



PASSAGES WITH PACHYDERMS

By
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Illustrated by G. W. GOSS

A PACHYDERM, as everyone knows, is a thick-skinned beast, an animal provided by Nature with a triple-proof suit of armour-plate—a brute, in short, against whom you have to use a solid bullet for the simple and excellent reason that any other kind will simply mushroom on that impenetrable hide, leaving him little the worse, and yourself (probably) in a rather awkward corner.

The pachyderm, moreover, is a walking anachronism, a relic of the long-forgotten days when the mammoth and the behemoth, the brontosaurus and the dinosaur, ranged the world, making themselves, no doubt, a great nuisance to the human element. Now, however, time has evened things up pretty considerably; man has grown, if not

The pachyderms are the thick-skinned animals, the lineal descendants of the brontosaurus and the dinosaur. The best-known representatives of this "armour-plated" tribe are the elephant, the hippopotamus, and the rhino, and in this article the Author tells some good stories of exciting encounters with these great beasts. He has also something to say concerning the buffalo, which, although not strictly speaking a pachyderm, has a hide thick enough to turn any ordinary bullet. Incidentally, he is probably the pluckiest and most dangerous animal on earth.

bigger, considerably wiser and considerably better equipped with weapons; while the pachyderms have decreased in size and numbers, and are confined to-day, as far as I know, to Africa, India, and certain other parts of the tropical East.

The largest and, I suppose, still the most numerous of these survivors of a prehistoric world is the African elephant. He differs from his Asiatic brother in various particulars, notably that the front of his skull is convex instead of concave; so that it is no use trying to stop him with a head-shot when he is charging, whereas you can drop an Asiatic

elephant dead by a bullet through the forehead.

Taking him as a whole, the African elephant is, viewed from the front, one of

the finest sights on earth. The first time I ever saw one we were placidly sailing up the Nile just south of the Sud, when someone suddenly spotted two gigantic forms moving in the long grass about a mile away.

To begin with we were suitably impressed; but what with the distance and the length of the grass one could not sustain interest very long, and we were just turning away, slightly disappointed, when the same keen-eyed observer declared that he saw a trunk waving above a clump of bushes at the water's edge. He was mocked at for his pains, but he was right.

As the steamer approached the said clump a great black mass suddenly emerged, trunk up to catch our wind, enormous ears outspread, seeming to block the whole horizon. I have seen many bigger elephants since and at far closer quarters (without any friendly stream between), but I don't think I have ever again received such an impression of size and magnificent strength.

At least, not quite. Familiarity breeds contempt, but it would take a whole lot of familiarity to render one contemptuous of an African elephant viewed head-on even if neither of you has hostile intentions. It is not only the size, though that is striking enough; nor the appearance (no mirage either) of enormous strength; but a queer feeling of awe before this greatest work of creation, mingled perhaps with some dim atavistic memory of days when our remote ancestors faced mightier beasts than these with no other weapon than obsidian knife or flint-headed spear.

It was near the Luvua River that I had perhaps my most exciting passage with elephant, and the sequel was even more exciting, though for a different reason. About seven o'clock one morning I blew into a small village to find the entire population in the open and a great state of excitement. I was very lame at the time—only able to wear half a shoe, owing to a badly-poisoned foot—and had no greater ambitions than to shoot a fat hartebeeste for the larder, but this general upheaval seemed worth investigation.

"What is the matter?" I demanded.

"Elephant in the manioc" (a kind of mealie profusely cultivated in this district).

"Good. Where?"

To my great surprise the natives did not seem at all keen on my pursuing it. The headman begged me to desist, explaining, with much gruesome detail, that this elephant was mad, had killed many people, was invulnerable, had fooled innumerable hunters, and so forth.

I naturally discounted these stories (though I discovered later that they were largely true), and, accompanied by the headman to show the way, started out. Sure enough, in a patch of manioc behind the village was a large bull elephant, slowly

making his way toward the thick bush beyond, which he reached before there was a chance of anything like a vital shot.

It was a poisonous country, in which one could barely see five yards ahead, the last sort of place in which to follow a "rogue," however exaggerated his reputation. But one is apt to forget such things in the excitement of the chase, and, followed by my two uneasy minions, I steered for the noise of breaking branches. Suddenly I caught a glimpse of an indeterminate black mass among the trees about forty yards distant, and at the same moment felt a breath of air on the back of my neck. The wind had changed!

What followed takes time to write, but it happened in a few seconds. Without a moment's hesitation, and to the amazement of all, the elephant charged! The gun-bearer (courtesy title) fled like a rabbit, taking with him not only my second rifle, but also my cartridge belt, which, as a rule, I always carry myself, but, on account of my lameness, had handed over to him. The headman also remembered a pressing engagement in another direction, and I was left with two cartridges in my double-barrelled 470—and one sound foot.

I selected the largest tree in sight—it would hardly have discouraged a determined goat—and, noticing a small clearing which seemed likely to offer a clear shot, about ten yards in front, determined to hold my fire. I saw the enormous head, trunk up, ears outspread, rushing toward me. I heard that most terrifying of all natural sounds, the trumpeting of an outraged elephant, and began to wonder why I had ever left England.

Then, just as the beast reached the edge of the clearing, another gust gave him wind of the elusive gun-bearer. Without checking speed he turned half-left, and before I had time to change my aim had vanished into thick bush, invisible, though more than audible.

I am still trying to make up my mind whether that deflected charge was good luck or bad.

Anyhow, the affair could not be left in this indeterminate state, so (having "sacked" the gun-bearer) I returned again that evening, but Jumbo was resting on his laurels and did not appear; nor did he show up the following morning, and by the next evening some Belgian friends had got wind of the affair and insisted on accompanying me.

Then came the more exciting sequel. We mustered in all six rifles—three Belgians, myself, and two *askaris*—and we wandered about that horrible bush till well after sunset, searching for that most elusive elephant. All in vain. At last we gave up and started to march back to Kiambi and the river in the dim light of a waxing moon. Half-way to the river, an uproar began in a

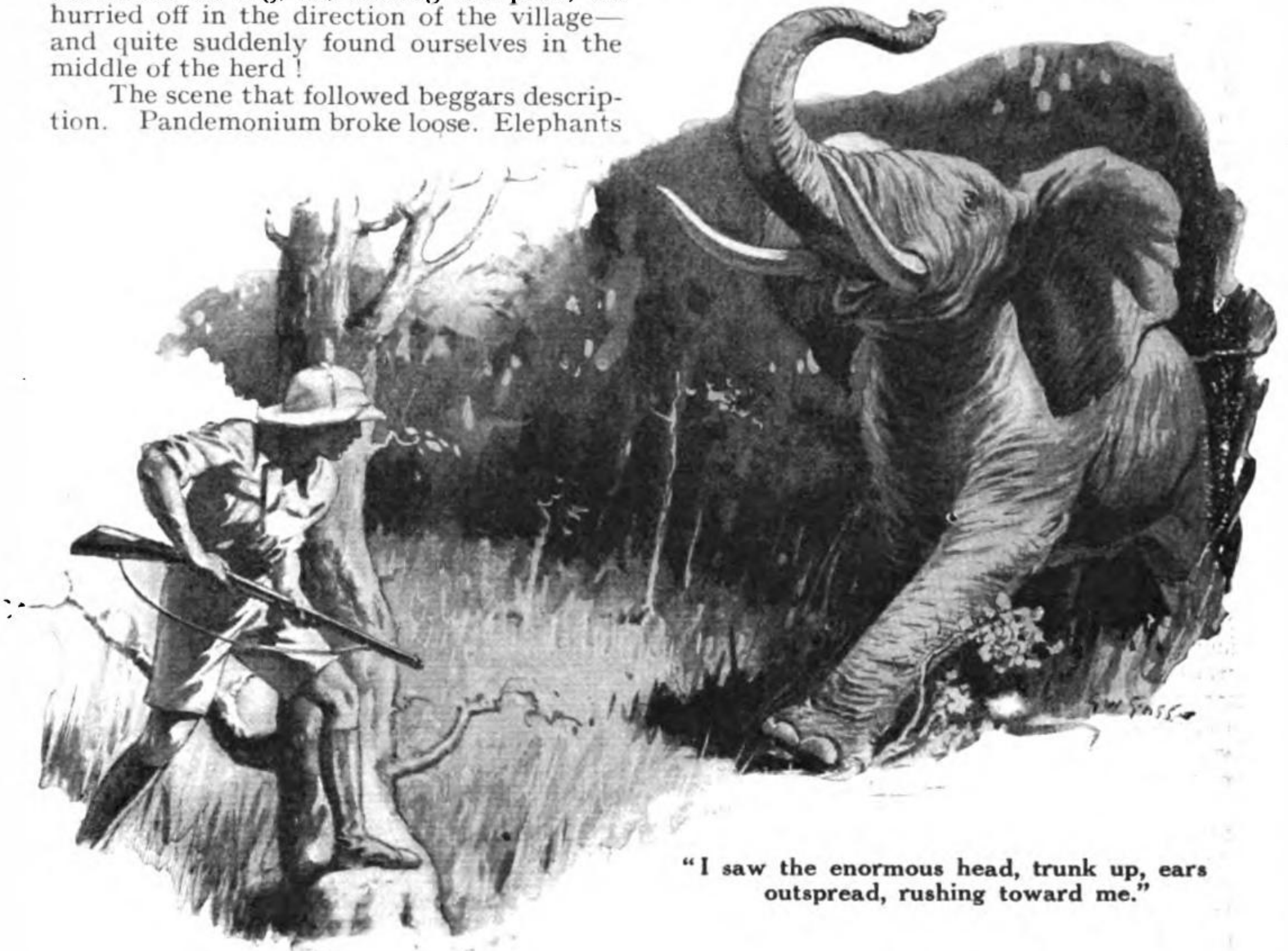
village to the right of the path, and a man dashed up in great excitement to say that a herd of elephants was destroying their crops.

Now shooting by moonlight is a poor game, and very dangerous; but we had come out to bag an elephant, and an elephant we meant to bag, so, leaving the path, we hurried off in the direction of the village—and quite suddenly found ourselves in the middle of the herd!

The scene that followed beggars description. Pandemonium broke loose. Elephants

two raced by, one on either side, so close that I could almost touch them.

That was the climax of the battle so far as I was concerned, though an astounding medley of shouts, shots, screams, and yells still went on for a few moments before the



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trumpeted and tom-toms drummed, white men shouted and black men yelled, rifles cracked and bullets sang. And they sang with a vengeance! I saw a battle or two during the late tribal dissensions in Europe, but they were scarcely more nerve-racking than this; and after a particularly buzzy bullet had removed part of my helmet I went to ground behind a convenient ant-hill—but not before I had fired at it twice, thinking it was an elephant.

Unfortunately for my peace of mind, other people made the same mistake; one gentleman—an *askari*, I fancy—emptied most of his magazine into the ant-heap, until in desperation I fired at him *pour décourager les autres*. He retired hastily, and hardly had he gone when three elephants—the whole place was alive with them—bore down upon my shelter. They were even more frightened than I was. I dropped one—a sheer fluke in that light—about twenty yards in front of the ant-hill, and the other

herd succeeded in doing what it had long wanted to do, and thundered away into the night, leaving us masters of the field. The casualties were three elephants, my helmet, one Belgian with a broken wrist—he *said* an elephant had stepped on it—and one villager with a slight flesh-wound from a rifle bullet. (Why is it the spectator who always gets hit on these occasions?)

Taking all things into consideration, I think the damage was amazingly small; but the old bull, the *fons et origo mali*, never came into the battle at all, and I never got him. As the headman sapiently remarked, he was "cleverer than many hunters."

Next to the elephant in size, if not in importance, comes the hippopotamus, or river-horse. Why river-horse I have never been able to discover; a greater libel on the noblest of animals has never been perpetrated. River-pig would be far nearer the mark, for, especially when one sees him with

only eyes, ears, and muzzle above the surface of the water, his resemblance to a gigantic sow is laughable.

And he is so fat, so (as a rule) placid, so stupidly content with his lot that one cannot help regarding him with a half-contemptuous, half-amused liking. It is significant that the hippopotamus is never referred to by his full, and rather sonorous, name, but is always familiarly spoken of as "hippo."

The hippo, for all his vast size—he is anything up to fourteen feet long and weighs two or three tons—is a mild and inoffensive creature; which is perhaps as well, since, with those enormous jaws and the comparative invulnerability he shares with other pachyderms, he would be a very nasty customer indeed if maliciously inclined. Or, perhaps I should say, "when"; for even the best-tempered people wax wroth at times, and the hippo is no exception to the rule.

Mostly he keeps these ebullitions of temper for when he is in his natural element, the water, his one idea if disturbed during his nightly business of stuffing himself with green food—five or six bushels *per noctem* is nothing unusual—being to get back to river or lake as soon as possible. But woe betide you if, engaged in the interesting little pastime of hippo-shooting by moonlight, you happen to be in the direct line between him and his refuge!

Those enormous jaws can, and *have*, in authenticated instances, cut a man clean in half. Moonlight, too, even the brilliant moonlight of the tropics, is strangely deceptive. Something looms up before you in the half-light. Is it a bush or a hippo? It's a bush. No; hippo. You loose off—and find it's a bush after all. But there is a hippo near by, and the noise of the report has disturbed him. He makes for the water in a desperate rush, looking like a kind of nightmare-tank in silent action.

Now, are you in the direct line of route or not? An anxious question, and difficult to answer. You decide to stand still, remembering uneasily that, though a hippo is a very large mark, the vulnerable parts of him are very, very small. A huge, thunderous shadow hurtles past you, the sudden roar of a heavy rifle tears the silence, followed by a triumphant splash. He has escaped this time; but, after all, so have you. Next time, one of you may not be so lucky, and in any case you have had an evening's amusement which can confidently be recommended as a cure for *ennui*.

One awful night I went up the Luapula with another white man and three or four paddlers in a canoe. It was really and literally pitch-dark, and several times we only knew we had turned completely round by feeling the current. Then we ran into the bank, pushed off, and ran into it again, to be greeted this time by a savage snarl

and two brilliant points of light gleaming out of the darkness.

The other man fired without warning. The sudden flash, tearing across that Cimmerian gloom, and the sudden tremendous noise, frightened me so much that I determined that at all costs we would not go into the bank again; so I switched on an electric torch, using it as a headlight. Almost immediately there was a heavy splash beside us and, instinctively, if very foolishly, I turned the light in that direction—to behold a hippo's head, neatly framed in the circle of light, approaching with unpleasant rapidity!

There came an imploring voice from the stern: "For Heaven's sake, put that light out!" I put it out hastily, and for an agonized eternity we expected the worst. Then we heard the gurgle of submergence and breathed again, owing our capacity for so doing simply, I think, to the fact that the sudden extinction of the offending light puzzled and frightened Mr. Hippo; but he could not have been so frightened as we were. Altogether it was a most delightful evening.

The ideal way to hunt hippo, if thrills are required, is from a dug-out canoe. In the first place one has got to be extraordinarily careful how one moves about at all; in the second it is extremely difficult to draw a steady bead in a craft that is only kept level by the adroit adjustment of one's own weight. Thirdly, if one does not hit him vitally the first time one has to make absolutely certain of doing so the second.

Either the hunted dies or the hunter; there is no third alternative save a miracle; for even if the hippo, being a vegetarian, does not bother much about biting the man—though he may include portions of his anatomy in the general gulp—he will most certainly bite the canoe to bits, and the lurking crocodiles can be trusted to do all the carnivorous work necessary!

Yet I know an old river chief who habitually goes out in an unusually crazy canoe with an ancient rifle that not all the wealth of Ind would induce me to fire for fear of it bursting in my face. Getting within five yards of a hippo, the old man discharges a medley of stones, nails, bits of iron—any old thing that can be crammed down the muzzle—into the astounded animal's face. Round his hut some dozen hippo-skulls are whitening in the sun, and he is inordinately proud of them. I don't wonder!

None the less, I doubt if even his *modus operandi* is as exciting as another canoe-hippo "stunt" I have known. The idea behind it, like all great ideas, was very simple, and was hit upon by a certain Captain Hurst, without any doubt one of the bravest men who ever pulled trigger. A big-game hunter all his life, he met, at last, the fate that lies in wait for all big-game



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hunters; he was killed by an elephant a year or so ago.

Hurst's hippo-game was played as follows. In a certain lake the shallows ran out some fifty yards from the shore, ending abruptly in a shelf which dropped sheer into deep water, where lived a small school of hippo. Hurst would take a dug-out to the end of the shallows and tickle up a hippo with a rifle. The animal promptly charged, and when he was close to the canoe on one side, Hurst stepped out on the other—the shallow side—and, pushing the canoe into the brute's mouth, calmly walked ashore while the hippo was removing this strange impediment from its jaws.

Barring unforeseen accidents it was really fairly safe; but I confess freely that on the only occasion I played this queer

game I did the getting-out-of-the-boat-and-walking-ashore part with less dignity than I liked. Hurst, however, was always quite cool about it, and even took a photograph of the process which was exhibited in the Kenya room at Wembley "to witness if I lie."

The lake referred to lies in the Ngorongoro Crater, and the most astonishing part of the whole thing is how on earth hippo got there. The crater is at least a hundred miles from any other water where hippo are found, and to suggest that the animals arrived there overland presupposes a mountaineering skill which I am quite sure hippo do not possess; and does not in the least explain why they should ever think of going to Ngorongoro, where no possible instinct could have told them there would be water.

Yet hippo do get into the most unlikely places. Lake Kasenyeh, at the southern end of Ruwenzori, is another odd location, though not so mysterious as Ngorongoro; at any rate there is no mountaineering involved to get there. I have never come across any theory to account for these isolated schools, and the only one I can think out for myself is that one couple got there somehow and that the school is composed of their descendants.

But this idea does not explain how the first couple got there, nor how they deal with the surplus population; for both these places are very little known and very little shot. Hurst accounted for two or three during his stay in the crater, and his predecessor, Siedentopf, probably did the same, while we bagged a couple during our short stay at Kasenyeh; but this would scarcely curtail the progenitive possibilities of a really healthy hippo family.

The third of the great pachyderms is the rhinoceros or rhino. But in this case the familiarity implies no contempt, for the rhino can be a very unpleasant customer indeed. Not so much through malice; in spite of his ultra-repulsive appearance he is not really aggressive and some authorities even call him timid, though I doubt this. His unpleasantness arises through sheer, blundering stupidity.

He is certainly one of the biggest fools in the animal kingdom and nearly blind into the bargain; so, when he hears or smells (both senses being very acute) something suspicious he rushes off madly in the direction in which he happens to be facing; and if your camp or your porters happen to be in that direction too, there is apt to be considerable trouble.

You go home to relate proudly, with much wealth of vivid and probably untrue detail, how you were charged by a rhino, whereas the poor old gentleman was only trying to run away! And, of course, if you happen to be killed in that rush, it does not really much matter whether it was flight or fury.

The African, who has a very healthy respect for the rhino, always assumes it is the latter, and takes steps accordingly. I remember once wandering peacefully along at the head of a long line of porters on a track that led through thickish bush when pandemonium broke loose behind me. I turned round just in time to see a rhino burst across the path.

Every porter, without a moment's delay, threw down his load and fled screaming, some upwards into trees, some into the bush, and some literally trying to go to ground like frightened rabbits. My gun-bearer, an alert youth, thrust a rifle into my hand, but long before I had time to use it the intruder had vanished, crashing away into the thick undergrowth.

It took a long time to collect porters and baggage, the latter none the better for being hurled to the ground. Having collected them, I pointed out forcibly and at some length that the brute was not charging, merely crossing the road in a hurry. They listened with apprehensive politeness, but I am quite sure they did not believe me.

In this (and similar) cases a rhino was an unmitigated nuisance, but on one occasion he really did me a good turn. I was marching through the almost unknown rolling down-country lying between Mbulu and Ngorongoro, following a kind of low saddle-back that led to the foot of the latter mountain. Suddenly in the plain below us a rhino appeared, moving parallel with the *safari*, now stopping to feed, now getting a whiff of human smell and trotting anxiously forward.

At the end of a long march, with no certain prospect of a decent camping-ground, I had neither the time nor the inclination to go after him, but kept an eye lifting in his direction until we plunged unexpectedly into thick forest; unexpectedly, because my guide, who had once taken a German hunter over the same ground, had promised a camping-ground outside the forest. The fool had overshot the mark; and in the difficult task of turning a large *safari* round in the dense jungle I was undoubtedly helped by the probable, though unseen, proximity of that rhino.

But this was not the end of his helpfulness. We found a good place and pitched camp, and when night fell the usual watch-fires were lighted round it. But that evening, for some obscure reason, the porters would not keep them going; they said they were tired, the wood was green—one excuse after another until the so-called fires dwindled to mere smouldering heaps that would not have frightened a mouse.

I was just meditating disentangling myself from mosquito-net and sleeping-bag to try physical persuasion when, suddenly, out of the darkness came a very loud, very inquisitive, very angry snort. There followed an instant's dead silence; then Babel, as every porter in the place rushed to bring wood or fan the expiring embers, and we had no more trouble with the watch-fires that night—thanks to the snorter who was, I like to think, our friend of the afternoon, and in any case was most certainly a rhino.

A wounded rhino, or a rhino cow at calving-time, can be savage enough, but its charge is nothing like so dangerous as that of the elephant. It can travel pretty fast straight ahead, but it cannot turn quickly; the hunter can nearly always save himself by jumping to one side and getting a shot in long before the unwieldy monster has "reversed."

It is as well, however, to avoid the mistake of a man I knew and his gun-bearer

who, in their anxiety to dodge the rhino, forgot to dodge each other, and collided! The rhino arrived at the same instant and white man, black man, and rifle went sky high, to fall with many bruises but, by some miracle, nothing worse, several yards away. That hunter would never tell me what he said to the gun-bearer!

All these remarks and stories concern the common black rhinoceros of Africa. Like the elephant, he has Asiatic cousins, dissimilar in many details (for instance, they are one-horned, not two-horned), and, like the elephant again, there are subdivisions within the continent itself. The white rhinoceros is another species rather than a subdivision, differing from his black brother not only in colour, a dirty grey, and size, being the biggest of all rhinos, but also in having a square instead of a pointed upper lip.

Furthermore, he is very nearly extinct. An isolated colony in the Lado Enclave are the only survivors and, incidentally, no living specimen has ever been brought to Europe. Otherwise the white rhino is much the same as the black variety, with the same acute sense of smell and hearing, the same semi-blindness, the same muddle-headedness and inability to turn quickly.

Scientifically speaking, the buffalo is not one of the pachyderms at all; but his hide is quite thick enough for the ordinary man to include him as such, and in size and strength he comes pretty close to them. In courage, ferocity, and cunning he far surpasses them all, while as for speed and ability to turn quickly—well, if "handiness" were the basis of classification a buffalo would belong to the same species as a polo pony.

It will be gathered from this brief description that the buffalo is a pretty tough proposition—and he is. I am convinced that, without any exception whatever, the buffalo is the most dangerous of all big-game in the world. When you are hunting him he is often hunting *you*, and it is quite an open question which is hunting the best.

He will hide behind a bush—not a difficult feat, for his size consists of bulk rather than height—and spring out on you like a nightmare player in a perilous game of peep-bo; he will fetch a wide circle and come on you from behind; he will "tree" you for hours on end; he is up to all manner of tricks when alive, and like Kipling's Fuzzy Wuzzy, "'E's generally shammin' when he's dead."

In the ultimate resort, when your last cartridge is expended or jammed, you can, it is said, save yourself from a buffalo by lying flat; he cannot then get at you with those enormous, inward-curving horns of his, and, like a horse, he will not willingly tread on a human body. Every hunter

knows that theory; the doubtful problem as to whether the buffalo knows it I have, thank Heaven, never had cause to solve by experiment.

But I *do* know a famous native hunter in the Congo who always goes out after them stark naked, with his spare cartridges tied on his head. He adopts this somewhat exiguous costume, so he informed me, because once, in his well-dressed youth, he went out hunting with a shirt on.

And a buffalo got its horn through the shirt!

"And you see, *Bwana*," he explained, "I couldn't afford to go on losing shirts at that rate."

Another authenticated instance is the story of a German hunter, Paul Grenz, one of the first people to try filming big-game. Grenz was travelling down the Lualaba in a motor-boat, and early one morning wounded a buffalo bull, which for some reason he did not dispatch. He sailed along the river for an hour and then, together with his camera-man, landed for a picnic breakfast. In the middle of breakfast the buffalo arrived, having followed them unseen along the bank, and went straight for Grenz.

Grenz threw himself flat (though not before his jaw was smashed to atoms) and, being a man of enormous strength, caught and held the sweeping horns, shouting to his camera-man to take a photograph of this unique incident. But the latter, feeling no doubt that it was up to him to save his employer's life, left the camera, which he thoroughly understood, and took up a rifle, of which he knew very little. This plucky effort cost him his life, for the buffalo turned on him immediately and killed him, but it gave Grenz time to get his rifle, with which he eventually won this strange battle.

Incidentally, with his jaw tied up in a handkerchief, he then walked thirty miles to the camp of a Belgian I know well, and, after a night's rest and some liquid food—all he could take—borrowed a bicycle and rode eighty miles along bush paths to Elizabethville and hospital.

But to return to the buffalo. As against these two instances I must record that when I was in Arusha some years back news arrived, closely followed by the victim, that a buffalo, coming up behind an old native who was peacefully bending over his patch of cultivation, had knocked him down, trampled on him, and continued the trampling until some white man came along with a rifle; an opportune arrival which was yet not opportune enough to save the unfortunate gardener from injuries which cost him his life.

Of course, that buffalo may have been the exception which proves the rule; but it is not a rule that I have any burning desire to put to the test. I nearly had to once, though! Very early one morning a

friend and myself marched out of our camp on the great plain between Lake George and the Ruwenzori Mountains, following up news of elephant received the previous night.

Suddenly there was a cry of "*Mboga! Mboga!*" (buffalo), and the little party—not so little either, for various Africans had joined in unasked—halted abruptly. That was, I think, one of the most impressive views I have ever had of buffalo, though neither side had any hostile intentions. We had another engagement. So, apparently, had the buffalo, for, though we must have numbered close on ten people, the four big beasts ahead took not the faintest notice of us, but sauntered across the track some fifty yards distant without even bothering to accelerate their lordly progress!

I observed these four gentlemen—they were all bulls—for some days and found that regularly, just after dawn, they used to make for one of the thickly-wooded valleys running far back into the foothills of Ruwenzori, in whose shady depths they were wont to spend the day, emerging only to feed at night.

I had then—and retain to this day, with additions—a very healthy respect for buffalo, and calculated that, if I took up a position on the slope of the steep hill which commanded the valley, I should be fairly safe in the quite likely event of not hitting my quarry in a vital spot first time.

It proved a miscalculation.

I wounded the biggest, very slightly I fancy—and forthwith he came up the slope after me like an express train!

Now a buffalo, among other peculiarities, has this: he charges head down, and the head itself is practically invulnerable, while the outward sweep of the great horns guards the body. My only chance, therefore, was to fire from a low level upwards, so—looking, I hope, a great deal more heroic than I felt—I sat down and let him have the second barrel. It misfired! This was decidedly unpleasant. It began to look as though I should be compelled to try the lying-flat business! But could one lie flat on a steep slope?

I reloaded quicker than I have ever done anything in my life, and fired both barrels almost simultaneously. One of them—I don't know which—brought him down with a crash. But his muzzle was within five

yards of where I had been seated; and it was quite a long time before I felt any real zest for more buffalo-shooting.

I never had such a close call again; though there was an interesting moment in the Congo when, out with a shot-gun and thoughts of the larder, I strolled round the corner of a thicket in one direction to meet a buffalo strolling round in the other. Intense surprise was mutual, but the buffalo recovered first and to my immense relief walked away. So did I—straight back to camp to fortify myself with a stiff whisky!

With most other animals there would have been nothing to worry about, because they would not have dreamt of attacking unprovoked; but you can never be sure what a buffalo is going to do next. He may, and quite probably will, walk or even run away; on the other hand, he may show fight at once, which no other animal will do except a "rogue" elephant or a man-eating lion.

At one time, for instance, the track which leads from the north end of Lake Natron to Songo, above the western shores, became simply impossible owing to the savagery of the local buffalo. There is, in fact, only one practical certainty about a buffalo; when he is wounded he will fight every time and all the time, and fight with such dour courage, such almost uncanny cunning, that many an experienced hunter has been killed in this most dangerous of all games.

The buffalo, to my mind, is one of the most splendid animals in creation. A match, it is said, even for an elephant, and more than a match for a lion, who never attacks him unless unusually hungry or with great numerical advantage on his side, he still roams, fearless and unchallenged, over great tracts of Africa. But the tracts are diminishing in extent, the buffalo himself is diminishing in numbers.

What the rinderpest has left, the onward march of civilization is taking, and, I suppose, the day will come when a few skeletons in museums, a few vast heads in the homes of the descendants of dead hunters, will be all that remains of the African buffalo.

But I doubt if the world will be a better place for that; and Africa, at any rate, will be considerably less interesting.

