

FOREST AND JUNGLE

OR

THRILLING ADVENTURES

IN

ALL QUARTERS OF THE GLOBE

AN

ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF THE ANIMAL KINGDOM

BY

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Written in Easy and Instructive Form

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

Embracing Vivid Descriptions of the Manner of Capture and Taming
of Wild Beasts, Birds and Reptiles for the Menageries
and Zoölogical Gardens of the World.

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CHAPTER LII.

THE BUPHAGA AFRICANA.

THE well-mounted hunters had but a comparatively short distance to ride, when they dashed into the tall grass, amid which grew a great deal of the native rice, of which the hippopotamus, as well as the rhinoceros, is so fond. The ponies, of necessity, slackened their pace, for, knowing how quick the big game is to detect danger, the time had come for the exercise of extreme caution.

Conscious that the proceedings had now reached a stage in which the Hottentot was the most competent director, Jack Harvey fell to the rear with the boys, all preserving silence, and the three keeping sharp watch of their native leader.

All at once, Diedrick raised his hand as a signal for the others to halt. Although they saw nothing, there could be no doubt that he had detected something important.

Just in front, the grass, which was five or six feet in height, became more dense and abundant. The party could see but a short distance, and, of course, it was beyond the power of the native to discern anything that was not manifest to his friends.

Several minutes passed, during which all were silent and listening. Diedrick then turned and explained that, while he saw nothing, he was of the belief that more than one of the animals was close to them. A gentle wind was blowing from that point, which was fortunate for the hunters, since, were the direction different, the sagacious beast would be quick to scent his danger.

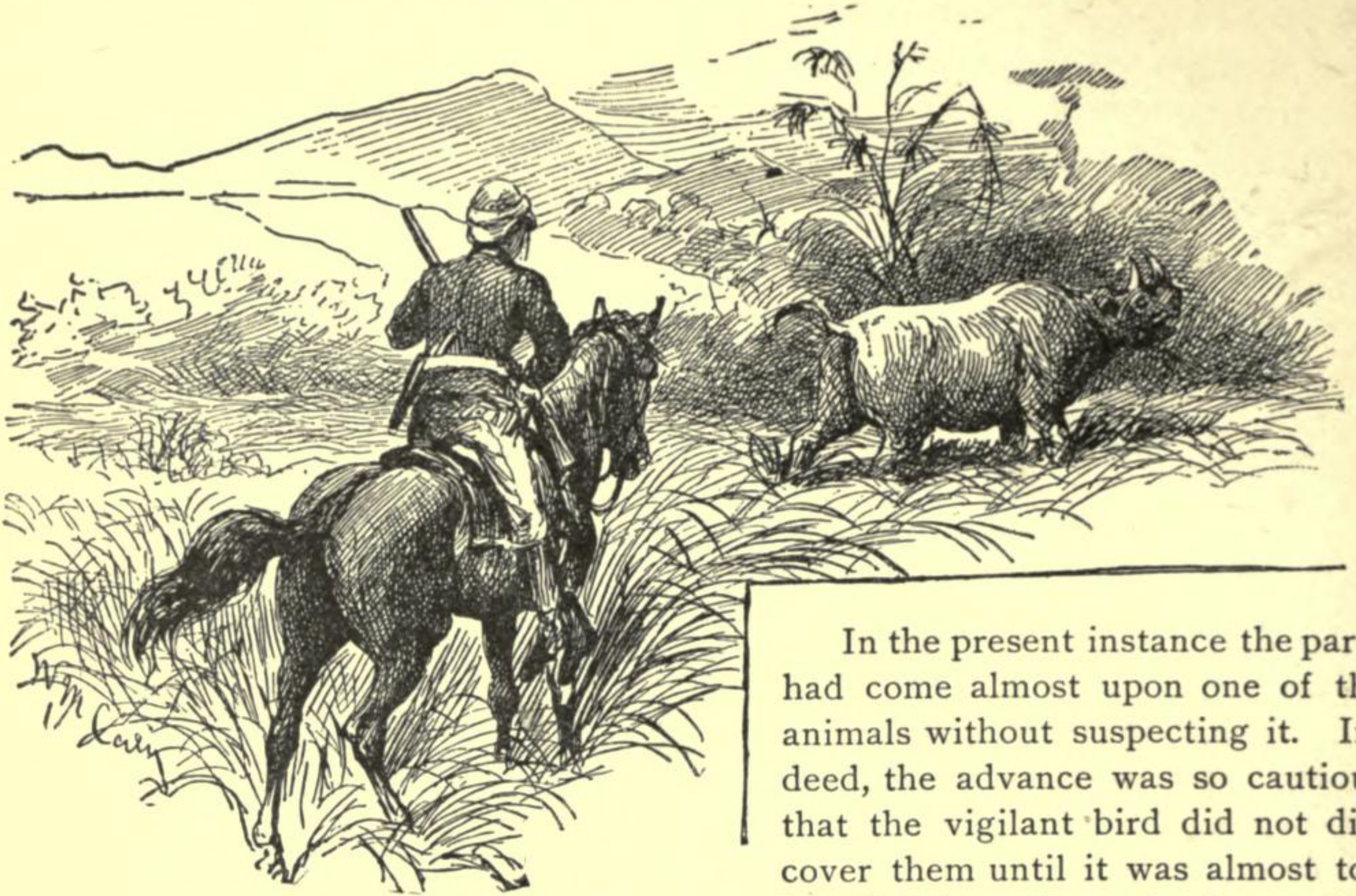
Diedrick proposed that he and one of the boys should make a circuit, which would take them around to a point a half mile away. Then, if any rhinoceros was between the parties, he would discover his danger and make off toward those in waiting, who, if they used ordinary discretion, would gain a chance of bringing down some of the gigantic game.

This understanding was scarcely reached when a small bird suddenly rose from the grass at a distance of less than a hundred yards, and, darting straight up in the air, gave utterance to a sharp peculiar note, that could be heard a long way off.

The Hottentot muttered impatiently in his own language as he faced about to explain the cause of his anger.

The bird, which had just risen, was the *buphaga africana*, or rhinoceros bird, the most devoted and faithful friend of the rhinoceros. It constantly attends the beast, feeding on the insects which infest its muddy hide. While thus employed, it is on the lookout for enemies of the animal. The instant it detects the approach of the hunter, it flies above the beast, uttering the sharp cries which he understands at once.

Many hunters claim that if the rhinoceros happens to be asleep when danger appears, the little friend will peck the inside of his ears until he awakens.



"HE CAUGHT SIGHT OF THE VAST BEAST."

In the present instance the party had come almost upon one of the animals without suspecting it. Indeed, the advance was so cautious that the vigilant bird did not discover them until it was almost too late; but it made up for its remissness. It did not rise more than fifty

feet from the ground, when it descended and circled about in great excitement, all the time emitting the cries of warning. The horsemen could not see the rhinoceros, but he was plainly heard as he went crashing through the grass with a speed which the best steed would find it hard to surpass when impeded by the luxuriant vegetation.

"Let's dash into the grass and charge upon him," proposed Dick, when told that they were so close to the brute. But the Texan shook his head.

"The fellow can travel faster than we, and that bird will keep him warned all the while, so we won't get within gun-shot of him."


"Then we might as well turn back and give up," said Bob; and I should like to know what warrant we had, in the first place, to expect any success in hunting rhinoceroses?"

"Others have brought them down; therefore we may succeed. It isn't every rhinoceros that is furnished with such a bird to give warning when danger threatens. Let us hear what Diedrick has to propose."

The Hottentot made known that he and the parties whom he conducted through the grass and jungles had often been baffled in the same manner by the vigilance of the little bird, but, where the hunters numbered three or four, he had succeeded in outwitting the feathered sentinel by a simple device.

CHAPTER LXXX.

A BATTLE OF GIANTS.

YP explained that a female chimpanzee with a single young one was eating a species of berry a short distance off among the undergrowth. He had caught only a glimpse of them, but they were unaware of his presence, and he believed that, by using care, they could capture the little one. It was probable that the male was not far off, though the native had not seen him.

The plan of the hunters was simple. They were to separate and surround the animals before showing themselves. Gyp would take station behind a tree, while his companions started the couple toward him. Then he would have to exercise his skill in flinging the net over the intended victim.

Pausing only long enough to make sure the scheme was understood by all, the hunters immediately parted company, each falling back so far that he was sure of being out of sight of the chimpanzees until he should begin closing in upon them.

This movement was pressed with so much care, that a half hour passed before our friends commenced to draw in their lines. Unable to see each other, their actions were governed by signals, so skillfully emitted that no ears except those for which they were intended read their meaning.

Bob Marshall was the first to catch sight of the creatures, and his heart gave a throb of pleasure when he saw the comical mother plucking the small, crimson berries, while her offspring frolicked around her like a kitten. Some of the antics of the latter were so comical that Bob could not help smiling. While the mother was gathering the fruit her offspring would jump upon her back, skurry up her shoulders, and hop from her crown before she could give it a cuff with her paw.

Catching the signal, the youth stepped forward with a rustling that caused the mother instantly to stop eating and look up. Seeing the strange figure, she uttered a sharp, warning cry and scampered off in an opposite direction, taking care, however, that her pace was so graduated that she did not pass beyond her progeny.

Unfortunately for the couple, their course led them straight for the tree where fate in the form of Gyp was awaiting them. The situations of Hargo and Jack Harvey gave them a view of what was going on, but they did not expose themselves, since the creatures were going right, and it would have been imprudent to interfere.

Bob followed at such a leisurely pace that in a minute or two he had fallen almost out of sight of the game. The mother continued hopping and running until she had placed herself a long way in front. Then, as if to learn whether she was still pursued, she stopped and looked around, chattering and frightened. Her little one, too young to understand their peril, frisked about like a puppy so full of life that it cannot keep still.

It so happened that at this moment they were within ten feet of the tree behind which the black-eyed native was furtively watching their movements. Hardly was the halt made when Gyp leaped noiselessly from his hiding-place, and, flinging the net with the skill of Jack Harvey, landed it directly over the head and shoulders of the little one. The latter uttered a series of odd squeaks and squeals, and struggled like a wild cat; but it was fast, and every effort only rendered its entanglement more certain.

The mother's affection gave her a courage which she never could have possessed at any other time. She flew fiercely at the African, but he expected it, and, paying no heed to her frantic attack until sure the little one was secure, he whirled about, and with a quick sweep of his long knife ended her career.

At this moment the other hunters ran forward, and gathered around the captive in no little excitement.

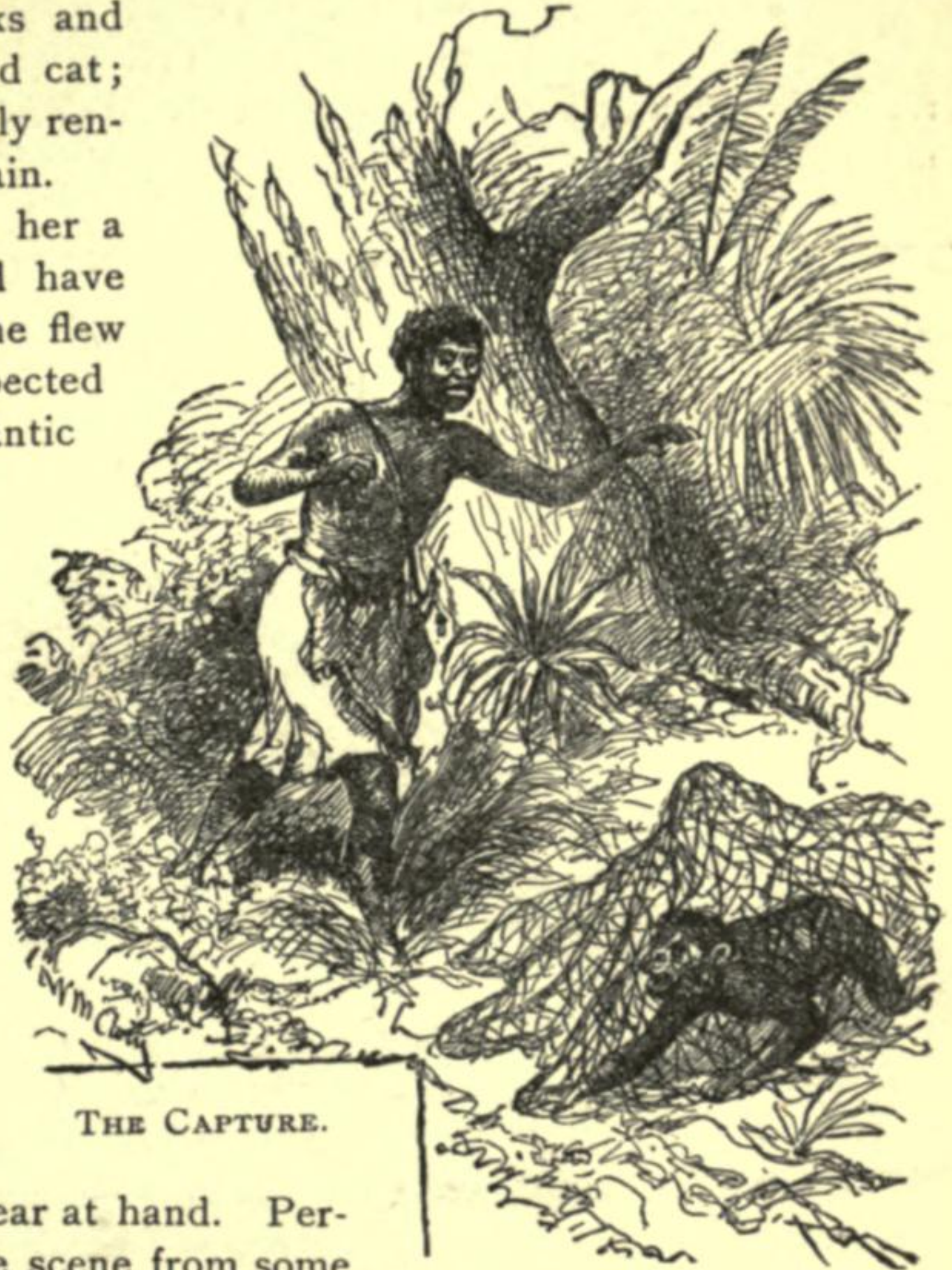
"Look out for the male," said Bob, the most flurried of all; "he's an uglier customer than the mother."

It was singular that the head of the family did not show himself, for he ought to have been near at hand. Perhaps he did take a sly peep at the scene from some safe hiding-place, and was wise enough to know it would be fatal for him to interfere. Be that as it may, nothing was seen of him from first to last.

The captive proved less troublesome than would be supposed. It was a male, several months old, possessed of considerable activity, and for a time he made a brave fight, biting at the hands which persisted in keeping the netting over his head and about his body, and uttering his odd cries of distress.

Before long, however, he exhausted himself and became quiescent. His captors managed to prevent the little one seeing the inanimate mother, quickly removing him from the spot. He was too young to realize his loss, and, though he doubtless meant many of his cries for the ears of his dead parent, yet he gave little exhibition of grief or distress over his loss.

The net having been made secure about the young chimpanzee, he was suspended



THE CAPTURE.

from a pole, carried on the shoulders of Gyp and Hargo, and the party set out for the camp, which was only a short distance off. Since the hunters were in an Equatorial country, and engaged upon a specific errand, their camp was quite primitive, comprising nothing more than a small open space, near a stream which was neither clear nor cool, and where at night a fire was kept burning, for protection against animals, and because of the cheerfulness it afforded.

The stream was in reality a sluggish river, winding its course through that malarious section, and showing signs on its bank of being frequented by some of the most formidable animals of the Dark Continent. Had our friends been prepared



"MIGHT IS RIGHT."

they could have secured rhinoceroses, hippopotami or elephants, for these animals were fully as plentiful as in South Africa.

"We've made a good capture, or rather you have," said Jack Harvey to Gyp; "and you must take him down the river at once to King William."

The Texan had arranged with his friend, the missionary, to assume charge of such young animals as were sent him until the return of the hunters from the jungle. The good man was an excellent naturalist and accepted the trust with pleasure. A portion of his premises were fitted up for such purposes, and he had already sent a number of valuable specimens across the ocean.

Jack did not intend to withdraw from the jungle until he had secured a gorilla, and, understanding the nature of the animal as well as he did, he resolved that the hands of the party should be unhampered when the golden opportunity came, if come it should.

A short distance down the river, which was a tributary of the Gaboon, lay the small boat that had brought the party almost to the camp. By entering this at once, and making good use of their time, the natives ought to deliver the young chimpanzee into the hands of the missionary before night, and return to their camp by noon of the following day.

Warning them against undue haste or carelessness, Jack and Bob bade the natives good-by, and they quickly disappeared in the jungle, bearing their precious burden between them.

Although Jack and Bob felt the need of the presence of the natives, they did not mean to loiter until their return. They were competent to the task of hunting any game, and they set out to do so before Gyp and Hargo had been gone ten minutes.

Their prime purpose, however, being the capture of a gorilla, they gave little thought to anything else; but, before they had gone far upon their renewed hunt, they came upon a scene which, for the time, drove everything else from their minds.

It seemed that a party of elephants were returning from a bath in the muddy river, when they encountered three rhinoceroses on their way after the same luxury. The meeting took place in a sort of rough path in the jungle, not far from the camp of our friends.

Two of the rhinoceroses turned out for the elephants, but the third, a huge, ugly fellow, refused to give an inch. Thereupon the dozen or more elephants sensibly yielded the path to him.

All excepting one, a huge bull, who was in just as ugly a mood as the rhinoceros. Within less than two minutes of their meeting these monarchs of the jungle came together like a couple of animated mountains.

The rhinoceros ran across the front of the elephant, and flung up his two horns with the purpose of tearing him asunder, but the elephant threw his left foreleg over the huge, flabby neck of the mailed rhinoceros, and, partly holding him motionless, bore down upon him with such awful power that one of his tusks was driven clean through the victim's body, just back of his shoulders. As the fearful ivory sword was withdrawn it was crimsoned with blood, which streamed down its length and dripped to the ground, while the rhinoceros collapsed like so much mud, killed as utterly as if a thousand tons of rock had crushed him.

"The only law of the road in Africa is might," said Bob, after the elephant, having contemplated his work for a moment, swung off to join the herd, which viewed the battle from a point some distance away.

"That rhinoceros was a fool," remarked Jack; "he was too stubborn to turn out, but preferred to fight, and as a consequence he was knocked out in the first round."

"A rhinoceros doesn't always make such a failure. Mr. Godkin told me they



ELEPHANT AND RHINOCEROS.

sometimes wound and drive off the elephant, but this bull is an unusually large fellow, and he made a better fight than usual. But, I say, Jack, we seem to have struck the latitude for all sorts of wild beasts and reptiles."

"How can that be," asked the Texan, "when the spot we are in has no latitude at all, being under the Equator?"

"You are right on that point, but look at the monkeys off yonder, along the edge of the jungle. They seem to be feeding without any fear of us, who are in plain sight."

More than a score of the animals with which our friends had, long since, become familiar, were playing along the edge of the forest. Some were plucking a species of banana-like fruit, others seemed to be shaking hands and sporting with each other, giving utterance now and then to their peculiar cries, and paying no heed to the two hunters who were within gun-shot.

"We are after more valuable game than you," said Bob, having watched them some minutes; "you must know you are of little account, or you wouldn't tempt us in that style."

Had the hunters ventured nearer, the creatures would have scampered off, but, as the youth had intimated, they were in no danger, for the "game wasn't worth the candle."

