its own domain, to the relief of the oppressed *Edwardsia* and *ceanothus* by its side.

The *ceanothus* are excellent wall shrubs. The deciduous *Gloire de Versailles* soon rises to 15ft. and, well cut back each spring, has a double flowering season. Of the evergreens, *rigidus* is the most choice in its manner of flowering, and its habit of growth is vertical and reserved, whereas *dentatus* and *divaricatus* are rather profuse and horizontal in growth to suit a house wall. Of other evergreens, *Crataegus Pyracantha* is far and away the best for a north wall, while for the south the choice is wide. Jasmies and *escallonia*s, myrtles and the bigger *cistuses* are excellent. The golden *euonymus* has a sunny look in winter. *Veronica*s are beautiful, but few survived the 1917 winter. The beautiful *Veronica Hulkeana*, however, did, and is a desirable subject where a height of only 5ft. or so is needed.

H. A. T.

NATURE'S CAMOUFLAGE.—II

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY CAPTAIN F. RUSSELL ROBERTS.

EXCELLENT as the colouring of the pachyderms is from the protective point of view, one would hardly include them as good examples of camouflage. They owe their invisibility to a want of marking. Camouflage rather suggests concealment by means of markings. Elephants and rhinos have no enemies to fear in the ordinary course of events, and it is seldom by sight that they are found even by the

birds of prey. The wonderful sight of the falcon is often insufficient to enable it to detect the cowering partridge on the plough. I have on several occasions seen a peregrine knock down a partridge in an open field and then lose it. Still, the fact remains that in Nature most things are coloured in such a way that, at any rate in some environments in which they periodically find themselves, they do gain advantage from their markings



THINKING THAT THE DANGER MIGHT HAVE PASSED HE PUT UP HIS HEAD.

human hunter. Elephants are usually followed up by tracking, and it is very seldom that one would spot them by sight even though they were as gaudily marked as a giraffe. Rhinos vary their habits locally; they seem more completely at home in dense bush than elsewhere, but are often found out in the open plains disclaiming all concealment. Even then, nothing but man armed with a rifle is likely to be dangerous to them. One would hardly expect to find Nature holding them with protection against such a modern danger as a man with a rifle. Even poisoned bow and arrow are hardly natural weapons of offence. It would seem that Nature holds no danger to the pachyderms except the rare efforts of a hungry lion to catch a young calf.

Even the antelopes hardly require protection from the eye of any enemy. Gazelles inhabiting open plains, where they stand out distinctly, are as safe as, or safer than, the speckled denizen of the bush. In either case their danger is practically always from their scent. It is true that lions, leopards, etc., generally have a good look at their game. But in the first instance, except in open plains, they generally discover their quarry by smell. So I imagine that it would make little difference to any of the antelopes or big game if they were conspicuously coloured or not. Where protective coloration is really useful is in the case of insects, birds and small mammals which form the quarry of

The rhino in the illustration, busy licking a palm tree, has a mottled look about his head which very closely resembles the tree. He was a nasty fellow, that rhino, with a distaste for photography. When first seen he was alternately licking the tree and rubbing his neck against it. So busy was he at his occupation that I got within 25yds. or so to take this photograph, practically without cover. He was so engrossed in his own thoughts that, after finishing his toilet against the tree, he walked slowly across my front, enabling me to take two excellent photographs of him. One of these shows how invisible a huge creature may become when right in the open. He finally woke up very suddenly on recognising the strangeness of the sound when the camera clicked startlingly from a range of 20yds. He lost no time thinking what he should do, but did it. His truculence, unfortunately, cost him his life. In an open place there is nothing else to do but to shoot, and to shoot straight and quick. Fortunately, such a finale has usually been avoidable.

On one occasion I had a friend and several natives with me, and when our pachyderm took the offensive we gave a simultaneous and prearranged yell, which so upset him that he "about turned" and took refuge in panic-stricken flight. This scheme, however, failed dismally on certain other occasions. One *contretemps* took place close to the site of the earlier



ORYX SHOWING UP FAINTLY AGAINST DUST-COLOURED GROUND AND THIN BUSHES.

fighting in East Africa, below Mount Kilimanjaro. This rhino was a cantankerous spirit; a bevy of birds combined their duties of sentry with a square meal of various parasites haunting their host, which are such a feature of Africa. Their appetite on this occasion exceeded their vigilance, so I got unusually near. As a rule the rhino is warned by the birds flying up with shrill cries when the danger is still some distance away. In this case, however, he evidently realised that the matter was urgent, for without warning he came, making an excellent shot for the small bush behind which my gun-bearer and I were stalking him. As arranged, we shouted together. Possibly the chorus was not full enough, and the volume of sound consequently inadequate. In any case he came on undeterred, with a look on his face which identified his intentions as "strictly business." A first shot with a heavy rifle added zest to his attack, but a second, more carefully placed, stopped him just nine feet away. It was some months before I felt enthusiasm for photographing rhinos again.

My experience of rhinos is that they charge if they suddenly become aware of a danger close upon them. If a rhino gets your wind some distance away, he likes to nose about and see what to make of it, and then as a rule clears out. But if he is suddenly surprised by a danger which appears to him to admit of no hesitation in dealing with, he goes for it. He feels cornered and impelled to make a fight for it. With a bit of cover and a little luck, one can usually keep out of his way. Once past the danger, he heaves a sigh of relief and thankfully puts distance between himself and the trouble. There are very unpleasant exceptions to this rule, however, and he may,

especially if wounded, keep his head and fairly hunt the intruder. It is on these occasions that one does well to make sure one's gun-bearer is not sprinting for the horizon carrying one's heavy rifle.

Here is a group of oryx standing, a happy, lazy little family, whiling away the day chewing the cud of contentment. The scimitar horns with which both sexes are armed add to their noble appearance, and they know how to use them. A wounded oryx is to be treated with the greatest respect. A sporting dog's first meeting with one of them is liable to be its last, so quick and so deadly is the oryx's use of these terrible weapons.

I spent the best part of a morning watching this herd. Many small duels took place, not very serious ones, but enough to show that the oryx knows the value of his horns as a weapon and likes to practise them. The herd showed up very faintly against the dust-coloured ground and the thin bush from the cliff above where I sat watching them. If I took my eye off them for one moment, there was some little difficulty in picking them up again. The oryx is one of the most handsomely marked of African antelopes. The jet black patches on his face contrast vividly with the pale fawn skin. On the fore legs just above the knee he has a band of black, a surprising and seemingly useless marking, and also a stripe on the side. One would think these would show him up; in fact, they actually tone him down. The patches of black seem incidents in the groundscape and break up the flatness of his otherwise whole colour.

As an instance of how Nature runs to the opposite extreme at times, while I was sitting on this hill photographing these oryx I could see about half a mile away, and standing out like a lightskip at sea, a cock ostrich in perfect plumage. Its jet black body was shown up by the brilliant white of the wing

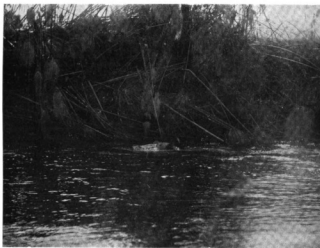


HOW INVISIBLE A HUGE CREATURE MAY BECOME WHEN RIGHT IN THE OPEN.

and tail plumes. So obvious was it that it caught the eye at once. Through glasses I could see it was sitting. I thought of our larder and of the many days' march which lay between us and the nearest fowls' eggs. It was a matter of the greatest difficulty to mark down the exact spot in a thin bush, flat valley without landmarks. We managed to make a sufficiently accurate shot. The bird went off while we were still some distance away, but we ultimately came on the nest (if it can be so called) with four eggs shining brightly and unmistakably, and visible as far away as the bush allowed a view. We shared the eggs evenly with the proud father, who later on resumed his duties as if nothing had happened. It is curious that this habit of the cock bird of sitting on the eggs during the absence of the hen is specially noticeable in the ostrich, for there is no bird or animal in Africa which shows up at a greater distance.

The hen ostrich's sombre sailing, of course, matches its surroundings perfectly, but even then her overdressed spouse puts her into the danger of having her nest found by his mere presence in the neighbourhood.

The ordinary means of concealment adopted by the hippo is simply submerging. When on the surface in open water he



HIPPO HIDING IN A PATCH OF PAPYRUS REEDS.

is a very conspicuous object. The ripples he creates and the spray he spurts into the air are hardly conducive to concealment. But when he knows danger is about he has a way of coming up very gently, making little ripple and exposing the minimum of himself. In the picture shown here the hippo was alarmed. He submerged, but at length, thinking that the danger might have passed, he put up his head to see what had happened. He was in a pool heavily shaded by overhanging trees; hence his difficulty in recognising me and the comparatively unnoticeable appearance of his huge and hideous head.

The hippo in this photograph at the head of the article evidently saw me, but in the gloom of the river bank he could not fully identify my crouching figure. He had a distinctly hostile look on his face, and each time he submerged I could not help wondering if he was going to appear at the water's edge with evil intentions. I had no mind for such a contingency, being on a steep slope into which I had to dig my heels in order to avoid being precipitated into the water. As the river was full of crocodiles a more undesirable prospect could hardly be imagined. Each time the hippo's head made its appearance it was always a little nearer. Having satisfied myself that I had got a good picture I climbed up the bank whilst the monster was under water. I do not think he really meant business, but in such a position, when any movement was likely to result in a ducking with crocodiles and hippos as bathing companions, I felt considerably relieved when I stood once more firmly on the bank. Discretion is, indeed, sometimes the better part of valour.

In another illustration the hippo is seen close to a patch of papyrus reeds. On the approach of danger, all he has to do is to put up his head among the reeds. He is then quite invisible, but can see sufficiently well to recognise whether or not it is safe to come out into the open.



HIS MOTTLED HEAD CLOSELY RESEMBLES THE TREE