

A BIG GAME EXPEDITION IN BRITISH EAST AFRICA.



Sir Claude Champion de Crespigny's last rhino.

OUR pictures illustrate incidents of sport in British East Africa, which Sir Claude de Crespigny describes in a letter to the *Essex County Chronicle*, from which we make extracts, regretting that we cannot reproduce it at length: "The *crème de la crème* of the shooting was expected on the trans-Jana plains, and such proved to be the case, but you must not judge of what we did kill by what we might have killed. Our grandchildren have to be thought of, so our licenses limit us, among other things, to two rhinos, one bull buffalo, and one bull eland. There are heavy penalties for making mistakes, some of which are extremely difficult to avoid, with forfeiture of trophies. In long grass, &c., it is at times almost impossible to distinguish the sexes, especially in the case of single beasts. Should you come across a herd of elands, there is not much



Jack, a specialist in big-game hunting, who has been wounded by lion, leopard, and topi.

difficulty in picking out the bulls, as they are so much bluer in colour. That best of Italian sportsmen, the Marquis of Pizzardi, who joined us for a day or two, had recently made a mistake in killing a barren cow buffalo, which he at once reported in the most

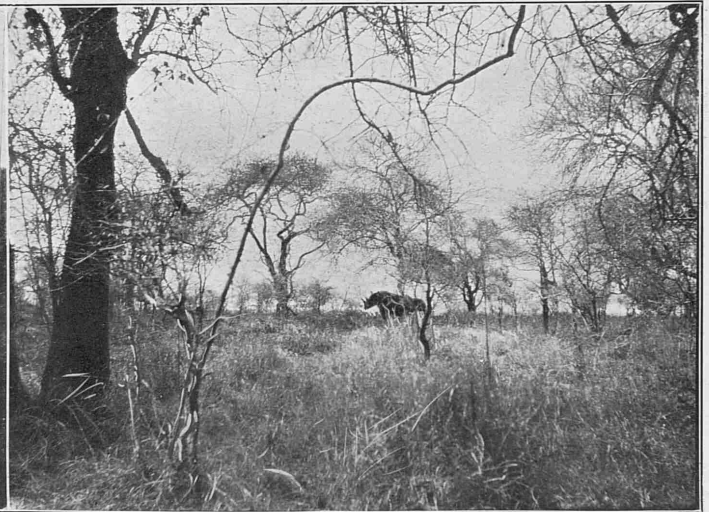
rhino and calf. Of course, as she did not charge me, I did not fire. Close to this spot I shot a bush buck. It lay on the ground, apparently dying. When my Askaris went up to cut its throat, it sprang up and with difficulty staggered into some high grass close by, the three of us plunging in after it, when out rushed three rhinos, one of my Askaris throwing himself into a hollow in the ground to avoid having daylight drilled through him. My son and I were each charged twice, and I think that two of the rhinos were as close as they well could be without serious, if not fatal, damage. On the first occasion the A.D.C. was riding across an almost dry water bed to join Mr. Slaney and myself, as a lion had just been viewed ahead, when a savage grunt in the long grass just enabled his horse to swerve in time to avoid the charge, the horn missing the rider's leg by two or three feet. The rhino having ascended a hill towards some plains, I galloped after it on the hurdle racer Mary, hoping to make rings round it till the others came up with their rifles, but unfortunately he turned sharp to the left into some impenetrable jungle, and



Sir Donald Stewart's first rhino.



Wire bridge over river near Fort Hall.—This bridge, which broke the day after the above photograph was taken, spans a river much favoured by crocodiles.



honourable, sportsmanlike manner. He had, of course, to pay his fine, and there was a good deal of friendly badinage over it, but he was greatly pleased when the Commissioner said he might keep the head. If an old Shikari like him makes a *genuine* mistake, how much more liable would be a man of lesser experience. On one occasion we saw a head poking out of some long grass, which my gun-bearer solemnly affirmed was a bull buffalo, so I took up a position on a slight incline, sending three or four men—we generally had some porters handy to carry in the game—to beat up to me. Soon I could see the high grass waving as some big beast advanced towards me, and then out came, within easy shot, a cow-



The Camp on the Tana.

Living rhinos photographed by Capt. V. Champion de Crespigny, A.D.C.

was lost to us. The next time we were charged we were close together on the line of a wounded buffalo, when a cow and calf, which we had previously passed, moved from the scent of some porters and came top speed bang into our party of about ten. Of course we only had soft-nosed bullets in our rifles, which have, as a rule, about as much effect on a rhino as a peashooter. To within three paces she was coming straight at me, and I was just about to drop my rifle and play the amateur Matador when she swerved slightly to her left, which gave me the chance of a neck shot, of which, naturally, I was prompt to avail myself, and at two paces from the muzzle of my .303 she fell stone dead with her neck broken, the A.D.C. being about the same distance on the other side. Of course, her poor little calf blindly charged in her wake, and a fool of an Askari shot it, though Col. Harrison shouted to him not to fire. This was a thousand pities, as it would have been worth many hundreds of pounds if it could have been hand-reared, which could probably have been done, as Chief Murad had a large herd of cows a few miles off."



Capt. V. Champion de Crespigny, A.D.C., with his second rhino.



A native bridge between Fort Hall and Tana River.



Sir Claude Champion de Crespigny.