

# PICTURES FROM THE UGANDA PROTECTORATE

## PART III.—THE BEASTS

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY SIR HARRY JOHNSTON, K.C.B.

I SAID in the opening part of these supplements that the Uganda Protectorate was remarkable as containing illustrative types representing nearly all the zoographical divisions into which Africa is divided. Here we find forms peculiarly representative of the West African region, of South Africa, of East Africa, Somaliland, Central Africa, and the Nile Valley. In the forests of its Western Province there are chimpanzees; the gorilla itself is found within a few days' march of Uganda's western frontier.

The existence of the chimpanzee within the limits of the Uganda Protectorate was first reported by Emin Pasha, who is said to have sent home a skull from Unyoro. Subsequent travellers, however, denied that this great ape was found there, and it was not very certain that Emin Pasha had not obtained this skull from the forests to the west of the Albert Nyanza instead of to the east of that lake. Soon after my arrival in Uganda proper I began to make inquiries from the natives about the existence of this ape. I found at once that it was well known to them by tradition, and that they possessed a name for it in their language which was *edzike*, a word which is obviously allied in origin to the *nzige* of Bantu races near the West African coast. According to the traditions of the Baganda, the chimpanzee in the times of their forefathers was found in an extensive forest which still exists in the district of Kiagwe, on the borders of Busoga, and quite in the centre of the Uganda Protectorate. It is not improbable also, from what the natives told me, that this ape further existed within the last few hundred years on the western side of Mount Elgon. All this evidence of its having inhabited countries nearer and nearer to the eastern side of Africa is interesting, because fossil remains of the chimpanzee have been found in Western India, and it is the opinion of some naturalists that the anthropoid pes, together with their congener, man, were evolved in Asia. Pressure of circumstances, largely concerned, no doubt, with the evolution and multiplication of mankind, extinguished the anthropoid apes in India, and drove the ancestors of the chimpanzee and gorilla westwards into Africa, across countries which, in not very remote periods, were sufficiently forested to admit of the sojourn of these tree-loving creatures. At the present day the chimpanzee is limited in its distribution—so far as the Uganda Protectorate is concerned—to the Bugoma and other forests in Unyoro near the east coast of the Albert Nyanza, and to similar stretches of forest in Eastern Toro, Northern Ankole, and, perhaps, also the western slopes of Ruwenzori and the Semliki Valley. When I visited the district of Toro and Mount Ruwenzori I made many inquiries from the natives about the chimpanzee. They knew of this ape's existence in certain forests, but declared they very seldom met it, as it was exceptionally shy. When cut off from retreat, however, it could display great strength and savagery, and the natives spoke of it with a certain amount of awe. They told the same stories about the chimpanzee's habits as have been reported by Emin Pasha and others; such as its building "houses" (shelters) in the trees (though they

relate that the adult male chimpanzee often sleeps at the base of a tree with his back against the trunk in the attitude given in the accompanying picture\*). The natives of Toro repeat the assertions of Emin Pasha to the effect that the chimpanzees are rather fond of beating with their hands hollow tree trunks which they find in the forest, and of shouting in accompaniment to this primitive music. The chimpanzees are certainly very noisy when they believe themselves to be unobserved. I have never succeeded in seeing any of them in these Uganda forests, but I have on one or two occasions heard and recognised their shouting cries, so familiar to me in the West African forests of the Cameroons and the Niger Delta.

During my stay in the Uganda Protectorate the place of theatres, concerts, exhibitions, and all the pleasant dissipations of our civilised existence were replaced, only as a means of distraction, by zoological studies, and, above all, by the keeping of a large menagerie. Many of my pets, especially the larger in size, remain at my headquarters at Entebbe; others, the monkeys especially, travelled about with me, and enlivened the caravan with their pranks. It amused us, amongst other things, to name the baboons and monkeys with distinctive appellations, which they soon came to realise as quickly as a dog does. The male monkeys were usually given Muhammadan names, partly by the Muhammadan coast porters, and partly in humorous raillery by the Europeans. On the other hand, the female simians were called by English names, of a more or less incongruous kind, largely taken from the heroines of the works of fiction circulating round the camp. Among our baboons was Eleanor Maltravers from the Semliki Valley on the Congo Free State boundary. She belonged to a kind of baboon difficult to classify, but offering considerable resemblances to the Chakma-like form which I have observed in the eastern part of the Protectorate. The male of this Chakma-like type had been captured by us when a tiny little fellow, and seemed to be indistinguishable from Eleanor in type, though nearly four hundred miles separated their birthplaces. The male was called Nassur, and Nassur and Eleanor, for aught I know, are living still as amusing bandits at Entebbe. Baboons possess a quite half-human intelligence, and, though sometimes inconvenient in their audacious mischief, they are most interesting



ELEANOR AND HER NURSE

pets to keep and study, and it is only by thus having them to live with one for years that one realises how much their average untrained intelligence is above that of the ordinary beast, and how distinct an approach the baboon makes towards man.

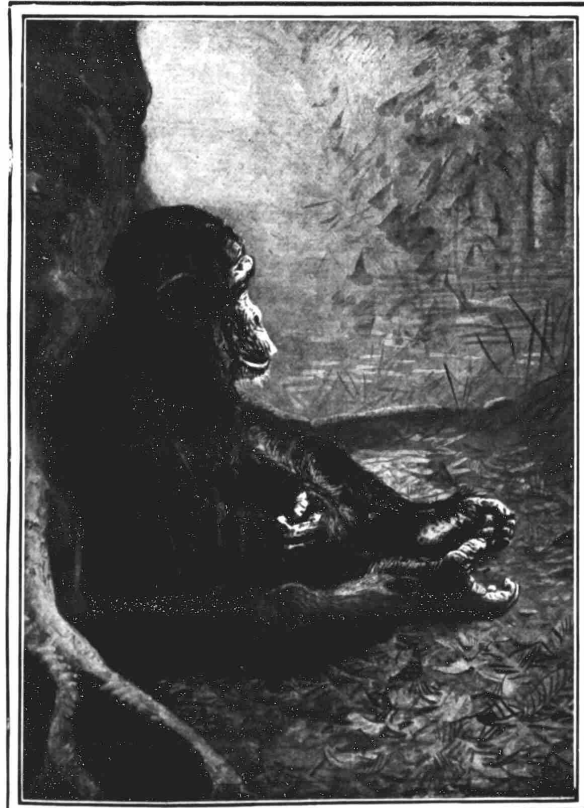
A strange-looking monkey comes from the district of Unyoro, and is found elsewhere in the Egyptian Sudan and in Senegambia. This is the Patas monkey, a creature which has taken to living almost entirely on the ground, and has developed very long legs like a greyhound. Its head is a bright chestnut on the top, and the rest of the body is a mixture of foxy-yellow, buff, and white. In the Uganda forests there are large *Cercopithecus* monkeys of blackish-green, and, above all, there is a charmingly pretty creature, the white-nosed monkey, a coloured illustration of which is about to appear in THE GRAPHIC.

The elephant is found all over Uganda, except, perhaps, close to thickly populated districts. There is little new to be said about it in addition to what has been already told by previous travellers. I have had the privilege of seeing large herds of this wonderful animal, whose appearance and mode of life so recalls those past ages of the earth's history when man had not yet made himself master of creation. The elephant might have attained to this position had not this clever ape forestalled him. But few elephants were killed by my expedition. I was rather anxious, on the other hand, to make experiments in the direction of preserving and domesticating this remarkable beast.

To attain this end I called, firstly, the chiefs of the Kingdom of Uganda into council, and asked them whether their people could attempt to ensnare, or catch in some way, very young elephants sufficiently small to be easily controlled. Little or nothing of the kind had ever been attempted before in this part of Africa, just as

they had never before attempted to catch chimpanzees; but so delightfully quick of response are these intelligent Negroes, and so anxious to meet one half-way in developing their country, that, within a week of having first mentioned the matter to the Baganda chiefs, the first young elephant in our series of experiments was landed alive and well at Entebbe. (Entebbe, the reader should be reminded, is the administrative capital of Uganda, and is situated on a promontory on the north-west coast of the Victoria Nyanza.) This little creature was at the time only four feet high. In two days it had become perfectly tame, and would follow a human being as readily as his own mother. It was easy enough to feed him with milk, because all that was required was a bottle with a long neck. This bottle was filled with cows' milk diluted with water and poured down the elephant's throat. Soon all that one had to do was to place the neck of the bottle in the elephant's mouth and the intelligent creature wound its trunk round the neck of the bottle, tilted it up, and absorbed the contents. For several weeks the elephant thrived, and became a most delightful pet. It would allow anyone to ride on its back, and seemed to take pleasure and amusement in this exercise. It would find its way through diverse passages into my sitting-room, not upsetting or injuring anything, but deftly smelling and examining objects of curiosity with its trunk. At the same time we had in captivity a young zebra, which was also to be the pioneer of a domesticated striped horse. These two orphans, the elephant and the zebra, became greatly attached to each other, though, perhaps, there was more enthusiastic affection on the part of the elephant, the zebra at times getting a little bored with constant embraces. Alas and alack! both elephant and zebra died eventually from the unwholesomeness, to them, of cows' milk. Several other elephants of the same age—that is to say, about four to six months old—were delivered into my hands, but all subsequently died. Cows' milk appears to give these creatures eventually an incurable diarrhoea, while all attempts at that early age to substitute for milk farinaceous substances also resulted in a similar disease. I do not say that it is impossible to rear young elephants by hand, for we have not made a sufficient number of experiments, but it is very difficult. I therefore favour the plan of attempting to catch elephants of perhaps a year old, at which age they do not require milk as an exclusive diet. One specimen of this age was caught, and was readily tamed, and, for aught I know, is still alive in captivity. As to young zebras, they must be reared with asses as their foster-mothers.

I am afraid that blustering creature, the rhinoceros, can be turned to no useful purposes in the future of Africa, but he is such a grotesque survival from the great Mammalian Epoch that he should be steadily preserved from extinction. The rhinoceros, however, is a handful, to use a colloquialism. All along the route of the Uganda Railway game is being carefully protected, with the delightful result of antelopes, zebras, and ostriches grazing close to the line as fearless of man as if they were in an English park. Much the same condition may be observed in parts of the Protectorate off the beaten track, where British sportsmen have not had an opportunity to harry and destroy. But in all these countries the



THE CHIMPANZEE AT HOME

\* This picture is a photograph taken from an adult male chimpanzee obtained in Toro. Its skin is now in the British Museum.



A MALE RHINOCEROS



THE OSTRICH OF UGANDA

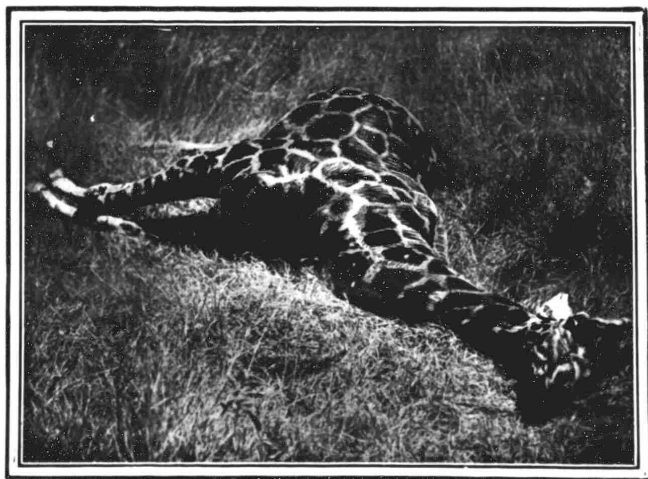
rhinoceros is not tamed by this tolerance, but is apt to become a dangerous nuisance by charging at all and everything at a moment's notice, when it is playful or out of temper. Thus, amongst a people like the Masai, it is much dreaded. The Masai do not eat, and therefore do not kill, game. They fear no wild beast but the rhinoceros, because all other wild beasts, if they are let alone, seem to experience, as a rule, no desire to attack human beings. The rhinoceros, however, makes absolutely unprovoked charges, and occasionally goes a man before he has time to get out of the way. Fortunately these huge beasts are very stupid and very blind. They probably can see little or nothing with any clearness that is ten yards away from them. They are guided entirely by their sense of smell, which, however, is extraordinarily keen. If the rhinoceros is out of temper and gets wind of a human being or some other form of animated life he will suddenly charge "up the wind." It is rare that it deflects from this line of charge to the right or to the left; therefore, anyone who is on his guard, can jump aside and let this steam-engine of an animal plunge snorting on its reckless career. The rhinoceros, however, is often very timid, and, so far as my small experience of its habits is concerned, rarely, if ever, charges the sportsman because it has been shot, unless, of course, the latter approaches imprudently close to a wounded animal. Rhinoceroses are seen in ones and twos, or, at most, there may be a bull, a cow, and a calf together. However abundant they are in a district they never seem to go in herds, and more often than not, are seen grazing apart from one another. The male rhinoceros, of which a picture is here given, was shot by my assistant, Mr. Doggett. It is the ordinary, pointed-lipped, black rhinoceros of Africa, which ranges, or used to range, from Cape Colony to Abyssinia and Nubia, and thence, perhaps, across Africa westward to Lake Chad and Eastern Nigeria. So far as I am aware, the rhinoceros has not been found to exist in Africa west of the Central Niger, if, indeed, it gets much further west than Lake Chad. This is curious, if true; because the other big animals of the African fauna, though, like the rhinoceros, they mostly avoid the Congo and West African forests, stretch in their distribution right across Africa from Abyssinia to Senegal. The two exceptions, however, to this rule seem to be the zebra and the rhinoceros. Not infrequently the East African black rhinoceros

produces horns of extraordinary length. The record, I believe, is 47in. for the front horn. I obtained from the North-Eastern part of Uganda myself a horn measuring 43in. long. It is always said by the natives that these very long horns are grown by old females. I do not know whether this is true, but I only know in my own experience that I have never seen the head of a male rhinoceros bearing one of these extravagantly long front horns. They are not only long, but slender, and sometimes the extremity is a little thicker than the diameter of the horn lower down; that is to say, the long front horn, instead of tapering to a point, becomes very slender and then expands into a spatulate tip. It is difficult to see of what use this very attenuated horn can be, as it looks too slender to be of much use as a weapon of offence with such a heavy mass behind it.

The giraffe is found at the present day in the Eastern Province of the Uganda Protectorate, in the northern part of the Central Province, and in the districts east of the Nile. So far as I know, in the North and South-East of the Protectorate, the species or variety of giraffe which is found right across the Sudan from Abyssinia to Senegambia and the Niger. But in the North-Eastern part of the Protectorate, about Lake Baringo and Mount Elgon, the male giraffes possess five horn-bumps or ancient horn-cores. I first heard of this peculiarity from a Goanese ivory trader, but, as he had no specimen to show me, I did not attach much importance to his remarks. In the month of May last, I was returning from a journey round Mount Elgon, and, for the first time in the Uganda Protectorate, found myself among large herds of giraffe. I was anxious to secure a good specimen for the British Museum. Mr. Doggett and myself, therefore, shot two males and two females. I was surprised to notice that each of the males had five horn-bumps, the females being restricted to three. The four heads thus procured are now in the British Museum at South Kensington. I give here a photograph of a male five-horned giraffe as it lay on the ground just after being shot. Unfortunately, though this photograph gives distinctly the markings of the animal, it does not enable the reader of these notes to distinguish the five horn-bumps; but a careful drawing from the head of this giraffe from a side view was published in THE GRAPHIC

of August 3. This variety or sub-species of giraffe would appear to differ from its congeners slightly in its coloration. The old males or females have the spots or patches almost purple-black, while the hair in between the spots is a dirty brown. This is the coloration of the upper part of the body, but the legs and belly in the old specimens tend to be nearly pure white. Seen from a distance, therefore, the five-horned giraffe, when old, looked black and white, or mainly black, since the white part of their bodies is often hidden by brushwood. The young, especially amongst the females, are coloured much like the ordinary northern giraffe, with orange-coloured patches on a cream-coloured ground. But before reaching the old stage of nearly black and white, the adult females offer a very beautiful coloration. The great polygonal patches are orange-brown with a purple rosette or centre, but some of the spots about the face are purple-black on a white ground. I also think that these five-horned giraffes are slightly taller than the other forms of this animal. One male that we shot certainly rose to a height at the top of its head of twenty feet above the ground. These animals go about in large herds, and the old ones, males or females, seem to stand sentry whilst the rest of the herd browse unconcernedly on the branches and leaves of trees. These sentries often chose a small hillock or large anthill, and look veritable lighthouses in the distance as they stand out against the sky. Seen any way but broadside, they do not appear to be beasts, but resemble a huge, tapering black tree trunk reared into the sky. I have never seen a more impressive sight in Africa than a large herd of these animals moving about unconcernedly, taking little or no notice of our presence amongst them; for, in this country round Mount Elgon, they had evidently been unattacked by man for a long period. When the four specimens above referred to had been obtained, all further shooting was rigorously stopped, and therefore we passed subsequent herds of these animals without any feeling of bloodguiltiness.

Wherever there is not thick forest in the Uganda Protectorate there antelopes of many sorts are found, sometimes in great numbers. Within the forest itself there are antelopes also, or ruminants like the tragelaphs, which are incorrectly included under that designation. In the dense forests of Ruwenzori and of Uganda proper the little cephalophus antelopes abound. On Ruwenzori



THE FIVE-HORNED GIRAFFE



COMPANIONS IN CAPTIVITY