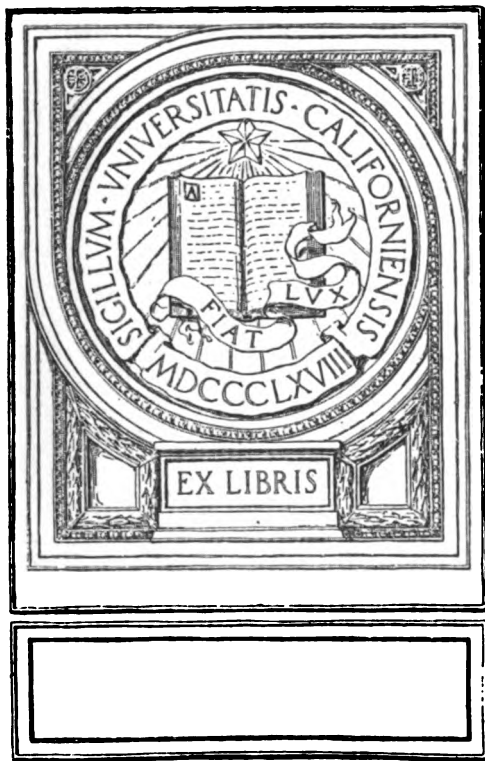


HUNTING IN AFRICA EAST AND WEST



BY
CHARLES P. CURTIS JR.
AND RICHARD C. CURTIS



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**HUNTING IN AFRICA
EAST AND WEST**

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AT NAROK, UNDER THE GREAT MIMOSA TREE NEAR OUR CAMP
From the left: Anita, Richard, myself, the Skipper, and my father

HUNTING IN AFRICA EAST AND WEST

BY
CHARLES P. CURTIS, JR.
AND
RICHARD C. CURTIS

With Illustrations



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
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1925

TO YOU
ANSWERED

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TO
OUR FATHER
IN MEMORY OF HIS SECOND
AND OUR FIRST HUNTING IN AFRICA
THIS STORY IS WRITTEN TO SHOW
IN SOME MEASURE
WHAT HIS SONS OWE
TO HIS COMPANIONSHIP

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HUNTING IN AFRICA

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PART I

LION AND BUFFALO IN KENYA

BY

CHARLES P. CURTIS, JR.

HUNTING IN AFRICA

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PART I

LION AND BUFFALO IN KENYA

CHAPTER I

NAIROBI

I speak of Africa and golden joys.

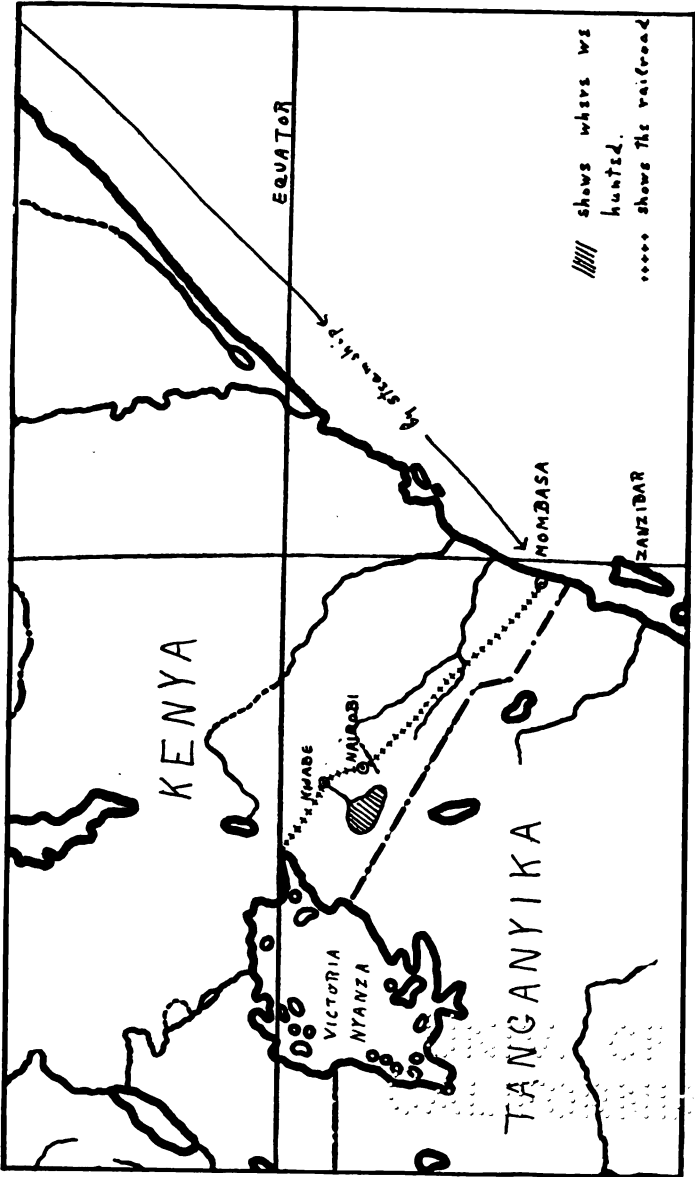
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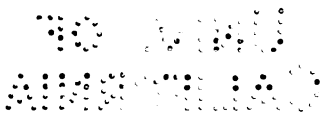
At Nairobi, on May 13, 1923, our travels ended and this story begins, although the Uganda Railway was to take us a few hours farther inland. The true distinction between travelling and the business of life is, I believe, a matter of luggage, and at Nairobi we stowed our steamer trunks in the hotel and shifted what we wanted for the field into ant- and water-proof tin boxes.

We were four, my father, my brother R., his wife A., and myself. We had joined the London boat at Port Saïd, passed four hot damp calm nights through the Red Sea, spent a day and a night at Port Sudan (where the Fuzzy-Wuzzies laughed at my falling off a camel), touched for a few hours at Aden, turned westward round Cape Guardafui, crossed the equator, and landed at Mombasa. There we had only time to put rifles and tobacco through the customs before we took the Uganda Railway to Nairobi, some

three hundred miles inland and about four thousand feet up.

Run your finger down the east coast of Africa until you get just below the equator and before you reach Madagascar — there is Mombasa. Then go inland, northwesterly, leaving Mount Kilimanjaro on your left, and a little more than halfway to the great Victoria Nyanza, about south of Mount Kenya, you are at Nairobi. It was a railhead in 1899; and, although now the capital of Kenya, it is scarcely thirty years old. Kenya has a population of only ten thousand Englishmen, twice as many Indians, and something under three million native Africans, of many tribes and several races; Nairobi seems fairly representative. Brisk Englishmen pass in automobiles, bicycles, and rickshas; bearded Indians stand at their shop doors; native black women stride along with burdens on their heads and their tall husbands tread the sidewalks with long spears. Nairobi has three branch banks, one English, one South African, and one Indian; that fact alone is fairly indicative of its business elements. It has two rival hotels; one English general store, with several lesser competitors run by Indians; and many yet smaller and miscellaneous shops spreading out into a native bazaar. But, barring the natives, the traveller's eye chiefly remarks the universal sun-helmet on all the Europeans and the three-foot-deep gutters along the streets, the one a tribute to the tropical sun, the other to the tropical rains.





We were met at the station by Colonel Whetham, who was going to fit us out, and taken in his Ford to the New Stanley Hotel. Mr. Philip Percival, the Englishman who was to be our guide, had not yet come from his farm on account of a go of fever. So we spent a day or two counting rows of tins and jars, neatly laid out in readiness to be boxed up, sorting cartridges for different rifles, having gun-sights adjusted, purchasing small articles we had really no use for, and meeting, talking, and supping with settlers and hunters in the hotel.

We had come for a three months' safari, chiefly to hunt and on the side to collect and photograph trees and flowers. The game we wanted was lion and buffalo, with a good hope of rhinoceros and a less hope of elephant. In addition to this, I procured a small sheet-iron tank half full of a gallon of alcohol, in which I proposed to collect lizards.

By the time Percival arrived, we were almost ready to start. He announced his proposal to go into the Southern Masai Reserve. We were to take a train to Kijabe, about forty miles farther up the line, there meet the native porters which he had collected, and go south toward the Tanganyika border, our further movements depending on the game.

CHAPTER II

BY RAIL TO KIJABE

A cold fresh height, a green rain-sodden plain, a grey soft-clouded sky!
A. S. CAIRNS, *Equatorial Africa*

ON a Friday morning in May after an early breakfast, we stood on the station platform, Percival and we four, bidding good-bye to Mrs. Percival and Allan Quatermain, a friend of Percival's (I choose that name because it describes him better even than his own). We had by this time our personal boys; R. and A. had Hassani, a Masai, my father and I Stephen, a Baganda. They had stowed our boxes and guns into our compartment and were standing near, waiting to pop into their own as soon as the train started. We conversed and A. made plans to meet Mrs. Percival on our way back. Behind Hassani stood a demure dusky girl; that was his *bibi*, he said, with a graceful pitch of his thumb over his shoulder which she acknowledged with a shy grin. Already our headman and our cook were in the compartment labelled 'Natives,' leaning out and apparently explaining us to certain friends with gestures of hands and heads.

Then the train pulled out, and I sat back, full of anticipated excitements.

It was some forty miles, with hardly a stretch of straight track and never a level one: round deeply

wooded hills, over gorges, and through ridges, past riffled streams and across open places studded with flat-topped trees. The stations were each decorated by the varied tastes of its Indian station-masters, some with bright vines and whitewashed fences, some with painted stones set in design, others with neatly raked paths and enormous sunflowers; and all were adorned with tall, lounging natives clad in a couple of yards of brown cotton and carrying a seven-foot spear. Between the stations, only the rails and our train had changed since Stanley. We all crowded the windows, Percival pointing and we looking.

'Yes, Tommies, that is, Thomson's gazelle; we'll never run out of those; and that's ostrich, and that's kongoni. Now watch for monkey in this bit of wood!' But I saw only wildly waving branches, as the monkeys dropped and swung away. However, I was beginning to believe some of the things I had read.

About noon we reached Kijabe. We were in the mountains, and the group of Indian stores and native huts behind the station and a line of empty goods vans on a siding stood on the side of a steep slope. Above, the mountain slanted up, covered with dark green forest; below, it dropped down, down to a plain which we could dimly see spread out under mist. A heavy rainy season was coming to an end, and the sun and the showers alternated so quickly that the landscape often showed both at once. The air was so clear between showers, however, that one quite missed the blue effect of distance.

We ran through one of the showers to the restaurant, a neat, freshly painted, frame house, and, amid the hurry of the other passengers who were going on to Uganda, took a leisurely lunch. By the time we had finished, the train had taken them off and left us to ourselves.

We found our porters already encamped on the opposite side of the track from the station, smoky fires surrounded by complete circles of huddling figures, little white tents, and horses and oxen. That afternoon, while our safari was getting organized, we were to sort out and arrange ourselves and our things, and next morning we were to start down to the plains and be off.

We spent a happy afternoon wandering about, watching everything, and asking Percival questions. I remember after lunch we sat about the steps and argued over the book with which we identified flower colors, each page covered with nicely graduated slips of tints and tones, named and numbered. We matched not only the flowers within reach, but our clothes and book covers, and ended by identifying all the bright colors in the tin advertisements nailed along the piazza rail. During the showers, we smoked inside and discussed the pictures in the restaurants and the printed regulations. Passengers using the waiting-room for more than twenty-four hours would be charged thereafter one rupee a day, we learned; and, indeed, waiting-rooms on the Uganda Railway are always provided with beds.

We went shopping in the Indian store and found we had journeyed beyond the bourne of postcards and into the country of blue beads and wire earrings.

We slept in the waiting-room, my brother and A. in the 'Ladies'' side, my father and I in the 'Gentlemen's.'

Before we get off in the morning I must describe our party. First comes Philip Percival — 'Skipper' we called him; and the rest of this book will make an adequate description or tribute unnecessary here. He is a settler, an Englishman, and a gentleman; he has killed and helped kill as many lions as any man; and the more exciting the situation the more courteous his demeanor. In immediate charge of our porters was our Baganda headman, a tall, elderly negro; he wore khaki shorts, shoes (a mark of distinction), a brown woolen watch cap, and an old loose khaki shooting-coat; and he always carried a long slender staff, which he gripped about three quarters up its length. His name was Enos, and his patriarchal air has somehow stripped that name of all pharmaceutical association and I always think of it as Biblical and of its owner as some black minor prophet. Under him were our porters. The Skipper's farm was in the Wakamba country, and every settler swears by the natives of his own district — and not by those of another; so we had Wakambas from his neighboring villages. Many had applied and been examined, and the District Commissioner had picked out about seventy-five for us. Only a few had

ever been porters before; they were out to buy a wife, or another wife, or to set themselves up in their village, with our twelve shillings a month. We supplied each with a red blanket to cover their black skins or to roll on their heads under the load, a coil of rope to tie the load, and a piece of cotton cloth to every five or so for a tent. We gave them a daily ration of mealy meal, a sort of coarse cornmeal (which they would only half boil so that it might keep on swelling inside), and that's all, except the enormous quantities of fresh meat they looked to from our guns. In fact, they were savages, but this was not manifest until they smiled and showed their front teeth filed and chipped to a sharp point. They were all, I should say, under twenty-five; so Enos had no need of any great age to be accounted elderly. There were four askaris, armed with Martini-Henry rifles and half a dozen rounds apiece. They are, in theory, soldiers, and a survival of the old days when an armed guard over porters was needed. Nowadays, they are night watchmen against thieving hyena, and firewood gatherers, and their guns are more a menace than a safeguard. We had three horses and three mules, each with its attendant syce. One of the horses was a Somali pony for Percival, fast and quick enough to pursue lions; the other two were for A. and my father, hers a big army remount, his a dirty gray wreck, but that was only because it was 'salted' by having already had the fly horse-sickness, and for that reason, indeed, the most reliable animal we had.

Two of the mules were for my brother and myself; the third was a spare, to substitute for any horse or mule bitten and dead of the fly. Then, too, we had an ox-team, which was to act as a sort of moving base of supplies, loaded with meal for the boys, fire-wood on occasion, and on the way back to carry our heads and skins.

Under Enos's general authority, but in fact independent as you please, was the cook, Mpishi. That was both title and name in one, for *Mpishi* is Swahili for cook and I never knew what his mother had called him. He was big and powerful, and he knew more English than he admitted. His assistant, promoted by his selection from the rank of porter, was known as his 'toto,' or 'baby' in Swahili, and covered his darkness with a suit of white cotton underclothes and a white rubber raincoat.

This made up our party except for ourselves, our personal boys, and our gun-bearers. I will not intrude ourselves and I have mentioned Hassani and Stephen. Our gun-bearers were constantly by our sides, and almost all my memories show me Selimani either smiling in the background or very active in the front of the picture. Selimani was a Wakamba, older than the others, with a family in Nairobi. His bent lay toward elephants, the Skipper said, but lions and buffalo were no strangers to him. His stocky figure, topped by a woolen watch cap, shod with cast-off boots, and mostly covered by khaki shorts and jacket, usually preceded me all day, for his eyes were

worth my four with my Zeiss binoculars thrown in. He was a great teller of stories, and I would sometimes softly approach the circle round the gun-bearers' tent to overhear some tale of Bwana Quatermain, and how ping! ping! the lion fell at his feet. Later, when his shyness of a new bwana wore away and my Swahili improved, I used to get a complete tale, and I would try to respond. The only time, however, I really impressed him was when I tried to describe a whale, a beast as big as four elephants in the ocean, and I doubt if he quite believed that. My father had Sasita, lean and tough, a bit of a rake in town and a devil on occasion, I fancy. My brother had Germani, so called because he came from over the old German border, an ex-corporal in the King's African Rifles. My sister-in-law was attended by Oseni, who had rather a sinecure, since she did not shoot, and who therefore carried a shotgun loaded with buckshot to protect her and a big knife to dig up plants for her. The Skipper had his Kombo, who had been with him for years, a big fellow with a sense of humor and a good share of self-assurance. Each gun-bearer had chosen an assistant or 'secondi' from the porters. My secondi was Mooma, a graceful, slender, almost girlish lad who would sling a big bag of cartridges over one shoulder and my twelve-pound double express rifle over the other and walk all day behind us. He had an elastic grin and a suppressed loquacity; whenever I said something silly in Swahili, or Selimani made some incomprehensible witti-

cism, I'd hear a promptly choked giggle behind me. It turned out he was married, but when I asked him how many children he had he shook his head, smiling, and held his hand about a foot from his stomach. I liked Mooma. I admired his woolly hair, shaved in designs with one of my old Gillette blades. He dressed in the red blanket, but gradually acquired hand-me-downs; whenever I gave anything to Selimani, Mooma displayed its predecessor.

That was our party, almost a hundred in all.

CHAPTER III

THE START

The great charm of Bushveld hunting is its variety: you never know what will turn up next — the only certainty being that it will not be what you are expecting.

SIR PERCY FITZPATRICK, *Jock of the Bushveld*

WE started rather late next morning. Not until nine were all hands ready. R. and A. went ahead on horseback; my father and I waited with the Skipper to see the porters go. All the loads were laid out in a long line and each porter took his place behind a load. Enos stood in front and gave a shout, raising his staff. Then each man picked up his load, one helping another, got it on his head, and in single file went off, winding down the slope along the road to the plains below. My father and I watched until most of them had passed out of sight between the trees, their red blankets bright against the sunlit verdure. We gazed down over the plains. The weather was clear, and the distant slopes were still green even as far as we could see, a young light green in places, in others dark under the passing clouds. We swung our legs over two of our mules and followed the Skipper's Somali pony down.

The road was a hard red dust, almost brick, really only a strip of the plain denuded of grass and brush. It was washed and eroded by the rains, in some places abruptly cut some feet deep by a rainwater sluice. On each side the plains stretched away to the hills,

covered with a foot or so of grass, flowers, bushes, and small acacia trees. We were now fairly off, and I looked intently as I rode along. This was the Kedong Valley and in it were lions.

Nevertheless, the first incident was not lion. We had covered a mile or more, and I was behind, stopping to cut a great flowering plant a few yards off the road. A couple of natives appeared from behind some trees and one walked toward me holding out his hand, in which I saw something glittering, about as big as an apple. It was a 'Baby Ben' alarm clock. Not to be surprised at anything I should see in Africa, I took it politely, wound it, and gave it back. He said 'Assanti!' or 'Thank you!' and went on, walking toward Kijabe. The Skipper later suggested he wanted to sell it, but I think the native believed no one but a white man could awake the sleeping devil in the clock. On cold nights, our askaris used to hang the watch by which we expected them to call us near the fire so that it might not die of a chill.

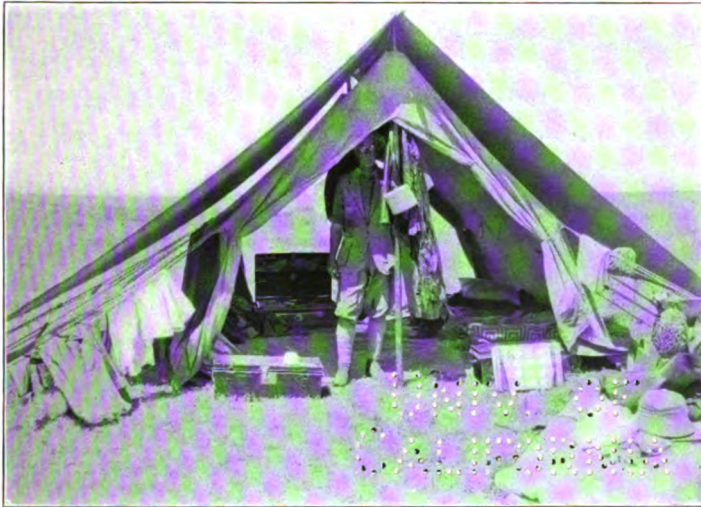
We knew we had arrived at our first camp by seeing R. and A. sitting on a little rise. What with a late start and the slowness of the porters, we had covered only about nine miles. As we got nearer to them we saw they were looking through their glasses beyond, and the Skipper stood beside them in an explanatory attitude. When we joined them, we saw a herd of eight giraffe a quarter of a mile away, and other smaller game scattered beyond. R. and I were to have our first shot that afternoon.

Lunch on safari is no picnic affair. Somehow or other, Mpishi would produce a full solid meal, whether we had been camped for days or the porters had just come in. He and his toto were always the van on the march and his fire was always high when the tired porters arrived, only to be hustled off for more wood. Our first lunch differed from the rest only in its lack of fresh meat. That was the want R. and I were to fill.

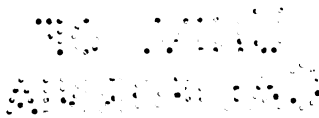
So, about three, after the sun had lost his keenest edge of heat, we left camp, each followed by his two gun-bearers to carry the guns and by six porters to carry home the meat. I left in some trepidation; my first shot in Africa was to be the focus of six pair of hungry eyes. I should have preferred to make my opening less publicly, but all went well, far better than on many, many succeeding days. We tramped off through the high grass, wet down by a noon shower, and soon lost sight of the group of little white tents. Parts of the plain were open, and almost, although not quite, free of the little, flat-topped thorn trees; others, however, were thickly planted, much like an orchard. The game we had seen on arrival had disappeared, but hardly an hour had passed before Mooma said, 'Kongoni!' and we stopped. I looked and looked, turning my eyes and holding my head still, and yet I saw nothing. Selimani put his head on my shoulder and pointed a finger beside my eye. Then suddenly I saw a light-brown beast, bigger than a deer, some way off, star-



RICHARD SITTING IN OUR MEAL TENT
These are our steamer chairs



MY FATHER STANDING IN THE TENT HE AND I SHARED
Our ant-proof tin boxes are in front. Against the one on the right stands
one of our two flower-presses



ing at us. He was too far for a shot, and we walked slowly, diagonally toward him, pretending to pass him by. He bounded off a dozen steps and stopped. We continued, and after a bit I dared not go farther. I wanted a shot, and I feared he would go off. Although it was a long shot, and some weeks later I should have refused it, it was my first. I enjoy thinking now what a fuss I made to myself of this first kongoni. They came later into the light of common day, but the first was enchanted. I put my Springfield up, only to find my rear sight full of water. I blew it out, smiled at Selimani, who did not smile back, and aimed again. Hardly had I fired than Selimani was running ahead and I followed, walking and enjoying my hit. The kongoni was down, kicking. Later I should have hurried to have a nearer shot if he got up, but Selimani's wisdom equalled my innocence and he knew the kongoni was anchored. Standing over him, with all the nonchalance at my disposal, I watched Selimani feel with a knife low in his chest, and then plunge it in to the top of the handle. Then a few long kicks, his hind leg drawn clear back to his ears, and he was dead. We left four of our six to bring him in and walked on. On our way back we saw them, struggling along in file, one with the kongoni's shoulder over his head like a great hat. My first shot was a satisfaction, but, perhaps fortunately for that satisfaction, I got no other shot that day.

There is a significance in Selimani's manner of

killing the kongoni which should be explained, although I am far from clear on it myself. Selimani was a Mohammedan, as were all of our gun-bearers and most of the other special functionaries; and one of his chief tenets (perhaps even the head stone of the corner) was only to eat meat killed by a fellow believer, a sort of kosher in fact, called in East Africa 'halali.' Whether the basis was the necessity of drawing off the blood, as Selimani's knife-thrust effectively did, or whether some prayer had to be said as life departed, I do not know; I have been told both. However that may be, I am sure we always let a gun-bearer kill the animals we shot for camp eating; and sometimes when my shot seemed all too accurate and I suspected death had already intervened, I would approach slowly and discreetly and leave Selimani alone with his conscience to decide that halali was still possible.

We were back in camp by six, wet and happy. R. had also shot a kongoni, and had seen, moreover, zebra and tommy. After a six o'clock supper, in the dark, for the sun sets abruptly at six, we were all off to our tents, my father and I in one, R. and A. in a second, and the Skipper in the third. Although I was tired, I lay awake, excited and strange. The horses stirred and scraped, the fires snapped and glared, and numberless, small, wild noises surrounded me. Was that an insect, or a snore, or some night bird? The Skipper explained the next morning. It was a hyena.

CHAPTER IV

THE KEDONG VALLEY

Indeed, 'a must shoot nearer.

Love's Labor's Lost, Act IV, Scene 1

THE next day we got started before Enos and the camp, and separated into two parties, my father and I making a loop to the left of the direct line of march, which was along the road, and R. and A. and the Skipper going in a similar loop to the right. In this way we could get off quietly before the porters and arrive in our new camp after they had set it up and after Mpishi had got lunch ready. We walked in single file, mules and horses well behind us. The country spread out now farther into the distance, and only on our left could we see the hills. The game appeared more and more plentiful, now in herds in the distance, and now suddenly rising out of the grass and bush near at hand. I had several shots and I missed them all.

Our plans were to move slowly down the Kedong Valley, encamping first under Mount Suswa, which makes a sort of buttress on the east side of the valley, and later cross diagonally to the west side, working down until we were under the trail over which our ox-teams could ascend the steep west slopes, which is the Mau Escarpment. Thence, along the heights of the Mau, we should have a few days of no game,

travelling south as fast as convenient to Narok, the Government station at the entrance of the Southern Masai Reserve. A day south of Narok we should cross the Guaso Nyero River and begin our substantial expectations of lion.

The Kedong Valley was to be a sort of initiation or school. While my brother and I were learning to shoot with a decent certainty of hitting, the porters would be hardening up on exercise and fresh meat and the whole safari would be reduced to its routine. Perhaps most important of all, the Skipper would learn how much confidence he could put in R. and in me, for we were going to meet some beasts that might not run away. My father had been in East Africa before, and anyhow needed no schooling.

Our first camp in the Kedong was under Suswa, at Rickman's Water. This was one of the water-courses or dongas which run down from the mountain and end in a clump of bushes and flowers on the level of the plain. These dongas were at times only a deep gravel stream-bed, at others a brook, depending on the season. Their banks were thickly set with trees and bush, indeed every variety of vegetation. As the excess of each rainy season flowed down off the hills, it drained into these courses and spread down on the plains; and, as it spread, the forest that covered the hills followed and stayed. So each donga is an overflow of the great forest, inhabited by its denizens, the birds and bats, and the small gazelle, as well as a refuge during the day for the dwellers on

the plains, the jackal and hyena and cheetah and lion.

Our camp was situated a few hundred yards up the first slopes and about as far from the donga. We were just high enough above the plain for a view, and after lunch, before our midday rest, or after it and before we started afternoon hunting, we could watch the game feeding. On the more distant rises I have seen what was apparently a field of sunburnt grass waver as if seen through heat waves and then apparently get loose and turn into a great herd of zebra or kongoni. I doubt if there were ever a time that we could not see some sort of wild animal on the plain before us.

One afternoon while I was sitting writing, with my binoculars beside me, I could see my father and R. off on the plain after meat. They were small brown figures ahead of several black and red; a short distance farther in front were some kongoni. Through my glasses I could see them distinctly. Then one of the brown figures raised his arms toward a kongoni, and by what seemed at the distance an exhibition of telepathic magic, the kongoni fell. I heard nothing, I saw nothing, except that a man stretched an arm toward a beast and the beast fell.

Our day now took on its regular routine. We four men were called at half-past four, giving us time enough to dress and eat breakfast before the leap of the sun over the hills and the quick equatorial dawn. We could not well start before we could see our gun-

sights, but we must be clear of the camp noises and smells before the sun lit up the plain and warned the lion and the leopard back to the safety of the hills. My sister-in-law slept on until the sun and the garrulity of the porters woke her.

At quarter of six — the sun rose at about quarter after — we started off in opposite directions, in two parties, the Skipper and my father alternately with R. and myself. The tall wet grass brushed our knees as we walked off, the Skipper on his Somali pony and the rest of us on mules. Behind us, in single file, followed the gun-bearers and their secondis, and then half a dozen porters to carry home the meat. The mist wreathed branch-high through the trees and filled the hollows of the plain. I heard hoofbeats of herds I could not see. Then the sun, quite suddenly, stood on the eastern hills and the mists were torn away, all but a few shreds and patches which were left on some bushes, and as we rode nearer and by them they turned out to be great glistening cobwebs.

The Skipper and I were together that first morning and we skirted the slopes to the eastward, with the hope of cutting off a lion which might have been hunting that night in the plains and which would now be returning to the hills. About eight or so we stopped on a shoulder of the slope to smoke a first pipe and to view the plain through our glasses. Steadying our glasses with elbows on knees, we examined different sectors; the bright green of grass

was shaded with hollows and with the passing shadows of clouds and was dotted and studded with patches of thorn trees and with herds of zebra, showing either all black or all white in the sun, and with the browner spots of kongoni. Over one of the patches of thorn our attention disclosed a slow swirl of birds. That meant something. The birds were vultures, and under them must lie something dead. Had a lion killed it? They were circling above in the air, and so either they dared not yet alight to their meal or they had already finished and were loath to leave the memory of fresh blood. It was not too late for a lion to be still eating a kill made at dawn, and so we had hopes of his presence below the wreath of slowly circling vultures. We hurried across the plain. I was not so excited as I later became, because I could not quite realize that a big cat might in fact and truth lie there among those thorn trees ahead of me. And none did. We approached cautiously, with our big rifles ready, but when we saw a fluttering and flapping of scores of birds in a heap we knew the lion had gone. The vultures rose heavily and sat on the trees all round like monstrous buds, as we examined the remains of a zebra, guts all out and head twisted wrong way up. The Skipper estimated we were less than an hour late.

Africa has a complete scavenger system. The lion or the leopard makes his kill, usually at night. He takes what he wants, say, the tongue (pulled out backwards through the throat) and the entrails and

what not. While he eats, the hyenas and the jackals sit round. They dare not join him, but, when he is full and they have their turn at the carcass, the vultures which have gathered must wait. By noon, the traveller finds only a great dark spot in the grass, a skull and a backbone and a few scattered legs; even the smell has been nearly disposed of, for, meanwhile, a ravenous and busy hierarchy of insects have been constantly engaged in picking up the crumbs and wiping up the spills.

The Skipper and I took a long loop back to lunch.

Walking from six to one was not yet habitual and my legs were not yet as tough as they were to become. We enjoyed some restful afternoons. We sorted flowers, changed the blotters in which they were pressed, and argued over their colors. I started my collection of lizards. My first difficulty was really my last; that is, the Wakamba name for lizard.¹ The Skipper did not know either that or the Swahili, the lingua franca of Africa, which the more educated of our men talked; he said he had always used the generic name for insect, which is 'dudu,' and that was not helpful. So I tried explaining. I called Enos and in elementary Swahili said, 'Hi! small snakes with four legs, Ugh?' Great astonishment, but no understanding! This was made worse when I said, 'I want Many.' Then I tried with my fingers in the ground, running. A grin, but nothing more. Yet the

¹ A Masai proverb calls the lizard a clammy thing which is always in your hut and which you don't notice. See A. C. Hollis, *The Masai*, page 257 (Oxford, 1905).

next day Enos came back and said one word to me, 'Telembo,' and with a grin imitated a lizard running with his finger, or rather, I suspect, he imitated my attempt of the day before. Then I made my arrangements. I would give sixpence for every lizard brought me alive, reserving a right of rejection. This reservation was necessary, because at some camps I was brought a dozen or more of the same kind. The arrangement worked well; we all ran out of sixpence and I had to give chits. I ended with some forty or fifty specimens which I decanted into two glass jars and brought home to the Agassiz Museum at Harvard.

One day, the second in this camp, I think, we ended the afternoon with a quail shoot. No great preparation or expectation was required. We called some porters; our gun-bearers brought and loaded our shotguns; and we all formed into line at the edge of our camp. Then we advanced slowly through the grass. Great laughter at a miss and great shouts at a hit, as the quail got up under our feet. We walked a quarter-mile or so and then walked back. My father gave his last two shells to the Skipper, who at once got a double. That raised the greatest shout of all and ended the shoot. We got eleven birds, as I remember, with six shells apiece, all in an hour.

CHAPTER V

AN ELAND

Here by, upon the edge of yonder coppice;

A stand, where you may make the fairest shoot.

Love's Labor's Lost, Act IV, Scene 1

THE rainy season had been unusually long and we received its last efforts. Most of the days it rained, but not continuously, and in the intervals the sun shone hot and bright. We got wet and then we dried off, so that the rain was no hindrance to our activity. However, we had two rivers to cross ahead and such reports as had come to us were not encouraging. Bridges were down and fords were deep. We ourselves could, of course, have crossed, but our ox-team might get stuck. So our schooling continued longer than we had expected. That was not to be complained of. Furthermore, we got eland in the Keding.

We had moved on down the valley and encamped by some water just under a little kopje. A kopje is a little hill, but in this country not such a little hill as we have at home, not merely a localized rise of the land. Imagine a clump of rock pushed up through the surface of the plain by some interior force and left half protuberant and more or less covered with vegetation. The raised and broken edge of the plain around provides the first slope; the steeper rock gives the height, perhaps a hundred or two hundred

feet. Near such a small eminence stood our white tents and rose the blue smoke of our fires.

On the march to our new camp we had passed another kopje which the Skipper thought lion should like, and one of us, while hunting, had seen lion spoor near by. So, the first thing after we reached our new camp, the four of us set out to drive that kopje. We were unsuccessful, and the event of the day, to me at least, was an eland on the way home. However, as many times later we drove kopjes or dongas for lion, I will describe the scheme and circumstance of a lion drive.

The theory of a lion drive is based on the desire of the lion to avoid human intercourse and to make for deeper cover when he hears or smells man near him. During the night a lion hunts on the plains, for there his game feeds; during the day he lies up in cover, either digesting a full belly or nursing an empty one. By its natural beauty as cover and by the proximity of footprints, we assumed a lion, or more, was on that kopje. It was of the usual type; and, for size, it covered, say, ten acres and rose about a hundred feet above the plain.

We left the forty porters we had brought as beaters at the near end and, giving ourselves fifteen minutes, hastened forward to take our positions at the other end. My father and R. with their gun-bearers, sat behind some bushes about fifty yards from the first slope; the Skipper and I found a thorn tree round the corner, also about fifty yards away

from the edge of the cover. We seated ourselves, our big rifles across our knees, and waited. The sky was brilliantly blue, and the landscape a shining green. I found I was holding my breath and then breathing deep. Soon we heard the yells and shouts of the beaters, like a distant village baseball game on a Sunday morning. Then a long wait, until the Skipper pointed to four little reed buck leaving the edge of the cover, stepping daintily and unhurried. They were hardly off before a hyena came out, heavy-shouldered, square-headed, and clumsy, looking back toward the noise that had roused him. He gave me a quick start. But no lion followed. Our last hopes were not gone until we saw the red blankets of the beaters on the brow of the kopje. We could see them throwing rocks into bushes and the Skipper could make out the cheerful obscenities which they hurled after them. They clambered down, grinning and talking, and my father and R. appeared around the corner. Only then did I get up and stretch, finding my legs more cramped than I knew.

We started toward camp, R. and I intending to split off in the usual loops. Just before we separated, walking through a fairly dense thicket of thorn, a stench of decay stopped us. That meant a kill. We found a zebra, or most of one. Our drive had had a better chance than we'd thought. I think we all got a bit excited — the Skipper had frankly not offered us much hope for the drive — and we all rummaged about among the thorn trees, rifles in hand. We kept

no line or order, and, although I was keen for the sight of a lion then, I think now it was just as well none of us did find one behind the next tree. From what I saw later, I know I'd not have seen him until he was pretty close up. Anyway, my imagination, so far as lion were concerned, was quicker and more sensitive than it had been.

It was on my way back alone that I got my eland. They are big, blue-gray cattle with the long, straight, twisted horns of an antelope. The bulls are half a size larger than the cows and easily discernible by their darker color, like the bottom of a thundercloud. They were not rare, by any means, in the Kedong Valley, but rather wilder than the other beasts and we had not been able to get near the herds we had seen. We had, however, constant hopes. They were vastly bigger than what we had shot; indeed, an eland is fairly big game; not in the class with the buffalo, to be sure, but no mere meat for the porters.

Selimani and I, followed by the young person Mooma and by half a dozen half-solemn and also half-ridiculous Wakambas, started off alone toward the western hills, meaning to skirt their edges and reach home by lunch-time. I felt elated and yet restrained. It was my first morning out alone and I rather wondered what I should do about a lion.

We walked in single file among the low acacia trees, avoiding their thorns, as long and as stout as matches, and admiring their big yellow blossoms as big as your fist. A native passed us in the other

direction, cleaning his teeth with a stout twig, and saluted Selimani and me with a dignified 'Jambo!' or 'Howdyedo!' taking no notice, however, of the Wakamba; but a good fifty yards behind followed his two wives, bowed down with his luggage slung on their backs by a hide strap across their foreheads, and they were not so haughty. They giggled and gave little shrill screams at what Mooma said; God knows what jest he cracked.

Nearly up to the lower slope we turned into a broad stream-bed. Selimani's hand pointed out the distinct prints of a lion. A close imitation of a lion footprint can be made by doubling your four fingers up, keeping your thumb off the ground and leaning on your knuckles and the heel of your hand: double the size of that impression. Indeed, our chances in our drive had been excellent!

Out of this donga, toward camp, spread a great meadow, deeper in grass than the plain and studded with groups of flowering bushes. Hardly up the bank, Selimani stopped me. He whispered, 'Mpofu,' and we all crouched, an angry gesture of Selimani bringing the Wakamba down. I made out the bluish hulks of the eland beyond. Manœuvring to get one of the bigger clumps of bushes between us and the nearest, we drew nearer. I had taken one look and I took no more until fairly covered by the bush. Then I peeked slowly and cautiously. A big bluish mass was endwise toward me rather under a hundred yards. I had been discreet in my motions, and even

now I drew slowly from behind my bush, but then I got excited, threw up my Springfield, and fired. Off he plunged and heaved, and I ran headlong after him, firing and yanking back the bolt and firing again. I had hit with my first shot, but I know I missed the rest. My excitement ran along a deeper vein of thought than common sense, and I tried to run after him, although a bullet might more easily overtake him. He disappeared in the direction of camp.

However, he was wounded; the grass showed that; and we followed. I have read of the Red Indian tracking the wounded quarry and I have seen a little of it moose-hunting in Canada, but Selimani, with Mooma and the porters, now beside us and spread out like a pack of hounds, have given me a faith in the art I lacked before. Through the taller, heavier grass, I could see his wake myself, but over the thinner, spare expanses I saw nothing whatsoever. They fanned out and leaned over close to the ground. Then one would raise in his hand a blade of grass darkly spotted with blood and all of us would hurry on. Or Selimani would point down to a mark I could not recognize. So we progressed, not slowly and gradually, but hurriedly. The sun was high, and I was hot and breathless. The eland continued, fortunately enough, to go straight toward camp. Soon — it seemed soon — we saw our white tents, hardly a quarter of a mile away. I confess I then doubted the trail, but a bright blotch of blood again convinced

me, and finally, beyond camp and under our little kopje, we heard shots. We came through a patch of trees and out on the plain, and there was our eland, down on the grass, and I saw my brother fire the last shot. Stephen, one of our personal boys, during the middle of lunch — indeed just as he was passing the curry — had seen him passing, and lunch was adjourned. Nevertheless, I think Selimani would have got him in the end.

The next day we moved camp to the bottom of the road up the escarpment, so that we might start the climb fresh in the morning.

CHAPTER VI

UP THE MAU ESCARPMENT

Now the sweet weather comes again:
The rain is less and less,
Dew-fresh and sun-bright is our wilderness.

A. S. CRIPPS, *The End of the Rains*

OUR week in the Kedong, which had been lengthened several days by the height of the rivers ahead and the ill reports we had received of bridges and fords, was now over. It had been our shaking-down cruise, and our safari had now become a little community. The porters' legs were hard with exercise and their blood vigorous with fresh meat; and they were happier for both. R.'s and my eyes dropped more naturally into line with our gun-sights, our fingers were beginning to squeeze and not pull the trigger, and a six- or seven-hour walk left us still able to get up and reach the lime-juice bottle with which we stifled the mud in our boiled water. As for my sister-in-law, her flower-press was stuffed with specimens in brown paper, to which we had all contributed, although our discrimination of new species did not go beyond the exclamation, 'Oh, I've seen that one before!' or, 'That's not the one you picked back at Rickman's Water!' Besides the zebra, kongoni, and tommy we had killed for food, my brother had shot an oryx, with its long and slender horns; and I had missed one. My father and I had got an eland apiece, mine

with my brother's help, as already related, my father's with one shot through the heart. Best of all, the Skipper seemed not dissatisfied with us; however, we'd had no such excitement as would render his courtesy inconclusive. And R. and I had learned a little Swahili.

Let me discourse briefly on that lingua franca. Before we left Boston, we prepared a list of Swahili words, spending as much time in the selection of a perfect minimum vocabulary as would have sufficed to learn it; and on the steamer we had acquired fifty or sixty nouns and verbs. Of grammar, however, we knew nothing, not a particle; but after a conference with the Skipper and upon engaging our gun-bearers in painfully slow and cautious conversation, we found to our delight that no grammar existed in our safari. Although Swahili is the best known of the dialects of the great Bantu language, and although it has a budding literature among the cultivated gentry of the coast, and the Colonial civil service examination requires a grasp of its intricate syntax, yet, the commercial habits of the Swahili and their living along the coast and the trade routes have simplified their dialect into a lingua franca, and on the tongues of the other tribes Swahili has lost its purity and its elegant complexity. It is the pidjin Bantu; almost anywhere on the East Coast it will at least be understood, and almost everywhere is it spoken pidjinwise. Few of our Wakamba porters, of course, knew any, but our gun-bearers and the other special

functionaries spoke it fluently. Their words came in the order of their thought, with little or no inflection, and their vocabulary was small and overworked. Thus, the word 'kuja,' meaning 'to come,' was used not only as the counterpart of 'kwenda,' 'to go,' but also to express the charge of a lion (which is 'coming' toward one with a vengeance) and even the growth or coming up of the grass. So, R. and I picked up gradually a working knowledge of Swahili even in the short months we were there, and it was great fun. I practised on Selimani. One morning, I remember constructing laboriously the sentence, 'Nini kusema ndege kidogo?' or, 'What are the little birds saying, Selimani?' and delivering it to him. He turned in some surprise, recovered, and answered with a grin, 'Maneno!' — which means, 'Bad talk.'

We left our last camp in the Kedong at dawn to make the long climb up the Mau Escarpment. The Mau is one of the steep sides of the Great Rift Valley, of which the Kedong is a small link. I cannot describe the Rift Valley; it is too stupendous an event in geology. Gregory has told about it, setting forth in his book both fact and theory, as well as the tale of his expedition. I pray my reader to imagine a mountainous country in which a strip many miles broad and hundreds of miles long is dropped down several thousand feet, leaving abrupt edges. It is the reverse of what Conan Doyle imagines in *The Lost Valley*, where a plateau has been raised by some ancient subterranean commotion and so left, inhabited

by its original, prehistoric species. This strip of bottom runs roughly north and south, up and down Eastern Africa; indeed, perhaps farther, for I believe Gregory suggests that the Dead Sea, in Palestine, may be its distant continuation. Whether this event was sudden or not, I doubt if any one can guess. However, the country is clearly volcanic; near the little kopje where we failed, so nearly maybe, to start a lion, we played with boulders of pumice and stumbled over many a ridge of black lava-like rock.

Our road to the top of the Mau Escarpment brought us some two thousand feet above the valley where we had had our schooling. It was no light climb for the ox-team, which did not catch up with the safari until a week later. However, we had enough posho for the boys, and the only inconvenience lay in the absence of my lizard tin. This had been placed in the wagon, and I carried a week's accumulation of specimens — it amounted to only five — in my pocket. The first of these five, if habitat is of scientific interest, should be at least a new species, for I caught it on the empty saddle of the Skipper's pony, while he was behind advising the ox-team boys out of a deep hole.

We walked or sat a mule up the trail, dark under a thick forest and a rainy sky, to the top, where we camped. The name of the place is Ndelele; I give it more for its euphony than for its topographical importance. And the next day we followed the road south on the Mau through more open country to-

ward Narok. We were travelling and no longer attempting to hunt. So we were now more sociable. All five of us jogged along together, stopping willingly to pick and discuss a new flower and to photograph a tree or a specially gay bush. Along one broad level part we contrived a mule race. A. and the Skipper were ahead on the horses; my father, R., and myself somewhat lagged behind on mules. But a mule will not be deserted. We reined in Cinamon, Seal, and Van Dyke (so named for their colors out of our color-book) until the horses were too far ahead for the mules' peace of mind, and then started all together. R. won, though he lost a stirrup in his mad career down the road, I took second place, and my father could only blame Seal. The Skipper and A. were the finish line and the Skipper nearly fell off his pony laughing.

I may add that only my sister-in-law and the Skipper really rode on horseback. The rest of us mostly walked, and used horses or mules as convenient and progressive places to sit down. I made an attempt in the Kedong to ride down a herd of eland, which was unsuccessful except in my being able to keep both my rifle and myself on the pony.

I think it was on this day that we found a curious form of chrysalis. Somebody or other picked up what appeared to be a tiny bundle of sticks, a miniature fasces. It was a little chrysalis, with the larva in the place of the axehaft. Round the outside were bound or glued a layer of acacia thorns, laid neatly

parallel and close together. Their tough strength made an effective protection to the insect within, which was in splendid health, as we knew from the fascies rolling over when we laid it on the dinner-table. Such haphazard bits of observation as this and, for instance, a scarab I watched in the Kedong rolling its big ball of dung, and the termite skyscrapers standing up in the midst of the plain high above your head, impressed us with the time that could be happily and enthusiastically passed in this country, without a gun, without even a camera, without anything but time itself and perhaps a notebook.

At Clark's, where Clark, the assistant game warden of the district, lived (on vacation in England at the time), we forded one of the little rivers which we feared might delay us, and though the mules sank to their water lines and the water rushed gaily by our knees, we got over with no trouble and nothing lost. We had tea there with the American missionary to the Masai, a tribe we shall meet frequently, and late on the third morning from the Kedong we arrived in Narok.

CHAPTER VII

NAROK

The holy text of pike and gun.

Hudibras

WE reached Narok about noon, after a few hours' march from Clark's. Passing through a patch of forest we saw below us a swift, winding gray river, tumbling down a gorge filled with vegetation. On the opposite level appeared open country and a few white huts on an eminence. We crossed the little river over a little stone bridge, which apparently need never have given us any occasion for thought, and mounted the road into the miniature town. The shopping district came first, half a dozen thatched mud huts showing an open counter to the road, with a few straggling natives talking with the bearded Indian proprietors. We bought some tobacco for our gun-bearers, of a tart violence which my brother was the only one of us to appreciate, some tinned jam and crackers for ourselves, and a shilling's worth of blue beads to bring home to my mother. But we were too recent from Nairobi to linger. As we rode and walked up the hill, we passed a three-walled house on the right, and within, in the middle of the open single room, sat an official-looking white man at a desk faced by a very erect soldier-looking negro standing at attention.

On the top of the hill we found the official seat of government. Narok is the entrance to the Southern Masai Reserve, and we had to enter our names in the register of travellers, presented to us by a lean young Indian sub-official. Our names were the first for some months, because there had been some trouble with the Masai and the Reserve had been closed. I believe a band of young warriors had speared a poor Indian store-keeper. The Ol Moran, as the young braves are called, must by ancient tribal custom blood their spears before they are considered fit for marriage, either by their prospective father-in-law (the important party), or by the young woman. It would seem that times had changed and manners had in some measure cheapened, because these young men considered but one wretched Indian sufficient for all their proud spears, and they had set on him together and from ambush. However, all their spears were blooded and, I hope, all their sweethearts satisfied. They themselves were in jail here in Narok. The British Government, unappreciative of this rigid economy of life, had at once caught them with a detachment of the K.A.R. (King's African Rifles) and was holding them for trial. Roundabout the two modest wooden houses where the British Government sat lounged tall, erect Masai, spear stuck high in the ground if they were squatting or sitting, or proudly held by those standing. As we walked by, no trace of the usual negro curiosity or excitement; perhaps a dignified 'Jambo!'

but nothing more; we were strangers, we were even in a way hostile, and they were most assuredly our equals.

I had been given a letter of introduction by an old friend of mine to B., an Assistant District Commissioner, in Eton with him, and, when in Nairobi, I had not been able to find him. I was told he was stationed in Narok. At the office I learned he was here, but at the time out, playing golf. So we rode over to the links. As we came up the road, I had seen a curious round flat plat of hard dirt surrounded by barbed wire. Now I knew that that was one of the holes. The course zigzagged about the hill, the row of shops lying pretty nearly across one hole. We found B. about to drive. On account of the approaching trial of the Masai, he had a foursome, made up of the judge and the prosecuting officer and another whose position I do not recall. Mrs. B. was following the match with two children, both on ponies, one of which could not have been over three and was seated in a chair strapped to the saddle. B. was most hospitable, and we enjoyed a late tea that evening at B.'s residence, which was a pretty vine-covered pair of native huts, newly built, close enough to be joined by a broad hall.

Our camp was placed at the foot of the hill, across the river, and after dark we found our way back from tea by the aid of a flashlight which B. loaned us.

The next morning we made a late start. As we were about to leave, watching our tents disappear

and hurrying our shaving to toss each article to Stephen, who packed as we progressed, we saw an automobile pass on the road. It was B. He stopped only to say good-bye and good luck and to tell us that he was going only some three hundred yards up the road to see where a lion had killed some native ox last night — 'About the time you were getting back from tea, so far as I can make out,' he said. We thanked him for the loan of the flashlight.

Two more days' travelling, across the largest river we had had before us, the Guaso Nyero, brought us into the great open country where we wanted to be. The road simmered off into nothing at all, and we saw great herds of game, not only the zebra, kongoni, and tommy we had got accustomed to in the Kedong, but also the wildebeeste or gnu, which shows a profile just like our own American bison, but which nearer, when we had shot one for meat, appeared to have a shaggy bison head set on the body of a horse. So long as they stand still, usually in a row looking at you with lowered heads, they are dignified, almost solemn, but once off, their dignity is gone and they swing their tails in circles, poke, and twist like playful poodle dogs. The gait of the kongoni (or hartebeeste) is very different. They trot like a horse on tiptoe. When they gallop, they bound, apparently on and off all four legs at once with joints seemingly stiff, and they look like animated rocking-horses. They are exceedingly fast, however, and we were told that a day-old kon-

goni can outrun a lion. Certainly, they often have to.

Evenings in camp were chilly now. The extra two thousand or so feet we had climbed above the Kedong brought us something over seven thousand above the sea. The days became fairly hot in the bright sunlight, for the rainy season now was definitely over and I cannot remember that we got any more rain at all. There was, however, a marked difference in the shade, which was startlingly dark and cool in comparison. Likewise, the temperature at night ran about 50 to 55 degrees. So, after our supper at six-thirty, we would sit round the big camp-fire in overcoats. The stars were brilliant and multitudinous; the Milky Way was almost a glare. One evening we spent in a mutual eye test on the Southern Cross. My sister-in-law won, counting six or perhaps seven stars within the limits of its quadrilateral, verified by the binoculars. The Skipper tied, and Mpishi was next with five. Sasita, my father's gun-bearer, was *hors de concours*, asserting he could not count as many as he could see.

I should like to say something about our guns. We had occasion to use them a good deal and came to certain conclusions on the subject. There may be said to be two great schools of thought on the primary question of what is the best sort of gun, that is, whether a .450 or larger double-barrelled rifle and a little one, like a .30 calibre, or only one middle-sized one, say of .35 calibre. You are going to shoot two

kinds of beasts, the smaller game, either for camp eating or perhaps for trophies, and the big game. The big game includes the lion, the buffalo, the rhinoceros, and the elephant. Discussion still continues and opinion still differs as to which of these four is the most dangerous — each protagonist usually speaking for that animal which has given him the closest shave; but I should suppose all would agree that there are many occasions on which a French seventy-five would be an appropriate weapon, if it could be fired quick enough. That raises the objection to the single middle-size gun. It is big enough for the big game only in the hands of a few experts. Those few, however, prefer such a gun because it is light enough to carry constantly in hand. Such a man was Allan Quatermain, whom we met in Nairobi. We three did not belong to this group, which is indeed not numerous. The Skipper had a big gun, too, but he had our safety on his mind; as he remarked, our lives meant a good deal to him, for who would take him out again if he got the reputation of having his hunters mauled and eaten? So we all carried heavy, double-barrelled .450 rifles. They were built quite similar to a shotgun, except for greater weight and the rifling; they shoot a heavy solid bullet with cordite powder in the equivalent of six or seven drams of smokeless powder. That was splendid for the big game, but too much for the little game. So we carried also Springfield .30 calibre rifles. My brother's and mine were the army model

in no way changed; my father's had been given a sporting stock, but was essentially the same. This gun fired a bullet just about half as heavy as our double-barrelled gun, and the gun itself weighed only slightly more than half as much, but it had one conspicuous advantage. Its trajectory was exceedingly flat; that is, the bullet kept to a nearly straight line for about two hundred yards. Since this is about as far as one cares to shoot for meat (as far as any ordinary shot can decently expect to hit and kill), such a flat trajectory allowed you to shoot without change of sight. We all used only the open sight (we early discarded peep sights), set for the lowest range, drawing a very fine bead for animals under a hundred yards (rare event with game shot for camp eating) and a coarse sight for over a hundred yards. Our big guns had no such flat trajectory, but we had little use for them over two hundred yards and had real need for them well under a hundred yards, as we shall see. These guns also had open sights, and the thought we kept constantly in mind was to draw a fine bead and not to shoot over, a dangerous practice with approaching game. Only two shots without reloading may seem few to those who use repeating rifles of the large calibre, but a jam may risk more than the loss of your beast, and the simpler the mechanism the more surely it works. I do not refer solely to faults or hesitations in the more complicated mechanism of the lever or the bolt action. In a nervous moment, when there is special — and mani-

fest — need of speed, the inexperienced gunner runs the risk of not pulling the bolt all the way back or not pushing the lever all the way forward, and then he jams the cartridge. We used to carry two more cartridges between the three last fingers of the left hand, bullet end out, and our gun-bearers stood very close with plenty more; anyhow, the greater the need the shorter the time, and it takes time to fire two shots if they are really aimed. We used to practise reloading, and we found it took us between four and a half and six seconds from the time we pretended to fire our second barrel to the time we had both barrels reloaded. For a charging lion that is not quite quick enough; if he starts within a hundred yards of you, you will be firing your first reload down his throat.

Another popular discussion is that about hard-nosed versus soft-nosed bullets. I believe without question that there will be little left of a soft-nose bullet after it has gone through the tense shoulder muscles and the bone of a lion, and I doubt if it will go through the skull of a rhino at all. But that merely shows that the preference depends on the spot hit. On the other hand, neither a hard nor a soft in a lion's stomach will stop him. Though either may ultimately give him dyspepsia, somebody else will record the fact.

However wise¹ and prudent all these remarks may

¹ Any discussion of firearms will raise contradictory opinions almost anywhere. The best gun for any man is the gun he likes best, for he

be, we met in Nairobi on our way back a man who never carried anything but a Springfield and he had recently shot fifty-two lions. To shoot fifty-two lions on one trip may at first thought seem slaughter, but that depends upon how they are shot. This man shot them by day and on foot. I have heard and read how the Crown Prince of Sweden recently killed even more than this on a recent expedition to Africa, but he seems to have hunted them by night, sitting in a thornbush enclosure or 'boma' with a dead zebra or ox tied outside for bait. This is different. The lion is intent on the bait; he is blinded by the glare of your flashlight; and you are protected by several feet of tree and thorn. Likewise, some prefer a platform in a tree, with the zebra beneath; for lions do not climb. Our friend's lions had faced him on the level; they could see him as well as, often better than, he could see them; and, nothing stood between but his bullets. Perhaps it would flatter the lion to say that they fought on even terms. Guns, if handled as he could handle them, do indeed upset the odds, and no one but the Roman gladiators and the Masai really fight the lion on even terms. At that, the Masai muster many together, and I do not know how many Romans were considered a match for one lion. The fact is that a lion is much more than a match for any one man unless he both have a gun and aim it accurately.

will shoot best with it. Familiarity with a gun is its chief merit, and confidence in it is its next merit. I must say one of the reasons I liked my .450 was the noise it made. It had a reassuring boom quite different from the bark of the Springfield.

Consider that a lion weighs over four hundred pounds and can cover a hundred yards in — no, his time never has been taken; but a lion from a standstill can catch a pony brought to a stand within a hundred yards of him. The Skipper had seen a lion with one leg broken catch a dog within thirty yards. Later we saw several move quite as fast as we cared. In sum, the sport is not unequal, unless you shoot too well or unless you halve the risk by hunting only in pairs, as we did.

CHAPTER VIII

OUR FIRST TWO LIONS

For there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion, living.

A Midsummer-Night's Dream, Act III, Scene I

WE were now in broader, flatter country. The expanse of plain round us still billowed and sagged, seamed here and there with dongas, but the enclosing mountains had receded. Over it, the familiar "acacia" tree,¹ with its yellow blossoms and delicate green dissected leaves, was scattered everywhere. One of its characteristics had hitherto escaped me. That was its colony of ants. When your leg brushed a lower branch and got scratched by the long thorns, you also found yourself attacked by emigrant ants. Each tree was inhabited by a multitude, hurrying over it, up and down the twigs, and popping in and out of little holes in the brown, hollow, round gall-nuts, in which the ants make their nests. The king-whydah birds, with tails quite twice as long as their bodies, jumped up and down, in and out of the tall grass. Ostriches were seen, always like something strange and in the distance a constant puzzle to me until I recognized them.

We camped first where the thicker growth we were leaving faded into a prairie of sparse bush and grass, between a marsh reeded in patches and a little hill topped with bare quartz. It was here that we first

¹ *Albizia fastigiata*.

shot guinea fowl; which were quite like the barnyard variety so far as I could see and taste. I myself was off with Selimani, trying to convince myself that the sights of my Springfield were not awry, in which I fully succeeded, to the prejudice of my eyes; I got out my spectacles that day and wore them constantly thereafter. While I was reflecting over all this, aiming at our mules and practising at a tree, the others were shooting the guinea fowl in the trees by the marsh. It was not sport; it was commissary work. The guinea fowl perched in the branches and peered down at the gunner right beneath, and there were many of them. So we had a splendid supper, and the Mohammedan gun-bearers ate those which R. and my father had only wounded and whose necks they had wrung themselves. Later the gun-bearers caught a lot of guinea chicks and carried a dozen or so home in their pockets, their idea being to bring them up and then halali and eat them at their leisure; but they all died naturally. I suspect, nevertheless, the end of their slow decline was anticipated and that they were eaten.

For the next month lions were our constant thought, and their manners our subject of conversation.

We got up at our usual hour of four-thirty and split in two directions, my father and I toward the north, my brother and A. with the Skipper southerly of the line of march. Camp was to be moved to the Leganga Hills, some ten miles off. When we all met

at noon, my father and I had nothing to relate, except that we disturbed eight giraffe near camp, which looked like monstrous geese as they waddled and plunged off in the mist of early dawn. R., however, got an eland, and the carcass near a lonely old tree turned out to be our rendezvous. He had surprised a herd early, through the mist, I think, as we had seen the giraffe, and he knocked down a fine bull. Like mine, however, it had got up and fled. Instead of tracking it on foot, he had ridden it down. R. had quickly shifted to A.'s horse, an ex-army remount, and borrowed the Skipper's spurs. He got his eland just where his mad career crossed and met our own line of hunt. After the usual ceremonies of halali and photography, we all walked together to the site of the new camp.

This camp was on the eastern slope of a row of four little hills, which lay in the midst of the plain like a range of mountains in miniature. The two larger, on the north, rose steeply to a hundred feet or so above the level of the plain, and were crowned by an outcropping of rock, where in the cracks and crevices grew enough trees and bushes to give good cover for lion. The small pair, just behind our camp, were no more than two ascents of the ground topped by shrubs. The plain, smooth and grassy, rose against them in a gradual slope.

We arrived this time before the safari, and we sat and smoked as we watched it approach. Mpishi, with his toto, came first as usual, and began immediately

to gather wood and start a fire. Then came Enos, at the head of the line of porters, each with his load on his head, which filed by the group of horses, mules, gun-bearers, and ourselves. Half an hour later Hasani announced lunch, and we turned to find a little village of tents behind us.

After lunch, I settled myself at the dinner-table, with a pipe and a long, muddy drink of lime juice and water, to write home. My walking-boots and thick socks were drying in the sun, and I had on my long, light slippers, which came up to the knee as a protection against mosquitoes and scorpions and other *dudus*. The plain in front of me was a tight-stretched greenness shimmering in the heat; I heard the shrill conversations of the porters grouped round their little tents or engaged in multifarious small jobs; my companions were all in their tents reading or sleeping. When my letter reached the Tale of the Giraffe which looked like Geese, Stephen touched my shoulder and said, 'Put on your puttees.' I looked up with surprise at his informality, but he explained that a lion had been reported by our wood-gatherers on the hill behind us!

Stephen had my shoes and puttees with him, and helped me put them on; but before I was ready, the Skipper was riding round on his pony with his rifle in his hand. R. and A. appeared from their tents, and my father said, 'Come here, boys.' He had two blades of grass in his hand and he was smiling. Since I was still winding a puttee round my leg, the Skip-

per sidled his pony over and pulled for me. R. got the longest blade and so won the first shot — this was going to be R.'s lion! Then Selimani thrust some hard-nosed cartridges into my hand, and we were off in single file toward the big kopje on the north. A. stayed in camp, because she was not shooting, and if a lion got away she could not very well keep up with us on foot nor could she be left behind unarmed.

Only after we were off did I hear the story of the wood-gatherer. He had been sent after firewood to the nearer of the two large northerly kopjes, and he had returned hastily with a report of Simba! which means lion in Swahili. On that report the Skipper laid our plans. The lion would hardly have moved toward camp; either he was still on the kopje where he had been seen or he had moved to the farther one, which was a little larger and more wooded. Moreover, beyond the farther kopje, the plain was dotted with acacias and bush, such cover as a roused lion would naturally move to. So we were to hurry round by the leeward or west side of the kopjes and find some position at the farther end, while the porters would start beating where the lion had been seen. Thus, the lion would be driven both away from camp and toward the nearest cover.

We trudged along behind the Skipper's Somali pony round the kopjes to their farthest end. It was about a mile. The Skipper placed his pony and its syce under a clump of trees handy and out of sight,

and then picked out a good spot for our ambush. Cover is not so important, if one keeps dead still, as a good open shooting view of the probable appearance of the lion. We all sat together on a crop of glistening pink quartz, which did not so much conceal us as offer us a range over the northern slope of the kopje. We sat still, with our big rifles in our hands, loaded and cocked, and we looked and we looked over the bushes and boulders on the side of the hill. Each one I gazed at seemed to stir and grow yellow; one flowering bush I took the trouble to examine later, because it had cut such capers under my eyes during this long wait. For the beaters had a long way to come, over two kopjes. The suspense grew more and more taut, because the lion had probably moved over from the kopje where it was seen to the larger one we were now watching and every minute offered a better chance.

From the tail of my eye I saw the Skipper turn, and then a hyena appeared in the open, bustling off, and passed within ten yards of us. I had not seen it come out of the bush. After him, a long wait, and then a dik-dik, which is a miniature gazelle and hardly larger than a hare, fled across the slope. The beaters must have reached the cover on our kopje.

I don't remember waiting any longer after that. I saw a great yellow lioness crossing the open in front of us, with an unmistakable feline gait. She looked exactly as if she had escaped from a zoo; I



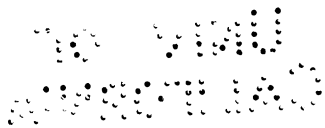
**THE NORTHERN LEGANGA HILL, SHOWING THE SLOPE DOWN
WHICH OUR LIONS CAME**

We were sitting up to the right, only a few yards out of the picture, when we waited for our first lion. It was down the right slope of the hill that the three lions came in Chapter XIX



OUR SECOND LION

Some of our porters in their red blankets stand behind, ready to carry the skin into camp



don't know why this recognition surprised me. I could see her great head turning from side to side, as she galloped by about a hundred and fifty yards away.

R. fired, and then my father and I fired. And we all missed. The lion was gone down the slope to the plain. The Skipper was leaping down the rocks to his horse. R. hurried to a jutting shoulder overlooking where the lion had gone and began shooting his Springfield at impossible ranges until she was out of sight among the acacias. Meanwhile, my father and I went toward the western slope where Sasita said a second lion had come off. I, too, had seen something slither through the bushes there, but we saw nothing.

By this time the Skipper was away on his pony, riding after the first lion, and R. was giving his Springfield to his second gun-bearer and taking his big gun from Germani. Our first attempt had not succeeded, but there was the Skipper riding through the bush; and after enjoining Sasita that he must stay and not lose sight of him through the glasses and wave us the direction, we three hastened down and after the Skipper. We half walked, half ran, through the acacias, stumbling through the grass and peering at each tree or bush we passed, since no one knew where the second lion might be. A good three quarters of a mile brought the Skipper in sight, his white pony showing first and then his arm waving. We ran up and he slid off. He had followed our missed

lion until she turned at bay, where she now crouched behind a bush a hundred yards off.

We four walked forward abreast, R. on the left, myself on the right, our gun-bearers close at our heels. We knew the lion was angry, for she had been ridden down and had refused to be pursued farther. We walked slowly and looked carefully. I remember I saw beyond where the lion crouched two natives who had turned up and I said, 'Masai.' The Skipper responded, 'Kill 'em!' and we walked on.

The Skipper saw her first, and we stopped. But I could not see her, nor could R. My father and the Skipper and all the gun-bearers tried to point her out. 'Look there! Under the bush!' For a long time — R. and I assert a full minute — we stood there trying to see a lioness thirty yards away crouching behind a little bush. Then I saw a waving yellow tail, much nearer than I had been looking for. And R. must have seen her just before me, for he started shooting. Two barrels, and then two more. Hits certainly, but the tail still switched.

'Gentlemen,' said the Skipper, 'will you please shoot a little lower? We must finish this off quickly. Will you please all shoot?'

At that, I fired one barrel, going over, but my father said, 'Charlie, don't shoot; this is Richard's lion.' And R. fired two more.

Immediately, she reared straight up, and I saw what then impressed me as at least twenty feet of tawny yellow clawing the tree. In my excitement, I

had opened my breach after my one shot, and now I vainly tried to put another shell in and close it. I had no time. I saw the lioness grow suddenly larger as she charged. Fortunately, she came, not directly toward us, but obliquely to our right, as if for some one running behind us. I could not help taking two steps back, still trying to stick another shell in, but the lioness dropped flat and limp, seven paces away to my right. At the same instant, two long spears flashed round her, flung by the two Masai. They had hurried round behind us, and I think the lioness's eye had caught them moving and had charged at them instead of at us.

R. allowed now that, after his six shots, he had felt in his pocket and found no more.

We walked round her, admiring the tree where she had crouched and wondering at her limbs and her yellow hide.

R.'s secondi was dispatched to camp with the news and for porters, and we sat round smoking, while Germani, as R.'s gun-bearer, superintended the skinning. I smoked a cigarette and slowly recovered from my excitement and a strange impression of glaring sunlight. Perhaps the best measure of our intenseness of emotion is the fact that neither R. nor I had heard the lioness roar, although my father and the Skipper looked incredulous and said that, after the first shot, she had filled the landscape with an appalling noise.

That instinct of the lion to go for the moving thing

impressed me. Our lioness certainly knew who were shooting her and, moreover, we were the nearest to her. I have no doubt she started at us. Yet the motion of a man running behind us caught her eye and diverted her charge. The Skipper said he had seen it happen before. It is the man who moves that gets mauled; the man who stands still, whether nerved by courage or frozen by fear, is neglected for the man who runs. Only I suppose it doesn't work unless some one does run.

After Germani had presented R. with the little lucky bone in the lion's elbow (does it correspond to the 'funny bone' in man?) and had set aside for himself the yellow fat which he would sell in Nairobi as a magic ointment warranted to make the user brave, we left the skinning and made for camp with a retinue of excited porters behind us. A. was waiting for us, ready to greet R., but our retinue closed up round us and, raising R. on their shoulders, carried him to his tent singing and shouting. This was the prologue to the lion dance we had that night.

After supper, holding a third drink in our hands (one more than usual, in honor of the occasion), we drew our chairs in front of the big fire and, on the other side of the glare, against the blackness of the night and the dim whiteness of the tents, appeared a line of naked Wakambas. In a single line of fifty-odd and then in a double line, glistening black backs, red blankets, and white teeth and eyes, singing and stamping, the lion dance began. Elbows out and

bodies bent, feet stamping and hands clapping, they swayed and advanced. The ends of the line merged into the night. First one and then another took up the song, R.'s secondi the most conspicuous, and the rest raised the chorus high and loud. A shriek of admiration and a glance at R. from a bystander showed how some of the choruses ran, but we could not understand the words, and none of us has the least memory for a tune. The scene, however, remains vivid, and I was still excited when I slid between my blankets.

This day made all the succeeding days different. Not until now had I had a lively faith that great yellow cats really were to be seen among these thorn trees and on these plains. Our morning hunts, when our hopes were highest, were bright adventures, followed at noon by the relaxation of a large dinner and an hour or so of reading. I was reading Jane Austen. Our afternoons were long happy walks to shoot meat for the camp.

Our second lion came soon. We were making a sweep of the plain to the southward, whence lions had been heard grunting the night before. The four of us advanced in line, about two hundred yards apart, guiding on the Skipper who rode his pony on the left flank. R., on the right flank, skirted the last slopes of our hills. With each of us were our gun-bearers, and well behind followed a mule with its syce. Dawn broke quickly, and visions of R.'s lioness skulked behind the bushes as they turned greener

and greener in the new light. From time to time I glanced toward my father and toward the Skipper to keep my station, but most of the time I kept scrutinizing bushes ahead. I saw the Skipper waving his hat and cantering toward me. That meant something more than a wish to speak to me. As R. told us later, he was riding his mule in order to see farther and better over the scrub when he saw my father and me running. So he jumped off and ran ahead, too. After a while he found that only his secondi had kept up with him and that Germani was behind saying hoarsely, 'Ngoja! Ngoja!' ('Wait! Wait!') and struggling to load the big gun. Then R. looked ahead and saw that the tommy he had been watching as he ran was a lion looking at him. 'At that,' he said, 'I stopped and waited for my gun.' Just before the Skipper joined me, I saw them, for there were two, crossing our line from right to left. They had seen us, but did not seem to be hurrying. R. and my father and I opened fire immediately. It was a running fight, and between the distance and the hurry and the running, the shooting was poor. The Skipper galloped ahead to head them off from our left, but one of them, the smaller, had disappeared among the thorn with which the plain was dotted. We three hurried on, shooting whenever we got a chance and between shots peering ahead where the lion should come through a patch of bush into view again. I anticipated him once, and together Selimani pointed and the lion gave a grunty roar from a bush well back

of where I was expecting him. But he went on, and I missed him with another shot. A little farther, I passed the Skipper's secondi yelling and pointing from up a thorn tree, and then we found the lion at bay. He was behind a bush some hundred yards from us and we walked toward him. This was my turn to shoot first, but we were now agreed that after my shot my father and R. should cut in at will. Just as before, I looked and looked and could not make him out. Then I saw a yellow heap with what seemed to be two ears up. I raised my gun, and my father said, 'Be sure you see him!' I looked again to make sure and shot both barrels into it. The yellow mass became at once an antheap between us and the lion, which I now saw moving under a tree beyond. I said, 'Oh!' and reloaded. Then I fired at the real lion. I think we fired ten shots in all, not counting my attack on the ants, and that was enough, because he lay still as we walked up. However, I put two Springfield bullets into him to be sure, and one of the gun-bearers pulled his tail before we stroked him. He was a good big male, very yellow. We had somewhat overkilled him, you might say, but R.'s lioness had bred a respect for the family and certain misgivings in the .450 bullet.

Nevertheless, there was another lion somewhere about, and the Skipper had ridden off to look for him. So we hurried after. It came to nothing. We could not find even the Skipper among the dense brush and so we turned and walked back separately,

still full of expectations. R. started a dik-dik, two wart hogs, and some quail on his way back, and said he had a complete lion thrill each time. I did not see so much, but halfway back, two quail got up under my feet, with a noise I instantly transmuted into the grunty roar I had heard earlier. My gun rose to my shoulder, but I saw the quail and I did not fire. The fact was I could not fire, because my safety catch was on. That showed me the need of a little thing I thereafter tried to make habitual, and for the rest of the expedition I practised pushing at the safety as I raised my gun. If the quail had been a lion, I am not sure I should have perceived the trouble in time and it would have been a humiliating cause for a sudden death.

When we got back to camp, a crowd of porters advanced and carried me to my tent; and then they held me up until A. had photographed me. Not until then did I impugn their spontaneity.

List of things shot to date:

Beasts—16 kongoni, 10 tommy, 4 wildebeests, 3 zebra, 1 oryx, 3 grant, 3 eland, 1 dik-dik, 6 hare, and 2 lion.

Birds— 8 guinea fowl, 4 geese, 11 quail, 3 plover, and 3 sandgrouse.

And we ate all but the lion.

CHAPTER IX

WANDEROBO GUIDES

Like other guides, as some folks say;
Who neither lead, nor tell the way.

Dr. Syntax

THE next day we moved. Aside from the ordinary noises and smells which had been radiating from our camp, we had made a fearful racket with our shooting, and we must have been in the centre of a lionless circle whose circumference lay miles away. The Leganga Hills would be safe for antelope for some time.

We moved to the southward over the Loita Plains; toward the border of old German East Africa, now renamed Tanganyika. The map becomes blank here, south of the Guaso Nyero, winding vaguely southeast, the only names which could be inserted are in colloquial Masai, and since they are nomadic people the names they give to the hills and streams change with successive occupants. Nevertheless, some four days' march south from the Leganga Hills there was an Indian store, near which a few natives had built huts, and, despite the map, it bore the name of Badámit. We were going there.

Our first aim after crossing the Guaso Nyero and entering the real lion country had been the Leganga Hills. The Skipper knew them and expected to find lions on them. Beyond them, however, we needed

local information of where lions had been heard at night or of manyattas where lions had taken cattle. The best guides were to be found among the Wanderobo, a hunting tribe, one of the three different kinds of natives we met during our expedition, aside from our own Wakambas: the Kikuyu, the Wanderobo, and the Masai. To a stranger they all looked much alike, but soon we found something about their faces or their dress which made them all easily distinguishable. The Kikuyu were agricultural, and perhaps consequently not so haughty and uncivilized as either the Masai or the Wanderobo. The Masai were a warrior nation, scorning farming and traditionally depredatory; we have already seen a few at Narok, later we shall see more of them. The Wanderobo, whom we were seeking now, from having been a tribe distinct by race, were now rather a mixed people, separated from their neighbors chiefly by their hunting habits. Those Masai whose individual tastes lay toward hunting mingled with them, and they were not without women of Kikuyu or other origin. The Wanderobo had become the gypsies of the country, but gypsies whose whole life was bent round hunting. Not being allowed guns by the British, they were still using their own bows and arrows and they practised all the ancient lures and traps. They would help us to lion, not really for the pound apiece we should give them for success, but for the sport of it. Although not above reward, they were well beyond it.



THE FOUR WANDEROBO GUIDES

The "long one" is on the left. Next to him is the little chief. This was taken just after they arrived in camp. Note the bows of the two on the right and the sword-hilts of the two on the ends



The second morning of our march to Badámit brought news, again from one of the wood-gatherers, I believe, who all seemed to roam wide in their search for firewood and to be observant fellows, of a Wanderobo village only a little off our way. The Skipper and I left the others to shoot and collect flowers and we searched it out. His idea was to persuade some of the young men to accompany us to and beyond Badámit. They would, the Skipper said, be rather flighty guides, because they would certainly desert us as soon as they became bored or homesick, but while they remained with us they would be a great help, and, he added, some amusement.

We found the village, or manyatta, near a donga which was still full of water from the recent rains. My first indication that we were near it was a sort of gray animal behind a bush, which to my surprise did not run off as we approached; it was a donkey with a foal beside her. Then we found the grass short and a smell, which in the absence of man scarcely exists in Africa. In the middle of the smell was the manyatta, a group of half a dozen brown oblong huts, rounded at the sides and corners and looking like neat heaps of dirt. Round the group was a heavy thick hedge of thorn trees piled some ten feet high and with but one entrance, near which lay a great bouquet of thorn trees bound at the lower trunks, ready to be dragged into place as a gate at night. Inside this boma, the space between the huts was ankle-deep in manure, for every night all the

cattle and sheep and donkeys were brought in out of reach of lion. As we walked up to the entrance through this mixed herd, some timid, some inquisitive, we saw on one side of the village a few women sitting and several children playing in the manure and mud. On the other side, two men were squatting under the lee of a row of bushes round a diminutive fire. Over their shoulders were hunched up skins, like capes too stiff to pull on. They were leisurely busy over something, and we walked up and sat down on the other side of the fire. Both the natives looked up, but said nothing, and immediately looked down again. One, I saw, was filing a panga, or sort of machete, down into a thin handy sword, perhaps for throwing; the other was making a sheath, carefully whittling down two thin wooden strips for the sides. They said nothing, and courtesy seemed to require equal silence from us. The fire was entirely unnecessary, for the morning had become noon and the sun was hot; the shelter of the bushes from the breeze was the contrary of what I should have sought; the flies were dense and crawling. I took out my plug of tobacco and, cutting some off with my knife, lit my pipe. After smoking and watching a while, I reached politely for an arrow, newly made, which lay between us. The Wanderobo looked up and in turn reached for my knife, which lay open on my knee, not in any way as security for his arrow, but rather, I am sure, as a corresponding courtesy. We sat for over an hour. More and more

Wanderobo came and stood or squatted round; some naked and exceedingly dirty children, their eyes and noses rimmed with flies, came and were sent away. When the Skipper finally broached the topic of guides, no reply, or even acknowledgment. After a few minutes, however, one of them got up and went inside the manyatta. We stayed sitting among the flies and I kept on smoking and watching the close circle round us, examining their anklets and bracelets and their blue beaded necklaces; and they examined us with an interest which became audible in giggles and whispers from the less dignified on the outer margin of our circle. Soon four men came out of the boma and it seemed that all was arranged. The four were prepared for an indefinite stay with us. The shortest, who walked ahead, brought nothing but a short piece of cotton, wholly and uniformly brown with dirt and grease, cast over one shoulder, and in his hand a short stick knobbed at one end. He seemed to be in charge and was indeed the chief of the village. Another, who was unusually tall, several inches over six feet, carried a long bow, and a similar short stick, but I could see no arrows. The other two I took no note of, but they certainly carried no more equipment or wore more clothes.

We started back to where our camp was to be set that evening, the little chief stepping busily into the lead of our single file. A few rods from the village, a man came hurrying after us and ran up to him. He turned with a slightly annoyed look and spoke a

word, at which the man walked back. I turned to Selimani and, pointing to the man, asked what was the trouble. 'Oh,' said Selimani, 'he want the chief to decide a lawsuit over a dead cow, and the chief say wait till he come back.'

We seemed to be well provided with guides. The little chief appeared competent as well as quite sure of himself and his three men, and the tall one looked pleasant and as if he expected a good time. On our return he invited A. with great ceremony to see his aged mother and two wives, of whom he was very proud, and expressed regret that I was off somewhere and that he could not show them to me too. Our arrangement with our four Wanderobo was only this: we gave them what they wanted to eat and a cover at night. Porter's fare provided the first and the tarpaulin we used as a store tent was sufficient for the second. Nothing was said about any pay, but we gave them a pound apiece at the end of the month they spent with us, and at Badámit we bought them blue blankets, one of which had a fancy border and was selected for the royal dignity of the chief.

When we got back we found that A. had been buying teeth from the porters, their own teeth. A Wakamba always files and chips his front teeth into a sharp point, with the result, I suppose to be expected by dentists, that they fall out. No whit daunted, the Wakamba make new ones out of bone and plug them into the sockets. A. had discovered

this in the conversation with Hassani, her personal boy, and had offered a shilling apiece for some. It must have been an extravagant sum to the porters, because one began tugging at a real tooth and she soon found it necessary to call Hassani and have him explain that she wanted only the false teeth. She brought them home as souvenirs to her dentist.

CHAPTER X

A HERD OF GIRAFFE

A very gentle beast, and of a good conscience.

A Midsummer-Night's Dream, Act V, Scene 1

THE morning before we reached the settlement of Badámit, my father and I were together in our usual split into two loops on either side of the line of march. R. and A. and the Skipper were riding round to the westward while we were off toward the east. The early morning had been empty of incident, and when the sun had risen too high to warrant much further expectation of lion, we called our mules up and turned our steps back toward Badámit and the locality of lunch.

As we crossed a great open meadow, many hundred acres broad, the idea of a photograph of a typical African landscape occurred to us. We called out, 'Camera!' and the two boys ran forward, one taking the camera off his head, the other unbuckling the tripod. Our camera boys, I may say, were constantly changing. It was not a hard job, and there was more excitement in following the bwanas round than in tramping across country in single file behind Enos. Their names, however, remained Camera, one name being sufficient for both.

We set up the tripod. My father took out the actinometer and handed me the stop-watch, preparatory to finding the proper exposure.

‘Our landscape is going to be even more typically African than we had planned,’ I remarked. ‘There’s a herd of giraffe over there, among the trees. We’ll be able to draw an arrow on the picture and write — giraffe here.’

We took our time and finally had everything set. Selimani and Sasita were watching us with that detached and yet interested look with which serious-minded people watch things they do not understand. Sasita was rolling a cigarette with toilet-paper and shag tobacco. When I had taken the picture and was pulling my head from under the black cloth, I noticed they, and all the others, were staring across the field toward the giraffe. The giraffe were coming toward us and now were hardly a quarter of a mile off. We were quite in the open, and the grass was no higher than our knees.

‘I wonder how close they’ll come,’ I said, and we stood waiting. I pulled out the used film and reset the camera.

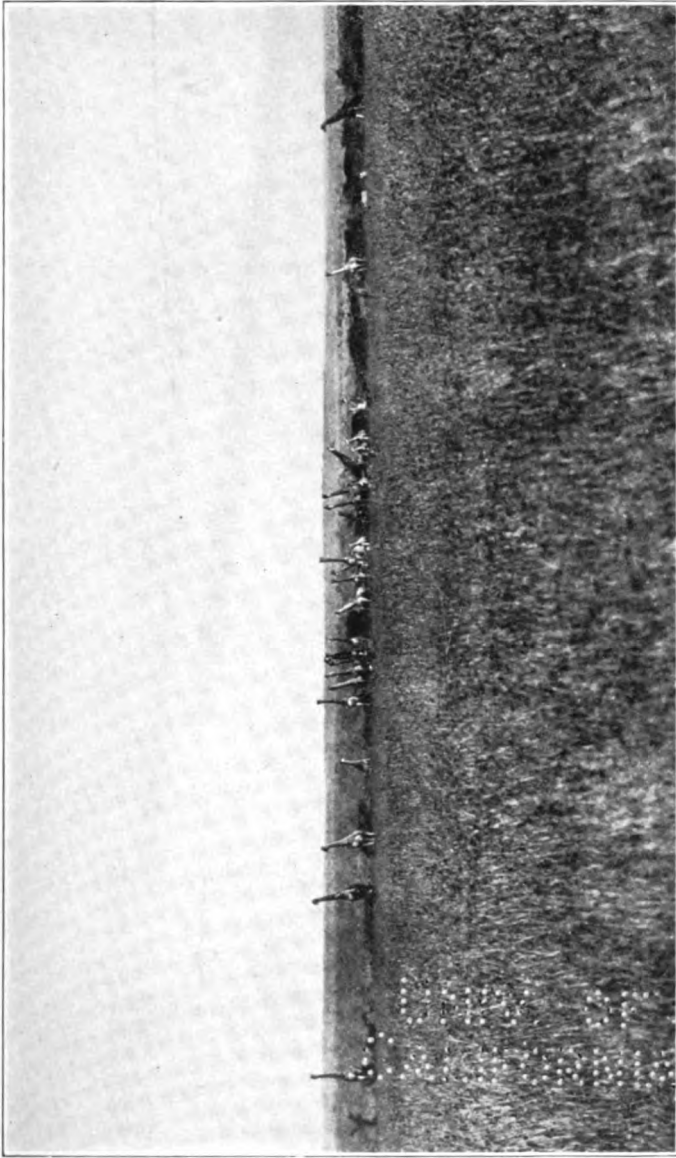
They saw us and they came nearer. It must have been curiosity. My father and I counted as many as thirty-one of the great tall beasts. A pair of zebra was with them and I judged they could have walked under a giraffe without touching. The two foremost looked the biggest, but that may have been only the shorter distance, because we had no tree or bush or anything but the zebra to compare them with. As they approached, we kept on taking pictures and got the last when they were at most a hundred and

fifty yards off; I should say less. You could see the tick birds clinging to the necks of some of them, like steeple jacks, and at each step the long neck, stretched a little forward, sagged a little in the middle. Finally they stopped and stared at us. We stared back. Then, at my father's suggestion, I took the camera off the tripod and crawled forward through the grass to get, if possible, a nearer view. That, however, was not a success. The sight of something moving toward them through the grass seemed to frighten them, and the foremost turned and moved off. Yet when I stood up again they stopped. I think that the sight of anything crawling through grass toward them roused an ancient, instinctive fear. They moved off after that, like great dappled rocking-horses, with their long legs thrown out awkwardly ahead and behind and their long necks stretched forward nearly to the horizontal.

We packed up the camera and struck off to Badámit.

Our camp was all settled about half a mile from the store and near some water, overlooking the plain from the last slopes of the hills behind us. As we were nearing the true bush country, there was less open plain and a closer pattern of dongas interlacing each other across the expanse before us. Behind us rose great hills covered with heavy forest.

After lunch the Skipper and I walked over to the store to make some purchases and to see the sights.



THE HERD OF GIRAFFE MY FATHER AND I SAW
Note the two zebra between the last two giraffe on the right

no vnu
assonuo

With us came a few boys to carry things back. The store was a collection of plain wooden boards covered by a corrugated iron roof. Round it there grew a struggling, straggling garden, in which the flowers, bright-colored and gay, were more probably weeds than intentionally decorative. To the other side from our approach was a small group of native huts, circular in plan, with low walls and a peaked thatch roof, showing they were Kikuyu and not the brown dungheap huts of the Masai. As we passed the front of the store, I read, 'Keep Away from the Engine,' on one of the boards in the side of the house. No longer a warning, as I first wondered, nor addressed to me; it showed what sort of ready materials the house was built of and the sense of humor of its architect. Inside, opposite the open door, a long counter ran the length of the store and divided it in two. A few Masai customers gravely glanced at us and left, and the Indian storekeeper smiled a greeting. He was heavily bearded and turbaned; his clothes were dirty khaki, and he was shoeless. His eyes were liquid and intelligent, and his face was singularly handsome. On the mud floor sat a child, whether a girl or boy it was impossible to say, as its long hair was tightly twisted into a topknot and it wore long trousers. While the storekeeper conversed in Swahili with the Skipper, telling him (I learned later) how the grunts and roars of the lions at night were even worse than usual and how he was willing to kill them only if they took any of his cattle, I

examined the store. The wall behind was lined with canned goods and boxes. At one end were stacked fifty-pound bags of potio or mealie meal, and the corner of the counter was piled high with red and blue blankets. From the latter we selected the robes of our Wanderobo guides. Indeed, the chief even then looked in through the door, but he did not enter. On some smaller shelves a row of bottles were ranged. Worcester sauce and quinine were all I saw; both are universal throughout East Africa. Along a wire over the counter hung numberless necklaces of beads, mostly of an opaque deep blue which I recognized as the favorite on the natives I had seen, and strings of cowrie shells and brass ear pendants; and in a corner lay a great coil of the heavy iron wire, which every native Masai woman loves not only in shining close spirals round her arms and shins, but even in a loose watchspring ruff round her neck.

We bought some potio for the porters — in fact, we needed all he had — and we picked out the blankets for the Wanderobo. I stuffed my pockets with cigarettes and got a glass jar of candy. The faces of the gun-bearers then appeared in the doorway, and for each we bought two blue paper packets of Rising Hope shag. That was what Sasita liked, and when I offered Selimani some cigarettes instead, he politely declined, saying, 'Cigaretti hapana kali,' which means 'Cigarettes not strong.' Finally, after I had succeeded in counting my change in rupees,

LION AND BUFFALO IN KENYA 75

shillings, and cents, and all in Swahili, the store-keeper smilingly assisting my hesitations and correcting my mistakes, we strolled back to camp in time for tea and jam.

CHAPTER XI

BADÁMIT

In secret ambush on the forest side.

Henry VI, Part III, Act IV, Scene 6

WE stayed only one night at Badámit. The store-keeper's talk of lions grunting and roaring at night was not confirmed in our gun-bearers' conversations with the Kikuyu. The fact is that domestic cattle were no great attraction to the lion, when there were so many wild herds of wildebeeste, topi, zebra, and kongoni roaming unprotected by thorn bomas and the presence of man. The Skipper believed that lions were to be sought farther to the southward, near the Tanganyika border, where the game would be thicker, unless the height of the grass, which grew fast after the recent heavy rains, made hunting there impossible. Another consideration urged us there. A herd of elephants lived near the Mara River, which crossed the border farther to the east. If the herd were to be found there now, we might go after it. To that end we sent ahead two of the subjects of the Wanderobo chief as scouts, who should inquire for news and spoor and report the chances. The little chief himself and his tall subject we kept with us. Meanwhile, we planned to move southward, travelling leisurely, but hunting hard. If the grass proved too high and if the elephants were not accessible, we should turn back.

Our day's hunting round Badámit brought some excitement, but nothing equal to what we had seen, nor, indeed, to what was before us. As soon as my father and I were well away from camp and beyond the town, we walked a little way up the rise of the hills behind us and sat down to use our binoculars. I had a turn with them, to no purpose, and passed them to Selimani, amusing myself with watching his open mouth as a sort of mirror of what he saw. Suddenly it closed, so far as a wide grin would let it, and he said, 'Simba!' On the rise of the plain below us, he had picked up the unmistakable feline gait. We were off on a diagonal, hoping to head the lion, while we sent a Wakamba hurrying to overtake R. and the Skipper if he could.

We were too late to intercept the lion before he reached the donga, but we saw the great imprints of his pads in a sandy patch where he had gone. Hoping that he had not seen us and was lying up in the donga, and fearful of scaring him off by too hasty a pursuit, we waited for R. and the Skipper in order to arrange a proper drive with our combined force of Wakambas.

When they arrived, we explained our hopes, and fixed a plan. My father and I walked quickly and silently along the lee side of the donga for about a mile and then chose our places, to wait for the beaters to rouse our lion, who, we trusted, was still there. I sat under a tree in the open with a good view across a sort of break in the bush where

the donga made a bend. My father was on the other side.

Nothing came of this drive. The lion must have seen us and kept on going after he entered the cover of the donga. Nevertheless, a good three quarters of the fun of a lion drive consists in the circumstance and the expectation, and we had all that, sitting still and silent, with rifle loaded and cocked across the knees, gazing and listening. In front of me the plain rose slightly and fell away, so that my horizon from a sitting posture was close. Every puff of breeze that stirred a bush of yellow flowers straightened my spine. I turned my head to look at Selimani, who was sitting just behind me as still as a tree. I looked at Mooma. He had gathered himself into a bunch, with his back against the tree, and his red blanket over his head. I wondered if he could be asleep; I was as far from sleep as a human being could well be. It was an hour and a half before R.'s head coming over my horizon showed that we had missed the lion. Three hyenas, however, had preceded him, and as each large square ugly head came through the grass into sight I made a sort of mental leap. These hyenas furnish a thrill to every drive. R. said, as he walked along my side of the donga, keeping abreast of the beaters in order to get a shot if the lion should break out, that once he passed his gun to his bearer to light a cigarette, and at that very moment a big hyena rose out of the grass twenty yards ahead of him. A lion drive offers good sport even without success.

After this unsuccessful but thoroughly exciting morning, we divided to shoot a wildebeeste, if we could, on the way back to camp. I got one finally, after missing a couple, and sat down to enjoy a pipe while Selimani and Mooma cut him into convenient parcels. The first thing Mooma did was to tie a knot in the long straight hair of the tail, which is much admired as part of a head-dress in Wakamba dances. I did not understand this preliminary knot and asked Selimani to explain. I was told that since my first shot had hit the beast in the belly and thus given it a bellyache, any one who was ill-advised enough to eat the meat would succeed to the bellyache unless a knot were tied in the tail as soon as possible. I suppose the knot somehow tied the ache in, but I could not get any explanation of what was, it seemed, such a natural and necessary precaution. The efficacy of knots is, I believe, widespread, and this example seems akin to the ancient custom of untying every knot in the room at childbirth.¹

One incident of the morning recalled one of the hopes of the trip which the predominance of lion had kept out of my thoughts. This was rhinoceros. While my father and I were waiting by the donga for the others to arrive, I saw near the edge a great heap of branches and vines, as much as a man might be able to lug alone. Selimani explained that a rhino had recently come through the donga, a dense

¹ The Golden Bough, vol. 3, p. 306. Also, Scotch Ballads:
'That she may be lighter of her young son —'

thicket of bush and tree interwoven with vines and creepers, and this heap had fallen off his broad back as he emerged. A rhino does not seek openings or paths in his progress; he moves at will through whatever may be in his way. A baby tank might well think better before a collision. Near the heap was some of the rhino's dung scuffed about, as is his wont, with his hind legs. This, too, impressed his size on me, for, just as in the dung of a horse you see bits of oat and grain, in the dung of this mighty browser you find sticks and twigs as large as a stub of a pencil.

CHAPTER XII

OUR THIRD LION

The blood more stirs
To rouse a lion, than to start a hare.

Henry IV, Part I, Act V, Scene 2

THE camp moved leisurely south while we hunted vigorously ahead of the porters every morning. One of these days gave us the third lion.

My father and I were off early, leaving camp in the darkness, even before the earth's cover of mist became visible and while bushes and trees were still solid and massy about our way. The night was clinging to the woods, but as we advanced the dawn was lifting the darkness from the open plain and the new breeze was fretting the surface of the low mist.

Although twilight is brief on the equator, the day had not yet come before we came upon a pack of wild hunting dogs. I saw them only after the head of our file had stopped, as I swung my leg over the mule's neck and seized my Springfield from Selimani. These hunting dogs run in packs and are feared by all the beasts. Voracious, fierce, and strong, they pull down the big antelope and ill-luck attends all interference. The light was just enough for me to see their big round bat ears, pricked up at our approach and silhouetted against the background, and to make out their spotty white-and-tan hide. There may have been a dozen or so. Although we

were not to shoot at less than lion on these hunting mornings, this was too rare a sight for eyes alone. We opened fire as they dashed off with short barks. I heard the thud of one bullet, and indeed there was no excuse for misses at the short range. So we ran after them, searching for the slain or wounded. Nevertheless, we found none. Although we circled about in the thicket into which the pack had made, all I got was a fine scare from an owl I dislodged from a bush. It was too dark for me to know what I had roused until he flew up through the branches.

Our shooting brought R., A., and the Skipper to aid our vain search, but we parted again soon, each party to its own side of the way to our next camp.

By this time the sun had tumbled up over the horizon. The sky was its usual clear blue and the mists had left bright sparkles and flashes in the grass and on the bushes. My father and I no longer kept to single file, but split a couple of hundred yards apart and walked on abreast. The cool wetness filled my boots and soaked my puttees, and the dewy tops of the grass splashed against my bare knees. I dried my eyeglasses and filled my pipe.

Excitement in Africa thrives in the early morning. If you start from camp at dawn, I defy you to spend an empty, idle morning. Something will happen before you come to lunch.

The acacia tree grows in a flat shape, spreading its branches laterally and its leaves vertically. The foliage is often so dense that the tree appears almost

like a great table. On one of such we saw a portentous number of vultures sitting in rows along the upper branches like monstrous flowers, which suddenly opened and shut their petals as a bird lost its balance or was crowded off its roost. As we have seen, that meant a kill beneath; they were waiting for permission to join the feast. We took our big guns and approached cautiously, still apart, but converging. The tree was in the midst of a close-grown wood, where other big acacias spread their branches over a mass of bush and thorn, through which the water stream of the donga wound sluggishly. I came to where I could not cross and followed down, diagonally toward the tree, but before I reached it I met my father. He said he could find nothing, and suggested we cross below and approach from the other side. We got out of the thicket, in single file now, and, as the file emerged, the foremost, Sasita and my father, started running.

They had come out just in time to catch sight of three lions trotting off into a farther thicket beyond the open field. I saw one, as I hurried out, a yellow blur moving between bushes.

The farther thicket into which the three had gone proved to be the tail end of a long and narrowing spur of forest. This thicket was partially separated from the main cover by a sort of alley or opening, dotted with bushes and perhaps fifty yards wide. We ran to this opening, anxious to get between the lions and the heavy cover where we knew they would

wish to be, while Sasita and Selimani hurried round the outside to watch lest they should make across the plain. One Wakamba was sent back to divert the camp if Enos should be leading the porters too near; another, two others, indeed, ran off to summon A. and R. and the Skipper. My father and I sat in the opening, to guard the ford, so to say, and prevent the lions from escaping into the forest.

We sat there waiting for a full hour and more, our rifles across our knees, watching the bushes and the tall grass at the edge of the thicket. At first, I sat on my heels until my legs were numb. Then I stretched cautiously, my eyes still on the bushes in front of me. Then I sat cross-legged. After a long time, I leaned way over and whispered something about taking a photograph, but we did not want to make any snapping metallic noises. I wondered if the lions were watching us, as they well might without our seeing them. We must have sat quite still and silent, for a wild pig ran by between us and the lions. I could see the wrinkles at the shoulder as he trotted, and his long curved tusks. Most unconcerned he was, on some jungle business, and he reminded me of the White Rabbit hurrying past Alice into the hole.

Not long after that, the others arrived. In whispers we picked a good ambush, not concealed, but commanding the opening across which we expected the lions to go. We sat close together, my father and the Skipper on the left, R. and myself on the

right, and A. close between us. Behind each of us crouched his gun-bearer with spare cartridges and his light rifle. All the Wakambas with us, led by the two Wanderobo, had gone to the open side of the thicket to begin the drive.

We did not have long to wait now. I saw a bit of yellow in a bush where no yellow was before, and two lionesses came out across our right, diagonally down the opening, about seventy-five yards away from where we sat. R. and I both fired immediately, and one went down behind a bush. The other, however, turned and sped across our other flank, almost toward us, passing but a few yards away. I heard two shots and out of the left corner of my eye saw her fall. 'Two,' I said to myself, but I was reloading with all haste and watching the first, who was still lying behind the bush. R. had dropped his empty rifle and taken his Springfield. I had but just reloaded when she started to come for us, not with the swift rush of our first lion, but in great bounds, and roaring. I aimed for the middle and held as long as I dared. Then I fired and she turned a great somersault, heels over head. R.'s nerve lasted a breath longer, for he fired his Springfield just as she wheeled over. She lay dead. Only then did I find that the other lioness, who had been knocked down, was not there. She had got up and gone off just when my father and the Skipper saw our lioness start to charge. So, instead of shooting at her again, they held their second barrels in case of need.

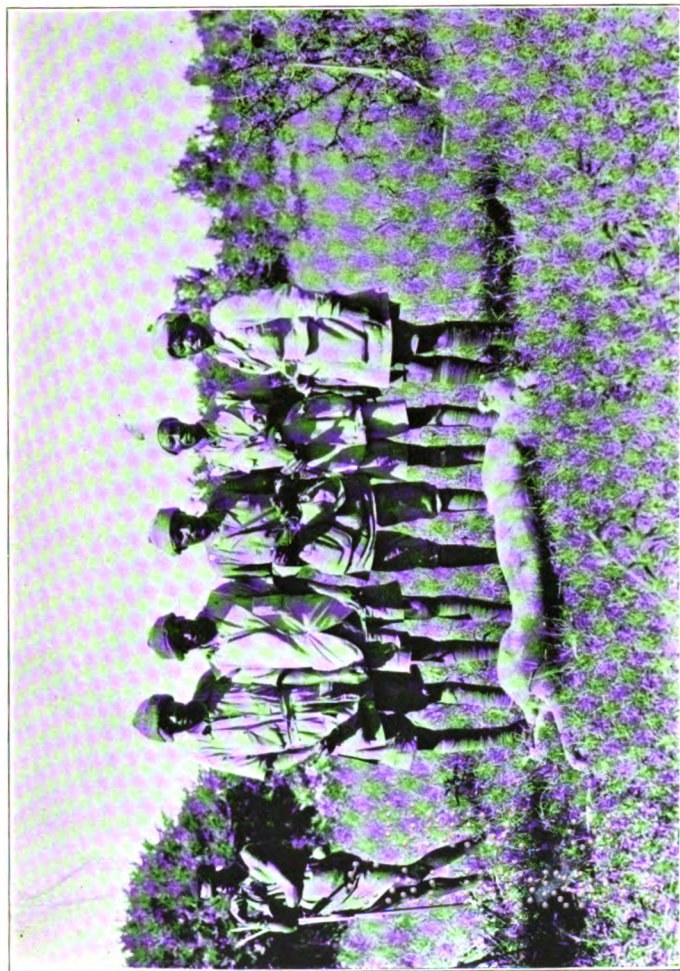
The dead lioness lay twenty paces in front of us. My shot had broken off one of the great canine teeth and come out at the nape of her neck. R., whose nerve was about one bound better than mine, hit her at the base of the tail, just as she turned over, the bullet coming out the belly — a fair bull's-eye.

As we got up and walked over to her, the Skipper laughed and chuckled.

'Do you know what Selimani is saying about your wife?' he asked R. 'He's saying that she is "mzuri sana sana," he says she kept perfectly quiet and made no trouble at all for the man who owns her, that is, yourself. He says one of his women would have shrieked and thrown her arms round his neck with a lion coming as near as that.'

Before we'd had time to think of the third lion and where he might be, a Wanderobo came up to announce that a lion had broken back past him during the drive and galloped off over the plain. He added that he thought he was going to be killed with all the bullets going through the wood. Selimani retorted that we on this side of the wood should all have been killed if it had not been for the bullets.

We made no attempt that day to follow the wounded lioness into the thicket. It would be dangerous in that close cover, and, unless she died and the hyenas eat her, perhaps she would be still there in the morning. But the male who had broken back and got away might be retrievable and we walked



OUR THIRD LION WITH OUR GUNBEARERS

Left to right (omitting the stray native in the graceful attitude): Germani, Sasita, Kombo, Oseni, and Selimani. The two lions came out of the bush in the background

To you
and your

over in his direction. Our hopes were spurred by two Masai we met who said they had seen a lion running and pointed to a big patch of scraggly thorn, but after poking about there, quite unsuccessfully, we marched on to our next camp.

CHAPTER XIII

VARIOUS BEASTS AND BIRDS

The uncertainty as to what may start up — anything from a partridge to a lion.

SIR PERCY FITZPATRICK, *Jock of the Bushveld*

THE next morning our first purpose was a search of the thicket for our wounded lioness. Camp had been pitched not far beyond, and so we reached the place early, while the morning was still chilly and the grass still drenched with dew. We approached from the open plain, entering the thicket from the side of the plain where the beaters had entered it the day before. They knew that three lions were somewhere ahead of them, alive, yet anxious to avoid them; we had but one to meet and maybe dead at that, but, if not dead, in no mood to evade us or to seek further safety in flight. The little wood grew thicker than I had imagined. The bushes seemed to embrace each other and the vines and briers tied and twisted everything together. If it had not been for some meandering trails which must have been forced by lion and other beasts, we should hardly have got through. We all wrested our way ahead, slowly and with great caution, stooping under here and stepping over there, always, however, keeping our guns free and never letting the barrel get under a branch. It would have been quick work, either way, had we met the lioness; but we did not. We

came out just where the two had emerged the day before, and we looked round for the carcass. At first, we missed it. Then we saw a dark dank spot on the grass, like a great ink spot on an enormous carpet, and near it lay the vertebræ with a dozen broken ribs. The grass around was trodden flat and dotted with the droppings of vultures. In brief, it was not a proper sepulchre for a courageous beast. We wondered how soon her wounded companion had made off, and if perchance she had heard the filthy festival.

We spent a long morning walking over the countryside after our dogs. Of these dogs I have not yet spoken. We had not seen much of them, because they lived with the ox-team, which was usually one or two days' march behind us, and, even when the team was in camp, they did not go with us when we were hunting in earnest. They belonged to the Skipper. A friend had given him a litter of six, which he boasted were Australian kangaroo hounds. For us they coursed only jackals and hares, but that might be set down to their youth. Tall, lean, gawky, affectionate creatures, who stumbled over themselves and each other in their eagerness to chase a hare or lick your hand. With them, as mentor and exemplar, was Tom, an old experienced rangy pointer, who knew what there was to know about the African bush. In admiration, I have watched Tom chase a wounded impalla antelope, double the size of our deer, throw it by a hind leg, and thus hold it down, sidling away the while from the sweep of the horns.

Do you know 'Jock of the Bushveld'? Tom was like Jock.

As we walked across the open, the kangaroo hounds loped ahead snuffing and yelping. Suddenly, all would be off together, and such of us as were on horseback would be after them, leaving the others to follow with their eyes until the hunt ended in a dead jackal. Sometimes we would see the hare sitting before the dogs did. Then the Wakamba who attended them would run toward it waving his blanket to start the puppies in the chase. Tom, too, often led them; at other times he maintained a quiet dignity far above their youthful and awkward efforts.

The small creatures which were continually showing themselves and scurrying away were a great part of the interests of the day. Hares abounded. On the plains the dogs chased them and you sometimes walked surprisingly close to them. On one drive for lion, I have forgotten which, a hare popped out of the bush and sat quite near, hardly as far as across the room, twiddling his ears, utterly oblivious of our presence, to make off finally in slow bounds. Another time, I remember one, which the dogs were coursing, circled round behind us, as usually they will, and, coming suddenly out of some cover, ran right by. The long Wanderobo was there and, though I did not see him throw it, I saw his knob-kerry flying and saw it lay the equally flying hare dead.

Jackals seemed to lie up anywhere for the day, and once I all but stepped on one asleep, as I came round the corner of some shrubbery. I looked down at the sleeping jackal and even as I looked he woke, started, and disappeared. Of a different character and less common, were the dik-dik, which I have referred to. Several times we walked back over a lion beat in order to start a dik-dik. They were miniature gazelle, in all points complete, but not much larger than a hare, small enough to be shot with a shotgun, not a rifle. Mongoose we saw, and the dogs killed one on this day. I remember once coming out of a donga and seeing, as I stepped up the bank, half a dozen short, straight, slender stumps, which all together suddenly dropped and ran off as mongoose. Monkeys, of course, were not infrequent, but we saw more of these later, in the buffalo country. Yet a different kind of small creature was the young of the several antelope. R. and I found a baby tommy one morning, scarcely able to run on its tottery, spindly legs. We resisted the temptation to bring it back to camp and watched it teeter away across the plain following that infallible instinct which leads it to its mother.

Of birds, I wish I could be more informing. In some measure I reflect the attitude of the natives, who knew, R. says, but two species of 'ndege' or birds, 'mzuri kula' (good to eat) and 'hapana kula' (no eat). I am surprised only at the existence of the latter variety. However, we saw geese and duck in

some quantity at several camps, and quail-shooting was, I do believe, always obtainable at any camp for a fifty-yard walk. The great marabou stork, standing as high as your elbow, was an impressive and beautiful sight, even though he was usually seen scavenging about the Masai villages. Ostrich, of course, were about, but they are so big as scarcely to be considered birds. The little birds, common as sparrows and like flowers in variety, were the most delightful, and as to these I must confess ignorance.

One of the species of antelope, added to our table in this bush country, and whose horns now decorate our walls, was the impalla, to my mind the most beautiful of all.² Its color is a uniform light brown; its size is that of a large buck deer; its horns, which are its best feature, bow out to the side and then go straight to a length of over two feet, in the form of a lyre. My father shot a head twenty-nine and a half inches long with the points of the horns standing straight and parallel. One characteristic I had heard of and had somewhat doubted until I actually saw it. When a herd of impalla is startled, they sail into the air, leaping over each other's backs, high enough to clear the hat on a man's head.

Another new animal was the topi. This is a species similar to the kongoni, our first game and on the

² 'But who can say which of the many beautiful antelopes is the most beautiful?' *Jock of the Bushveld*. See the chapter called 'The Impala Stampede.'

whole our most constant provender. The topi, its cousin, was far handsomer and less plebeian; for its coat shone with a splendid, though subdued, iridescence of purple mingled with brown, which glowed in the sunlight across its shoulders as if it were a stain left by some gorgeous trappings, the whole trimmed with bright yellow stockings.

As may be guessed, we ate a good deal of meat, perhaps too much for the dietitian. The best — and one whose taste lingers yet — was the tommy. Tommy chops, with onions, would always rouse us from book or letter or hurry up a change of wet shoes. Quail, grouse, and duck are the same the world over, and on our table these were frequent. I think the next best meats were from the big eland and the little dik-dik, eland steak rivalling prime beef. The other animals, kongoni, topi, and wildebeeste, were tougher and larger, and since porters' teeth did not mind the toughness, the size made these their favorites. We ourselves by no means disdained the meat, but on our table it usually ran to soup. What the boys really liked to set their teeth in was a tasty, almost rank, shoulder of zebra, garnished with its yellow fat; but we never reached the necessity of zebra, even in soup. One thing about Wakamba methods of eating interested me, and I think it was not a tribal but a racial habit. Europeans have a way of cutting off a bit of meat in the desired size and then conveying it to the mouth. Quite the contrary with the native African.

He cuts, or sometimes tears, a strip from the leg or shoulder he has broiled and puts one end in his mouth, as much of the end as his mouth will allow; then he cuts the rest off, as near his lips as he can. Our big Wanderobo, I remember, once carried in his hand a big roasted leg of an impalla all the morning, laying his teeth deep into it from time to time and then pulling the leg away with a surprisingly big hole in it each time.

Another dainty was the wild pig. The dogs killed a sucker one day, not so small but that he and his brothers and sisters gave them a long and heated chase, and we had our first taste of wild pork. Nothing tame could have bettered it, and my father and I had its tripe. The Mohammedan gun-bearers looked scandalized, the first and only time I saw such an expression cross their faces, as I ordered Selimani to save the tripe for me. The Wakambas, however, grinned to the backs of their necks. Tripe was their first tidbit from any antelope we killed; indeed, so far the first that only those who were with us at the death got any. For they would cut it out, scrape off the contents of the stomach, and devour it warm and fresh in strips, squatting round the carcass.

CHAPTER XIV

A SNAKE AND SOME HYENAS

I will give unto you power to tread on serpents

Luke 10. 19

OUR southernmost camp lay in true bush country; no more views over plains scattered with game, no more sunsets across a darkening expanse or sunrises coloring a sea of mist. The trees and shrubs grew close round us in green walls and the boys often had to clear away the underbrush. During the first lunch at a new camp we would hear the swish-swash of two boys on their knees in front of the tent cutting down the tall grass and the little shrubs with their pangas.

There were snakes in this grass and about this bush. I was reading after lunch when I heard the Skipper's voice. During the siesta hour the Skipper was usually cloistered in his tent, and only something well worth while could disturb him. This something was a big python one of the boys had reported near camp. I got my shotgun and a handful of shells, and followed the Skipper in his socks and shirt. Not fifty yards behind our tents we were shown the clump of bushes where the python had been seen. I parted the tall grass about the foot of the bush with the muzzle of my shotgun.

'That's no python,' said the Skipper. 'She's a big puff adder! Give her some number 6!'

I could see only a short section of the snake, as thick as my knee, and I did not like to run the chance of irritating his middle with birdshot without knowing where his head was. So I poked about a bit more with my muzzle. The puff adder is monstrously short for his diameter and I soon found the head, only to lose my chance as the snake glided farther round the bush. However, I got another chance and shot it dead. At that the Skipper took it by the tail, still writhing posthumously, and walked slowly back toward camp holding it behind his back. The boys who were clustered about followed us giggling and squealing. I did not catch the point until I saw Enos approaching from camp to see what mischief so many idle Wakamba were up to. He approached us gravely, but the Skipper suddenly swung the adder from behind his back, and at that Enos fled. The Skipper pursued him, amid howls and shrieks from the Wakamba, and flung the snake at Enos, still fleeing, although now with a great grin of mingled mirth and horror, and saying, 'Nyoka mbaya sana sana!' (Very very bad snake!)

They were bad snakes, these puff adders; not only as poisonous as you please, but slothful, stolid things, so slow to get out of your way that there was more risk, I believe, from them than from the quick, lithe, dark-green mamba or black cobra, which was equally poisonous and about as common. These were the two species which we chiefly encountered.

There were other small ones, but I can recall now only one, which I added to my collection of lizards, only a couple of feet long with yellow bands round a slender body. Although snakes were not included in my collection, one of the Wakamba produced him wriggling on the end of a cleft stick and so I popped him into my alcohol tin. Since I had no special wish for more, indeed, I did not want my sixpences to lure the boys into risks of a bite, I got Enos to explain that I gave no sixpences for snakes without legs, but I made out from the boy's somewhat apologetic answer that he had caught this one in his bed, and that the lack of legs was not his fault. So I changed my ruling to no sixpences for snakes without legs unless they were caught inside a tent, and then went further and made it a shilling if it were in my own tent. The first remark my friend of the museum made when I offered him my lizards, neatly decanted by that time into Major Grey's chutney jars, was that the little banded snake was as bad as God made them.

I do not want to give the impression that snakes were rife in the country. The two species we met were the puff adder and the mamba, both of them poisonous, but after a pretty careful count we saw only eighteen for the three months we were out. When you consider that we covered on the average over ten miles a day, eighteen becomes very few. I should suppose you could not walk that far at home and meet less. The matter of snakes in Africa

is not serious. The Skipper could not recall that he had seen a single case of snake-bite during the recent campaign against German East Africa, and when I asked Selimani how many people he had ever known to die of a bite he thought for some time and then could recall but one, a brother-in-law. I believe that the snakes in Africa have been trained to avoid an oncoming foot by ages and ages of getting out of the way of the multitude of game which runs through the grass and endangers their lives. Selimani, however, once saw an eland dying in the open plain from no other visible cause than a big mamba slithering off through the stubble.

We took no sort of precautions against being bitten; so far as protective gaiters and such like went, I wore shorts and puttees, with bare knees between. We each of us did carry, nevertheless, rolled up in a handkerchief in our shirt pocket, a lancet, a little bottle of permanganate crystals, and a unit of morphine, which would have been useful for a snake-bite, but which were primarily intended for a case of mauling by a lion or goring by a buffalo or rhino. I should say that snakes were not one of the dangers in Africa. However, there was no objection to killing one within fifty yards of camp.

Hyenas at night, not snakes, were the real domestic feature of the bush country. On the plains the fires kept them at a decorous distance. In the bush country they had no compunction against a closer approach behind the shadows. We all were

tired in the evening and slept well, but the noises the hyenas made at night, first way off and then suddenly right near, were enough to distract the most pious sleeper.

At this southernmost camp, my father and I sat out one night for these hyenas in a boma. Although not particularly a sporting event, it was an interesting experience.

All the afternoon Enos and a working party of Wakamba were building the boma about a hundred yards behind our tents. They piled branches and small trees of the thorny acacia into a ten-foot circle round the trunk of a good-sized tree and bound them into a thick wall with withes and bark. At one point in the wall Enos contrived three small apertures, two for us to shoot through, and so fixed at our height sitting. The third was for Oseni, who was going to sit up with us, to shine the electric flashlight through, and so set between and a little above our two. Our bedding was laid out on each side of the tree-trunk in the centre, foot to the shooting-holes, and with a space between so that Oseni could sit with his back against the trunk and within reach of his hole. It was a formidable stockade when Enos was done.

Meanwhile R. and A. had gone out to shoot a wildebeeste for bait. They secured one not too far from camp, and a pair of oxen was dispatched to drag its disembowelled carcass round a circuit before it was laid in front of our boma. There the car-

cass was staked down directly outside our two apertures and some three or four yards away.

After supper we collected all the small necessities which we thought we might want — for it is not prudent to walk round at night, even so near camp as we were — and ensconced ourselves. We wore sweaters and overcoats. We gave Oseni the flashlight. We swallowed some quinine and took some more with us twisted in a bit of paper. I had my shotgun loaded with slugs and my father had his Springfield. Oseni carried one of our .450 rifles.

Our purpose was to slaughter hyenas, and we had a hope for a leopard, for you cannot really expect to shoot the wily leopard by day. A lion might come, but we had promised the Skipper, who had a strong sentiment against shooting lions by night out of a boma, that we would not shoot at a lion, and he had given us a dozen rocks to heave at any that might come.

The night was dark. A few stars showed through the branches of our tree above us. Inside our boma it was densely, heavily black; with wide-open eyes you could see nothing and the flashlight even swathed in a spare sweater gave too bright a glare. We settled ourselves for the night. Oseni, sitting between us with his back against the tree, was going to watch and wake us. I lay on my back with my toes stuck under a firm branch in the wall so that I could raise myself up quite noiselessly to a position in front of my hole and ready to shoot.

It seemed a long time before I went to sleep, but I know I felt a grasp on my leg and sat up slowly as I came awake. The noises about us were ghoul-ish. Within my reach, it seemed, a gluttonous slup-slop and a tearing were going on; at intervals the chee-chee-chee-cheeeee of the hyena laugh exploded into my ear; almost continuously a chance-medley of grunts, howls, and screams were kept up, sometimes almost leonine at the beginning, but always ending in an undignified, whiney scream no lion could utter. I peered through my hole and saw shadows move and pass. Then I felt Oseni squeeze my shoulder, the signal that he was about to turn on the flashlight, and I put my gun to my shoulder. A whiteness of light showed several little jackals, with abnormally large ears and eyes like saucers, standing on the wildebeeste, and other dark, fleeing shapes. My father shot, but we could not see the result. That brought a heavy silence, and we snoozed off again.

The next time Oseni woke us I fired, although I could not see much. I stayed awake this time, and after a time we heard a wee crunching noise just outside the boma. More noises came and I sat listening to the noisome carnival. Besides the pot-pourri of sound in my ears, my nose received a mingling of smells from the dead wildebeeste and from its scavengers. My eyes, almost my only dis-engaged sense, became accustomed to the darkness and I could make out fleeting figures pass. Then

suddenly I was startled by a sudden yelp, seemingly at my ear, and Oseni at the same time gripped my leg hard, whispering low, 'Chui!' That means leopard. I could make nothing out, but my father fired, and said he had seen it. Oseni said the chui had slapped a hyena, too eager for the feast to wait till a leopard had finished.

We went back to camp about four-thirty, with a lantern, by which we discerned two dead hyenas, but to our great disappointment, no leopard. A shave and a breakfast set us up for the morning's hunting.

CHAPTER XV

OUR FIRST RHINOCEROS

The wind blew open the tents of dawn . . .

Haling Sonnets

THE morning after the hyena Walpurgis-night, the Skipper and I went off farther to the south in order to prospect the grass. If it were as long as the recent rains gave every reason to expect, there was nothing to gain in that direction, and we should turn east into the hilly country where the buffalo lived. We were now some twenty miles north from the Tanganyika border and about a hundred miles to the west of the Rift Valley. Tanganyika had plenty of game and the lion followed the game. On the other hand, our side of the Rift Valley was covered by thick tropical forest; and along the near edges of this forest, where it merged with the plains in great islands of forest and great lakes of plain, were the buffalo. Whether to go farther south or to turn eastward into this buffalo country was the question. Long grass to the south would dispose of that alternative, because it would be manifestly impossible to hunt anything, except elephant, over your head in grass, and the hope of elephant had been dropped on the reports of our Wanderobo scouts, who had returned during the night.

I was a little thick with lack of sleep and my ears

rang and my knees were shaky with quinine, on account of the last six grains I had economically eaten from the bit of paper into which we had twisted the tablets. Nevertheless, an hour's walking in the fresh morning light dispelled all that. Our way passed across great spaces of tall grass and through patches of bush. Signs of rhino were noticeable, and one heap of spoor was not over a day old. The grass was long, and a few weeks would bring it higher. Although we postponed any decision until the evening, the Skipper, from his remarks, had clearly reached his own opinion.

So we turned back to where we expected to meet the others. This was a donga where my father and Sasita had reported fresh lion tracks going both in and out, and our plans for the day were to take enough porters over and have a beat. While the Skipper and I were prospecting the grass, the others, with the beaters, had proceeded leisurely to this donga. If, as we thought probable, this donga should be one of the covers where lions lay up during the day, there was no need of starting our drive early. We met there about eleven o'clock.

The beat was not a success. Only a pair of large yellow-winged bats and a troop¹ of gray monkeys came out of the donga, and we started back toward lunch a little after noon. But we were but just come together from our several stations when some one, I forget who, noticed the circling halo of vultures which was now familiar to us as the sure sign of

recent slaughter beneath. So far as we could see, for the plain rolled gently up from where we were and pitched gently down beyond, the vultures hung over a point beyond the dip, and we could not tell what lay there. There was running and eagerness and high expectations, whetted by our recent bad luck, until we reached the top of the slow rise and saw only the torn remnant of a tommy. No lion, no leopard, nothing but the crumbs of the feast. It must have been a cheetah, we thought; one of those dog-like cats, hardly distinguishable from the leopard, except for its long legs, its round spots, unlike the rosettes of the leopard, and its canine, non-retractile claws. There was no danger with cheetahs, no fight from them at bay; the Skipper said, 'Ride them down over the plain and kill 'em with your stirrup iron; but look out if it's a leopard!' R. had ridden round after a couple one morning, seeing one here, and another there, several times, but never long enough for a shot. Now we had just missed another.

Two disappointments in succession usually lead in Africa to a sudden and unexpected fall of luck. This may be deduced from the only generalization about that 'tricky' (the word is the Skipper's) country which I learned to have faith in; that is this, the less happening now the more there will be soon. A constant and confident belief in this rule will keep your weary feet on the move or spur your bored spirits into activity. After a hard day, a wakeful

night, and a good deal of a morning, I tried to keep this in my mind as we continued our way to camp. My legs swung idly out of the stirrups, and in time with the motion of the mule my heels beat his flanks to urge him up to his place in our procession. I dropped my reins and rolled a cigarette from a blue package of the Rising Hope abomination. The sun lay hot on the plain, and my little motto slipped out of my head.

'Kifaru! Kifaru!' came suddenly down the line, and then the meaning reached my idle brain, rhino, a rhino, the rhino whose spoor we'd seen that morning. Selimani had my big gun in my hands almost before I had slipped off the mule, and I hurried forward. The Skipper was pointing to the side of a slope, about a quarter of a mile away, where a rhinoceros was trotting off, near two giraffe who were getting into a gallop. They all had got our wind. As R. remarked, it was a sight such as might have been seen on that hillside almost any time during the last half a million years.

We had only two horses with us, and whoever was going after the rhino had to go quickly. The Skipper was touching up his pony with his heels and at the same time holding her in. R. insisted I should go, and without arguing I got on my father's horse. The long-legged Wanderobo held my big gun for me and he kept it, following us on foot. The Wanderobo tucked up his blanket, and together we topped the rise, right behind the Skipper. But the rhino was

still going, and we bent to the right in order to get our wind out of his nose. Once we stopped and got off, running after him; he was too fast for us, however, and we took to our ponies again. He did not slow up until he entered a piece of ground thinly spread with little acacia trees. As soon as we saw him come to a walk, we got off and ran toward him, the Skipper first, I at his heels. There stood the rhino, a stone-colored, moving mass. At about a hundred yards away, the Skipper stopped and I stepped clear of a tree between me and this huge boulder of flesh. I fired and heard the thud of the bullet. The rhino started to trot away. I fired again, going well over, this time, which was not a commendable shot at that short range, and the Skipper fired his light rifle. By now I had lost sight of the rhino among the trees. So I just followed the Skipper and, although I did my best, I did not see him again until the Skipper pointed him out to me under a little tree. Even then I could not be sure which end was which — which the head and which the tail — but once satisfied of that I fired four times into his neck. He was already dead, I am sure, for none of these unnecessary shots had any visible effect. We went up and the Skipper jumped astride of the broad back. For the rhino had not rolled over on his side. He was too broad in the beam to allow that. His legs had merely collapsed under him and his head had fallen between his fore feet; had his appearance even remotely resembled any other

beast, he would have suggested a great mastiff asleep.

That is how my rhino was shot, hardly a story of danger and skill. I hit him once alive and four times dead; and at that, my first shot was a trifle high, I think, to reach the heart, which is very low in these pachyderms. They are strange beasts. They may come straight for you, like an excited steam roller, or they may trot off, as this one did, to die in a heap from a fatal wound or to go on through life as if they had never even heard the gun. In thick country they are dangerous companions, for they rush through close growth which a man cannot dodge about in and only a well-placed bullet can swerve their charge. In the open, men do not fear them, for they cannot see much over fifty yards, and if you see them first you need only make a *détour*. We had but little experience with rhinos — only this one and another big one which R. shot a month later — and I speak with insufficient knowledge, but the manners and customs of a beast with such a thick hide, such a short sight, and no wits at all cannot be abstruse.

That afternoon I went to sleep over Miss Austen and woke only in time to find that a rhino was being taken as sufficient reason for an extra whiskey at supper.

CHAPTER XVI

RICHARD'S LION

The shooting of a lion, fair and square, and face to face, was the Blue Riband of the Bush, and no detail would have seemed superfluous.

SIR PERCY FITZPATRICK, *Jock of the Bushveld*

WE decided that night to give up any thoughts of Tanganyika and, instead, to turn eastward to the buffalo country. Although we shall never know what lay in store — or in wait — for us to the south, we did not in the event regret our decision. The best route lay back by Badámit and the Leganga Hills.

The next morning, while Enos moved camp, we all started early to where we shot the rhino with the purpose of stalking his remains. We had a flurry of excitement hardly out of camp when one of the gun-bearers said he saw a lion, but I saw nothing and the incident lay in my mind more as a presage than as a real occurrence.

Near where the rhino lay we all got off our mules and horses, and advanced silently on foot. Selimani turned once and frowned at a couple of twigs I stepped on; as if they and not I had made the noise. Round each bush, we peered ahead, not perfectly certain, among so many similar trees, which of them sheltered the rhino. All in vain, so far as lions were concerned. What we saw will, however, remain almost as vivid in my memory as even the sight of

a lion could. I counted rapidly up to twenty-two hyenas leaving the carcass at our approach, and there must have been more of them. Big spotted beggars with square heads and turn-up snouts and little fellows with swollen bellies, they looked like monstrous maggots as they scrambled and hustled off, some looking back at us and others doubled up in flight. They had eaten through the walls of the hulk, but they had not half finished it. The mass of a rhino baffles even the scavenger system of Africa; like a heavy snow-fall in the city, the force needs more than one day to dispose of it. Diligent gluttons as the hyenas are, they cannot overnight get round two tons of meat, though they are the veritable sewers of Africa.¹

Our start had been so early that, even after stalking the rhino and conversing over the remains, we had a full morning ahead of us. So we made a sweep of the country to the west of our next camp, walking abreast a quarter of mile or so apart. Just as the destroyers in the war used to cruise in line abeam at a distance of visibility, so that they might cover more sea in their search for submarines, in similar fashion we covered the plains on foot after lion.

After a couple of hours under a sky of luminous blue, up which a glaring sun rose rapidly, we converged and met at the end of a donga, where the

¹ As well as being the African sewers, the hyena might also properly be called the native cemeteries. For many of the tribes leave their dead, and sometimes their nearly dead, outside the boma at night.

final trickle of forest from the hills ended in a flowery bush amid the surrounding plain. There we sat and smoked. A couple of Masai happened along and I remember one of them exhibited a scarred chest and shoulder, where a lion had left his teeth-marks in the shoulder and the furrow of his great claws across the chest. The Masai are warriors and a band of young braves will kill a marauding lion. Having surrounded the lion in a bit of brush or in high grass, they draw their circle closer and closer until they get within the cast of a spear. Then suddenly, anticipating his charge by their own, they dash in all together and throw all their spears through him. Their only protection is their buffalo-hide shields, tough enough to turn a spear, but scarcely stout enough against a lion's paw. Brave men and skilful. I judge that I, alone and armed with my gun, take no odds against a lion; a sure and quick shot might do so, since the use of a gun lies wholly in its aim; but one of twenty Masai, with spears, do, indeed, give odds. This leisurely conversation with our mauled Masai induced his companion to show us his scars, which turned out to be a rifle bullet through the chest. He was watching a fight between some Masai of another tribe and the English, so he said; and a stray machine-gun bullet found him out!

The Skipper broke up this social gathering by suggesting a beat of the donga; not because he had any reason to think any lion was there, he said, but here were enough porters to beat such a narrow donga

and there was a fine-looking donga, and here were we, with plenty of time before luncheon. So it was arranged that R. and I should walk as far up the donga as we could in ten minutes, and then sit down to wait for whatever we might see. My father and the Skipper would follow along with the beaters, one on each side.

R. and I, at the end of our ten minutes, found a sort of opening, enough of a break in the cover to see anything pass, and sat down, too near, I thought, to the edge of the bushes. Usually we allowed an ample fifty yards of open space; for, although all our lions had hitherto broken cover slowly, I always expected one to burst out on the run, and fifty yards can be done quickly by a lion in haste. We were allowing hardly thirty yards, and I hoped that any lion that might be there would not be startled out of his sleep. A hyena, indeed, gave us a start by poking his great ugly head out, staring at us, and pulling it in again. But no lion came. We heard only the shouts of the beaters grow near and distinct.

As soon as the beaters reached us, R. and I took another ten minutes and this time found a good spot. A tree had fallen athwart the donga at an opening, and we sat on this, sure not only of seeing whatever passed, but also of having time to shoot. Soon we heard a shot, off to our right, on my father's side, from a light rifle, and we saw a hyena, probably the same one that scared me, scuttling across the plain with a puff of dust beside him as my father shot

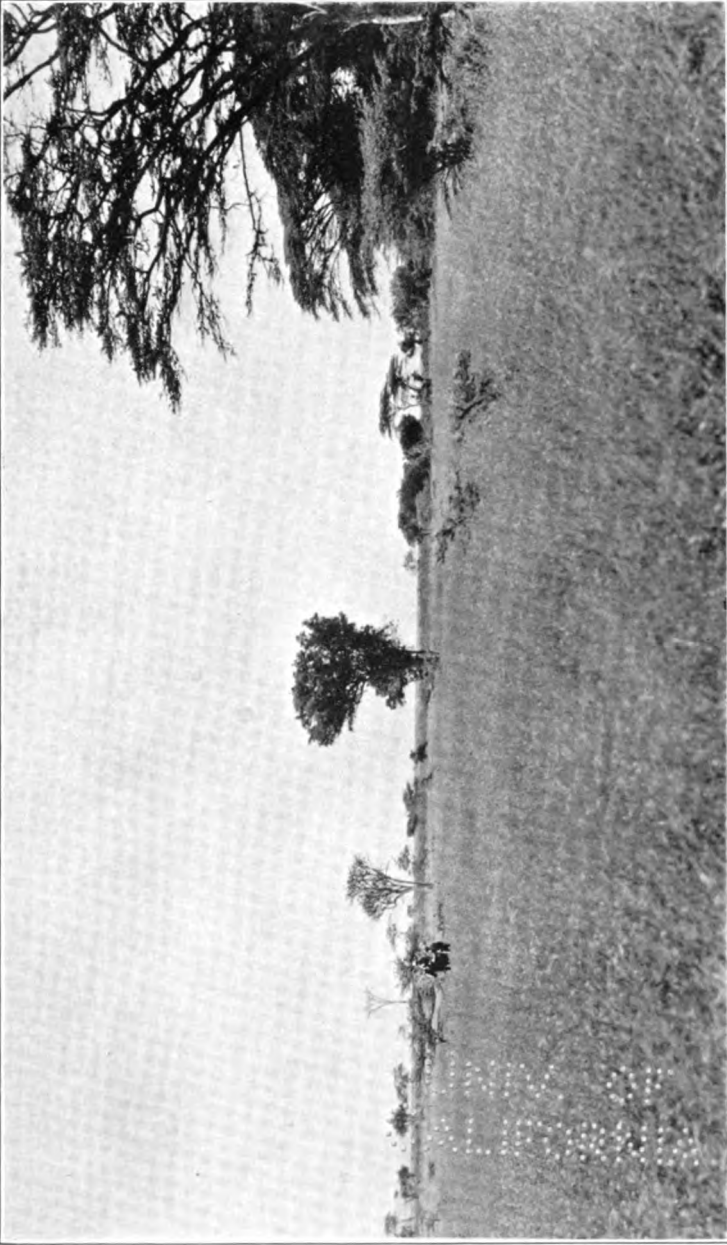
again. We had no special expectations of quarry, and so I was still thinking of hyenas when Selimani nudged me and I turned. There I saw two beasts coming out of the donga on our left. I said, 'Hyenas!' but they were not hyenas, they were lions. After advancing some yards from the bushes they stopped and looked over their shoulders, listening to the approaching yells and shrieks of the beaters. I aimed at the foremost. I would have fired, had not my target suddenly disappeared in the tall grass with the loud report of R.'s gun by my ear. I turned my sights on the other lion, which was now trotting away from us. Yet I did not shoot. My head was full of thoughts of apparently dead lions rising from where they fell and charging. Perhaps R. would fire again, and if so we might need both my barrels. Prudence held my finger, and I let the second lion go without a shot. Probably I should have missed him.

R.'s lion had disappeared in the grass, but the gun-bearers were all for walking up. 'Dead! He's dead!' they said. The beat was not over. There might be more lions. Moreover, if this one was dead, there was no hurry, and if he was not, there was even less. We stood on our tree-trunk and peered at where he lay. Nothing was to be seen. So, finally, we started cautiously over, stopping on the way to stand a-tiptoe on a little anthill, from which we saw no better. Halfway over, we caught sight of the other lion, now a good way across the open and

apparently making for another donga beyond. R. watched him over a rise as I covered the spot where I surmised his lion lay. Now, there was need for hurry. The sooner we could finish off this one, the more chance of following up the other over the rise. We went over and found him dead. We had no more than satisfied ourselves of this fact, by pulling his tail, and the gun-bearers were congratulating R. by pressing bunches of grass into his hands, their customary manner of felicitation, when the Skipper arrived, and we left the scene of R.'s triumph to hasten after the other lion, the one I had let go without a shot. We beat the other donga, our spirits now high with recent excitement and great expectations, but nothing came of it. He must have kept on up the donga and into the hills.

So we returned to R.'s lion. The bullet hole was just behind the shoulder, and low enough to get the heart; a pretty shot, at some eighty yards. Since he had not moved from where he was struck, our caution and prudence were wasted on a completely dead lion. No matter; there is an adage in Africa to the effect that more men are killed by dead lions than by live ones.

After Germani had finished skinning, he opened the stomach which was stretched with a recent full feed, probably off an eland whose remains we had passed early in the morning. The contents were junks and strips of meat, incredibly large, some as big as my fist, others as long as my hand. I think



TAKEN FROM WHERE RICHARD SHOT HIS LION WITH THE SINGLE SHOT
He and Anita on the horse are standing where the lion fell. The two lions had come out of the donga on the right



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this recent meal was why the noise of our first drive had not moved him and his mate across to the other donga before R. and I got down for our second drive.

CHAPTER XVII

A BLACK MANE

There is a goodness-knows-what-will-turn-up-next atmosphere about the Bushveld which is, I fancy, unique. The story of the curate, armed with a butterfly net, coming face to face with a black-maned lion may or may not be true, in fact; but it is true enough as an illustration!

Jock of the Bushveld

WE were no longer hunting in couples now, as we had begun by doing and as we were to do again in the buffalo country. Our progress back from the thicker bush country brought us again to the plains, and the more space we could cover the better our chances. So we swept across a belt of plain as broad as the four of us could cover without losing touch with one another. Every morning we started out together, and as soon as the day broke and the plain opened round us, we split some two or three hundred yards apart, and tried to keep in line. A shot or a hat waved or in fact anything out of the ordinary was the signal to close up, but after nine o'clock, when lions should be asleep and in cover, our discipline relaxed and we felt free to find our own way about and then home, taking care, however, to note each other's direction and general whereabouts. Behind each one walked his gun-bearer and his second. I usually had Selimani in front of me, to make the best use of his eyes, carrying the gun I expected to use, and Mooma behind me, with the other gun and the spare cartridges. Farther behind,

and during the first two hours a long way behind, came my mule and syce.

One of such mornings after R.'s last lion I got separated from the rest, and so missed the chief of the excitement. A long line abreast, as we were keeping, is not difficult on the open plain, but a stretch of woods, especially if it be drawn diagonally across our advance, always put me out of line, either lagging behind or changing my course. One such stretch this morning brought me out on its farther side alone, and I gave up trying to regain contact, although I had a feeling something was up, and I out of it, because my mule and syce, which should have been behind me, never showed up out of the wood. Some sort of excitement was detaining them, either voluntary or perforce, and I expressed the hope to Selimani that a lion had eaten the mule and left the syce.

I kept on alone, with Selimani and Mooma, and spent a happy long morning. At the point where we turned back to camp, while we were sitting smoking for a moment, I listening to some story of Bwana Bad Hat, as they called Allan Quatermain, on account of his always old and seedy headgear, which Mooma understood and appreciated far better than myself, we noticed a fresh hyena hole. Near by were several others, all connecting, of course. In default of other excitement, I asked Selimani, why Mooma should not go down the biggest hole while he and I watched the others. My tone, at least, was serious,

and Selimani answered in kind, that surely Mooma would and that Mooma was known in his village for a good hyena hound. Mooma showed a ring of white teeth at all this, but he burst into hearty, helpless laughter when suddenly a baby hyena, mostly belly and head, appeared from one of the holes, quite as if he had overheard our talk, and waddled off in fright. 'Ah,' said Selimani, 'the hyena fear our Mooma!' — and Mooma went off again into high merriment.

We three got back to camp about one, just in time, as I thought, for a big luncheon. I had my shoes off and dry socks on and I was setting my mouth to a long lime juice and soda, when the tall Wanderobo ran into camp. A. was asking me where the others were, and I was saying I did not know, when Selimani interrupted with the news. The others had sent in for beaters; they had found a black-maned lion; they were waiting for more porters to beat him out of some cover.

There was no way of telling how far off they were, because distance meant nothing to the tall Wanderobo, who only pointed when we asked him. I advised A. that it might be too far for her, and so she went back to her flowers. Then I followed the Wanderobo back, walking as fast as I knew how. At the end of a short hour, we came to the others sitting under a tree, passing round pieces of Dot chocolate and water-bottles.

R. told me what had happened.

'About eight or so, I came through a belt of thick

scrub and met Pa. The Skipper, seeing us together, rode up, and we planned an attack on a herd of impalla which were grazing a quarter of a mile away out in the open. We had got about halfway to them when Sasita whispered, "Simba," and I felt my big gun in my hands and found myself staring at a great big lion galloping across in front of us, hardly a hundred yards away. Right behind him followed three lionesses. They were moving too fast for a good shot, so we trotted after them. Over the next rise, the lionesses had disappeared, but there was the big lion, acting as a sort of rear guard. He was enormous and had a thick black mane. I did not shoot, because he was a long shot and some thorn trees stood in the way of a clear sight, and I figured our best chance was a beat, for if I had only wounded him, we could not have done that, not with any safety to the boys. So I watched him disappear into the scrub. A quick view of some game feeding on the farther side of the scrub and the attractive thickness of the scrub itself made us think the four had not passed through it, but were still there. We gathered all the boys we had with us and sat down on the farther side. The scrub was thick, but it was small and we could hear the progress of the beat. Just about as the boys reached the middle, one of the dogs let out a howl and one of the boys came out all scratched up with the thorn. A lion had growled at him, and he had forgotten there were any thorns. That rather stalled the beat. So we sent Kombo, who you know

is an ex-sergeant in the K.A.R., and Germani, who was the same thing, to encourage the boys. Germani took my Springfield. Again the yelling and shouting stopped in the middle; accordingly, Germani went in alone, with my gun. Then we heard four shots, from Germani, who had seen the lion, "black as night," he said, and had fired into the air to move him. But the lion only moved farther into the cover. Germani came out with a long black hair between his fingers. That rather stumped us. We could have gone in ourselves, but it was too thick to promise much of a shot, and the lions would most probably come out to where we should have been waiting for them. The Skipper thought our best show was in a proper beat. That's why we sent the long Wandero back for more porters.'

All this R. related in a whisper, for we were only a few paces from the edge of the cover, and between munches of chocolate. I found every one's attitude big with the near possibility of the event. The proximity of lions snatched my own thoughts away from fatigue and a vacant stomach, and gave a something of expectancy and imminence even to the tree above us and the tufts of grass about us. Lions, to a certain degree, are not game or quarry; the fact that they are your peers in courage and by far your superiors in physical prowess gives them the quality of an adversary, an antagonist. There is this, too, about them: You do not hunt them for ivory, or record horns, or even for their hide; one lion skin is

as good as another in front of the hearth. The truth is, I believe, you hunt merely for their killing. They are the noblest of the vermin; and man pursues them just to kill them, wherein lies a dignity not possessed by the beasts man hunts to eat or to wear or to flatter himself. I know that I was always glad to see a lion die, and in giving the finishing shots I know I felt no such compunction as I could discern in the *coups de grâce* to anything else.

However, I never saw R.'s black lion. We beat the cover, and nothing came. While we were sitting there under that tree he had slipped away. R. had been really too generous when he refrained from shooting. I have a feeling he would have hit, just as I had seen him hit the last lion, and I wish he had tried.

We all reached camp about four o'clock, to get a tea from Mpishi which had been invested with the dignity of the luncheon we had missed. Sitting round the tea-table, we missed my father. While we were sunk in our steamer chairs, he was off gathering flowers with a long knife in his hand to dig up the roots, followed by a boy who carried the flower-press. He was topping off a ten-hour lion hunt with wild flowers.

After a long day such as this, when there was a luxury in pulling off your shoes and stripping your wet feet of the heavy woolen socks, we all gathered in a semi-circle round the fire and thus brought the day to a close. Then we lay stretched in a chair with our thoughts circling about a muddy syphon

and a bottle of lime juice, each with some small wonder to relate, and leisurely discussions wound themselves about the most casual subjects.¹ The stars stared and glistened. The fire flared up and the sparks spouted as a new log was thrown on by a dark figure beyond. The minor noises of the camp and of the mules mingled with our desultory conversation. Enos came and squatted beside the Skipper to receive the plans for the next day or to answer our questions, and their low talk was interrupted by the Skipper's explanations in English to us. Soon came time for sleep. A wet sponge all over my head and hands, a last look round the clear black sky, clustered and spangled with the white lights of the stars, and the next thing I knew, seemingly a moment later, was Stephen's voice as he brought me a big tin cup of tea, at half-past four in the morning.

¹ Such as the Worcester Sauce label and the advertisement on the tinned Indian butter, which was guaranteed to stay fresh and wholesome 'if kept in a *cool* place.'

CHAPTER XVIII
A BABY HYENA AND A LOST LAMB

What man dost thou dig it for?
For no man, sir.
What woman, then?
For none, neither.

Hamlet, Act V, Scene 1

DURING these days so full of rhino and lions, black-maned and elusive or otherwise, our camp was shifted every morning back toward Badámit. We spent one night there on our old site. For a time we feared we might be held up, for our sixteen oxen, which were regularly loosed to graze together, horn to horn, as immemorial fear of lion has taught them, wandered off over the short horizon of the plain and could not be found. A pair of Masai, however, brought them in before nightfall, and we were able to get away. We did not go straight back from Badámit to the Leganga Hills, as we first had expected we should. Instead, we took a three days' excursion into the valley on the other side of the range of hills behind Badámit. I don't recall any special purpose for this; I think we were generally disinclined to leave the lion country.

Whatever we expected to find beyond those hills, these three days carry for me only the memory of their afternoons. We hunted assiduously every morning, but nothing came of our efforts. During

the afternoons we had hilarious quail shoots, advancing in line through the tall grass and shouting at each other's misses and hits. One such afternoon brought in eighteen quail, two lesser bustards, one hare, and one dik-dik, and I don't remember ever seeing the bottom of a huge quail pie Mpishi made and, I suspect, replenished.

One day we had wet weather; not the downright sheeted rain of the wet season, but a constantly cloudy and intermittently rainy day. I was settling down to a tented afternoon with books and letters when I heard my father and the Skipper talking about hyenas and holes. There was a group of hyena holes close by, my father said, which he had noticed on his way to camp, and some of the entrances showed recent occupation. After that, it did not look as if there would be any more rain and we found a shovel in the ox-cart. So we paraded over to the hyena den, armed with a shotgun, a couple of spears, a camera, and the shovel.

The first thing was to select the right hole to begin on. There were half a dozen within a radius of twenty yards, on the side of the hill, but the dogs took a special interest in a group of three and barked madly at them. So we determined on these, and stuck rocks into the others. Our choice was confirmed by certain grim rumblings R. and I thought we heard when we put our ears to the entrances. Many plans were then proposed and, unlike most deliberative assemblies, all were adopted. Any one

who had an idea or made a suggestion could carry it out. First we tried shooting into one hole in the hope that the hyenas would run out the other two, and as this was being done, the two exits were covered by a camera, two spears in the hands of the porters, and a second shotgun which had been sent for. Nothing appeared. Next we tried to smoke the hyenas out. R. and I attempted to light a fire in the most convenient hole, but the twigs and leaves were damp and we failed wretchedly. At that one of the gun-bearers asked for a match. With great care he selected a few leaves and, as by magic, bending low, he succeeded in teasing flame and smoke out of them in a moment. Nevertheless, as we might have foreseen, the smoke no more drew down the hole than down a chimney.

By the time we had exhausted these and other devices, including a futile attempt to send one of the kangaroo hounds down the largest hole, an audience of idlers from camp surrounded the scene. In the front row stood Mpishi, hands on hips and elbows akimbo. When the Skipper got up from his knees, where he was trying to push an unwilling puppy down a hole, and said, 'There's nothing for it but digging,' he looked hard at Mpishi. This look changed the cook's status from one of a spectator to that of a possible, indeed prospective, protagonist, and altered his expression from placid curiosity to that of a busy cook, too negligent of his own duties. 'Hyenas live far down in the earth,' he declared, and

walked away toward camp, shouting to some boys to hurry up with the firewood they were carrying.

Nevertheless, the rest of our audience did not escape. They were pressed into service as spademen, and with the usual eagerness of the Wakamba for any kind of hunting soon became as enthusiastic as we. By poking a long branch into a hole up to the shoulder, we found the direction the passage took and the spot to sink the first pit. The spademen relieved each other and the bottom of the pit fell into the passage. Again the long branch guided us to another pit. The third time the branch was shoved in, great excitement was roused by the Wakamba showing us a few brown hairs on the tip. The Skipper smelled them and proclaimed them, 'Hyena! and we keep 'em to match 'em on him when we get him!' The next poke brought the Wakamba out of the hole, announcing that something had bit the end. While a pit was dug at a surprising speed, the entrance was guarded by Mooma and Mooli with spears. I held the camera ready to snap these spear-men and R. stood ready with a shotgun in case the spears went shy. But all these preparations for the expected flight of the hyenas were bilked at a shout from the spademan that he had struck the back of a hyena. We all peered into the pit and there, indeed, we saw a bit of fur at the bottom. The Wakamba stamped on it with his naked heel, but the hyena would not budge. So R. fired both barrels into it, and the Wakamba disinterred the body of a half-grown

hyena. That seemed to be the end, for there was no real reason to expect more hyenas in the hole; moreover, the rain had begun again and the dark was coming on. The Skipper dispersed the audience by flinging the carcass into its midst and we began to collect the spades and coats and things. An exclamation from one of the Wakamba brought us all again to the pit, and there we saw a little gray nose pushing aside the loose dirt which had fallen back and partly obstructed the passage. The nose pushed farther forward and the head of a baby hyena appeared, blinking and snuffing. 'Pull him out!' said my father, and one of the boys leapt into the hole, seized the puppy by a leg, and flung him up at our feet. He immediately started off as fast as his little legs could go, and I grabbed him by the neck. Instead of the soft puppy body I expected, I found a tough, struggling little beast in my hand, snarling and showing a white row of teeth. A dog collar was produced and affixed and we paraded back to camp. As we passed the kitchen fire, Mpishi stood up and somebody shouted, 'Look, here's the cook's child!'

At supper the question of a name was discussed. Hyena in Swahili is 'fisi'; so my father suggested 'Fizz.' We asked what the Wakamba word was and tried to pronounce it acceptably, 'Telaythi,' meaning 'a little thing making a noise like a dog.' But we came to no conclusion, beyond leaving the decision to A. as the owner and patroness of the baby hyena. This turned out to be equivalent to baptism, as we

found next day. For all the porters, as soon as they heard that the 'fisi toto' belonged to A., called it after her. In spite of a gentle matronymic, he never grew tame. His fierce, sullen spirit was always snarling and suspicious, and he never ate without watching us meanwhile. The only way we could approach and pat him was to walk up on his chain and warily scratch his back. On our return to Nairobi, A. presented him to the Governor's menagerie, because I refused to bring him home on the steamer with me. My refusal was too prudent, and I have since regretted it. What a gift dog! Whenever it got into a fight with another dog, not only would its proud owner be pretty sure of victory, but he would have the rare satisfaction of seeing his dog proceed to devour the other!

Not long after the hyena dig, R. and I had some goose shooting. Near our camp, on the other side of a water-course, there was a shallow pond, and one of the Wakamba reported 'Ndege kubwa sana' ('Very big bird') there. So we approached through the sedge and reeds and spied half a dozen geese. We tried a stalk and they swam out slowly beyond gunshot, as if pretending they had not seen us. So we dispatched Mooma and Mooli, our seconds, round to the opposite side of the pond to shout and wave their arms. This strategy succeeded almost too well. The geese flew straight for us, low down, hardly off the water, and passed us so fast and so close that I missed mine and R. said the only reason that he hit

his was fright, because he thought they were charging him.

On our way back to camp we encountered a flock of guinea fowl on the ground. We walked up on them in the twilight, but they kept moving on ahead of us, just out of shot. So we walked faster, and so did they, R. and I finally running as fast as we could and the guinea fowl scattering and dodging about among the bunches of grass and bushes, but never taking wing. They beat us. We never got near enough for a shot before we lost them in the increasing darkness. A fine sort of bird-shooting when the birds refuse to fly and outrun the hunter!

As we crossed the donga to our camp, whose fires we could see a hundred yards beyond, R. almost stumbled over a small brown animal lying in the edge of the grass. He stepped quickly aside, and we all peered down at a little lamb, not many days old, which lay there with his legs doubled under him, looking up at us. Neither Mooma nor Mooli would touch it, despite our suggestion that they bring it into camp. They looked at each other, and said, 'He Masai lamb.' It was to them manifestly an adequate reason for leaving the little thing alone, and an edible thing at that, but whether their attitude was based on a natural Wakamba distaste for anything Masai or whether they feared that the Masai owner would suspect them of stealing it, I do not know. However, we were in a hurry to get back to camp and supper and we left it. After supper, while

we were sitting round the big fire, R. and I thought of the little lost lamb, probably sick. Young sick things do not often survive an African night, where the land is scoured by jackals and hyenas and where few dongas lack a leopard. So we took a lantern and went back. We found it readily enough, just where we had left it, its eyes glittering in the light of the lantern. R. picked it up, and soon it was safe by our fire, with a saucer of milk under its muzzle. Perhaps it would have got well and lived either to become a pet, a companion to our baby hyena, or to be eaten by our Wakamba as soon as its Masai origin was forgotten, but a dark and inevitable fate had already claimed it. Early the next morning, in the misty darkness before breakfast, the Skipper stumbled over its dead body some hundred yards from camp; he jumped aside, he said, mistaking it for a coiled snake. That mystery, the instinct of the animal to die alone in the dark, had drawn the little helpless thing away from the warmth and protection of our fire into the bush.

CHAPTER XIX

OUR LAST TWO LIONS

Cet animal est très méchant. Quand on l'attaque il se défend.

Anonymous

THIS camp of the geese and the lamb was only a short march from the Leganga Hills, near enough for Enos to get his boys over to the site of our old camp in good time for lunch and not too tired to beat the hills that same afternoon, before our noises and smells scared away the lion. After lunch, as before, we preceded the beaters by half an hour and took our ambush on the farther end of the range of hills. This time we sat a little farther down the slope than before, just below the upper face of the hill beyond where the cover ended and just this side of where the ground fell away into the plain. It gave us a range over the last open slope, but not over the side slope, down which Sasita had seen the second lion come on our former drive.

The day was chilly, with a slight drizzle, enough to make me clean my spectacles and hope each time that the lions would come before I had to do it again. But the drizzle soon ceased, and by the time we heard the first distant yells of the boys the only sign of rain was a gray sky and the glistening leaves of the bushes beside us. My first intimation of lion was

the Skipper, who sat farthest on the right, scrambling to his feet and whispering, 'Come on!' We all ran and stumbled over the rocks up to the hummock of quartz where we had sat before, and thence we saw three lions sliding down the side slope, over the same places where Sasita's lion had passed before. As my father and R. and I watched them go down and over the plain, out of range, the Skipper dashed back to his pony, which was waiting below. We three did not stand there long.

My father said, 'How about some more?'

R. said, 'Aren't three enough for you, Pa?'

We turned round to face the long slope again, and even as we turned we saw two more lions come galloping down the slope, passing across from our right, but coming diagonally toward us. The foremost was a lioness; a couple of lengths behind her and a little nearer to us came a lion. This had been agreed to be our father's shot, and so he opened fire on the foremost, the female. He missed, and then R. fired his first barrel and missed, holding his second. By this time the lioness had galloped out of shot, but the lion was nearer and broadside on. My first barrel hit him too far back, in the belly, and I saw him lash his great head round and snap at the wound. I tried to hold my gun on him for a second shot, but some bushes came between and I could not shoot, until I saw him turn head on for us, rounding a big bushy tree. R. fired square into his chest and, just as my second shot followed, he collapsed dead, some thirty

paces away. As R. said afterwards, 'There is no more satisfactory sensation than to see a lion charge, to wait until he's close enough to be certain, and then to see him collapse as you fire.'

We waited only to assure ourselves of his death, for Skipper was somewhere on the plain below with four lions. I don't remember the direction, nor how far we went, but I know we hurried. We found the Skipper standing in his stirrups, shouting, firing his pistol in the air, and at first sight apparently alone, but when we reached him he slid off the pony and pointed beyond. There we saw a lion, couched and looking at us, yellow in the sunlight and manifestly angry. His mane seemed to stand out like a ruff and as we looked he stood up. My father walked forward to get a clear shot between the thorn trees, sat down, and fired both barrels deliberately. Both hit and the lion's hind quarters sank to the ground, leaving him still facing us and sitting on his haunches. My father fired once more, as R. and I cut in, R. to hit once, both my shots to miss. At that the lion dropped prone and dead. He was our biggest, measuring nine feet three inches from nose to tail-tip.

Then the Skipper told us about the first trio and we told him of the other two. He had galloped after them, with due regard, he said, to the farther side of each bush, until he ran suddenly into their midst, for three heads appeared in a circle. Never had pony stopped shorter, nor turned quicker. They made off, and he chose this big male to follow. However,

he thought he knew where the other two had gone, and he was off again on his pony.

We left another gun-bearer to do the skinning and followed. Somehow or other, we lost the Skipper this time. The thorn and bush cleared into more open plain in the direction he had taken, and there was really no excuse. Perhaps we dawdled a bit, getting more cartridges and whistling up a syce who was leading another horse. Perhaps the open plain, dipping imperceptibly, concealed him and deceived us. At any rate, after walking fast, in the way the Skipper left us, we could not see him. By this time, it was after five o'clock, and, although still bright light, we knew that the abrupt evening was approaching. One of the boys shinned up a large thorn tree — not too easy or comfortable a feat, by the way — and R. galloped the horse in a big circle ahead of us. But we could not find the Skipper. This was the more disturbing because he was gone long enough to have already given up an unsuccessful chase. If he had not found one of the two lions, he should have been back. There was a third about, too. We walked on, using our eyes as much as our legs, until ten minutes of six. Then we descried the Skipper appearing suddenly out of one of those deceptive dips in the plain, which may put a whole safari out of sight a mile off and no one the wiser. We were relieved to see him and eager to hear what he had seen.

He said he had found one of the other two, a lioness, and he had ridden her down to a stand in a long,

low donga, about a mile from where we were. There he had held her, by shooting and by firing away all his pistol ammunition. This pistol was his only weapon, I should add, and hardly better than a fly-swatter against a charging lion, for it certainly would not penetrate a big muscle. At quarter of six he had given us up; now he said, we were really too late; sun set at quarter-past; we could not get there till six or more; she was in no mood to be harried through a donga in the dark; and anyhow, by that time we could not see her. My father wanted to go, notwithstanding; but R. and I and the Skipper all voted that it was too late. So back we all went, and it was pitch-black night as we marched into camp, bright with the fires which had been heaped high for our return and happy with the two lion skins which the gun-bearers had but just brought in.

CHAPTER XX

HOT SPRINGS

Well, in that hit you miss.

Romeo and Juliet, Act I, Scene 1

THIS lion hunt was our last. The next morning we started east toward the buffalo country and made a short march to a camp by some hot springs. I remember the walk over from Leganga to the hot springs as one of the pleasantest of our mornings, without excitement and without events, but six or more miles of blue sky and green grass, scattering game and twittering birds, as Selimani and Mooma and I sauntered along. During the course of this bright forenoon, we spied the head of a giraffe moving and swaying over the tops of the thorn trees, and, since it seemed to be approaching, we sat down to wait for it. Perhaps it was half a mile away when we first caught sight of it. We three sat behind a bit of tree, in no manner sufficient to conceal us, and trusted in our immobility and the light favoring breeze. I sucked gently at my pipe and watched through my glasses. The giraffe came slowly nearer and passed by some hundred yards away. Perched on the ridge of its back, and at one time scaling its neck, I could see a pair of tick birds. Every now and then it would stop, its neck slightly swaying, posed in an admirably graceful attitude; then the great

beast would move in a slouching amble, grotesquely out of proportion to the trees, and indeed to the whole landscape.

Camp nestled in the bend of a donga, specially green and fertile on account of the warm stream flowing ever through it, until the waters were dissipated upon the plain. The hot springs were a little way behind our camp, toward the hills, inaccessible in a maze and tangle of brier and bush and reed. As far upstream as we could walk, the water was too hot to hold your hand in, and as the stream wound down to the plain it got lukewarm and finally almost cool. Opposite camp, conveniently enough, it was just right for a hot bath. We appropriated one section, and the boys screamed and splashed farther down, washing and bathing several times a day.

Not only did the vegetation delight in the warm water, but there seemed to be more birds and more small beasts in this donga than anywhere else, except in the thick forests of the buffalo country we were going to. We collected some bird-nests here and packed them into an empty food-box. One nest was of the weaver bird, a pendent tunnel of woven grass leading up to a bulbous nest at the top, and fully six feet long, an edifice well worth the skill and patience in a country where snakes visit trees at night.

This afternoon Selimani and Mooma and I, as usual, went alone, except for four or five boys following well behind. We were chiefly after dik-dik.

Hardly out of earshot from camp, I saw three small creatures cross an opening in the bush ahead and raised my rifle, but they were monkeys. Farther on, I got a shot at a dik-dik, and missed. Then I took a shot at a guinea fowl perched high in a great tree, some way off. Down he tumbled. As we walked up, Selimani stopped me excitedly and pointed toward the bushes into which the fowl had fallen. I looked quickly, saw a wild pig trotting over a space beyond the brook, and fired, knocking it down. A good shot, considering the quick sight and the motion of the pig, but Selimani was grieved. He had not been pointing at the pig at all, but at a serval cat which he had seen dragging off my guinea fowl. We beat the clump of bushes without success and passed on, leaving two boys to the pig. Crossing the brook, we then walked out into the plain. Far away we could see a herd of wildebeeste and some odd zebra, but they were too far to walk to and be back for supper. Nearer, we saw a half-dozen tommies, grazing and frisking their tails. So we approached diagonally, and got within a hundred and fifty yards. I made a nice shot at one and the rest ran off, and then stopped, to resume their grazing as if nothing had happened. Flushed with three good shots in quick succession, I asked Selimani if he wanted another tommy. 'Yes,' said he, with a grin, and I shot at one of the tommies, now well over two hundred yards. Down came a tommy —, alas, not the one I aimed at, but his companion a yard or so to the left! I

transmuted a cry of surprise into an exclamation of success, and Selimani grinned to the ears. That sobered my elation. It was time to walk back to camp, and Fortune tried me — or I her — no further, for I got no more shots on the way.

The way home led us by a Masai manyatta which we had not seen from our camp, for it lay some distance off and on the opposite side of the hot-water donga. In the course of my walk, I had crossed the donga downstream and circled across the plain far enough to pass the manyatta homeward. Under the thorn boma sat a group of Masai women waiting for their spouses to declare for supper and their sons to bring the cattle home. At their feet a few small children played in the dust. When Selimani stopped to pass the time of day, it occurred to me that I might as well be polite as stand aloof and dignified. So I said, 'Jambo,' and remarked to one young dame, pointing to a youngster whom I took to be hers, since he fled to her knees as I pointed, 'Toto mzuri sana sana,' which means, 'That is a handsome child.' She protected the little brown back with one hand and smiled, but at the same time she spat toward me. Selimani immediately told her that I was a beautiful bwana.

I remained doubtful about the social significance of her spitting, whether it was a special Masai salutation expressing gratitude or appreciation or whether it was designed to avert the evil eye, until I reached camp and consulted Hassani, R.'s and

A.'s personal servant, who was a Masai himself. R. suggested that she did not like my looks, and I was the more convinced that it was a curious form of acknowledgment to my compliment.² But Hassani gave us the simple and satisfactory answer. 'She did not like your smell of soap. It smell bad to her. She think soap a dirty thing to put all over you. She like grease and clay better. So she spit when she smell it.' Thereafter, whenever A. would remark how smelly and disgusting the Masai ladies who visited camp were, I would tell her that she used soap far more than I did and suggested that her sentiments might be reciprocated.

We stopped for a couple of days at these hot springs. The Skipper's Somali pony, which had got two of our lions for us, and, the Skipper added, had got him away from three, came down with the fly sickness. I believe nothing much is known about this sickness, which kills many horses in Kenya. It seems clear that it comes from the bite of a fly, the ngana, and that the fly lives only in certain belts. These zones move and change, and at times have spread so as almost to exterminate the horses, but usually it is known where it is dangerous and where pretty safe to take your horse. The fly bites your horse; his temperature rises; and he is done for; at

² A. C. Hollis, on page 316 of his book on *The Masai* (Oxford, 1905), says that the Masai express either contempt or surprise by spitting; 'When the Europeans came to this country and the Masai saw them for the first time, they used to spit, for they said we have never seen people like this.'

most he lives until he gets wet in the next rains or until you overwork and tire him. The only hope seems to lie in keeping his temperature down. The Skipper's Somali had had a hard day at Leganga with the lions, and the first morning at the hot springs his temperature turned out to be 104, taken as is a baby's. There was only one thing to do, the Skipper said, which was the cold-water treatment, and 'he has chosen a singularly inappropriate spot for that.' The syces led him downstream, where the hot brook was almost cool and where the evening breeze fanned across the plains. There they doused him hourly with water, and his temperature came down. It took two days, and the Skipper did a deal of walking for a couple of weeks, but the Somali came through all right. It seemed to mark success for the cold-water treatment. The Skipper, however, was skeptical. A lot of people would say that it only went to prove he'd had it before, he remarked, and showed he was salted, that's all. A salted horse is valuable in Kenya, because he is one that is known to have had the fly and recovered. Like smallpox, he scarcely ever has it again, or, if so, but lightly. Salting enhances the value, but not the beauty. The horse my father rode was salted, and visibly so. He wheezed and whistled; his white hide was blotched and dirty; his joints bulged; a sorry-looking Rosinante on the whole. But he was sure to live. That was his great virtue, and the other horses and the mules were not. That is why we could not sell the

others on our return, and why we found a ready market for my father's salted horse.

This fly sickness held us at the hot springs a day or two, and it gave my father and me my first buffalo hunt. A Masai, who wandered into camp, had spoken laconically, but respectfully, of some buffalo in the hills near camp. So my father and I started early one morning with the Masai as guide, into the hills behind camp, in the fastness and thickness of the forest, where the buffalo feed at dawn in the glades. We found nothing, not even spoor. As we came down the hillside, however, somebody saw a herd of impalla beneath us, grazing on the edge of the bush.

Selimani and I went down ahead to make a stalk. On the plains a stalk is hopeless for utter lack of cover; in the bush one must advance cautiously and quietly, hoping to start the impalla near enough for a shot. Here we had a perfect opportunity. The impalla were grazing undisturbed close to the edge of the forest and we were already in the forest. We did our best and, owing to Selimani's skill, we came to the edge right beside the herd. He gently, almost timidly, raised a branch and I saw a dozen impalla before me, some sitting, some grazing, some nosing themselves. The nearest were not fifteen yards away. I chose one beyond and slowly raised my gun. The loud report brought them all to their feet, but not one moved. They all turned from me to look at the one I had killed. Not until I reloaded and

clicked home the breech bolt did they bound away, one over another. I do not understand this, unless the noise of the gun was so loud as to give no sense of direction. They were startled by it, but did not know whence it came. The thud of the bullet in the neck of the impalla, however, drew their attention. Then the slight but unfamiliar click of metal scared them.

On our way back to camp we passed through some close-growing, alder-like cover, and there I missed a sight I most should like to see. Suddenly, Selimani, walking ahead of me, turned and pressed my heavy gun into my hands and took the Springfield I was carrying. I saw some yellow moving among the leaves and thought of lion, but only a pair of impalla went off. Although I did not understand at first, what I had not seen was a leopard close behind the impalla and about to spring. Had we dallied a moment more over my kill, had I even stopped to light my pipe, then we should have seen the leopard pulling down his buck. As it was, I saw only two frightened beasts, and, of course, we never got another sight of the leopard.

CHAPTER XXI

CAMP LIFE

My morn, noon, eve, and night—how spend my day?

Pippa Passes

To describe the routine of one day, with all the detail a search in my memory of those happy times can muster, is the purpose of this chapter. Without detail such a description would be only a schedule. Even with sufficient minuteness it will not be exciting, for routine can rarely be; but at least it will present a background to my narrative.

Let us begin with me asleep on a collapsible cot on one side of the tent which my father and I share. The night is dark, except for the tropical multitude of stars and the unsteady flames of the camp-fires. A blind wall of mist, beyond which no porter will venture, shields from view the plain and all that walks there, hidden in its white darkness which invisibly shifts and streams in the easy wind before dawn. From beyond the light of the fires, from behind this wall of mist, far and near, comes an intermittent medley of noises — the vibratory grunt of the lion, which alarms our tethered horses; the whine and cough of the hyena, who steals our scraps and even drying skins; and the other sounds of smaller beast and bird, now smothered by distance, now startlingly close by.

It is cool enough for me to be rolled up in two gray blankets. At four o'clock, the askari who, watch-and-watch with his colleague, has been tending the main fire all night to keep off the beasts, finds by the blaze that the hands of the clock have reached the two spots on its face which we have taught him to mean the end of his duty, and thereupon he calls the cook and the personal boys. So far I speak only by hearsay, for the first thing I am conscious of is a hand on my shoulder at four-thirty, and then, as I turn over, a tin mug of tea carefully placed in my hand by Stephen, our personal boy. The tea is so hot that I set it down unsteadily on the canvas-over-grass floor of the tent. I call my father, who reaches for his eye-glasses hung on one of the reef points of the tent wall and takes his mug of tea from Stephen's other hand. We push back mosquito nets and sit on our beds in the dark, sipping the tea and conversing in whispers on the morning plans.

Stephen has slipped out, and now returns to lay within our reach our shoes, all slippery with new grease. Inside each shoe are two heavy woollen socks and beside my pair lie dry and neatly rolled puttees. The first thing to do in Africa is to put on your shoes. Otherwise you are likely to pick up jiggers, a small insect that burrows under your toenails and is so difficult to remove that only a native can do it properly — that is, without drawing blood and risking infection — by reason of his long practice on himself. The next thing is to put on your big

sun-helmet, for fear of forgetting it later. After shoes and hat, I get into my green woollen shirt and my 'shorts.'

One word, now that I am dressed, and even before I brush my teeth, on trousers and boots. I wore 'shorts,' loose and cut off above the knee, leaving a bare gap between them and my puttees which was soon baked brown and continually got scratched — in the thick bush country I had to borrow knickers; but I iodined the scratches every day before lunch, and my knees were cooler and freer for the long walking than in the duck knickers my father and my brother wore. As to shoes, let them be light, and carry spares. Allan Quatermain wore boxing-shoes, of the next to the thinnest and lightest make. You can do this on grass, because on grass the soles do not wear out: the toe-caps do. I cut through the toes of two pairs and most of a third in our three months. The sharp stout blades of grass saw through the leather and leave your big toe exposed. The soles, on the contrary, need be only thick enough to hold small hobs, which are best screwed in along the edges where they do not make a lump to walk on and to raise a corresponding blister.

As soon as I am dressed, I step out into the end of the night and finish my cup of tea under the stars or in the moonlight. By that time Stephen has brought a bucket of hot water and two mugs of boiled water. From the bucket we wash our heads and faces, and in the mugs we brush our teeth. The Skipper is

already sitting by the fire in a chair, warming his socks. There we join him. My brother comes up, swinging his lantern, and stoops to light his pre-prandial pipe.

Breakfast is not delayed. We set our lanterns on the table under the big fly tent, and we each take our own chair. Our chairs are the same steamer chairs we bought, instead of hired, on the steamer. We used them constantly, and I kept mine all the way back to New York, where I forgot it on the dock in my excitement at getting home. In Africa a chair is not a luxury. It is a necessity. The Skipper said he always chose his folding-chair in preference to a bed when travelling light on scout duty in the War in German East Africa. You can sleep on the ground perfectly well, he said, but you cannot for the life of you sit and rest comfortably against a tree, and in hurried journeys you are more likely to get such rest than you are to get much sleep.

Breakfast is porridge and tinned milk, toast and tinned butter (of a specially delightful kind from India), bacon and sometimes fried eggs, coffee and/or tea, all on tin plates and in tin mugs. Dinner is far away, and we eat with our minds on a good six or seven hours' fast and hard walking. Sometimes we used to make a bacon sandwich with the thick toast and wrap it up in a sheet of the 'Weekly Graphic,' two months old, thus to fill both mind and belly when the time came. I remember many noons when I munched my toast, reading the while on the

wrapping a report of some divorce or sport, or one part of a serial, or an advertisement of houses for rent.

Before we left camp, which was about quarter of six, in time to be just clear of camp when the sun lifted over the hills, I always verified all the contents of my pockets. This was important, more or less, for many reasons of comfort, convenience, and safety. In the breast-pocket of my shirt, wrapped in a handkerchief, was my first-aid package. We all carried that. It consisted of a lancet, some permanganate of potash, and a quarter grain of morphine. In my right trouser pocket, alone and safe from hasty confusion with knife or anything else, was a small emergency shell ejector. That, too, we all carried, for fear of a sudden jammed cartridge. In my left was a jackknife. Slipped into loops above the right pocket of my light shooting-vest were three spare cartridges for my big gun. I turned and loosened them. In one of the many pockets of this vest was my pipe; in another my plug of Dill's Best; in others my spectacles, my handkerchief, a pencil and scrap of paper for notes, sometimes a volume of a pocket edition of Jane Austen; and around my neck hung a pair of binoculars. No compass; although I should most assuredly lose myself alone, I ran no risk of losing Selimani, and he was a veritable homing pigeon or wandering bee.

Then we were off for the morning, and some days a very long morning, depending on our luck and how

late we found it. As the sun rose rapidly into the clear light sky, the morning mists dissipated and the chill of the dawn turned into the heat of noon. The sweat would begin to roll down my face and neck, and about the time the sun had taken the edge off our hope of lion we would unbutton our shirts, or stop, peel off the woollen jerseys we had worn on the colder mornings, and toss them to our second gun-bearer. For during the morning the temperature would rise from under 60° to 90° in the shade, and beyond exaggeration in the sun. After the first two weeks it never rained, but the grass was always heavy with dew in the morning. Every morning we were soaked from the waist down, and just as regularly by eight or nine o'clock the sun had dried us off again. But the rest of these pages is devoted to an account of our hunting; so my routine begins again with dinner.

The first thing upon returning to camp was the reverse of the first thing upon getting out of bed — to get my shoes and socks off. Often, perhaps usually, my afternoon was spent in different shoes and socks, so that I changed them, not every day, but *twice* every day. The next was to pour some lime juice into a tin mug and squirt a syphon of muddy water into it. I believe we started with a few glass tumblers, but no one grumbled when they were broken, one by one, because the mud in the water — which we got from holes and ruts and standing pools — showed so annoyingly through the glass

that you could see, as you set it down, all you had not swallowed settled in the bottom.

In dry socks and slippers we were ready for dinner, which, like breakfast, was not delayed. Before that, however, a word on slippers in Africa. They are not low-heeled or no-heeled things as at home by the fire. They are knee boots, of soft leather, with a string on the top with which to draw them close below the knee. They are to keep out the mosquitoes, for in Africa a mosquito may as well as not bring malaria, and the sting of a mosquito is scarcely more wholesome than the sting of a serpent.

Dinner was a grand affair, lacking, however, the whiskey and the quinine in which we indulged at supper. Sitting up as high as we could in our steamer-chairs, with our sun-helmets tilted back on our heads, because the meal tent was only a single fly and inadequate against the noon sun, we ate our kongoni soup and tommy chops. They are what every man who has hunted in Kenya will never forget. The kongoni is a big buck, heavy and strong, as soup should be, and his toughness becomes irrelevant. The Thompson's antelope is small and tender, and his chops are too. When they are smothered in onions out on safari, they are *hors de concours*. I spoke of toast at breakfast. We had a lot more at dinner, from bread baked in the ashes in a sort of double baking-dish which had a top to close down tight; and few were the ashes which got into Mpishi's bread. Of course, we had Worcester sauce

on the table, and sugar and butter as well. Over all and in most were flies.

The common house fly is the commonest wild life of Africa. They follow the game, like the lions, and I do not believe that you ever get away from them. I remember often walking over a rolling plain and coming unexpectedly into a cloud of flies. No hint of game until then, but over the next rise would be a herd of zebra, which had scented our approach and galloped off too swiftly for its attendant flies. I often wondered if the deserted flies had wit enough to overtake their herd or had to wait until another grazed into them. We used to discuss methods of eliminating flies from our camp. The best suggestion was the least practicable: to lead the safari over a windy ridge and stand two boys on each side with switches, to brush the flies off each man and each pack as they passed. I tried a mug of soapy water on the conglomerate mass of flies in my tent. I got bunches of them, but the sloping roof of the tent was against me and I spilled most of my catch on the beds. The easiest way was to swish the tail of a wildebeeste constantly in front of your face, and perhaps the final comment on flies in Africa is that its tail alone gives a commercial value to a dead wildebeeste.

After dinner, we would all disperse to our tents for that hour of rest holy in all tropical countries. I used to sleep, empowered thereto by a long hard morning and a big dinner. I also read. We figured roughly

that a minimum of six books apiece, giving each of us five a choice out of thirty, was the proper number to carry for a three months' trip. What books we brought is of only personal interest, but one counsel is not out of place. You will be interested by far different authors and subjects than you would be at home. You will read lighter, trashier stuff than you can enjoy at home, for somehow you will find more in such books than you expect, perhaps more than they contain. On the other hand, you will take an interest in more solid reading than you can on train or steamer, perhaps because you are farther removed from conflicting and more insistent interests, perhaps because you may have exhausted other choices.

Our tents were the usual camping-out tents, of a dark but faded green color, and with a fly so that we had a double thickness and an air space against the sun and the heat. On each side stood the cot beds, which were drawn out into the sun every noon. In front of the tent and at the foot of each cot were our tin boxes, in which all our clothes and personal things were safe against dampness and ants. On the front tent-pole hung coats and slickers and binoculars; against the back pole were stacked our guns, held up by a loose cord drawn round the muzzles. Only the Skipper's gun was loaded at night. Rather two lions in camp, he said, than two loaded guns at night. Over each cot, attached to two rings in the tent-roof, hung the mosquito netting, which continually disclosed little holes and tears to be sewn up. We all

rather dreaded the malaria mosquito, whose bite might so easily spoil our trip, and so we took perhaps unnecessary though not excessive care of the two precautions — netting and quinine. Out in front of the tent stood two little folding green canvas washstands with sponges tucked between the double guy ropes, against which leaned our flower presses drying in the sun. During the first two weeks of our trip, until the end of the rainy season, round the tent ran a little ditch, a couple of inches deep, which was the invariable routine in the proper erection of a tent in a country where a sudden flood is the routine of the weather.

Although dinner might be a variable feast, depending, not upon the phases of the moon, but on our return from hunting, the end of our siesta came almost always round three o'clock, when the sun began to permit nature to cool off. Then we roused ourselves and went off singly, or often still in pairs, hunting meat or sight-seeing. Those afternoon walks were happy hours, without the tension of expectation of the morning (until we got to the buffalo country), and always fruitful in some event. You were almost certain to see something; one day pot shots at guinea fowl, or a quail shoot, or a flash of a little dikdik, or the spoor of a lion or rhino, or a conversation (vicariously conducted) with a Masai, or a swarm of wild bees, or an odd bird's nest, or a new flower, either photographed or dug up, or several of such together, as well as the more serious business of

shooting a zebra or a kongoni or a wildebeeste for the boys to eat. But even the longest hunting day ended before dark, which, like the sunrise, came always at six o'clock.

Every other afternoon I returned to camp in time for my hot bath and shave. Stephen would have it ready. The folding canvas tub, just big enough to sit in a bucketful of hot water, would be lying open in my tent. After shaving in front of a little mirror which swung uneasily on the tent-pole, my shirt off, but my sun-helmet kept scrupulously on, Stephen pours in the hot water and I pick out some struggling ants. He holds the soap and sponge and towel. Stephen also wields the clippers with which we clip our hair to a uniform and cool brevity. Then, after getting into our long mosquito boots, we had the two drinks of whiskey which was our regular portion. It became three in honor of a dead lion or a dead buffalo, but only then. For we provided ourselves with 4 men \times 2 drinks \times 90 days of whiskey, and the drinks were of the ten to a bottle kind. I should add, for the sake of completeness, that we had one bottle of port and one of brandy for sickness, but the rules provided that you had to score a fever of 102, or the equivalent, for either of these, and since neither was won during the trip we drank them both in Nairobi on our return.

Supper offered the same fare as dinner, except for the six grains of quinine with which it opened and the finale of jam desserts which Mpishi devised; but

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like breakfast, it was held in the dark, with the table lighted by three lanterns.

After supper we would gather our chairs round the fire and, clad now in overcoats, we would smoke and converse until an eight o'clock bedtime.

On the whole, you can see that the roughness is planed off all the hardships on safari in East Africa.

CHAPTER XXII

THE MASAI

Customary suits of solemn black.

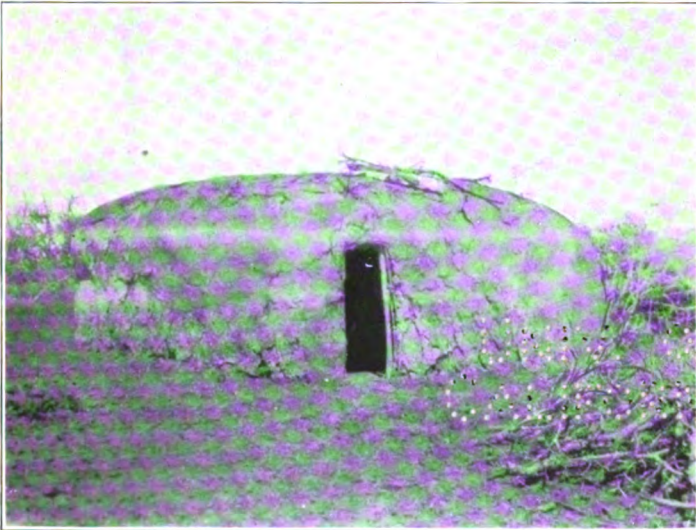
Hamlet, Act I, Scene 2

THE country we were in was the Southern Masai Reserve. This was the big district set apart by the British Government for that troublesome tribe, the Masai. A life organized and devoted to raids and forays made the Masai such an impossible neighbor that a great tract of land was found for them a few years ago and there they were left, or rather kept, to themselves. It was good country in the fertile and beautiful highlands where the white man can live in health, and so it was necessary not only to exclude the other tribes, but also to forbid European settlers. The bellicose habits of the Masai made the exclusion of the other native tribes practically self-enforcing, but how permanent may be such a policy against white settlers, easy of execution now, must remain doubtful while the colony grows. Besides this isolation, the Government appears to exercise but little jurisdiction over the Masai. Liquor, firearms, and strife are forbidden, and, moreover, prevented. A few trading posts where an Indian storekeeper swaps beads and wire and truck for hides, such a one as we saw at Badámit, are permitted subject to supervision, and exist somewhat under the shadow of the long



A MASAI WARRIOR

Note his long spear, his stretched ear-lobe, and his blue bead necklace. The test of well stretched ear-lobes is whether they will meet on top of the head



A MASAI HUT OF COW-DUNG

Part of the thorn boma appears on the right

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spears of the young warriors. But each village is administered by its own chief and most, if not all, of the business of the district commission is done through these chiefs. In brief, if war had not been their chief occupation and if war were not now denied them, you might say that the Masai live the same life within their Reserve that they have always lived.

The delights of battle are now denied to the Masai, but they still possess the stakes of battle, now their chief, indeed it would be as true to say, their only remaining interest. This is their cattle.¹ I have heard it said that the Masai had more property per capita than any nation in the world, solely because of their herds. Many times have we come upon a little manyatta or cluster of a dozen mud huts and seen a herd of over two hundred head of steers and cows, of mixed breeds, long, short, and crumpled-horned, black, pied, and red. Besides these, they have donkeys, their beasts of burden for such things as were too heavy for the women, and they have droves of goats and sheep. With all these they live on terms of the closest intimacy. I remember standing with my father by a manyatta one day, while the gun-bearers were drinking milk and asking questions. As I stood there, I bent to slap a fly from the back of my knee, which was left bare by my shorts, but instead of the fly I struck the warm damp muzzle of an

¹ A Masai myth has it that the Wanderobo used to have all the cattle until God gave them to the Masai, and now the Masai have a right to all the cattle on earth and the Wanderobo must shoot the wild animals for food. (Hollis, pages 268-69, 271).

inquisitive calf which had silently advanced behind me and was licking me.

These herds are tended all day by small boys. Selimani said they started at the age of four in full charge of a hundred head of cattle. I have many times met a long line of grazing oxen, horn to horn, head down, and grazing as if the noon sun might burn away the grass, and apparently alone and untended. Then a long, slender stick would appear over their backs and a small child, like the Mowgli of the 'Jungle Book,' would walk towards us, with a dignity and manly bearing which his brown nakedness and round tummy could not diminish. They say that these children, quite unable to count beyond their fingers and toes, always know whether a cow be missing. For they know all the cows personally. Like the Australian shepherd, when asked how he could possibly tell if any of his sheep were lost, said he counted them night and morning, and, when asked how he could possibly do that with so many, said, 'By leaning over and counting their feet and dividing by four.'

These two hundred-odd cattle looked up to their little shepherd as their guide and master. How often such an urchin must have spied the slow lurch of a lion on his way home to his hills from a late slaughter! How many evenings, as the cattle turned the end of a donga on their way to better grass, he must have failed to see the yellow eyes of a leopard lying along a branch!

At evening these small shepherds bring the cattle back to the manyatta, and before dark crowd them all safely inside the high thick thorn hedge that circles the group of huts. The cattle completely fill the enclosure. Like brown islands the dung roofs stand among the herd, a dozen or more amid the hundreds of beasts. In one large hut the sheep are housed. Goats and donkeys share the other huts with the population of the village. For all living things must be inside before the darkness comes and the lion and leopard are seeking what they may devour.

The next morning, as soon as the sun appears, the women pull away the great bundle of bushes which has closed the gate, and they all come out, the women to their work, the men to sit in the sun, and the cattle and boys to be off to the best grass. My father and I once watched the beginning of the day, when we came to a manyatta to get a guide. The gate shook and trembled as it was drawn in, and first through the opening sauntered two men, who came up to us and shook hands. They were followed close by lowing oxen slowly swinging their great horns. When they were all out, we could see the women bustling about. One, I remember, had already begun to repair her husband's house. She was patting into shape a little pie of damp steaming dung before she applied it to the hole in the roof.

The ground within the boma wall is over your

ankle in cow dung. During the dry season under the hot sun, this gives a firm footing. I have not seen it when the rain falls every day; perhaps enough falls to wash some of it away. An old site of a manyatta is a mound of green, for the grass springs high and fresh through such manure, and the old huts crumble away under the next rains, leaving the brown brittle boma to surround the green like a crown of thorns. Perhaps even the flies and the smells are dissipated in time.

These herds are more than mere riches to the Masai. Besides providing the material for his dwelling, they are his sole source of food. For this tribe does no agriculture. Nor do they hunt. The Wanderobo, as I have said, sometimes are joined by renegade Masai, and they live by hunting. But the Masai will not even eat the meat of a wild animal. When I shot the impalla after our first and vain buffalo hunt, I offered a leg to our Masai guide. He smilingly and gracefully refused, and Selimani looked up from his skinning and said, 'He no eat wild meat.' Sometimes he will eat the meat of his own herds, but that, the Skipper remarked, was only when one died of disease. The sole food of the Masai is the milk and the blood of their cattle. They get the blood by distending the jugular with a tourniquet and shooting a very sharp arrow into it. The arrow has a guard an inch or so from the point and is shot from a few inches away. The blood gushes out into a belied hide and when the tourniquet is released, the

small wound closes up.¹ Often the young men will have an orgy drinking the fresh blood, but usually it is mixed with milk in smoked gourds and left to mellow. This mixture and the fresh milk is the staple diet. Every time we passed a manyatta the boys would crowd round and jolly the bibis into giving them a drink of milk out of the long brown gourds which the women carried slung over their shoulders. I can see now my syce with the reins of my mule in the crook of his elbow and an enormous gourd held high to his mouth, so high the milk flowed over his chin. Then he would chatter and joke and the women would smile and giggle.

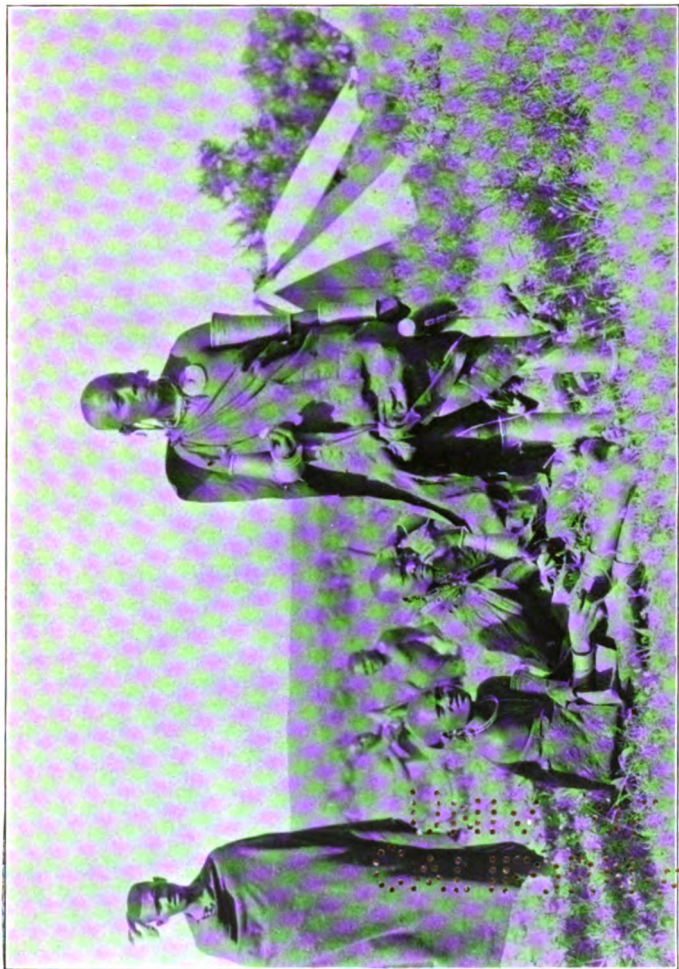
The women do all the work. They build the manyatta from thorn rampart to dung roof. On the march they carry all the tribal possessions, and what they cannot the donkeys must. From time immemorial until the British came, the men had no time, because they were always at war or on raids. Now that the British have stopped all that, or almost all, the men are out of work, and choose to stay so.

A life of war breeds pride, and idleness, I suspect, confirms it. The Masai are a proud race. It was new and surprising to me to walk by a couple of half-naked black men, clad in a yard or so of dirt-brown cotton over one shoulder, with a bead necklace and copper earrings, and receive from them a look of dignified contempt. There was an easy grace in that

¹ As to the Masai drinking the blood of cattle, see page 257 and the picture opposite in A. C. Hollis, *The Masai*.

look, too, which made it clear to me that it was not merely hostile or in any way assumed. They thought themselves better men than I. No Kikuyu or Wakamba could give a white man such a stare. Only a Southern gentleman of the old school might look that way at a carpet-bagger, or a cat at a king. They have, however, the virtues of pride. They are courteous. If a Masai be rude to you, you may count it deliberate, and yet I think he will sooner drive a spear through you than poke fun at you. And they are brave. If a lion attacks their herds, they will kill him with their spears. R. was told an anecdote of such an affair; the lion broke back through the ring of spearmen towards a Masai who had sat down to pick a thorn out of his foot with the sharpened nail he kept in his ear for the purpose; he looked up, wiped off his nail, put it back in his ear, picked up his spear, and killed the lion dead. I don't know whether that be true. I do know that in the presence of one of them you will believe it.

At about the age we go to college, the young Masai quits tending the herds and is circumcised. He becomes an *ol morán*, or warrior, entitled to carry the long spear which from now until his death never is out of his reach, rarely out of his grasp. The circumcision ceremony is annual, and thus the warriors are divided into classes by age, just as in our colleges. Each class goes off and lives by itself in a little village or manyatta of its own. They do not, however, live alone or do their own chores. They are warriors.



A MASAI LADY IN OUR CAMP

She is holding a powder-puff in her hand and she has just looked at her face in a mirror for the first time.

Note the iron wire wound round her arms and legs

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय

With them live quite promiscuously the younger, unmarried girls.² Upon graduation, so to speak, when his spear has been blooded, when a year or so has added enough dignity, and when he can afford it, he buys wives, a couple, or perhaps three, selecting them from among his common helpmates, unless he succeeds in stealing them from a neighboring tribe; and Masai women have often a Kikuyu look about them. Then he settles down as elder of a manyatta to the enjoyment of his three great possessions, cattle, wives, and spear. Nowadays, these have usually been bought, the wives for cattle, the cattle for hides or sheep or something, the spear from the Kikuyu iron-worker for money, but in the old days, ten or twenty years ago, our Masai would not have considered purchase respectable, and even now only theft, and that by violence, lends a true distinction to the owner.

² A Masai myth gives the reason for this. Once two Masai girls carried on with some of the enemy, and ever since they have lived with the Masai warriors to prevent this ever happening again. (See Hollis, *The Masai*, pages 120-22).

CHAPTER XXIII

OUR SECOND RHINO

I think he thinks upon the savage bull.

Much Ado, Act V, Scene 4

FROM the hot springs we travelled east along the foothills on our right for some three days, stopping one night at a place called Camp Dudu on account of its scorpions ('dudu' is Swahili for bug), and the next night at a similar place, until we came to the Narossora River. We splashed across about halfway to our knees and camped on the other side.

As I have said, our excursion to the south of Badámit had taken us away from the Rift Valley. We were now once more nearing its western slopes, but between them and us stretched an expanse of forest, the deep tropical forest of the African highlands. In the glades and meadows along its western margin, where islands of forest stood in a sea of grass and where lakes of grass lay in a mainland of forest, lived the buffalo. There they slept in the forest by day and fed on the grass by night. At twilight, dawn and evening, we were to hunt them. Here, too, in the marshes between the hills were rhino, and we hoped to meet them. Lions we now had dismissed from our thoughts, for they are plains dwellers and live amid the great herds of antelope, not in the forest where hunting is hard.

Just as Badámit was the last point to the south-

west connected in even a tenuous and intermittent way with Narok through its Indian store, so Narossora was to the southwest. For here also was just such another store. The road we had followed from Kijabe through the Kedong Valley by Ndulele to Narok and thence to the Guaso Nyero continued less and less distinguishable, to die out at Narossora. A. had invited Mrs. Percival and her daughter to meet us here, for they could get through on this vanishing road by automobile. But at Narossora a runner came through with the word that they had been delayed, and, in order to avoid waiting for them in a comparatively gameless land, we planned to go on and leave the Skipper to meet them and overtake us at Laitokitok, in the midst of the buffalo. By that time we hoped to have something to show the Percival family.

So we started the next morning, leaving the Skipper with one tent, three mules, and a dozen porters. Our first day's march wound along the bottom of a shallow ravine and then by a pass through the forest, our first real African forest, where the sun is withheld by the foliage and the air is cool and damp. Almost as much seemed to hang down from the boughs and trunks as grew up to meet them. It was the jungle of the story books, where the birds were parrots and the beasts were monkeys and leopards. We passed through and our path declined into a valley, not so spacious as we had been hunting in, and without the great herds of zebra and wildebeeste

we had seen, but large enough to show us that the main forest was beyond.

Yet here were great trees. Tall cedars, hardly to be girdled by the arms of two men, stood singly or in pairs like wireless stations on the tops of hills or in groves like the cedars of Lebanon.

We shot a tommy or two to eat and saw a few eland, but a long morning up and down the slopes of the hills disclosed no buffalo spoor, and so we moved on to Laitokitok the next day. We marched up one of the sides of the valley, passed through another and thinner strip of forest, finding on the way some flowers we had not seen before, and came out into another valley, smaller and surrounded by steeper and more wooded hills. Here we stayed until the Percivals overtook us.

As soon as we had pitched camp, an old Masai appeared, attended by two younger ones. We took him for the chief of the manyatta we could see near by and his appearance as a ceremonial visit. So we drew our folding steamer chairs up into line in front of where the porters were pitching our tents and prepared to receive him. Sasita acted as interpreter. But he disclosed no royalty or even vice-royalty. He had pains up and down his side and wanted to be cured. From all we could gather, and chiefly from his solemnly pained expression, his trouble was rheumatism. So we called Stephen to bring us the lime-juice bottle and a syphon. This was great dawa or medicine, we informed him, and perhaps, if God

were good, his pains would be less. He drank it with the wry face appropriate to medicine, and gave us thanks. Then we explained to him that we wanted some guides to help us to the buffalo. He responded with no assurances or promises, and his two younger companions looked utterly unmoved, even when we offered a reward of a pound in case of success. Sasita, however, was not discouraged; indeed, he opined that if they had promised to come we should never have seen them again, and that a blank expression really gave us some reason to expect a couple of guides in the morning; but when they arrived would depend on when they woke up and how they were feeling.

The next morning, when we were all ready to start, we found two Masai waiting for us, near our tents. They stood leaning on their long spears, as if our camp had happened to be pitched near where they were standing rather than the reverse. One was the usual Masai — long, thin-bladed spear, brown cotton knotted over one shoulder, copper earrings pendent from widely stretched lobes, bracelets, and blue bead necklace. The other was remarkable for his broad-bladed spear, a full hand's breadth across. It turned out that he was a son of Sendeyo, one of the two great chieftains of the Masai, who had fought with his own brother, the other, and caused the great schism in the tribe.¹ I think our man's

¹ As to Sendeyo, who lost his rightful inheritance of the chieftainship of the Masai by his younger brother's playing the part of Jacob to his Esau, see Hollis, *The Masai*, pages 327-29.

broad-bladed spear was the mark of his inheritance, for I never saw its like.

They eyed us, said, 'Jambo!' and shook hands limply and gravely. Then they took the lead and started off, without a word of inquiry as to what we wanted or of consultation as to where best to go.

The sun was not yet over the hills and we tramped through a thick white mist which showed where a swamp stretched between the site of our camp and the eastern group of hills. Beyond this the ground rose sharply and we walked in single file through deep wet grass. In the plains the dewy grass had brushed and slapped my bare knees; here the ears, laden with enormous drops, splashed on my spectacles and I had to pass my gun to Selimani while I kept drying them. The hills were steep, yet not abrupt. In the high altitude we all got a little out of breath as we climbed, and caught our breath again as we descended. For we went up and down, skirting a dark patch of forest here and then passing through a stretch of it there. As the sun came up, we saw how the country alternated between grass and forest, so distinctly divided that a step could take us from the bright sunlight through a close-grown wall of underbrush into the almost unbroken darkness of the woods.

We spent a long morning walking over these hills, until I was quite lost. Finally we skirted another long marsh, which lay, I think, on the other side of the range of hills to the south of camp. A hundred

yards into the swamp lay a whitish mound of something, and our Masai turned toward it. We followed, stepping from hummock to hummock, and found it was a rhino skull. Into it the Masai tossed a few blades of grass. This was a propitiation of such devil as might have taken possession, and so we, too, pulled some grass, and threw it in. Then we regained firmer land and stopped for a moment to look at our watches and consult about going back. The Percivals might arrive that afternoon and we had as yet nothing to show them. Nevertheless, it was past lunch-time. We decided to go back, and said as much to the broad-bladed Masai. He started up the hill in the centre of a wide meadow of open grass which ran to the top between the woods that covered the rest of the steep slope. Below us lay the swamp, and beyond it, over against us, rose another hillside, three or four hundred yards away, covered by patches and brakes of heavy cover.

About halfway up we crossed at right angles a fresh rhino trail, so recent that the bent grass had hardly had time to rise. It led into the woods to our left, and we followed it. The woods were about as thick as you please, with undergrowth and creepers, but the rhino had pushed and torn a path through like a tractor and we stepped hurriedly and yet cautiously on. It turned downhill and then out again into the open, crossing almost where we had stood for a moment to decide whether to go home. The spoor was so unmistakable that I do not think we

could have missed it, and I believe we had just missed the big beast by going to propitiate the devil in his ancestor's skull and again missed him when he returned to the open by following his trail into the woods. So we were not far behind, and we followed the bent grass across the open and into the woods on the right of the open meadow.

I was last of us three in our single file, because R. had given me the shot at the rhino on the plains, and it was now his turn. So the others were already within the wood when I and the *secondi* were still outside. I heard an exclamation from Mooma and said, 'Psst!' Then I saw that the boys behind me were gazing over the marsh at the hillside opposite. I called back my father and R., and we all looked across and saw a rhino followed by a calf steaming across an open patch on the side of the hill and disappear into some cover. Then we had another consultation, just about on the same place as before. Through our glasses we watched the pair emerge into the open again.

The Masai said the swamp was deep, by pointing and holding his hand at his waist. He added that the cover beyond was almost impenetrable, by holding the fingers of one hand criss-cross over his others. And, moreover, the game laws forbade killing a cow rhino with a calf. We decided to go back to camp. But we had hardly started once more up the meadow toward camp, when one of the Masai stopped us with the word, 'Mbogo,' or buffalo. Our gun-bear-

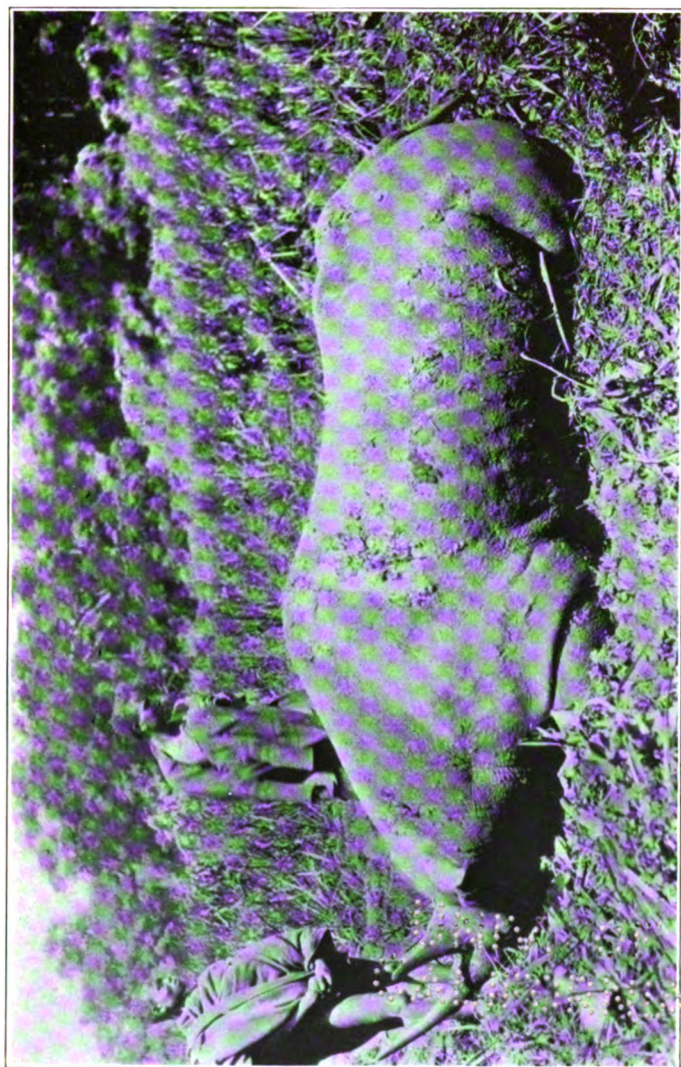
ers, however, refused to believe him, saying he had just seen the rhino cow again. So we kept on up. Near the top we halted, to get our breath. Again the Masai said, 'Mbogo.' Sasita shook his head, and sarcastically said, 'A bush moving.' But R. was gazing over the swamp, and now he stretched his hand out and called for his glasses. Through them he saw no buffalo, he said, but another rhino, alone, with no calf, and farther up the swamp, where it was narrower. That was what we wanted; without further consultation we went for him. It was R.'s rhino, for he had spotted him.

We got down the hill pretty quick and turned to our right along the edge of the swamp. By this time the rhino also had moved along the opposite side and was down in the mud and the rushes of the marsh. We did not see him until we walked out on a sort of peninsula that gave us a firm footing. Sasita, my father's gun-bearer, saw him first, stopped, bent over, and waved us down. We three advanced for a long way, it seemed, until we felt we must be very close to him. But he was a good seventy-five yards off when we saw him, splashing about belly deep in the mud, and half concealed by the tall reeds. R. fired and he turned with a lurch. I could hear the bullets go plunk, with a sound like stamping on wet earth. The rhino, facing us, made an effort to rise from the mud, and then sank back and over on his side. As we walked up, we heard a high, plaintive squeal, utterly out of sorts with a monster like that,

and more like a baby than anything else. He was dying, and when we reached him he was dead.

We sat round as the boys cut him up. We had to hack off his head, or rather the upper jaw as far back as the neck, to get the horns, which were fine and long, over twenty-four inches. The boys cut a quantity of long strips of the hide to make whips and walking-sticks out of.

As we sat there R. and I amused ourselves with the hide. It is a fair inch thick and tougher than leather. We got one of the Masai, he with the broad-bladed spear, to show us how he would have speared a rhino. He stood by the body and with a graceful and powerful flick of his wrist and arm drove the spear deep in, a foot or more. When we said, 'Again!' he flung it in again, deeper, and, to my admiration, precisely in the same hole. This showed he could spear a rhino all right, but if he hit one of the broad ribs, he would just bend his blade. I am told that native spearmen choose where the skin is tender under the tail and the spear can reach the heart without meeting a bone. After this, R. and I tried a soft-nosed Springfield bullet. We started to haul a big junk of flesh and hide over toward the wall of flags and bush that circled the marsh at this end, but Selimani would not let us move away without a big gun. 'Who knows who hides in that big grass?' he said. He was a prudent fellow when there was no reason to be otherwise. R. and I found that a soft-nosed bullet went through the hide easily, but left



RICHARD'S RHINOCEROS IN THE MARSH

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so large a hole coming out that we wondered whether there would be much of the bullet left together to do a live rhino fatal harm.

We did not get back to camp until after four o'clock, tired and hungry. There we found the Percival family.

Mrs. Percival is one of those ladies, the best type of the settler's wife, to whom a wise Colonial Office will be polite and considerate, for without her and such as her the British Empire would be neither British nor Imperial. She was pretty and pleasant and competent. The camp and the supper table was the happier for her presence, and the richer for her activity. We had cakes cooked in cigarette tins, newspapers she had brought with her, new flowers we had missed, and such like. A small Masai baby had been brought in with deep sores on its legs and we had clumsily and ineffectually washed it with corrosive; I asked Stephen the day Mrs. Percival came how it was: 'Oh, it's all well; Madame Percival treated it.'

Peggy, her daughter, I can only say, is a great friend of mine. We had long talks. When I see her next she will be grown up and I hope she will be as kind to me as she was.

CHAPTER XXIV

BUFFALO-HUNTING

The bull has the game; ware horns, ho!

Troilus and Cressida, Act V, Scene 7

WE shot no buffalo at Laitokitok, but we got a good deal of splendid buffalo-hunting, and I shall remember the hunting we did quite as vividly as the shooting of the buffalo I finally got later.

The African buffalo is big and black, as big as a large British bull and as black all over as a hearse. That is the first and abiding impression. He is strong. Bush and tree and brier do not impede him any more than the rhino. His horns spring from the top of his long head, over his eyes and his ears, and curl grandly to each side, like great mustaches, parted in the middle of a boss which is two full hands' breadths wide and one thick. At the ends they curl fiercely up into points, forty to fifty inches apart. His temper is bad. Discussions wax and wane over the beasts which will attack man unprovoked. Almost any beast with young to protect will turn on an aggressor, and so will a wild animal cornered or baited. A wounded lion will charge or not, as the impulse surges. Rhinos sometimes charge on sight or on smell, up-wind, with a blind rush that goes by you purposeless. But only the buffalo may hunt you out with a will to murder — just as you are hunting him. And a wounded buffalo in the bush!

He may rush, or he may not. He may just crash off. Yet, if he does, you must mind your way. He alone of the beasts will double back and ambush you, circle and lie in wait. As the Skipper said, if you follow a wounded buffalo into cover, you will get into trouble, and if you do succeed in getting back to Nairobi alive, anyhow, you'll get no sympathy. He will stand there waiting for you, still and invisible, until you are within a few feet of him. And you cannot dodge a charging buffalo. Unlike the domestic bull, or the bull of the Spanish ring, who lowers his head, this buffalo charges nose out and eyes open, and he dodges about in a close-grown cover like a polo pony in a meadow. Perhaps I exaggerate. The Skipper would not say so. Once he went to the zoo at Kew, and as he was looking at the monkey cage he heard a grunt behind him. He jumped. 'I'd heard that before, and enough,' he said; 'I left the place, and I didn't care if the damned Cockneys did laugh.' The Skipper had had one buffalo, shot in the heart, charge and die with its muzzle in his lap.² Sasita once climbed up on an anthill to look for a buffalo his bwana had wounded; his bwana was close behind with the gun; but the buffalo was standing still as death beside them and killed the white man ere Sasita turned. There is a vindictiveness about the buffalo — justified, I allow — that distinguishes him from the other dangerous

² Blayney, Percival: *A Game Ranger's Note-Book*, p. 266. Blayney is the brother of our Skipper.

game. If a lion gets you, he may kill you on the spot or you may die later of blood poisoning, but there will always be something to put in a coffin. Not so with the buffalo. All that the terrified natives will find to take back with them, when they finally come down out of the trees around, will be your gun, and more than likely that, too, will be stamped into the ground.

They live in this thick country, where the forests are close-grown as the roots of grass, and the swamps are deep, and even the open glades covered with grass waist-high and undulating. Generally you cannot see a hundred yards, sometimes not ten, and even less. Consequently, you do not know from one minute to the next what you are going to see. We walked all the mornings very slowly and quietly in single file peering round the bushes and trying to stare through them. You cannot be sure of seeing the whole of a buffalo. You catch sight of a black patch and then examine it for holes; if there is a hole, it is a bush. In the early morning, when the chances are best, the light is poor. R. said that he once stalked a big tree stump, after examining it through glasses at fifty yards, and several times I have turned sharply at sight of a bee or something out of the tail of my eye.

You rely chiefly on tracking. The country is so covered with tracks and the tracks so distinctive, that the problem is one of age rather than discovery; how old is the spoor, not what is it. Yet sometimes

even a good tracker has confused the print of buffalo with that of some Masai cattle; I hope the Skipper will read this. Many things, like the bend of the grass stalks or the state of the dew or the condition of the leaves, will tell you how recent the footprints are, but the dung gives the best indication. It quickly turns dark in the sun and soon becomes crusted, but in the shade the lapse of an hour shows less. If it looks fresh, the natives stick their toes or their fingers into it to see if it be still warm. If so, then you follow cautiously.

When you come into the open, the country is so hilly and the high air so clear that, although you have been able to see barely a hundred yards close ahead, you have a good view at a mile. So we examined hillsides through our glasses most circumspectly. Then the distant bushes turn visibly into big buffalo, grazing at the edge of the cover. R. said he got into the habit of marking the bushes down for another look to see if they had held their places. For if he stared at them steadily, they were sure to move. Wandering over and round these hills, we were pretty sure to lose ourselves. One day, R. said, he came out of the forest on a hillside and started to prospect the valley beneath. 'The first thing I saw was sixteen black buffalo. Germani, however, said that they were only wildebeeste. The Skipper took one good look and announced that they were our own black oxen and pointed out our white tents beside them behind some trees.'

Every morning of this sort of hunting, now almost gun-to-horn sort of work, and then prospecting hill-sides with glasses, was exciting enough. Mere unsuccess in killing was only a trivial shortcoming in the sport of it.

The first buffalo I saw was soon after R.'s rhino, on a morning with the Skipper, R. and my father having gone off together in the opposite direction. In these buffalo hunts we used to be gone all day, taking our lunch with us, a hunk of meat, half a loaf, all in a kettle for tea. This morning, both the boys who were carrying the kettles came with us and so my father and R. got no lunch. Enos, it seems, had not explained, and the boys naturally kept together, for, of course, no thoughts on the subject crossed their minds. Neither the gun-bearers nor the boys took any lunch. This surprised me the first morning, for I was pretty sure they had had but little breakfast, and I offered Selimani a piece of bread. He refused politely, but not merely because he was a Mohammedan and our bread was baked in lard, for he could have brought something himself. Apparently they all eat one big meal in the evening and eat nothing much at other times. To us, a strange custom, for it meant walking most of the day wholly on last night's supper. I know my cup of tea, made safely with boiled water from the nearest puddle or swamp, with a quarter loaf of bread and a piece of cold meat, was most acceptable.

This morning, when we got to the foothills about

seven or so, we came on fresh buffalo spoor. The place was alternately open in grass and shut with thick bits of forest. The spoor was still warm to the Masai's toe and steaming a little in the cool morning air. We took our big guns and put the usual spare cartridges between our fingers. As we were about to pass a small island of forest on our right, scarcely an acre in extent and separated by a few yards of grass from the major forest on our left, with the Masai still ahead, I heard a great crashing in the island and a gray-and-black hulk dashed across. The Masai was between me and the buffalo, so I did not shoot. Had I been ahead, most probably I'd have hit him in the belly, if at all, and got nothing. He was, say, thirty yards ahead of me and less from the Masai, but he passed like a shadow of a thunder-cloud, save for the noise. The Skipper stepped up to the Masai and poked his forefinger into the nape of his neck. 'That's what you'll get, my prince,' he said, and motioned him to the rear.

The next morning I came equally near to buffalo, but I did not see any. I was with my father.

The Masai brought us to a salt lick, which is as good and better than a water-hole in a dry country to find a congregation of beasts. We found nothing there, however, except pawings and lickings in the caked earth streaked with gray, and multitudinous tracks. We were on our way to another place, 'not so good,' the Masai told Sasita, and were crossing a little stream, when Selimani stopped and pointed

without a word to a vague marking in the sand of the stream-bed. Sasita's eye caught the motion, and together they bent over the spot. Then Sasita's long arm shot out at a freshly nibbled stalk, and we were fairly on a fresh trail. It led us, cautious and silent, into the depths of the near-by forest. I did not catch on to how close they thought the buffalo was until I noticed that Selimani was walking on tiptoe, and, oh, so gently! After we'd gone some little way into the forest, Sasita pulled my coat-sleeve and, while Selimani looked bright-eyed and solemn at me, pointed to my eye, then to the dark forest ahead, and then to my gun, and whispered, 'Epesi, epesi.' I knew that was the word for 'quickly,' and I understood what he meant. I nodded violently, and we proceeded. Immediately after that advice, we heard a crashing and tearing of boughs ahead of us. He was there all right, even if we could not see him. The question was whether he had seen or smelt or heard us. The gun-bearers thought not; they seemed to think he had not made as much of a racket as if alarmed. So we went on until we came to the signs of his scramble in the bushes. By this time it was nine o'clock and getting warm. It was time for buffalo to lie up and sleep. We could hear nothing more. Figuring from this that he was not alarmed and that he was probably settling down even now and here to sleep, we all sat down to wait. We planned to give him an hour and then to follow up his trail.

It was a silent hour. The natives sat like stones.

My father and I ate a remnant of breakfast which we had folded into a scrap of newspaper. It took me a quarter of the hour to unfold the half-page of the 'Daily Mirror' of two months back. At every fold I read the print, whatever it might be. I forget the advertisements, but I remember how Bob Gardner was beaten at Deal in the British Open Amateur and that he gave some opinion or other on Ouimet's chances. We all sat there quieter and stiller than the grass and the trees.

At last, Sasita and Selimani were satisfied. They drew themselves stiffly and gently to their feet. We got up, and we followed the trail, Argus-eyed. It led us at last out into an open field. That was disappointing, but we still had hopes. So we peered about before we stepped out from the cover. No buffalo. He must have smelt or heard us and gone off. The only thing we found was some fresh spoor, which Sasita picked up to see if it were warm and threw away, disgusted at our failure.

CHAPTER XXV

SOME MONKEYS AND A SHEEP-KILLER

The leopard shall lie down with the kid.

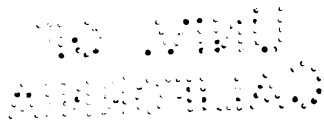
Isaiah 11.6.

WHAT I have said in the last chapter about comprises what we saw of buffalo at Laitokitok. R. had also another adventure with a rhino, which he and my father trailed down the tunnel he left as he passed ahead of them through some specially compact undergrowth. Neither saw him, but they both heard him. The Masai did not like it and took the rear. But they did not get a shot.

There were elephants in this country, though not many, and we saw none. But one day R. heard one scream, and we came on spoor of only the day before. Their paths through the forest are what I shall remember them by. Broad enough to give the freest walker plenty of elbow-room, hard under foot as a Roman road, winding as the easiest gradients required, they criss-crossed the forest. They say an elephant will always walk where another has gone before him, though that were a hundred years before. Even, when Nairobi was laid down and built up across an ancient elephant path, it took some years before the elephants ceased coming to the outskirts of the settlement to stare bewildered at the strange obstacle before they retraced their accustomed way.



THE SKIPPER, PEGGY, MRS. PERCIVAL, MYSELF, MY FATHER, ANITA, AND RICHARD



There was no doubt of the antiquity of the paths we trod. A tree which in its sapling years had encroached and had been bent aside was now growing old and mossy and straight above the bend, and high up, as high as I could reach, the shaggy bark was worn smooth and showed mud where the sides of elephants had rubbed in passing. Except for such signs of the mighty wayfarers and the great round footprints, into which one could sometimes set both feet on end, these elephant paths reminded me of the trails over the hills of Mount Desert.

Crossing these paths we saw the roads of the sifia ant. Woe to such of us who stepped on these little roads! These ants do not sting, they bite, and so acutely that you lose all thought of anything else. You don't know they are at you until they pass up your boots and puttees. Then you drop other cares. I had to take off my shorts and skirmish for them, picking them severally and vindictively off me. The roads they make are worn inches deep and inches wide in the hard, dusty dirt by the multitudinous traffic which you see passing incessantly. They cross running brooks. They kill hens and even puppies. Sometimes a migration passes through a camp. Then the camp moves.

We spent one long morning along the elephant paths in the forest hunting the colobus monkey. They are called colobus (the accent lies on the penult, I was later informed), because they lack a thumb, and colobus means 'maimed' in Greek. The

reason we wanted them was their sumptuous skins, of long, glossy hair, jet black with a broad, snowy stripe down the back and the long silky white tail. We took our Springfields charged with sharp hard-nosed bullets to save tearing big holes and walked along the elephant paths. Soon we heard them chittering and saw the branches waving. Guided by these signs, we ran under the high trees in which a troop were sitting and then manœuvred round for a shot. Sometimes they would plunge off, running along boughs, dropping from branch to lower branch, swinging and leaping, with us running after them below, looking up and tripping over the creepers and shouting directions. It was all somewhat shameful. One colobus ran up to the topmost twigs and drew the leaves about him to hide. Another, I remember, came down in two bumps on the ground, one heavy for herself and another light for the baby she carried. I can only say that that shot was fired in ignorance of the fact. But it made no impression on our Wakamba. Whenever a monkey survived the shot and the fall, they would rush up and beat it to death with sticks, and the Skipper would cry, 'There he is, ndugu ake (your brother)! Kill him!' R. shot one dead and it fell into a crotch some thirty feet up. One of the porters cast aside his red blanket and wriggled and scrambled up, stretching and crawling until he reached it and pushed it down. All this was as different as it well could be from buffalo hunting, and not a noble sport, but we wanted the skins,

enough to make a couple of coats or capes at least, and I must say we had a brisk, animated morning of it. We shot fourteen.

This monkey morning was the last we spent at Laitokitok. We had not had any success at the buffalo and we sought new pastures. After a long conference about the possibility of descending into the Rift Valley, which lay not far to the east of us, we determined to go back. The forest which covered the escarpment between us and the valley was almost impenetrable without proper Masai guides, and we could not get any. Moreover, the high chances were that the bottom of the valley, after such a heavy rainy season as there had been, would be covered by too deep grass and infested with too many mosquitoes. The plan was to go down into the valley, cross over to Lake Magadi, and thence take a train out to the main line. We decided not to, and I rather think we made a mistake.

All this country that lay to the east of the Narosora River was divided into long, broken valleys. We were at the end of one at Laitokitok. We decided to return and go up another to the north.

The day before we got back to the river, we camped a mile or so from a Masai manyatta. When we finished a late lunch, we found a sort of deputation of Masai waiting to see us. They wanted something.

They wanted us to kill a leopard which had been molesting them and preying on their sheep. There

was a devil in the beast. Unless we killed it, they should move their village, else they would become poor and starve. Last night he had killed a hundred and fifty sheep.

We determined to lose a day if necessary. Yet that would not be necessary, for we could overtake the camp the next morning. Not only did we want a leopard, but also the white man has denied fire-arms to these people and the least he can do is kill leopards and lions for them. A. did not want to sit up again in a boma. So my father and I went.

Enos took over some of his boys to help the Masai build the boma, for there was no reason to expect them to waste labor on our security. They wanted us to kill the leopard, but they cared little what he might do to us. Right after supper my father and I started on mules, and when we arrived about sundown, we found a beautiful boma ready, manifestly the handiwork of our boys and the architecture of Enos. It was much like our hyena boma, except now the bait was not anchored to stakes, but cast in a great heap of skinned sheep (one hundred and fifty-three, Enos said), within a sort of little courtyard, fenced with thorn branches. The door to this yard opened in front of our gun holes. It was built round the nearest tree to the outside wall of the village, about twenty yards away.

On our arrival, a Masai ushered us in, and leaning near enough for us to smell him, whispered that he'd already seen the leopard and heard it growl, thus,

'g—r—r—r—r.' That was something to keep awake on. We stuck the muzzles of our shotguns loaded with slugs through the little holes, sniffed the sheep, took some quinine, and disposed ourselves comfortably. I lay on my back and looked up into the blue-black sky overhead. I stayed awake some time listening to the multifarious sounds from the Masai village. Human voices died out soon, except for the wail of a child, that sounded as it does elsewhere; the husky gentle lowing of the cattle was constant, accompanying an endless succession of different notes from the other animals; the sheep bleated and the goats and donkeys talked; occasionally a loud bray or cough gave me a start, as it occurred to me that they might know better than I of the leopard's approach. I know I fell asleep, because I woke once with a jerk and the vivid impression that the stars over me were blotted out by the leaping form of the leopard. But no. We neither saw nor heard the leopard all night. We only smelt the sheep.

Just before dawn we gave it up and crawled out of our thorn castle. The village was waking up. We stood there, smoking pipes, and watched the stream of cattle issue from the gate, followed by men who yawned and spat and stared. One of these brought us inside and showed us where the sheep had been killed. The leopard had leapt and scaled a hedge of thorn which was, I estimated, over seven feet. That done, he had got into the hut where all the sheep

were kept, tearing a hole through the dried dung roof, and he had found a hundred and fifty-three sheep and one sick calf. He killed them all, eating, however, only one sheep. No one dared go near him in the dark and the shouts and movements of the men did not seem to frighten him. At dawn, when one of the old men went to the door of the sheep hut, the leopard came out through the hole in the roof and made off, clearing the outside hedge or boma in a great bound, the Masai said. He added, as we left, 'A bad beast, but clever.'

My father and I walked along to meet the mules which were sent for us and we overtook the camp well before lunch. One little thing that morning I must not forget. On our way through the belt of forest which stretched across the valley, we passed an old tree stump. I should not have noticed it at all, but the syces and gun-bearers ahead of me each pulled a handful of grass and cast it into the hollow. Round about the stump I saw the long tufts twisted into single knots.¹ Sasita explained that a devil lived in that stump. Why he knew it he could not say. But one did; and so they propitiated him. I pulled my bunch of grass, too, and did that homage to this minor deity. I do not know the meaning of this grass cult. It would seem to have some relation to the handful of grass which Germani pressed into my brother's hand when he shot his lion with the one

¹ S. E. White in *The Rediscovered Country* (page 36), mentions what I take to be this very tree.

shot. Perhaps grass has a sacramental value as the foundation of all life to a nomadic race depending, as these natives do, almost solely on its flocks and herds.¹ I suspect that many things in nature have grown to be commonplaces to us which in long-forgotten times played strong and often exalted rôles in human life. Thus, cow dung has become nearly nasty to our modern senses, whereas in times past and now almost done with, when our houses were built of it and it was in general inseparable from our wealth, its smell must have been pleasant in our nostrils and its very color a joy and a pride. The prosperous French peasant does not try to conceal his heap of manure. He piles it high and conspicuous in his front yard. So also with the common grass. It takes a Whitman to extol it and the African native to make a sacrament of it.

¹ Fraser, in *The Golden Bough* (single volume edition), page 242, mentions grass knots as charms.

CHAPTER XXVI

PULLING A TOOTH

An aching tooth is better out than in.

RICHARD BAXTER [and Germani]

OUR camp lay about a day's march to the northeast of the Narossora up a valley. Just as the marsh at Laitokitok was two days up the valley to the southeast, so at the end of this valley, shorter and more broken, was a smaller marsh and strips of cover leading from it. We stopped about halfway up this valley to avoid alarming the buffalo we hoped to find near the marsh at the end. For two days we four hunted from this camp, taking turns two by two on the marsh and scouting along the ridges or up the little glens. But we had no success. Our caution in setting camp too far from our hunting-grounds to alarm the game got us late to the hunting in the morning and called us back too early in the evening. The buffalo were not disturbed, but they were safe in their cover before we arrived and stayed in until after we left.

This camp gave us no buffalo, but I remember an afternoon of impalla, when Selimani and I stalked a herd and I shot three with five shots. Just as before, when none stirred after my first shot, so this time there were a few seconds of dismay and bewilderment in which I emptied my magazine. However,



OUR BABOON PLAYING WITH THE KITTEN

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the camp is memorable chiefly for Germani's tooth.

For several days he had been suffering from tooth-ache and had asked us to pull the tooth. Several times we held a consultation and decided that his chances of saving the tooth overbore his pain; we were the better judges of the first, however valuable his opinion of the second factor. Moreover, it was not actually loose, and our 'Manual for Travellers' enjoined pulling only a loose tooth regardless of the ache. But now we felt it might as well come out. 'Let's do this properly,' said my father to R.; 'we don't know when we may not have to do it on Charlie and we'd better learn how.' I suggested I should like them to be experienced in the administration of novocaine, which we had with us, as well as in the pulling proper. So that function was taken by my father. The pulling part was assigned to me, inasmuch as I should not care how they did that, so long as they were adepts in the use of the novocaine.

We boiled water, waited for the sediment to settle, made a solution of corrosive sublimate, and laid out the instruments, a needle and a pair of forceps, and dissolved the novocaine tablets, one to five teaspoons. Then we laid Germani out. My father injected the novocaine, about three cubic centimetres, we thought. We waited a bit and I poked Germani with a needle. No twitch. So I put my left arm round his head and seized the tooth with the forceps. The great thing, R. said, is not to smash the tooth

off by gripping it too hard, and the next thing is to rock it gently and firmly. Fortunately, I was not without advice, nor spectators. Gently I secured the tooth, well down. Gently I rocked it. Then it came out as easily as you could wish, and my advisers all leaned forward to count the roots. All there. We presented the tooth to Germani. Our only fault was in my father's administration of the novocaine, or perhaps I was too soon in beginning to pull. For it hurt a good deal. Yet Germani spat and said, 'What's a tooth, after having three bullets out of me?'

Ever since Peggy's arrival our camp had become more and more a menagerie. We had already our baby hyena, which was transported in an empty wooden provision box and staked outside the store tent in camp. He had never got any tamer. But a variety of small wild things seem to cluster about Peggy, as round an Artemis. For many days a tortoise, as big as a bread-pan, was carried in another chop-box and tethered like the hyena. A guinea-fowl chick lived a short while, chiefly in the pockets of different persons, and then died. I remember a small hedgehog, with prickles like phonograph needles (the simile is R.'s), crawling round the tea-table and eating so much bread and butter that Peggy feared it would not be able to curl up properly. Then she acquired a baby baboon and a kitten at about the same time, the former by purchase (one shilling) from a native boy, the latter by gift. Aagon, the

baboon, loved the kitten, but the kitten did not love the baboon. He would take the kitten, hold her securely under one arm, and with the other he would examine her all over carefully, opening her mouth and peering down into it, sticking a small black forefinger into an ear or up a nostril, raising an eyelid, and blowing into its eye. If you attracted his attention with something else, the kitten would squirm away, but she never succeeded in getting out of his reach. An arm as long as he was tall would dart out and pull the kitten back, by a leg, by the tail, by anything it grasped. Then the baboon would suddenly get bored and clamber to the ridge-pole of the tent and swing down by the guy ropes, hand over foot. He never liked any of us, save Peggy and Mrs. Percival, and if I held out my hand, he would chitter at me and withdraw backward toward one of them.

After two days of hunting from this camp, we moved to the salt marsh, and there we stayed until we got buffalo. This marsh was at the head of the major valley, but the valley subdivided into two minor gullies, separated by an outcropping which rose behind and over the marsh. Our camp was set on the near margin of the marsh. Every morning we split up, in alternate pairs, first the Skipper and R. and my father and I, next the Skipper and I and my father and R. We kept apart, one pair going up one division of the valley while the other hunted up the other division, or one pair working far up while the other kept nearer camp.

CHAPTER XXVII

I MISS A BUFFALO

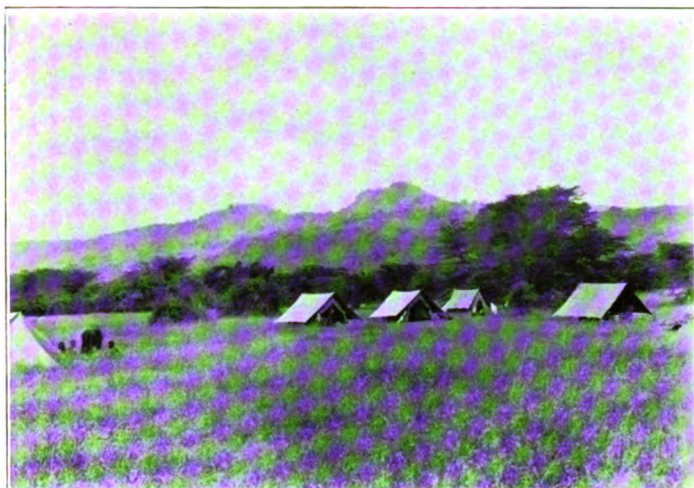
Thou canst not hit it, hit it, hit it,
Thou canst not hit it, my good man.

Love's Labor's Lost, Act IV, Scene 1

IN those few days by the salt marsh we made rapid progress in buffalo. I saw a couple the first day; I got a shot at one a day or two later; and I killed one the next day after that. R. and my father did better. A herd got too brash and they had to kill three. Let me start with my own experiences.

The first day the Skipper and I left the other two to crawl round the salt marsh and its tangled bushy fringe, while we went farther up the gully. We took mules, because we were going to spend the whole day and we should need all our legs.

The gully ran shallow and broad, opening up more than once into a stretch of field and sparse thorn, where we saw a few impalla, and at times closing into a gorge between small hills. Along the middle there was an irregular, intermittent line of open ground, which may once have been a stream-bed. Baboon watched us, as we rode along at a walk, making that curious noise, which R. described as something between a bark and an attempt to swallow a cough. One old fellow I remember sitting holding on with one hand; he looked like an eccentric elder until he dropped to the ground and ran off



OUR CAMP AT THE SALT MARSH
Our buffalo were shot here



PEGGY STANDING ON MY BUFFALO

THE NEW
ALPHABET

like a dog with his tail straight up. Our path wound beneath low thick trees and twisted vines. As soon as we were clear of the other two, we planned to start hunting. I beat my mule with my heels and smoked, and he minded the one as little as the other.

Then quite suddenly he stopped. I beat him some more, vainly, and slipped off. The Skipper was a bit ahead and I joined him. We had come to one of those little water-holes which are only muddy spots in the dry seasons and bogs in the rainy seasons. Now the water, if there was any, was concealed amid some rushes, and all one saw was an expanse of hard mud covered by a multitude of tracks. The Skipper pointed to some great depressions, which looked as if a man had taken a series of bumps sitting. They were elephant. But we saw no fresh buffalo and I turned to regain my mule. He had not advanced. Then the Skipper held up his hand and I heard a noise of crashing and galloping ahead of us. A shift of wind had swung our scent toward a herd of buffalo and that was what my mule had been so obstinate about.

We ran on, followed by our two gun-bearers, and soon we were on the fresh tracks of a score of buffalo. At short spaces we saw their fresh droppings, and the Skipper said he heard a tick bird. It was thick, hot work, stumbling over creepers and stooping under branches so low I took my hat in my left hand. We advanced slowly, trying to make little noise, the Skipper ahead and I close behind him. Twigs

switched into my face and my thumb caressed the safety catch. I knew the buffalo were near. I wondered when we might suddenly come upon them. As I stooped over, my eye was caught by a bright flower I did not recognize. 'New flower!' I whispered. 'Yes,' answered the Skipper, 'a new flower.' And we went on.

I finally reached a point when I felt I had to stop, for I could not see anything with the sweat dripping on my spectacles, and I felt it might be most important to see clearly. So I passed my gun to Selimani and took them off, about to wipe them on a spare clean handkerchief, appropriated to the purpose. But at that moment the Skipper grabbed my arm and said, 'Come!' I stuffed my glasses into my pocket and followed. On our left the bush was as dense as a wall; on our right was a bit of field, and there in the middle stood a buffalo, as black as a crow, but bigger! We stooped and sidled over to get a bush in front of us, and approached. But when we got to the bush and peeked out, we saw it was a cow and she was galloping off after the herd. I think she had lagged behind as a rear guard, to get a look at us.

So we started back to the trail again. Another buffalo crashed by us and broke into the bush, following the herd. I had my gun half to my shoulder, and this one was near enough to hit, perhaps, when I heard the Skipper, 'Don't shoot! Cow!' and as I brought my gun down, I echoed, 'Don't shoot.'

Cow.' A moment after she had disappeared, we heard the great crashing and crackling of the herd, which these two rear guards joined and started off. From the sound we thought they were about a hundred yards ahead of us. There was no great hope in keeping on such a pursuit, for we should never get by that rear guard, at least in its present state of alarm, and so we settled down to lunch, in the great expectation that the herd would go to sleep.

I munched my share of bread and chewed up my portion of cold meat, and then read 'Emma.' The Skipper sat with his back against a tree-trunk, and the two Wakamba went to sleep, pulling their red blankets over their heads. I suspect they all go to sleep, immediately, like birds, the moment their face is covered. The gun-bearers squatted together and whispered very low. After about an hour we got up to proceed. We followed the trail, fresh as new paint, and our spirits rose to the pitch of the morning. But no luck. We listened to our buffalo galloping off once more, and gave it up as a full day, well spent but unlucky.

The next day my father and I were together. The morning brought nothing. We lunched in the middle of a donga, where great ancient trees overarched two little brooks which flowed together, one bright and clear, the other muddy, keeping their waters separate for some yards. While we were eating our bread and meat, unwrapped from the 'Weekly Times,' two colobus monkeys watched us from far overhead, un-

til the Wakamba laughed at them and flung rocks. I read how Mrs. Elton explored King's Weston, most delightfully, in the barouche-landau; my father read Rhoda Fleming; the gun-bearers slept; the Wakamba chatted about many things in their low girlish tones. About one-thirty, Selimani woke up and said he wanted to go on. So we were off again, gun in hand and spare cartridges replaced between our fingers.

The Masai had been at the head of our single file all the morning. Selimani now took the lead from him and motioned him back. This change may have brought us luck, for soon we crossed a fresh trail. We followed Selimani through bush, through brier, uphill and down dale. After a tense hour, or more for all I know, we came out of the forest to the edge of a clearing, behind a large single bush. Then somebody saw our buffalo in the open, and we all crouched down. I could not see him. Selimani pulled me to the right. Then Sasita got my arm and hauled me to the left. And then both pushed me to the right again, and I saw a tail and the buttocks of a buffalo passing between two bushes. I moved farther to the right and saw a long black nose come out from behind the bush, less than a hundred yards off. It was not coming fast, so I waited for more. A head and horns appeared. I waited for the shoulder. But the buffalo, instead of continuing slowly, jumped into a gallop across the open and toward the thick forest from which we had come. I fired and missed. Then

I fired my second barrel and missed. My father shot twice after him, as he disappeared with two cows and a calf behind him. I could not believe I had not hit him because I wanted to so much, but we could find no trace of blood and Selimani reproachfully pointed out a bullet sear on the bark of a sapling. There was nothing more to do. We started back to where we had left the mules.

Another full, but unsuccessful day was almost over. As we passed through a grove of young growth, I heard a long *whew-ew-ew*, like the whistle of a toy steam engine, from close by. I could see nothing. Selimani presented the Springfield as if it had a bayonet and he was to repel a cavalry charge. I held my big gun, and we started. Nothing happened. We had waked a rhino, but he had gone off in another direction. We searched about where we had heard his awakening snort, but found only broken sticks and bent branches. It was getting late and the cover was pretty close anyhow.

When we got to camp, we learned that R. and the Skipper had heard a buffalo and seen a cow rhino and calf. But the camp itself had done as well as any of us. Immediately after we all had gone, a little after six that morning, the ladies had seen a big bull buffalo and a cow grazing on the near slope of the rocky hill that rose over the salt marsh and over our camp. They had given orders that no one should go down to the marsh for water, and they had stayed in camp themselves all day. Moreover, they

said that the fresh tracks of a rhino had been found passing right through camp, between the tents. Manifestly our presence was not frightening anything away.

CHAPTER XXVIII

OUR TWO BUFFALOES

'What's the best thing to do following up a wounded buffalo?' was the question. . . . 'Git out!'

Jock of the Bushveld

THE next morning my father and R. went where we had been the day before, while the Skipper and I went after the trail of the two buffalo which had been seen from camp. We found the trail easily enough and followed it up a beautiful little valley on the opposite side of the rocky hill overtopping camp. It was a small valley, with narrow bottom green and deep with grass and with open sides sloping steeply up to a ridge of forest. We walked along the left slope about halfway up, over our knees in grass and winding between groups of bushes and thorn trees. On the whole the valley was an ideal spot to find a buffalo in, because he would have to go so far to get into cover, and all the way uphill.

A few minutes after seven the Masai ahead stopped, and we all sat down abruptly. He had seen two buffalo grazing in the grass in the bottom. A whispered debate followed. Wet fingers were raised to test the wind and Selimani dropped a pinch of dust. It was not quite right, but we were well above the buffalo, and until we came nearer our scent would be passing high over them. 'Lucky! The big one is nearest,' said the Skipper.

Selimani went first, myself next, the Skipper next, and Kombo, his gun-bearer, last. We went on hands and knees, trailing guns. After a little, I struck my gun against a stone, and Selimani left the Springfield he was carrying and took my big gun from me. We went a long way, and the heels of my hands and my knees showed it for some time after I had reached home. At intervals, whenever we reached a bush, we stopped and breathed and peeked. Finally, one of the buffalo threw his head up, and they both started to move off, the smaller one up the bottom, but fortunately the big one went, not up the other side, but diagonally up our slope. The currents of air in the little valley must have wafted our scent down to them from a different angle. Up we got and ran. The buffalo was moving off, but he stopped and turned from time to time. Whenever he stopped, we froze into immobility, breathing hard. At one such stop, the Skipper whispered, 'Shoot!' but I was out of breath and I shook my head. At the next stop, I held my breath and fired. The buffalo was almost two hundred yards off, not much less. My first barrel was a miss, but at my second he plunged. I kept on firing, I do not know how many times, until my barrel was hot, running nearer and then shooting again. I kept hitting intermittently, but he did not die until we were right beside him, and Selimani stuck his long knife into his great black throat until he almost lost the handle.

Over him we enjoyed our bread and meat. We had

tea and set the kettle and our cups on his big round black side. One of the Wakamba went back for the ladies. They all came, bringing the camera, and we took a picture of Peggy standing on the buffalo.

On our way back to camp we heard the sounds of shooting, off in the direction my father and R. had gone. The first reports sounded propitious, and we walked on triumphantly, happy in a general success. But then we heard a second fusillade, and soon after that a third. There were too many shots for an easy success. We began to worry a little and wonder what was happening. It was not until some time after lunch that they returned and we heard their story. It started with Sasita telling the Skipper, by way of introduction, that R. was as quick a shot as any one in Nairobi.

This is what R. told us: 'By seven-fifteen we had almost reached our grounds and the point to leave the horses, when there was a tremendous commotion behind us. Everybody was talking and everybody was pointing. And then ahead and a little to our right I saw several big black objects moving slowly down and across the hill toward a little donga. The first step was to stop the uproar behind us, and the next was plans. More and more buffalo appeared coming through the bushes. Pa told me afterward that he counted thirty-nine through the glasses. And one at least was a great big bull. From where we stood it was about six hundred yards. We

started: Sasita, Germani, I, and Pa, with our seconds behind. Our plan was to meet them as they came out of the donga across our right. We crouched down and hurried from one bush to another, stopping at last behind a low thorn tree. We had just squatted behind the tree when I saw them again fifty yards away and coming straight toward us, walking slowly. We waited. I couldn't see the big bull. Our tree was right in their path, and the herd turned a little to pass it on our left. There were buffalo on our left, buffalo ahead, and others almost to the right within twenty-five yards. Two calves passed us to the left ten yards away. And still I couldn't see a big bull. I had decided by then not to wait for the bull. Right behind the calves an enormous black buffalo saw us and advanced slowly toward us, on our left. I heard Pa say, 'That's the one to shoot!' and point to it. It had pushed its head through a tiny bush, seven yards away, when I fired both barrels. Pa followed suit and it staggered behind the tree to our right. It went down, but it was struggling to get up and away, so Pa gave it two more. I fired one barrel at it and then began to think of the rest of the herd. I saw them rushing back into the donga in front of us and I ran up to the tree to get a last shot. But I couldn't spot a bull and didn't want to take a chance shot. They were one hundred and fifty yards off by that time. We had one down and out, so we hurried after. But we didn't go in — just from the edge of the donga

came a noise between a groan and a snore — very loud and very unpleasant. Instead we skirted around to the left and then into the bush. Crossing that donga was harder on my nerves than anything I've ever done. But we got through to the grass where the herd had galloped back up the hill. About then I drew my first long breath. And it was obvious that our gun-bearers felt just the same way. Up till then they had been tense, quiet, and efficient. You could see them react now, laughing and gesticulating and describing. My second developed a very unpleasant ability to imitate the buffalo's noise. The main herd had gone, but at least one had stayed behind. We had heard it in the edge of the donga. So we started back down their trail through the donga, first a Masai, then Germani, and I with my big gun. The Masai had just reached the edge of the donga, when I heard the buffalo again, on our edge of the donga now. And then out came a big black head and shoulders. The Masai and Germani jumped aside and I fired both barrels at once. It went down and then crashed off to my right. It was only ten yards away when I fired, and I hoped hard that it wouldn't charge while I was reloading. And then the same unpleasant sound came out of the bush — it had only gone five yards. Pa and I fired our light guns at the noise and where the bush swayed. The noise grew fainter after half a dozen shots and then stopped. After allowing it a few minutes we poked in to the right. It was only a half-

grown buffalo, but it had given me the time of my life.

‘We started back through the donga down their trail. It was spotted with blood now so the calf must have been wounded, though neither Pa nor I had even seen it when the herd was with us. Crossing the donga again was almost as bad as the first time. It was about fifty yards wide and too thick for comfort. A wounded buffalo has a disagreeable habit of circling back on its tracks to watch for the hunter. But we had both concentrated our attention on the single big buffalo and might fairly assume that we hadn’t wounded another. We were almost back and out of the donga when our seconds spotted something else. All I could see was something gray lying under a bush. I fired at it twice while Pa covered it. It was so thick that we all had to crouch. Nothing stirred so we crawled up. Another calf and about half the size of our other. This one wasn’t bigger than a donkey. That ended the morning’s excitement. Our first big buffalo was a cow, but a big one. We had to shoot it. Germani told me afterwards that if we hadn’t shot it, it would have “shot” us. The big bull, he said, was just behind it, but we couldn’t wait.

‘Both half-grown buffaloes had been wounded from the first. Neither Pa nor I had seen them. Either two bullets went through the cow or we had missed the cow twice. Germani said it was the former. I’ve never had a better morning.’



TAKEN FROM WHERE RICHARD SHOT HIS BUFFALO,
THE PONY STANDING WHERE THE BUFFALO WAS,
SEVEN YARDS AWAY



GERMANI AND RICHARD STANDING OVER HIS
BUFFALO

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That was the most dangerous bit of excitement any of us had throughout the trip, and Wambooa, my father's secondi, got a chit for ten shillings for having spotted the herd first.

CHAPTER XXIX

BACK TO THE RAILROAD

Talks as familiarly of roaring lions
As maids of thirteen do of puppy dogs.

King John, Act II, Scene 1

As that was the best day of our buffalo-hunting, so it was the last. We had given up the plan of crossing through the forest to the Rift Valley and out to the railroad by Lake Magadi. So we marched back to the Narossora River, crossed it, and returned to the Leganga Hills by way of the hot springs. There is one thing you get by returning to places where you have been, and that is the feeling of the old campaigner. You know the country just well enough to act as if you did. We camped on our former sites and we felt like Stanley returning to the coast.

At the Leganga Hills we held a last lion drive, just to cap off the expedition, but nothing came, not even a hyena. At the Guaso Nyero, we found a couple of traders with a phonograph and held a concert, to the admiration of the Wakamba.

At Narok, although my friend B. had been transferred, the new incumbent expressed much pleasure at seeing us, more than we could quite understand until he told us that a rumor had come in of the Masai attacking a safari and that he had believed it to be ours. At Clark's we had tea with the American missionaries there, who were teaching the Masai

children, and we had supper with an English school teacher and his wife, who were spending their vacation in the game warden's cottage and building a bridge across the river we had forded.

When we reached Ndulele we had made such good time that the Skipper and R. went after buffalo in the Mau Escarpment before we descended into the Kedong Valley. They got none, but the time was far from wasted. They ran across a herd and R. had a shot at the backs of the buffalo moving through the tall grass out of the tree in which R. had climbed to look for them. After that they waited for the herd in an opening while one of the gun-bearers fired a shot on the other side of the wood into which the herd had gone. The herd started with a crash, but it came out of the wood somewhere else.

In the Kedong we kept up our supply of meat by showing off to each other how much our shooting had improved. At Rickman's Water, we set our last camp as we had our first. From there to Kijabe was nineteen miles, and starting at dawn we arrived at eleven o'clock, my father being the only one to walk all the way. The down train to Nairobi brought an end to the trip on July 30, 1923.

PART II
GIANT SABLE ANTELOPE IN ANGOLA
BY
RICHARD C. CURTIS

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA



MY GIANT SABLE HEAD AND THOMAS, MY GUNBEARER

PART II
GIANT SABLE ANTELOPE IN ANGOLA
CHAPTER I
MOMBASA TO DURBAN

OUR hunting trip in Kenya Colony ended at Nairobi on the 30th of July. My brother Charlie to our regret had to leave for home and took the first steamer north through the Suez Canal. But the rest of our party, my father, my wife Anita, and I, had another month to spare and hoped to spend it in Angola.

We had first thought of Angola one evening a few weeks before by our camp-fire on the Loita Plains. The giant sable antelope was the attraction. A better setting to dream of further adventures could not be imagined, well out in the lion country and well removed from any such limitations as maps and time-tables. However, our total combined knowledge of the country was rather insufficient for plans: we knew that there were giant sable antelope in Angola and that Angola was Portuguese West Africa, and we thought that we could land somewhere on the coast and take a railroad inland. A letter sent off to Nairobi by a native runner asking for further information had led to very little.

Now, once back in Nairobi ourselves, we tried hard to discover more facts. Portuguese West Af-

rica, or Angola, is just south of the Belgian Congo on the West Coast and almost directly opposite from Nairobi and Kenya Colony. We knew better than to try to cut across overland, and found that by steamer south to Capetown down the East Coast and from there up the West Coast we might hope to reach Angola by the first week in September. So much was now clear, and from Colonel Statham's book on Angola we established the fact that the giant sable antelope was worth having at any price. Hunters have long argued the relative merits of the greater kudu and the ordinary sable antelope. No other head in Africa will bear comparison. For many years a single horn, sixty-one inches long, a foot longer than the best sable head ever shot, has hung in a museum at Florence. Its history had long since been forgotten, and it was only just before the last great war that its origin was discovered by H. F. Varian, an English engineer engaged in building the new railroad inland from Lobito Bay in Angola to the Katanga copper mines. Between the Cuanza and the Loando Rivers in Angola, Varian found a new species of antelope with immensely finer horns than the common sable and a somewhat different face-marking. This was the giant sable antelope; the unknown horn in the Florence museum was at last explained.

We now knew at least where they could be found and we knew we could reach Angola by September. We made up our minds to try, but there still re-

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mained several serious problems. The most serious obstacle was the rainy season. All we could learn was that it lasted 'from' September to May. We could not reach the country until September, and we were worried over that word 'from.' For rainy seasons in Africa mean just what they say and a great deal more besides. It is entirely impossible to travel during the real rains; the roads and paths are washed out and the danger of fever is too great. The only other American, as we learnt later, who had tried to reach the sable country had been turned back by the rains. This was our first problem; the second was the question of time, for we had only a month to spare. Such little details as distances, hotels, porters, food, and guides were all unknown. We had hoped that the reply to our cable to Loanda, Angola, would settle our problems, and were somewhat disappointed when a polite but wondering answer returned at last from London, England. We decided against cabling home for fear it would be misread for Angora and the goats. But we determined at least to start and see what more we could learn at Capetown. On August 5th we sailed south from Mombasa, the port of Kenya Colony, on the S.S. Karapara.

We reached the island of Zanzibar in ten hours. Zanzibar is an ancient Arab town and up till recently was a great slave centre. The island is still nominally ruled by an Arab sultan, whose national flag is, rather incongruously, plain red. The town itself

is old and heavy and cramped. The clocks are set on Swahili time: 6 A.M. is 0, 7 A.M. is 1 o'clock, and noon is 6 o'clock. What appealed to me most were the costumes and the fruit. The variety of costumes is wonderful. The women wore gold ornaments like collar buttons through the left side of their noses. Everything seems to grow here: mango trees, bread-fruit, cocoa, oranges, lemons, tangerines, guavas, grapefruit, besides a quantity of queer native fruits. We found the sensitive plant, that closes up when you touch it, growing wild like a weed. But most of the island is devoted to cloves. I believe three fourths of the world supply comes from Zanzibar and the island just north called Pemba. It grows on trees about thirty feet high. I know I will never eat ham again without thinking of Zanzibar.

Our ship decided at the last minute to omit Dares-Salaam, the port of German East Africa; so our next stop was Mozambique, in Portuguese East Africa, a little coral island, very dry, very sunny, and surprisingly clean. The principal attraction of the town is an old Portuguese fort, now turned into a prison. We preferred the other end of the town where the natives live in wattle houses. The natives were most properly dressed in flaming printed cotton; I take it they would all be Christians.

Beira, our next call, was nothing but sand. And Delagoa Bay, or Lourenço Marques, a little farther south, doesn't live up to its romantic name. It possesses a railroad terminal, enormous docks, and

streets enough for Washington, D.C. They even have a traffic policeman at every corner. Ours and the other dozen automobiles kept them amused all the morning. But the town hasn't grown up to its architect. One of the curiosities is the money system. It is all paper down to the two-cent bills, and the exchange runs up and down every day. Everybody prefers English money — all the shops and hotels. Consequently the Portuguese had to pass a law forbidding the use of any but their own currency for any payments except to the Government. I understand that taxes and steamer charges must be paid in English gold. We paid in shillings at the shops, but we did it in hushed voices.

CHAPTER II

WHALES AND DIAMONDS

WE had seen a whale leaping two thirds out of water in the Mozambique Channel. Coming into Lourenço Marques we passed a whaling steamer, and as we entered Durban harbor in Natal, one of our steamer acquaintances, a short fat Danishman, pointed out the whaling station, and offered to arrange a trip for us. He had been the captain of a whaler, and knew almost everybody concerned. According to his account the whalers went out only for a day, and were back in port with a whale alongside the same evening. That started us. We didn't wait for a Danish introduction. We went straight from our hotel to the station across the harbor. A whaler was tied up to the pier, and we simply asked the captain to take us out for a trip. He took us up. I don't know whether he or we were more surprised. We were to come on board the next morning, and bring blankets, as we should have to spend the night out, if the whales were too far out to sea. For the same reason Anita decided to stay behind.

The whalers are small steamers, one hundred and seventeen feet long, somewhere near the size of a tug-boat, with high seaworthy bows, but very little freeboard aft. On a platform in the bow is a harpoon gun, a big heavy gun working on a universal joint

and shooting a big heavy iron harpoon, perhaps four feet long. A 'warhead' is screwed on the front of the harpoon and explodes when well inside the whale. Four flukes open with the explosion and hold the harpoon in place. Attached to the harpoon is a light strong hemp rope coiled under the gun and leading either to starboard or port to a nine-inch cable, bigger than my wrist. This last cable one thousand yards long is led up twenty feet to the masthead, over a pulley suspended from heavy steel springs, and thence down to a pair of iron drums, to be reeled in by donkey engines or braked slowly out. The spring pulley arrangement is designed to take up the jerks if the whale gets fretful. A sudden strain draws down the pulley and thus flattens down the angle in the cable. Otherwise the cable would part. This about completes the outfit. The whale is towed into port to be cut up, so there is no apparatus and no smell corresponding to this department of whaling.

We were called at the hotel at three, and our boat sailed by quarter-past four. Our contribution to the cruise was six bottles of whiskey. For three hours we steamed straight out to sea at ten knots, way out of sight of land. The lights on the other whalers were spread out ahead and to starboard. There are eleven ships in the business out of Durban. By half-past six the sun was up and we could see one whaler a mile ahead, and another a couple of miles to the right. It was blowing fairly high by this time, per-

haps twenty knots, and the sea was choppy. Our little steamer rolled and staggered. Our decks were running, our bow kept poking under, and we had to duck on the bridge to avoid the heavy spray. I was extremely seasick.

At half-past seven the boat ahead turned sharply to port; evidently they had seen a whale, so we followed along on a parallel course. We watched them stop, circle, stop, and then turn back for port. They had killed their whale. I began to believe that it was possible then. Our gun forward had been loaded, and the captain, also the gunner, had put on his oilskins. It seemed rather a waste of time to me. Our bow was poking under waves too green for any oilskins. I could not understand how he was going to shoot at all. Of course he has a big target, and hardly ever shoots over thirty yards. But the gun platform is next to impossible. You know how hard it is to direct a fountain pen in an automobile on a smooth road. Think of aiming a heavy, clumsy gun at a diving whale from a platform bobbing ten feet up and down, with the spray in your eyes.

Half an hour later, the man at the masthead sang out, 'Thar she blows!' precisely like the story-book language. There was no great excitement; the captain and crew were cold Norwegians. But there was a certain tension. The men are paid by the whale and everybody was alert. The captain took up his station by the gun, and we swung around to where the whale had blown. But we could not pick it up

again. Sometimes a whale won't come up again to blow for half an hour. So we kept on. An hour later we sighted another whale. For ten exciting minutes we followed in its wake. Every couple of minutes it came up to blow, but always two hundred yards ahead. And then we lost it, but not for long. Just ahead and to starboard I saw a great white shadow lying motionless just underneath the water. There were no orders shouted now or later. The helmsman followed the motions of the captain's arm at the bow. The coöperation was a very pretty sight. The captain was a whirlwind of energy. Swinging that gun with the motion of the sea, ship, and whale, called for skill and strength, but not for grace. The captain looked like a jumping-jack that had escaped from his box. Slowly we closed up on the whale, until the shadow was only fifteen yards on our starboard bow. The gun was trained on it, and I expected a shot every second. Just then the shadow disappeared. I learnt afterward that you can't shoot even a harpoon through the water, but at that moment I saw my hopes disappearing. Half a minute later, the shadow reappeared in the same position on our port bow just alongside. I was surprised how long and slender and fishy such a bulk looked. Very slowly it came up to the surface and underneath our bow. It couldn't have been five yards away; it was so close that the Captain could hardly depress his gun far enough. There was a report and I saw the harpoon rope flash across its back. I thought he had

missed, but the line ran out in a swirl of foam and then tautened. The man at the brakes played it like a salmon, I could see the brake-band smoke as the cable ran out. The captain still clung at the bow waving orders; no other directions were needed. We followed on under full power, but still the cable paid out. At last after the first great rush the brake was jammed fast and we shut off power. For a quarter of an hour the whale towed us at four knots. Meanwhile the gulls were gathering, white gulls and coal-black gulls and tiny gray gulls, besides a solitary albatross. The whale was blowing hard and often with the tremendous effort — a fifteen-foot geyser, a flash of shining black, and then a bright red patch, a brilliant scarlet in the blue sea and mass of foam. Just behind hovered the gulls, apparently drinking the blood. And four hundred yards back we followed. By this time we had reloaded with a fresh harpoon, attached now to our starboard cable. The engines were started and the line slowly reeled in by the donkey engine. The whale was headed toward port, but we did not want to make an undignified entrance. At each successive blow the whale and the gulls and the boat were a little closer together. The captain waited until the whale was only fifteen yards away and then fired, and sank the second harpoon straight into the centre of the black mass. But still the whale kept on, slower now. By this time we could see the first harpoon. It had evidently struck high, gone clear through, and exploded beyond.

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That explains why the whale was so full of life. We reeled in and fired a third harpoon, though without a cable attached. This last harpoon must have reached the lungs, as the whale blew blood. And this ended it. There was a flurry of foam, a few giant convulsions, and it turned over on its side with a noise halfway between a groan and a snort.

The first and immediate step was to pump it full of air, as a dead whale sometimes sinks. We manœuvred alongside and the nozzle of an air hose was shoved three feet in. A light line was thrown around its head and worked back to the tail. A chain followed and was jammed just ahead of the great flukes. With the whale towed alongside, tail first, we started back to port. The captain decided that it was too rough to stay out on the chance of a second. A bit of our tackle had already parted. Indeed, it was so rough that an extra chain was passed around the tail by way of precaution. It had taken us an hour from the time we first sighted the whale to kill it and another half-hour to secure it alongside. I am afraid that I am spoilt for any other kind of fishing.

Our beast was a blue whale, a bluish gray in color with flakes of white, and sixty to seventy feet long. This is the largest kind of whale; some grow to over a hundred feet; they were never caught by the old-fashioned harpooners, as they are too fast. The mate told us that these beasts travel fifty or sixty miles per hour and would tow a rowing whaleboat under water. Our beast was good for about forty barrels

of oil. There are six barrels to a ton and a ton is worth thirty pounds sterling. Probably our whale would bring a thousand dollars. The oil is used for the manufacture of soap, an undignified end for such a sporting animal. I had always thought that the real prize was a sperm whale, but sperm oil can't be used for soap, and apparently has no other market.

We got back to port by three-twenty that afternoon. Probably this is the only place in the world where you can go out for a day and kill a whale. Close behind us was another whaler with a finback whale, towed alongside. We watched the process of dragging it out onto a railway truck to be taken to the cutting-up station. What impressed me most was the size; almost as remarkable was the tiny eye and tiny ear. The eye is not much bigger than that of a horse; the ear is simply a two-inch slit.

We certainly had played in luck; it isn't every day that a steamer kills its whale. I suppose that they average three a week. And very few whales, we were told, put up so good a fight as ours. In calm weather the steamer steals up alongside and murders it. But the weather was too rough and the whale too close under our bow for a centre shot in our case. Why whales let the steamer get so close, I can't see; the captain told us that it was curiosity. But it was a real experience; I wouldn't have missed it for anything.

Our whale hunt was so absorbing that the rest of Durban made very little impression. It was our first

sight of modern civilized Africa. Durban is a great big city with modern shops, modern trolleys, modern everything. All the local color is gone. The natives are no longer undressed savages; they look more like shabby black Europeans. The only picturesque touch is the rickshaw boys, great stalwart Zulus with grand head-dresses. The basis is a pair of ox horns and a halo of feathers; the rest is left to each individual's imagination. We arrived in Durban at the end of the holiday season. It is a health resort, and people come down from the inland plateau for the bathing to avoid the cold winter. Spring was almost here: I was gradually getting used to the reversal of seasons, to seeing advertisements of spring sales.

We had landed at Durban on Wednesday, August 15th. On the 17th we took the train for Johannesburg, twenty hours away. The railroad winds and doubles and twists at first up through abrupt, flat-topped hills, which gradually flatten out into barren, uninteresting plains. The native villages are the only source of interest, neat rectangles of beaten earth with beehive huts. Approaching Johannesburg, we began to see great hills of a dirty white color, the refuse heaps of the gold mines. Johannesburg produces over a half of the world's supply of gold. The city was only founded in 1886, and there are now over 130,000 whites and as many more natives. It is just my idea of a gold country — red, barren soil, low, rolling hills, lots of dust, and nothing green. And the city is in accord — com-

mercial and shabby, a poor-looking community to handle gold. We had planned to visit a gold mine; in fact that was the real reason we went. But we had forgotten that it was Saturday and noon. We had almost forgotten that business stops on Sunday; this was the first Sunday we had passed in a city since Cairo. We had just missed it coming and going in Kenya Colony. Consequently we didn't see the gold mines; we went to the horse-races instead. For six races we bet and lost steadily. We were too late for the first, and there were only seven. The next morning was better; we went to the zoo and saw the lions. The temperature was surprisingly low. I have been held up by a snowstorm in May in Argentine, and I've hugged a fire in Oxford in the end of June. But this was the first time I've ever been grateful for a fire in the middle of the day in August.

That evening we left for Kimberley. We hadn't seen the gold mines, but we'd seen a gold-mining city, which was better. The morning showed the same barren country, precisely the opposite of what I had imagined Africa south of the Sahara Desert to be. A very little grass in tufts, no trees, no flowers, no hills — just dirt. Every little while we passed mounds of earth where prospectors were still hunting for diamonds. And coming into Kimberley we saw mountains of bluish-gray dirt thrown up from the mines. Kimberley itself is a scrubby little town, a shopping district surrounded by cheap, low bungalows. There is just the same incongruity as in

Johannesburg between the product and the city. Absolutely the only industry is diamonds, and that is practically controlled by the De Beers Company. They produce more than half the world's annual supply. Our first look at diamond mining was the 'Kimberley' crater; I think it was the first original mine. It is a great crater five hundred yards across and three thousand feet deep, dug down into the level plain, a most impressive sight, just beside the town. Originally, before the various claims were consolidated in the De Beers Company, this enormous hole represented a dozen or two different claims. Imagine the parallel claims reaching farther and farther down into this gulf, each with its tangle of wire trolleys, and the obvious endless quarrels. Our next look was at the diamonds themselves. We were shown the sorting-rooms at the De Beers Company and their private collection. An uncut diamond is a shiny bit of glass; there is no brilliance, of course. They come almost any old shape, but the standard shape is eight-sided like two pyramids base to base. Cut off half of one pyramid and trim down the corners and you get the cut stone. There were some bigger than the first joint of my thumb, and they were all colors — amber, yellow, white, blue-white, pink-white, green, and sooty-brown.

We saw one that looked yellow in the shadow, green-yellow in sunlight, and red in electric light. We considered a lot about buying one, but the formalities were too terrifying. Diamonds are so

easy to steal that the Government has wound the business round and round in red tape. There is a license to sell, a license to buy, a license to own, export declarations, etc., *ad infinitum*.

In the afternoon the company loaned us an automobile and gave us a permit to visit the mines. Everybody was surprisingly polite. Diamonds are found in what is called the blue ground (though they are still picked up in the streets and cellars), and the blue ground is found in shafts or veins leading straight down from the level plain into the earth. So the mine is simply a great, open crater, usually about a thousand feet deep. It was found too dangerous to carry the open excavation much deeper; the sides slipped in on the miners. So, after the first one thousand feet, shafts are sunk beside the crater and from the shafts tunnels are led under the open crater. Only a small proportion of the diamonds are found by the miners. The native miners are given a reward of five shillings per carat, in order to make it worth their while not to steal them.

The blue ground once excavated used to be spread out in the sun for two or three years to decompose. It is a very soft rock. But the latest scheme is to send it direct to a crusher. From the crushers the ore goes to the washers, great open rotating tubs half full of water, where ninety-nine per cent of the rubbish is washed away. Of the ten thousand tons of ore which are crushed and washed a day, only one hundred tons survive. These one hundred are car-

ried to the pulsator, where they are first sorted into six sizes by screening. Each size is given a more thorough and careful washing. Perhaps thirty tons are left for the last process. The rest of the job used to be hand work, sorting the diamonds from the pebbles by hand, but they have invented a machine for the work. Up to this point the machinery is simply an adaptation of the old-fashioned hand tools for treating any kind of ore. But this last machine for the final sorting is new. The final thirty tons are carried over open trays by a slow trickle of water. The trays are coated with petroleum jelly and only the diamonds stick. Heaven knows why. The pebbles are carried on and away. This really ends the game. The diamonds are picked off the tray, washed with acid to remove the dirt, and sorted. From the ten thousand tons of ore treated a day, they get a tumblerful of diamonds, about four thousand carats, and worth fifteen to sixteen thousand pounds. And a great part of these are lost in the final cutting. Judging from the annual report of the De Beers Company the usual two-carat diamond is the final result of about twenty-five tons of ore, or twice the amount of coal we use a winter in Boston. And this doesn't allow for the fact that such larger stones and white color are far above the average. Perhaps two hundred tons would be a better guess.

One of the most interesting parts was the labor employed. The natives are hired for nine to twelve

months. During that period they live in compounds behind barbed wire. This is no hardship, however, since the majority of them are convicts. The Company finds a readier supply and less trouble in persuading them to stay cooped up. Think of convicts handling diamonds. It's much the same idea as giving your pearl necklace to an inmate of Charlestown Prison for safe-keeping. It would be safer than it sounds.

The mines are only running two-thirds capacity now, and for a time after the World War they were closed down altogether. Even yet they haven't resumed mining ore, they are only treating the blue ground that is dumped on the surface. Of course, the real reason for the drop in the price of diamonds has been the unsettled state of finances since the war. But they told us that the sale of fifty to seventy-five million pounds' worth of Russian stones substantially affected the market. Diamonds have recently been discovered in Southwest Africa, Angola, and the Congo, but apparently there is very little danger of the market ever being flooded, for all the output in South Africa and even from the newly discovered territories is controlled by a big syndicate. I understood that the De Beers Company was allotted fifty-five per cent; that is, they were allowed to produce fifty-five per cent of a fixed quantity, fixed with the view of maintaining the price. We asked everybody we saw the old question, whether the market could be flooded at any minute and the price knocked

down to nothing. The regular answer was that the syndicate held too close a grip on the output. Perhaps back of this is the better answer that the cost of production is now approaching the market value, so that while there might be a temporary flood, any serious fall in the price would put the mines out of business, cut out the supply, and so tend to restore the market again.

On Tuesday, August 21st, we left for Capetown, a twenty-six-hour trip. The railway travels through the same miserable, bare plain. There are more rocks and less grass. Gradually the hills accumulate and close in. They get higher and the tufts of grass greener. By Wednesday morning we were winding through the Hex River Valley, where the fruit trees were beginning to blossom and the hills had run up into the snow. We reached Capetown by lunch-time.

CHAPTER III

WE LAND IN ANGOLA

CAPETOWN is the loveliest of all harbors, overshadowed by a range of mountains rising three thousand feet perpendicularly in the background. But we found no time to admire it. The problem of Angola had only been postponed. The next steamer north for Lobito Bay sailed in just six days, and we had to decide by then whether we should take it. We called on the American Consul, the Portuguese Consul, the steamship agency, and a shipping concern. They had all heard of Angola, they all knew that the steamers called there, but beyond that nothing. Even Cook's office admitted ignorance. A missionary friend told us that he had inquired of two students and one professor of a university in South Africa and found that none of them had ever heard of the name before. So we sent off more cables and sat down to wait. On August 26th, two days before the steamer sailed, the answers came through and we at last decided to go. Every sort of provision, food, tents, and cooking-utensils had to be bought in Capetown, as it was rather obvious nothing could be had in Angola. We had drawn it pretty close: our countless boxes arrived on the dock just twelve minutes before the steamer was sched-

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uled to sail. Our ship was the Adolph Woermann, German, new, clean, and excellent.

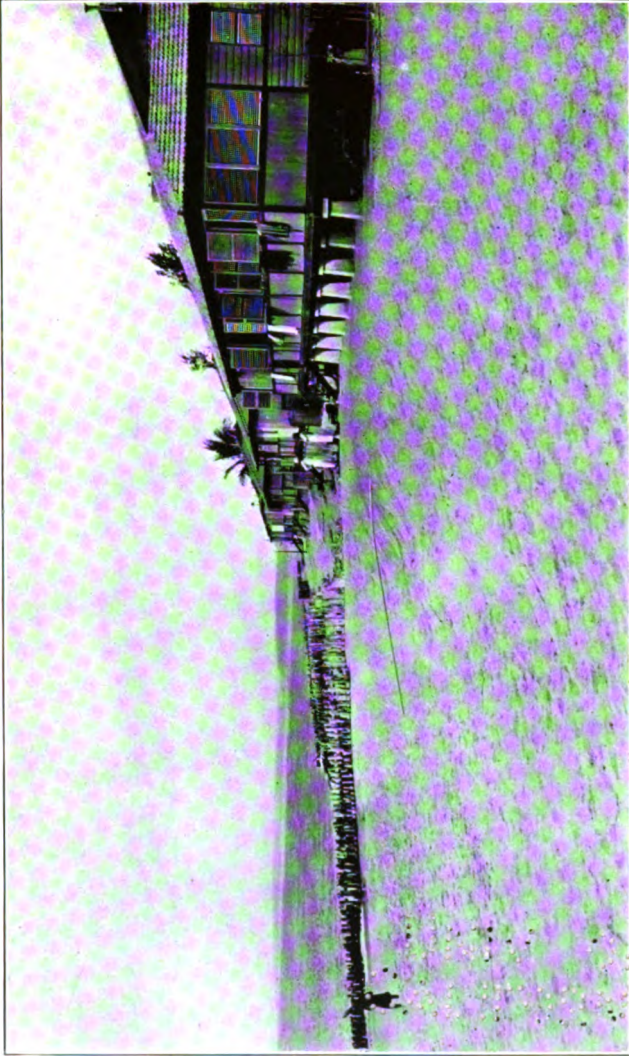
I had made up my mind that the West Coast would not be quite so swampy and malarious as in the novels; I had got used to being surprised in Africa. But I was surprised as usual. I have never seen any town as dry and rocky as Luderitzbucht, where we stopped first, except Walvis Bay, where we called next. At Walvis Bay the ocean is distilled for drinking-water. Both towns are in what used to be German Southwest Africa. The English have now shortened the name by one word. On Monday, September 3d, we landed at Lobito Bay.

From the sea no stranger would ever suspect the existence of a harbor. All that can be seen is an open beach, a straggling line of palms and houses, and beyond abrupt, barren limestone hills. Twenty-five years ago, before the town was built and when slave-trading was still the principal industry of Angola, the British cruisers never understood how the slavers were able to disappear. Our steamer bore straight on up the coast past the town, and what we took for the beach on the mainland turned out to be nothing but a natural breakwater, running parallel to the line of limestone hills and all but enclosing a deep-water harbor behind. The town is built on this strip of sand, a mile long and a couple of hundred yards wide. The houses perch on stilts along the open beach, nearer the sea than we should dare to put a bath-house at home. I never shall understand how they

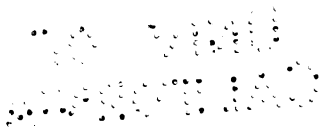
survive a winter storm. At present, Lobito is only a beach broken by low bungalows and softened by a few palm trees, with a prevailing impression of sand. But the town is still young and growing fast. Lobito was only founded in 1904, as the terminus of a new railroad inland to the Katanga copper mines. Buildings are still hurrying up and the harbor works are growing, all in anticipation of the promised time when the railroad is to be completed. Already there are electric lights, a bank, a post-office, a hotel, and a few stores, though as yet they are all bad. No other word is quite so descriptive. However, Lobito is healthy, has an almost perfect harbor, and is the terminus of what will be one of the most important railways in Africa. Some day, and soon, Lobito will be the leading port on the West Coast of Africa.

Once ashore, our problems and difficulties immediately began to dissolve. A Colonel Swayne, just out from a rather unsuccessful hunting trip in the sable country, met us on the dock; he was taking our steamer back to England. We learnt from him that we had arrived at precisely the correct season, not only the right month, but the right week, when the hope of shooting a sable was highest. The colonel's guide was waiting for us up-country at Chinguar, the end of the railroad, with an ox-cart and porters.

Mr. H. F. Varian, the resident railroad engineer and the accredited discoverer of the giant sable, had been called away up the railroad, but in his absence had turned over to us his house and servants at



H. F. VARIAN'S HOUSE, ON THE BEACH AT LOBITO, WHERE WE LIVED



Lobito complete. No one ever could have been more hospitable than he. We used to shudder as we passed the only local hotel; one look was enough to show how much we owed to Mr. Varian. And finally Mr. Manham, the unofficial English Consul, took charge of our baggage, our duties, and our licenses. Our cables from Capetown had found us kind friends.

There remained only the question of time, for we planned to catch the next steamer north a month later. Every one we asked was polite but positive that it would be quite impossible to gather in a sable head in the meantime. We wired up-country to cancel the ox-cart and to hire automobiles instead, and my father took the first train to Chinguar to hurry preparations at railhead. Anita and I stayed behind to push our supplies through the customs and to take out our shooting licenses. I never conceived that any officials could be so slow or that red tape could be carried to such ridiculous extremes. There was no hurry and no crowding, there were no waiting lines, we had all the officials to ourselves, and yet nothing seemed to happen. My part was somewhat inglorious, for I could not talk Portuguese. I sat patiently all day, first in one place, then in another, and the work fell on Mr. Manham. In two days our boxes had at last cleared the customs in Lobito, and one lifelong day at Benguella, twenty miles away down the coast, resulted ultimately in shooting licenses. There were licenses for each gun, licenses for

cartridges, and licenses for shooting, each countersigned by three officials, and each official as nearly inaccessible as he personally could devise.

I believe that in theory the law requires a further special license for sable that can be obtained only at Loanda, the capital of Angola. Loanda is no more than a hundred-odd miles north of Benguella along the coast, but, as the monthly steamers are the only method of communication, a round trip would mean several weeks. Fortunately, in our case, and I understand the practise is the same in every case, this last requirement was waived, although we were limited to one sable apiece.

Benguella is the second oldest city in Angola. Angola was one of the earliest of all African colonies, founded by the Portuguese long before the Puritans had so much as thought of America. Benguella dated from 1617 and is now dead. I hope I shall never see a more deserted, unhealthy,¹ and stagnant town. There are still some three thousand whites living in the town, but their only visible occupation is trading among themselves on credit. Its pro-

¹ The temper of the climate of Benguela is so bad, and gives the food of the country such a pernicious quality, that those who eat of it at their first coming certainly die, or, at least, contract some dangerous distemper. For this reason passengers take care not to go ashore, or drink the water, which looks like lye; and the authors refused to dine with the Governor of Benguela till he had assured them that neither the victuals nor wine should be of that country. It is easy to see how ill the air agrees with the whites who live in this region; they look as if they were dug out of their graves, their voices are broken, and they hold their breath in a manner between their teeth. This made Carli decline staying there. (A.D. 1666). *Voyages and Travels*, vol. III, p. 273.

sperity had depended upon the slave trade, and since that was suppressed a few years ago the inhabitants have fallen peacefully asleep. I do not know enough to be drawn into a discussion upon just when slavery ended. Some put the date at fifty years ago, some say that slavery still continues. The most usual answer I received was about fifteen years ago.

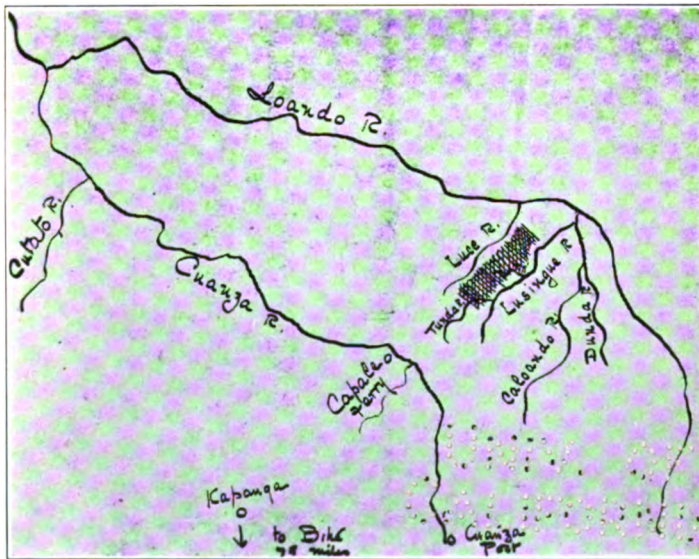
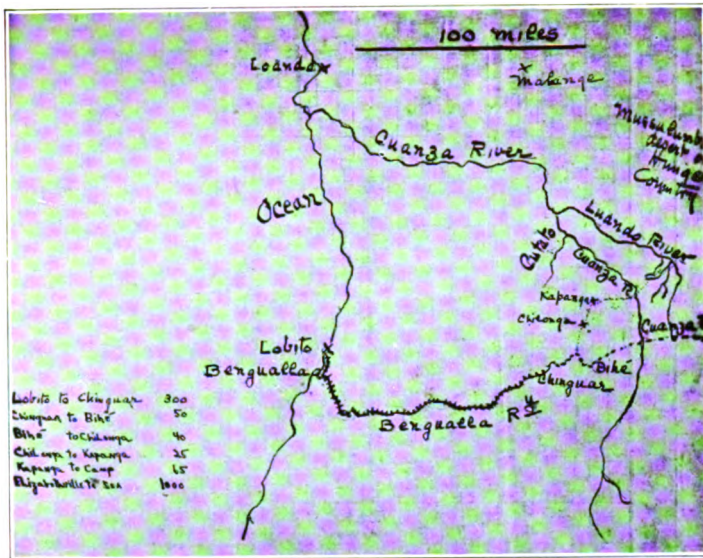
Our boxes were now through the customs and our licenses were complete. We were free to start. Every sort of supply, except flour, sugar, onions, and potatoes, we had brought up from Capetown, and it was well we had. The only food of all Angolans, if you can judge by the stores, is sardines and beer. Anita and I took the next train inland for Chinguar, two days later. The train runs only three days a week.

Chinguar, the present railhead, is three hundred miles inland from Lobito, twenty-seven hours by train, and fifty-five hundred feet up. Progress has been held up, of course, by the war and lack of capital, but the railroad is designed ultimately to connect up the Katanga copper mines with the coast. The Katanga mines are located in the very south of the Belgian Congo and have been discovered and exploited jointly by the Belgians and English. They expect eventually to produce from three to four hundred thousand tons of copper a year. The country is unbelievably rich in copper, although the ore is somewhat contaminated, we were told, with such things as gold, silver, and platinum. At present

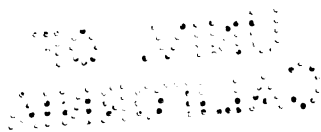
Katanga must ship its output by railroad east to Beira in Portuguese East Africa and thence in steamers, either north through the Suez Canal with expensive dues, or south around the Cape of Good Hope. The only alternative is a still longer overland haul directly south to Capetown, and again north by sea. The Lobito Railroad will cut freight rates in half and throw a new and enormous copper producer on the world's market. Just when the railroad will be completed is not easy to say. Very recently I have read in the newspapers of new efforts to raise more capital for this purpose. Perhaps five years would be a good estimate.

Until the railroad is completed and the great coal deposits of Rhodesia tapped, the engines must still burn wood. We sat out on the rear platform in the evening and the trail of sparks looked like the Fourth of July. That night we shared our compartment with a fat Portuguese lady, an even fatter mulatto woman, a baby, and a little boy. We had the two upper berths, and how they fitted into the two lower berths still remains a mystery to me, although there were no curtains to conceal the feat.

We had left Lobito at two o'clock Saturday afternoon. By Sunday morning we had climbed up five thousand feet through the barren hills of the coast belt to the inland plateau, a rolling country of red and green scrub. September is the end of the dry season and the new leaves were just coming out — a brilliant scarlet. September is, of course, officially



MAPS OF ANGOLA DRAWN BY MY FATHER; THE UPPER OF THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE SHOWING OUR ROUTE IN FROM THE COAST, THE LOWER OF THE SABLE COUNTRY



spring below the equator, but the country looked precisely like autumn at home.

At Huambo we had a chance to thank Mr. Varian for the loan of his house. He met us on the platform and, while the train waited, took us home to lunch. At five that afternoon my father appeared at the train window at Bella Vista, ten miles short of Chinguar, and brought our railroad journey to an abrupt end. He took us up to the American mission at Dondé, where he had been staying with the Reverend John T. Tucker. I hadn't been so close to home since we left New York. The mission's headquarters are in Boston and on the same street on which we live. And there are no kinder or more hospitable people than the Reverend Tucker and his wife.

The mission is a model of efficiency and is accomplishing very wonderful results. The natives are taught the trades as well as Christianity. Many of the missionaries in Africa have attempted to settle among the natives, to follow the tribes. As the natives live in one place only until the soil is exhausted, any such mission must necessarily be temporary. The mission at Dondé, in contrast, is established permanently as a school centre to educate the natives and send them back to their villages to carry on the cause. Neat, permanent brick buildings are going up on every side. They were hurrying to complete the latest before the rains come. Or rather Mr. Tucker was hurrying the work; the natives could see no reason for haste. Their belief in Mr. Tucker's pow-

ers as a rain-maker or rain-stayer was fixed in spite of his protests. Some few years ago when the rains were unaccountably late the village elders sent a deputation to beg him to let the rains come in time to save their crops. At his indignant denials of any control over the heavens, they only smiled and pointed to two of the new mission buildings still lacking roofs. And when the rains did come the very day after the roofs were completed, their smiles turned to grins.

We found that my father had arranged everything. I knew he would. He had done it so often already in my life that it never occurred to me there could be a hitch at this end. Our tents, provisions, and porters had been sent on ahead in automobiles and were waiting for us at Capango, a hundred and thirty miles on, with one Alan Chapman in charge, a young Englishman my father had engaged as our guide. The next morning, Monday, September 10th, we followed on after by automobile, a hundred and thirty miles to the northeast. The roads were excellent, twenty-five miles an hour roads, almost as broad, as smooth, and as straight as any turnpike at home. They have all been built within the last three or four years by forced native labor — that is, practically free of cost — and the Portuguese are very proud of them. These roads lie so close to the official heart that the Portuguese take great care nothing shall injure them. Ox-carts are forbidden to use them, and, since there are no horses or mules in this

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part of the country, the roads as a result are still as good as new. The traffic is practically negligible. For the last sixty miles of our trip less than a dozen automobiles a year pass over the road. Indeed, the only sign of use is a wavy path worn by the bare feet of the natives, wandering from side to side of the road. I do not know of any theory to account for the crookedness of a path down a broad, smooth road.

Ten miles from Dondé we passed through the town of Chinguar and fifty miles beyond through Bihé. The latter town has lately been renamed Silva Porta. Both towns are sleepy and uninteresting. These and Huambo, where we lunched with Mr. Varian, are the three principal towns inland from Benguella. Outside of the missions there is not a single church in any one of them. The missions have a clear and responsible field.

Once free of Bihé we left civilization behind us. The country is still the same monotonous, rolling scrub. There are no houses, no signs of cultivation, no real trees. Every year the natives burn over the country and only the scrub survives. No one seems to know just why the natives should burn off the grass. Perhaps they hope to better the grazing, or perhaps it is to kill off the insects. The best explanation I heard was that the natives formerly burnt the grass in annual game drives, and that while the game is now killed off they still do it from habit. Certainly there doesn't seem to be enough cattle or cultivation to justify either of the first two explanations.

All morning we held on northeast at a good twenty-five miles an hour, farther than we could have marched in a day four years ago before the roads were built. There was only one real bump in that road and that came so unexpectedly that at Chilonda, an English mission where we stopped for lunch, we found the whole front of the car had sagged. Our chauffeur refused to proceed, so, while Anita and my father lunched, I sat by the roadside to intercept our Ford truck, returning from Capango. We turned it round and completed our trip safely by sunset. I had noticed, when we stopped outside a native village to refill our radiator, that the usual crowd of little boys had kept a respectful distance. On our arrival at Capango the whole village turned out to see us, but fled with shrieks of laughter when our car turned to go. The missionaries told us that the first automobile arrived only a year ago and that ours was only the seventh the natives had seen.

We spent the night at the mission, a miniature village of thatched plaster houses in a grove of eucalyptus trees planted when the mission was founded, and now fifty feet high.

I wish I could repay the debt of gratitude we owe to the missionaries in Angola. Capango is an English mission in charge of Miss Gammon and Dr. and Mrs. Bodman. From them we learnt much of the joys and a very little of the difficulties in the life of a missionary. The latest obstacle they have to overcome

is a new law requiring that all instruction must be carried on in Portuguese. The missionaries were never allowed to teach the natives English — the Portuguese seriously believe that the missionaries are American and English spies preparing the way for annexation. And now the missionaries are also forbidden to teach in the native language. The natives must first learn Portuguese and be taught reading and writing in that language. Think of the effort of teaching a Chinese boy how to speak German and then instructing him to read and write in German.

Tuesday morning we sorted our loads, collected porters, and lunched at half-past eleven so as to be ready to get away early in the afternoon. But while we were lunching, our porters were conferring, and, when we ordered the start, the labor union struck for higher wages. We appointed Dr. Bodman as arbitrator and gave him a free hand. We certainly didn't want to raise the local standards unfairly and spoil his market. After an hour's debate, he finally agreed, rather than argue for a day or two, to pay what was considered extravagant prices — sixteen cents a day on the march, and eight cents while in camp. I'd hate to carry fifty pounds on the top of my head for fifteen miles a day at that price. Wages were still rather unsettled in this part of the country. For many years and up till a few months ago cloth was the common currency among the natives.¹ A

¹ Heere wee sold our cloth at a great rate, for we had for one yard of cloth, three Elephants teeth, that weighed one hundred and twenty

porter's wages were fixed at so many yards of cloth. And probably the real reason for our strike was that wages in Portuguese escudos were not yet settled. We noticed that on the march, whenever one of our porters bought food from the villagers, he paid by a piece of what served him for trousers.

Their food, three pounds of meal and beans a day per man, cost us only six cents more. Their method of cooking meal is unique. A bit is mixed with water in a pot; when the water boils, the rest is dumped in, stirred around, and removed at once. They claim that meal treated by this method is more satisfying. Most of it is uncooked and, once inside, swells up like dried apple and water diet, resulting in a pleasant, replete sensation.

Our party was led by Alan Chapman. He was only eighteen, but he could speak English, Dutch, Portuguese, and the native language, Umbundu; and he had been in the sable country twice before. Besides all that, he was as agreeable as he could be. Our staff consisted of Augusto, an old, experienced native hunter and tracker with something Mongolian about his face; Thomas, his coal-black associate; and Caveto, whom we had hired at Lobito as our cook. The rest of the party were just plain porters, a dozen from the Chapman farm, twenty-three from the Chilonda mission, and thirty-six more from Capango.

pound: and we bought great store of Palme-cloth, and Elephants tayles. (A.D. 1591.) *Purchas His Pilgrimes*, vol. vi, p. 371.

CHAPTER IV

INTO THE SABLE COUNTRY

WE marched off at the head of our army late that same afternoon, determined at least to make a start, and did eight miles down the road. We were at last really away on our sable hunt. Our goal was a little spot between the Cuanza and Loando Rivers, sixty miles ahead, where Varian had discovered the giant sable ten years before. There were no excitements. I got my first blister in Africa after walking six hundred miles in Kenya Colony. But our porters were most impressive. They carried fifty-pound loads at a terrific pace, just as fast as I could walk, and the fact that our first march was so short was no explanation. They did twenty miles the next day at the same speed and averaged fifteen miles throughout the trip. Alan pointed out one of the porters who had once carried a hundred-and-ten-pound load seventy miles in four days. He couldn't have weighed more than a hundred and twenty-five pounds himself. And the most remarkable part of the story is that, as he was paid by the weight, he had selected the load himself. They start young; several of our porters weren't over twelve, and a couple of little children joined our procession for the whole trip. One, aged about nine, carried a fifteen-pound load, the other, who claimed to be five,

marched along with an empty water gourd on top of his head. Coming back he carried an umbrella. And such children aren't the exception; the ordinary safari numbers a good many as servants for the porters. Often the porter feeds himself and pays a boy a cent a day to carry meal for him.

Wednesday, after another ten miles along the road, we finally branched off into the native paths. And I must say I was grateful; it was a lot easier to keep up with Anita's hammock. Twelve of our army were assigned to two hammocks for my father and Anita, though he rarely used his. There were no horses, mules, or donkeys in the country, so we had adopted the standard local conveyance, a hammock slung on a twelve-foot pole and carried by two men, working in three shifts. And they certainly covered ground. Our fifteen-mile marches were well below their standard and they shuffled along the open road at a trot. They must have averaged four miles an hour. And yet I understand that the porters prefer carrying the hammock to a load.

From then on for the rest of the trip we followed native paths through a continuous scrub of stunted trees. The paths had been worn smooth and several inches deep into the ground by the passage of thousands of bare feet. As the natives always walk in single file and put one foot down ahead of the other, the paths were only about six inches wide. In our heavy boots we found it very difficult to follow these winding ruts without tripping over ourselves. The

grass and undergrowth had all been burnt off by the natives. The ground was carpeted with dead leaves and seedlings. The whole aspect was autumn — red foliage, more branches showing than leaves, and dry, dusty country. It was the very end of the dry season; the rains were already overdue. It was actually spring according to the almanac, but people talk of wet and dry seasons in Africa, not of spring and autumn. As we gradually descended toward the Cuanza River down to an altitude of three and four thousand feet, the open scrub closed in to continuous bush, and it grew hotter.

One village provided us with a momentary excitement. As we entered by one gate, I caught a glimpse of the villagers running out through the other. That was all, but it was enough to illustrate Portuguese rule. The Portuguese by law require the natives to work for the Government several months a year. In theory such labor laws may well be defended, but in practice, or at least so we were told, the soldiers raid the villages, tie up the required number of men and women and children, and march them off to work on the roads many miles from their homes without pay and without food. As they are not allowed to leave their work in search of food, many die of starvation. Slavery in the sense of selling slaves for export has probably ended, but this system of forced labor is a survival, and there are still rumors of shipments of 'contract laborers' to San Thomé, an island owned by Portugal off the West Coast of Africa,

where a laborer goes for a term and disappears for life. And private labor for the few Portuguese farms is recruited in much the same way. Certainly no native would work, if he could help it, for the wages paid on a farm — food and forty or fifty cents a month. All this is, of course, nothing but hearsay. Our only first-hand evidence was this little bit of by-play when for a moment the villagers mistook us for Portuguese officials. Only a couple of the elders remained behind — I suppose they felt old enough to be safe — and bowed respectfully, one hand raised in salute and with heads up.

We held steadily on a little north of east. I should have got lost in a minute alone, there were so many branching paths; but the first man in line, chosen for his knowledge of the country, blocked each side track with a branch.

Thursday we came suddenly out upon the Cuanza River, a real river a hundred and twenty-five yards across and far too deep to ford. This is the boundary line; beyond this river are the sable. Practically all the giant sable, since their discovery in 1913 by our kind host, Varian, have been found in this strip of land, thirty miles across, between the Cuanza and Loando Rivers, and a hundred miles long, upstream from the junction of the two rivers. And all the best heads and most of the total have been shot in a tiny area, a few miles square, between two streams, the Lucé and the Lusingé, seventy miles upstream from the junction of the two rivers. We were now headed for these two little streams.

As our porters came up and put down their loads, the villagers across the river gathered on their bank. A dugout put out and paddled over to our side. Anita, Alan, and I crossed first, the canoe wouldn't hold more, for it was only about fifteen feet long by four wide, hollowed out square and following the curves of the tree. As we landed, the whole village burst into roars of laughter. Anita was wearing pants. Probably she was the first white woman who had ever crossed here at Capale, as we heard of only two other white women who had ever been in the sable country by any route. Indeed, apart from a few local Boers, there had been only half a dozen parties in after the sable before us.

We were now in the sable country at last and might well hope to see other game as well, for the Cuanza is the dividing line between the Luimbe and Umbundu tribes, sable and no sable, game and no game. There are a few hippo in the river and there are said to be crocodiles. Certainly none of our porters ventured in for a swim, although the villagers told us no one from the village had ever been caught by crocodiles; and, though it was very hot, I resisted the temptation myself.

It took four hours and I don't know how many trips for our army to cross in the dugout ferry. Meanwhile we had target practice back across the river into the sandy bank a couple of hundred yards upstream. By half-past one all the party was across, but we decided not to push on as usual in the after-

noon, for the villagers told us that there was no water for the next five hours. It was untrue, and we suspected as much, but we couldn't afford to take a chance. There is no such thing as an accurate map of the country. In fact, the missionaries we had met preferred to get up their own sketches rather than try to correct the printed maps. So camp was pitched beyond the village, half a mile on from the river, and in the bush to avoid mosquitoes.

Late in the afternoon we left camp for our first hunt, to shoot reedbuck as meat for the men. My father, Alan, and I, with our two hunters Augusto and Thomas as gun-bearers, walked half a mile to a big marsh upstream. During the rainy season the river overflows and the whole marsh is under water, but now it was dry and burnt. Almost at once Thomas spotted some reedbuck. Nobody else could see them, even with the field-glasses, and there were so many likely looking anthills that we all expressed polite doubt. A few hundred yards further on and Thomas saw them again. This time with the glasses I could just make out brown specks that weren't anthills. I've never imagined that any one could have eyesight like Thomas's. I could almost compete with my gun-bearer toward the end of the trip in British East; with Thomas I soon adopted the habit of following on for another hundred yards after he had pointed, before trying to strain my eyes. Thomas and I walked on, crouching behind a little rise and anthills, till I saw the reedbuck at last, watching us



OUR FERRY



MY FATHER CROSSING, WITH OUR PORTERS WAITING ON THE
FARTHER BANK

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GIANT SABLE ANTELOPE IN ANGOLA 251

and two hundred and fifty yards away. As I tried to get a little nearer for a shot, they moved off to the left and then stopped again. It was clear that I had to take a long shot or none at all, so I sat down and fired at the buck. Rather to my surprise I heard the plunk that always marks a hit and another shot brought him down. Half a dozen does stayed on and I got one. My father came up and killed two more; meat enough for all the camp. A reedbuck is much bigger than I had thought; the buck must have weighed well over a hundred pounds.

The porters had been summoned and now arrived in threes and fours with the unmistakable grin that greets the first meat.

In the evening the porters sang hymns, for most of our porters were mission boys. Caveto, our cook, was the hymn leader. Their voices were good and their memories were wonderful, for they had very few hymn-books and no musical instruments. The setting was perfect, with the darkness and the twinkle of their camp-fire through the trees. We recognized 'Onward, Christian Soldiers,' and 'God Save the King,' from the tune, the words were Umbundu. The next Sunday Anita got out her own hymnal and sang them a few hymns herself that they recognized at once. But it was on the pagan porters from Chapman's farm that we relied. They were the ones that put up the tents and accomplished the camp routine while the mission boys sat around. And on one occasion when we crossed a stream they insisted on car-

rying Anita over in her hammock themselves, refusing to trust her to the mission porters.

Friday we marched on to Mollundo. It was only ten miles; the villagers at Capale had lied to us, but it didn't matter. We had spent a happy afternoon by the Cuanza and stocked up our porters with meat. Our path wound through the same inevitable forest of stunted trees, and our porters kept up the same terrific pace, but always in the lead were the hammock-bearers, maintaining a continuous chatter of encouragement, warning, and advice to one another, with a grunt each time the pole was shifted from one shoulder to the other or settled with a bump on top of their heads.

For a time we came out from the bush into a burnt, dried marsh. And then Thomas, the eagle-eyed, spotted some roan to our left. Our procession stopped while my father and I loaded the Springfields and started after them, followed by the hungry eyes of our porters. A couple of hundred yards and I saw them at last, brown, homely beasts, the size of a horse, with high, heavy forequarters and short horns. My father, as always, gave me first shot. Twice at three hundred yards we fired and missed. The third time we crawled up behind a fifteen-foot anthill for a better shot. A cow covered the shoulder of the herd bull, but I had a shot at his heart and tried it, since he was only one hundred and fifty yards away. As the rest galloped off, my father brought down another with a pretty running shot. My beast was

evidently hard hit, but as we came out into the open it cantered off. My father took one of our two remaining cartridges to finish off his animal, while I followed on the track of the wounded roan with the other. I had never shot roan before, and Alan warned me that a wounded roan sometimes charges, two good reasons for being excited. For a couple of miles Thomas and I followed on. There was blood showing here and there on the track. I decided then to send back Thomas for more cartridges and to tell the others where we were. Thomas could understand English, though he could hardly talk a word. Meanwhile I tried tracking by myself. It is great fun. This was my first experience of it; it's almost never done on the plains in British East. I tracked the spoor for a few hundred yards and then stopped. Every anthill looked alike and I began to realize how quickly I should get lost by myself. There isn't a hill, a big tree, or a landmark of any sort in the whole country. Once Thomas was back, the end followed quickly. We came up with the wounded beast and finished it at last after a considerable number of shots. Only then did I discover that I had wounded and shot a cow, and that the bull in the background that I had aimed at originally had escaped. Our porters had now all the meat that they could carry, and we warned them that it was the last they could expect. Once well into our hunting-grounds there was to be no shot fired at anything except sable.

Mollundo is the residence of the chief of the

Luimbe, beautifully situated on a hill in the grove of great green trees planted by the natives that always marks their villages, a very striking contrast to the scrub on all sides. The whole territory between the Cuanza and Loando is occupied by the Luimbe, a hungry, scattered tribe. They own no cattle and cultivate hardly at all. A little mandioc and a little honey is all they live on. A sort of double apron of skins, before and back, is all they wear, both men and women. The children, of course, wear nothing at all. No missionaries and very few white men of any kind ever enter the country.

In the afternoon my father and I, with our big camera, paid a visit to the village. It was surprisingly neat and clean; square, mud and matted, huts with thatched, pyramid roofs stained brown by the smoke. No native hut ever owns a chimney. I had a curious sensation, as we walked in by the gate, of entering the black man's country and leaving behind the land where the whites are supreme. The almost naked men and women disregarded us and the village dogs snarled. I tried to maintain a continuous smile to show that we meant no harm with our tripod and camera. I forgot entirely that a native was not my social equal.

At breakfast the next morning, as we were breaking camp, a young lady, clad in her skin apron, knelt down beside us and offered for sale a basket of shiny white beans flecked with black. They were castor-oil beans, but I'm afraid she didn't see the



THE VILLAGE AT MOLLUNDO



THE CITADEL OF THE VILLAGE OF MOLLUNDO

At the extreme right is a hut under construction

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय

humor. The natives use the oil as a sort of human stove polish.

A few miles beyond Mollundo we passed the local salt works. This is the only real industry of the Luimbe. At this spot there is a stream very rich in salt. The soil from the stream bottom is collected and placed in a trough of bark raised on forked sticks. Water is poured into the trough, and the salt dissolves and trickles through the bark into a water-tight basket below. Finally the solution is boiled down to salt. Two of the workers ran up to meet us, seized Anita's hammock from her bearers, and ran on with her. Anita had quite a start, but they were only behaving like the little boy who grabs your suitcase at the country station, and they were rewarded with three cents apiece.

We marched sixteen miles and that afternoon pitched our camp in the centre of the sable country, just south of the Lucé. We hoped to make this our permanent camp for our sable hunt. This was the centre of their range. Thirty miles to the north the country begins to get malarial and unhealthy, thirty miles to the south you run out of their home. We were still in the same continuous forest of stunted trees, only half out in foliage, and looking most like a basket-work of branches. Very seldom can you see over three hundred yards. The ground is covered with dead leaves, seedlings, and scraps of brown grass.

Perhaps the most extraordinary feature of the

country is the anthills; enormous anthills fifteen to twenty feet high that must have been erected by some extinct race of giant ants, as they all are old and covered with trees; whole fields of spiky anthills, a couple of feet high and only a few inches through; anthills shaped like Japanese stone lanterns; and just plain anthills.

Except for the network of paths there was very little evidence of the natives. There were a few artificial beehives of bark perched in the branches and very few straggling mandioc fields. And usually one or two hungry-looking men visited our camp each day.

CHAPTER V

WE START HUNTING

WE arrived at our permanent camp on a Saturday, September 15th, and Sunday our serious hunting began. As we only had nine days on the field if we were to catch the next German steamer north, we had decided to separate into two parties. At sunrise my father, Alan, and Augusto, with a porter to carry lunch and water, disappeared in the woods to the east. Thomas, my porter Miguel, and I departed to the north. Thomas led the way, very slowly and very quietly.

Almost immediately we saw tracks, and an hour later Miguel just behind me suddenly crouched and began to chatter with excitement, in a whisper. I couldn't see the sable, but I followed Thomas on my hands and knees until we could peer around the corner of a giant anthill. A couple of hundred yards away stood a young buck, a dirty, yellowish chestnut, standing about thirteen or fourteen hands at the shoulder, but sloping down to very light hind-quarters. We covered another hundred yards to another anthill and looked again. But now the young sentinel suspected that something was wrong, and the herd cantered off. I caught a glimpse of a dozen bright golden-chestnut cows, and then I saw a black beast, a coal, pitchy black, that seemed to

belong to another race — the herd bull. We followed on their tracks all day, from seven-thirty in the morning until three in the afternoon. Six times we came up with them, and twice I caught a flash of the bull's horns, great enormous horns out of all proportion with the rest of his body, that made me catch my breath. Several times I almost fired, but each time I hesitated. I could shoot only one sable on my license and I wanted to be sure of a big head. It was not easy to see the horns and the beast and get a shot all at the same time. The trees were thick and a bull sable seems to make a point of covering its shoulder and heart behind a trunk. At last I had my chance. At one hundred and fifty yards the head and neck of the black bull showed from behind a tree. I took a last look through the glasses, rested my rifle over the top of an anthill, waited until two cows had moved on out of the way, and fired. Just at the blind moment, when my eyes were focussed on the sights and the neck of the bull blurred, as I pressed the trigger, my target moved. There was the plunk of a hit, the hindquarters of the bull disappeared among the trees, and a chestnut cow was struggling on the ground. I lost my temper with myself more completely than I had done for years and used most improper language. All Thomas said was 'no,' and I still wonder what he meant. The cow got up and apparently rejoined the herd. We followed their tracks for another hour and then lost them at last. Thomas said afterward, through our



ANITA AND SOME OF THE VILLAGERS AT MOLLUNDO

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AMERICAN

interpreter Alan, that just at the moment I fired the cow butted the bull from behind and took his place. I tried hard to believe his story, but have always suspected the kindness of his heart. If Thomas's account was true, that's the third time cows have interfered with my luck, once with the roan a few days before and once with buffalo in British East, where the cow took the part of an active rather than a merely passive bodyguard for her lord and master.

The next day I saw a couple of brown bulls, but I was still too particular to take a shot at them. The brown bulls are young with horns somewhere in the forty inches. An old bull is pitch-black, and his horns may be anything between fifty inches and the record — sixty-four.

All that week we hunted hard. From sunrise to sunset I followed Thomas, with an hour or two out for lunch, walking very slowly through the woods. Our horizon was only about three hundred yards among the trees, so that the next step might show a flash of chestnut or jet-black shadow. But as the sun climbed up and the day grew hot, the morning excitement began to die. The very fact that we could see only a few hundred yards made it seem so hopeless. By ten in the morning the sable have lain down for the day in the thickest cover they can find. Toward sunset the herd begin to get to their feet and think of dinner. They feed at night. Our best chance was to come across them after sunrise as the herd wanders off toward cover or to find them standing

sleepily about in the bush. After ten, when the beasts have lain down and only the tip of a horn is showing above the grass, you would stumble over them before you saw them. But there was always the hope of crossing fresh tracks. In the straggling bits of open where the herd had fed at night, the ground was covered with footprints. Tracking is the most fascinating of sports. To find a heart-shaped print stamped clean in the burnt, powdery soil and to follow its wanderings among the trees, to know that the herd must be just ahead, is the best sport I've ever had. It was even more fascinating for me because I couldn't tell the difference between the spoor of yesterday and to-day. All spoor looked fresh and hence exciting. Once, when I thought I had discovered a fresh track and had pointed it out proudly, Thomas took one look and said 'To-morrow.' My mind faltered for a moment until I remembered that the native word for yesterday and to-morrow is the same. The standard test is to examine a bit of grass broken off in the footprint; if it has dried, the track is at least a day old. In an older track the soil is no longer fresh-cut and brown. This was as far as I could get. The final test between last night's and this morning's spoor I never could see — whether the dew has covered the track or the dust lies over the dew. Thomas's tracking on the first day, when we had followed the same herd for seven hours, had seemed so sure and inevitable that I was always anxious to follow up every fresh trail we came upon.

But I had sense enough to leave it to Thomas, and I soon learnt the difficulty. A frightened running beast leaves a plain trail, dug deep in the ground with toes wide spread. On the other hand, the spoor of a sable wandering peacefully off for his day's siesta is very faint and soon lost among the dry leaves. Our great hope was rain, to soften the ground and to deaden the noise of our footsteps among the crackling leaves. Already the rains were overdue and the clouds in the afternoon looked more threatening every day.

Walking was dry and hot. For the first two days I brought out only a quart of water and I almost understood what thirst means. By noon the temperature was over ninety degrees, and I was generally too tired and hot to take much interest in lunch. Our bill of fare was hard-boiled eggs, cheese, nuts, raisins, or dates, *and water*. By sunset we had covered around fifteen miles.

The flowers were always an occupation; so were the flies. A glimpse of a couple of duikers and a reedbuck usually added to the day. Twice I saw a herd of bush pigs, a blood brother of the native domestic pig. On the whole there was very little game. I believe that the giant sable insists upon reigning alone and drives everything else out of the country. There were few birds, but one in particular was the most extraordinary I have ever seen. It was a sort of nightjar colored gray and black with a pennant of a single white feather over a foot long floating

back from the tip of each wing. For the benefit of the sceptics I might add that I saw it three distinct times, and, further, that I have since checked its existence in the Kensington Museum at London.

One day, as we were swinging back toward camp, I noticed smoke ahead and tried to remember where I had knocked out my pipe. But Thomas knew better and hurried on with a broad smile. As we came up, I saw that three natives were smoking out a beehive. A cylinder of bark, a foot in diameter, four feet long, and blocked at both ends, is wedged up in a branch. Tiny holes are bored for the bees. The hive now lay opened on the ground and a smudge fire kept away a few of the bees; the rest were simply disregarded by the natives, though I kept well to windward. In the next half-hour Thomas chewed at least half a cubic foot of beeswax. It looked to me as if it was almost all wax with just enough honey and grubs to give it a taste. In fact, the beeswax is carefully collected, boiled down, and sold by the natives. Several hundred tons are exported annually from Angola.

The standard native diet of mandioc and honey must become pretty tiresome. As often as they can the Luimbe add game to their bill of fare. There are a certain number of old-fashioned guns in the country in spite of the strict Portuguese laws on firearms. Once we heard a shot in the neighborhood. But the usual method of killing game is by pitfalls. A pit eight feet deep, eight feet long, and three feet wide

is dug in the madioc fields where the game naturally congregate. Rough side railings lead the animal up and the top is covered over with dirt and brush. I saw only one, but I noticed that, on the few occasions when we passed through native cultivation, Thomas kept strictly to the paths. I made a point of following in his footsteps. A few spikes are usually added in the bottom of the pit. Judging by the number of big sable horns that can be bought from the natives and from the number of young and cows that must be killed for every big bull, pitfalls are common and successful. The problem of preserving the giant sable centres around its protection from the Luimbe. For every sable killed on a hunting license, the Luimbe must kill a dozen.

Tuesday was a blank day, but Wednesday afternoon a couple of miles out from camp I saw a leopard slouching through the grass in the open, looking like a heavy, white cat with black perpendicular stripes. He was about one hundred and fifty yards away and headed between two giant anthills, so we crept up behind the nearest to catch him as he came out; but he didn't come out at all. Thomas spotted him at once and pointed toward the farther anthill, fifty yards away. I knew he was somewhere between, but for the life of me I couldn't see him. Thomas pointed with his finger and pointed with my gun. We crawled a little forward and then hitched a little up our anthill. I could only smile helplessly at Thomas. He could only point, for his English was absolutely unin-

telligible. Finally, we crept around in front of our anthill and I motioned Thomas to point my rifle at him. I thought that it seemed a trifle absurd to let my gun-bearer lead me up to a beast and then aim the rifle for me, leaving me as it were to pull the trigger, but I couldn't see any other way. Unluckily I had jostled Thomas a little and he trod on a crackling leaf. The leopard heard it and turned his head. I saw him then for the first time. He was lying on the very top of his anthill in plain view, but the combination of the evening light, the shadow of a tree above him, and his own coloring was all too perfect. If he hadn't moved his head, I should have stepped upon him first. Even now I could only guess where the anthill began and the leopard left off. As I sank down for a certain sitting shot, he was off. We had seen each other at the same moment. I doubt if I could even have got in a shot offhand before he moved. We ran after him for a couple of hundred yards, but the show was over. I had determined from the beginning not to try a snap-shot. At best I could only have hoped to wound him and a subsequent fusillade would have alarmed the whole sable country. It was a very rare sight. It isn't often you catch a leopard napping.

However, while a leopard was all very well for an excitement, what we were really after were sable antelope, and our prospects were waning. My father had had no better luck than I, and already four of our nine allotted hunting days were past.

GIANT SABLE ANTELOPE IN ANGOLA 265

Anita had been having her own difficulties, alone in camp with her sixty blacks. Our cook Caveto had a pleasant smile, but no other qualifications for his job. All the provisions were doled out by Anita in person, and in person watched one by one into the pot. When she tired of prodding Caveto along once each ten minutes, the only alternative was to do the cooking herself. Without her we should have got nothing to eat and no water boiled to drink. But I think that she herself would admit that our fare was somewhat monotonous. Our usual dinner consisted of Oxo tablet soup, boiled potatoes and onions, with boiled prunes for dessert. Another of Anita's many duties was the sick-list that grew rapidly with her reputation as a doctor, from five on the first day to twenty-five on the fourth day in camp. Quinine, Epsom salts, and corrosive sublimate were the only medicines, but in her hands they went far. The quinine and corrosive answered for all fever or cuts. The Epsom salts was applied to every other known form of ache.

Meanwhile our flower collection had been growing with complete success. This, too, was in Anita's department, ably aided, instigated, and abetted by my father. Anita did not shoot, and long before we left the United States had decided that she did not want to shoot. Hence she had wisely prepared herself for an equally exciting sport, the pursuit of new flowers. The apparatus is simple — sheets of blotting-paper, sheets of manilla paper, and a light press

composed of two wooden frames and two leather straps. The method is equally simple: the flower fresh picked, with roots and all, is placed between the folds of a sheet of manilla paper,¹ and the manilla paper is placed between blotters, and the whole is squeezed until dry. As the moisture is pressed out of the flower, the blotters are changed and dried. Two or three changes and a couple of days' pressing usually do the trick, although it varies with the weather, whether the air is moist or dry. This is the whole story. Once dry, the specimen, still between the folds of the manilla paper, is tucked away complete.² Of course, there are accessories. The most important is a pencil. The specimen is of no use to science without full notes of the date, place, soil, and a brief description of the plant. Our other accessories were a color-book and an enormous German camera. The color-book was perfectly fascinating. Every color, shade, and hue, some 1431 in all, were classified and named. Botanists, as well as other scientists, have long since tired of trying to generalize in colors. 'Light pink' or 'dark blue' may mean much to the author, but it can necessarily convey very little to a correspondent. Hence the need of a publication of scientific names for each color, used all over the world. All specimens lose their color with pressing, so each new flower and leaf was

¹ The standard museum size is $11\frac{1}{2} \times 16\frac{1}{2}$ inches when folded once.

² For further details on flower collecting as well as on travelling in general, see *Hints to Travellers*, by the Royal Geographical Society.



ANITA

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carefully compared with our book and the true color carefully noted. And we found other uses for our book. In Kenya each of our mules and horses was named from our color-book by the same process. One mule, as I remember, turned out to be a true Van Dyke brown, and caused our natives considerable difficulty with the pronunciation of his name.

Our flower collection was ordinarily a source of wonder and amazement to the natives. They could not understand how apparently intelligent white people could stop to trifle with such matters. Only occasionally would a tree or flower justify itself and us; several had a real meaning to the native. The leaves of one tree in Kenya were boiled down and the concoction used to poison the natives' arrows. The wood of at least three was employed as a toothbrush by the fastidious Masai. The bark of a third was a medicine for fever. And I remember one tree that was thought to provide babies for barren wives.

To us our collection was a source of constant fascination, for each day's march brought us into new territory and new flowers. We never had an idle moment. No matter how little game, there were always flowers. And here beyond the Cuanza River we were in new fields, unexplored by botanists. We collected in all, in Kenya and in Angola, over a thousand specimens. Of these sixteen were new species, unknown to science, and of these sixteen, all but one, I believe, came from the sable country, across the Cuanza River. The ground was strewn

with thousands of great purple orchids, or at least we thought that they were orchids. Certainly they looked like orchids and the missionaries called them orchids. And there was another peculiar little plant with two distinct kinds of flowers blossoming on the same stem, one purple and one white. To us in our ignorance all the flowers were strange; our method was to collect everything we saw and hope for results when we got them home. Our sixteen finds, of course, were the most unassuming and insignificant. But that did not disappoint us; that was what we had hoped for and expected. All the thousand-odd specimens are now presented to the Arnold Arboretum in Brookline and the Gray Herbarium in Cambridge¹ (Massachusetts). To them we owe much.

¹ See *Contributions from the Gray Herbarium of Harvard University*, N.S., LXXIII, 2 — 'New Plants collected by Mrs. Richard C. Curtis in Portuguese West Africa,' by I. M. Johnston, 1924.

CHAPTER VI

OUR GIANT SABLE

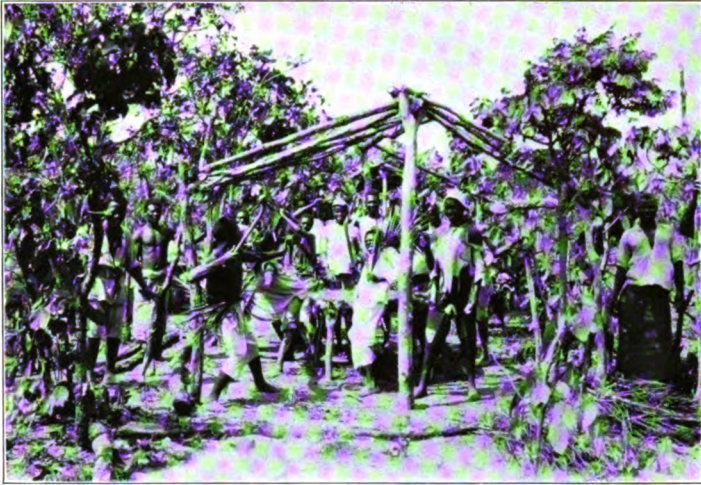
THURSDAY again was a blank day and we began to get nervous for our success. Our best hope for sable now lay in rain to soften the ground, make tracking easier, and deaden our footsteps among the leaves. The dry season begins in the end of May. During June and July the grass is too high to spot the game. By August the grass has been burnt off by the natives and the country is very dry. The first week of rain in September is the best hunting week of the year, when the sable are restless, the grass is low, tracking is easy, and before the country gets too wet for comfort. The rainy season starts slowly with occasional thunder-storms, but by November hunting is impossible.

And on Thursday afternoon it looked as if the rain was coming at last. For three hours the thunder-clouds rose higher and blacker. By sunset when I reached camp the lightning and thunder had already begun in the distance. With the aid of Caveto, our smiling but useless cook, Anita and I tried to hurry camp under cover. Fortunately, the porters had built us a dining-room and kitchen, two frameworks of poles with palm-thatched roofs. My father and Alan arrived long after dark, but it was not until seven that the storm broke at last. Everything looked hopeful for the morning. My father and Alan

had discovered a new herd of sable of at least twenty-five, and had stayed on its outskirts in the hope of a shot until the light had gone. It was decided that we should join forces the next day. Such a big herd should contain at least a couple of big bulls. My father had at last, and for the first time all summer in Angola or in British East, consented to take the first shot.

By 5.30 A.M., as soon as there was light enough to see, we left camp: my father, Alan, Augusto, Thomas, Miguel, and I. Within an hour Alan spotted the herd; sable don't wander far. Augusto and Miguel dropped back. For an hour the rest of us crawled and crouched and crept behind the anthills. Once I saw a young bull close by and several times the herd slipped past one by one through the tree trunks, two or three hundred yards away. At last the black herd bull stood, facing in our direction and about one hundred and fifty yards away. My father sat down behind a tree with his big .450 Holland and Holland, and took a long, long aim. There was a report like a cannon and the bull threw up his heels and all but stood on his head. Chestnut shapes flitted off to our left, but the bull disappeared straight away from us. I noticed blood on the ground when we reached the spot and a clear trail showed the way he had gone.

We followed on and on. It was a very marvellous exhibition of skill in tracking in which Thomas played the principal part. As long as he was run-



OUR DINING-HALL IN THE SABLE COUNTRY IN THE PROCESS
OF CONSTRUCTION

The porters are trying to add life to the picture



OUR DINING-HALL COMPLETE WITH MY FATHER-IN-THE
DOORWAY

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ning, the bull dug in deep and spread his toes wide, but where he had slowed to a walk the tracks grew faint. Without last night's rain, and a fresh burst of blood to guide us across one particular patch of ground where the leaves lay thick, we should have lost the trail. Thomas led the way, very slowly, peering down and pointing out each footprint with a twig in his hand, more to himself than to us. We followed with our rifles cocked, for a wounded sable has been known to charge. Soon we hoped he would. My father had shot at about a quarter of eight and we tracked steadily for the next three hours. Four times we saw him ahead, the first time only ten yards away, but each time we waited for an easier shot. By eleven we stopped for lunch, and then followed on. Augusto and Miguel had now come up. For two more hours we kept on very slowly and deliberately. We tried hard to walk quietly. There was one particular kind of dried leaf that will always haunt me — a thick leaf that curled up into a cylinder and cracked loudly under your foot. Every time I stepped on one, our black tracker looked back reproachfully.

Every so often, when our trail was crossed by fresh spoor, Thomas would retrace our track a few steps to make certain we should not be led astray off our line. And every few hundred yards, where the leaves were thick the party would stop to decipher our course. Often, when it seemed most hopeless, I regretted the snap-shots I had refused to take. And

then a drop of blood on a dead leaf would prove that we were still on the right trail. At last Thomas sighted him ahead, and I thought I could see a spot among the trees where the shadows were darker. On our hands and knees Thomas and I crawled up. Two hundred yards seemed like a couple of miles. Thomas came to rest behind a little anthill, four feet high, and pointed. A hundred and fifty yards away, the bull was standing facing us with his head high in the air above his chest, coal-black, save for two white patches on his face. I leant my rifle on the top of the anthill, lined up the sights very deliberately, and fired. There was a thud; I knew I had hit him in the chest, but he turned and made off. A quarter of a mile on we saw him again, and I took a shot as he stood behind some bushes, but without any apparent effect and another at his hindquarters, as he ran off, that only made him stagger. A fourth shot at his neck, as he stood protecting his chest behind a tree, brought him down at last. He was still alive when we came up, a magnificent beast with great, sweeping horns, that we measured at fifty-three and one half inches.

Unquestionably a giant sable has the finest horns in the world and my father was the first American to shoot one. We were thrilled; our trip was now a complete triumph, and to kill a big sable on such a short safari was really wonderful luck. It was a beautiful black buck, very heavy in the forequarters and very solid. He must have weighed over four hun-

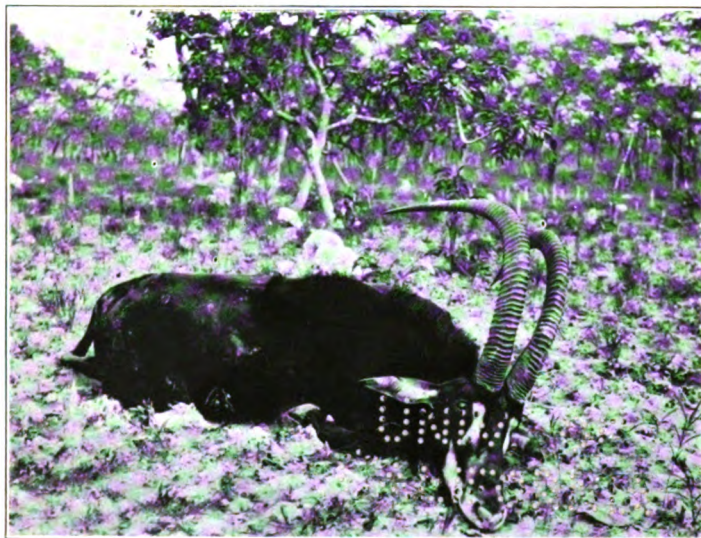
GIANT SABLE ANTELOPE IN ANGOLA 273

dred pounds. I never thought any antelope could carry so much lead. He had travelled for five hours with a .450 bullet that missed his heart only by inches and would certainly have killed him eventually. My first shot, low in the centre of his chest, had simply slowed him down. My second shot through the bush had just penetrated the skin, and my third had merely grazed his hindquarters. The fourth and last hit him in the neck. We photographed and photographed the sable in every position and with all of us in turn. And then my father led us the three miles back to camp at a tremendous race. I couldn't understand why he was not at least as tired as I was.

My father killed his sable on a Friday. Saturday morning Alan came out with me, while my father took a day off. For two hours we saw nothing. Then I fixed my eye on what seemed to me perfectly fresh spoor. I had pointed out so many old tracks by mistake that I had now adopted the habit of looking just long enough at a track to be sure that the man behind me had noticed it, and then trying to appear care-free while he examined it. This time the porter behind me took a lively interest and summoned back Alan and Thomas for consultation. They declared at once that it was a big bull, but that the spoor was last night's and too old to follow. So we walked on. We passed a little tree where the bull had rubbed his horns on the bark and a few hundred yards on we crossed the same bull's tracks again. There was a breathless minute while Alan and Thomas debated

over the dust, the dew, and the bits of grass in the footprints. I had seen so many apparently fresh tracks abandoned because of one stem of withered grass, dried since the track was made, that I hardly dared hope. But finally Alan whispered that we had struck upon this morning's trail. I thought from the spoor that it was a herd of sable, but Alan told me that it was a solitary big bull.

For half a mile we followed on cautiously across a bit of open marsh, when suddenly Thomas stopped and crouched down. He had seen the beast ahead. I, of course, and as usual saw nothing. So Thomas and I began our stalk; for three hundred yards we crawled on hands and knees over stubby grass, burnt short and sharp. Crawling three-legged, with a rifle in one hand, is breathless work. From behind a low anthill Thomas pointed, and I saw the bull at last, about one hundred and sixty yards away, facing our way and suspicious with his head high in the air and his body jet-black. His horns were thrown back out of sight, but I had long since decided to take a shot at the first black bull I saw. I shoved my Springfield through the heavy dry grass on the ant-hill for a shot. But the grass caught in the sights and even when I cleared it away, I couldn't get a free shot at the bull. For half a second I hesitated between the chance of a deflected bullet and the chance of the bull moving off. Then I sat up and leaned the rifle against a tiny tree. I was still so out of breath that the sights wobbled even with this rest. As the



MY FATHER'S SABLE

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sights steadied on his chest, I pressed the trigger. It hit; you could hear the thud. With the same fierce satisfaction that always follows a hit, I stood up and fired again as he ran off. Another hit. I ran forward and fired again where he had stopped among the trees. Two misses, so I kneeled and hit him the third time. Four chestnut cows were disappearing in the bush, but I didn't waste a second look. The bull moved on and stopped again, evidently badly wounded. The last cartridge in my magazine hit him a fourth time. I had carried out a resolution I had made yesterday when our chances of coming up with our bull again looked most hopeless, to empty my magazine on any pretext. I reloaded and ran up, but there was no need for another shot, the bull was down.

Alan and the porter joined us, all smiles and enthusiasm, clapping their hands, the polite form of congratulation in Angola. Thomas clapped and I grinned. I never was so pleased. No beast could be more wonderful than the giant sable. I measured my horns off on my belt where I had marked off fifty inches — incidentally it is worth noting that this had not spoilt my luck. They were half an inch shorter than my father's, with half an inch more spread. Everything was as it should be. My first shot had hit low in the chest, my second just forward of the shoulder, a third too far back, and the last in the heart. We tramped back in heat and triumph to camp with the head perched on Thomas's shoulders.

CHAPTER VII

BACK TO THE COAST

It was decided then and there to start back at once for Capango. We had taken out a license for Anita and so could try for a third sable for the museum. Our two heads were big enough for ourselves, and we didn't want and couldn't hope to beat them. But our luck had been so good that it didn't seem proper to trespass on it, and we were all tired out. Nobody could have hunted harder. Walking from sunrise to sunset every day, with the thermometer between ninety and ninety-five, is hard work.

There was another real reason for starting back; we had camped long enough in that one place. Our army of porters had built themselves a whole village of thatched huts, low and muddy. And the mosquitoes were soon to become dangerous. A bad mosquito is a mosquito that has bitten a native with malaria in his blood and has then had a week to develop the germs. Where there are no local natives around, as here, and only your own porters to infect the mosquitoes, you can always keep a jump ahead by moving camp once a week. You are off and out of range before the germs have had a chance to develop in the mosquitoes.

Saturday afternoon was spent fussing over our two heads, scraping and salting, and Sunday morning,

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September 23d, we marched back to Mollundo. We had hunted for just a week and had killed two big sable. Nobody ever had better luck. My father and I counted up that, between us, we had seen forty-four sable, of which four were big bulls, and all in a territory of about forty square miles where the sable seemed to be concentrated. I don't believe that there were more than seventy-five sable in all in that territory. Few, if any, species of animal was ever so narrowly bounded or so limited in numbers.

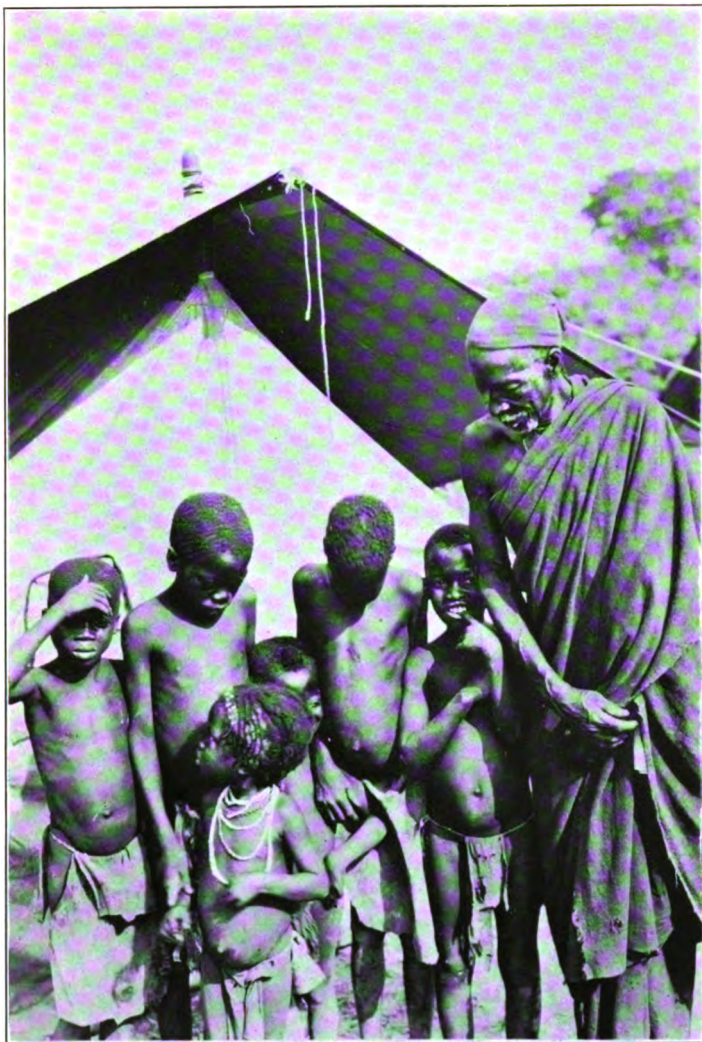
Sunday afternoon we camped again by the village of Mollundo, and this time were visited by the resident chief of the Luimbe, a simple, dignified elder, entitled by rank to our handshake. In accordance with custom we presented him with four yards of cloth. The chief acknowledged the gift by first clapping his hands softly together and then thanking us, a very pretty local custom. He returned shortly and presented us with a hen. In return my father gave him a cigar, I produced a new safety razor blade, and Anita overwhelmed him with a tin of marmalade and a can-opener. That night we were waked by our second thunder-storm and the shouts of our men putting our belongings under cover.

Monday we marched to the Cuanza and camped three miles beyond. The offer of the headman at Capale, where we crossed, to show us a hippo 'just a few miles' up the river was disregarded. Alan told us that on his last trip through here the villagers had said 'just around the bend' and had almost pointed

to where a hippo was to be shot. He had taken them up that time and walked ten miles up the river and ten back before breakfast with the evanescent hippo always just around the bend. If just around the corner is over ten miles, think of what a few miles must mean. I'd like to have killed a hippo, but I couldn't afford to spend a week's side trip to it. However, you can hardly blame the natives. There are hippo in the river, and what does a white man's time amount to in their minds compared with the hope, however small, of supplying the village with more meat than they can eat?

The rest of our march back to Capango was totally uneventful. We did the whole sixty-odd miles from our sable camp in four days instead of the four and a half coming out. I must admit that I was glad to arrive and have done with walking for a while. For the last sixteen days I had averaged from twelve to fifteen miles a day and disregarded Sundays. We arrived on Wednesday, September 26th, and spent the next four nights at the mission.

Since we had left, Dr. Bodman had had an adventure. For some weeks a leopard had been carrying off his goats and he had spent several sleepless nights sitting up for it. Eventually he had loopholed the henhouse and tied up a goat for bait outside. On the first alarm of the night, he shot the goat by mistake. A few hours later he fired again at something moving in the shadow, and after waiting a little longer went out of his henhouse with a lantern to investigate, but



THE LUMBE CHIEF AT MOLLUNDO WITH SOME OF HIS SUBJECTS

without result. The next morning he found that it had been a leopard and that he had passed within a few yards of it with his lantern, and the only reason it hadn't jumped on him was that he had shot it dead through the heart. If he had only wounded it, no doctor could have hit upon a neater way of acquiring experience on how to treat leopard bites. The leopard was killed a few yards outside the mission compound. It is an exciting place. The night before we left to return to Lobito, Miss Gammon discovered a wildcat in her kitchen.

We spent the next three days paying off, distributing our outfit, and sitting — but principally sitting. Augusto and Thomas were burdened with presents, but I think that the most appreciated were our two Canadian hatchets. To understand how useful such a hatchet must be, you would have to see first the local home-made variety. I am sorry now that I didn't give Thomas one of my pairs of trousers as well. His costume in the field consisted of just three pieces; a black felt hat, always removed when approaching the sable, a brown business-suit coat, and a patched pair of cloth trousers down to his knees. The trousers were occasionally replaced, perhaps for the purpose of another patch, by a bit of sacking. It puzzled me so much to know what part of the trousers was patch and what original that I finally asked him. He replied that all the original had long since gone.

Saturday afternoon, according to our arrange-

ment with Mr. Tucker, two automobiles arrived to take us back to the railroad. Our boat was due to sail north from Lobito on the following Friday, and we had been devoting considerable thought upon how we were to catch it if the automobiles failed us. Probably we should have just missed it. It's hard to realize that a hundred miles means four days' travel without a motor car and three days for a message without a telegraph. But we needn't have worried. Mr. Tucker came up himself in one of the two cars to make certain that they arrived. Without his energy and aid, we'd never have got them, as there is a shortage of gasoline in the country. Apart from four punctures, our trip back to Dondé was happily uneventful. At Chinguar we found that Alan's men had arrived before us. They had rested one night at Capango and then walked the one hundred miles to Chinguar with half-loads in three days. We reached Dondé by sunset, and at last felt certain of catching our train and our steamer.

Monday morning we left for Lobito by train. We said good-bye to Alan and his men at Huambo, the starting-point for their march back to the Chapmans' farm. Thomas said 'Good-night.' Our two sable heads travelled in the compartment with us. In spite of the smell, we couldn't trust them to the baggage-car. And for the next few days in Lobito they occupied most of our time, scraping, boiling, poisoning, and packing.

Our steamer north was late, but we didn't know

and couldn't discover how late; otherwise we might have been tempted to try for the kudu that are said to be found a few miles inland. But I am glad we didn't. It would have been a dreadful anticlimax after all our luck to miss a kudu. Instead, we sat on Mr. Varian's piazza watching the horizon, drank German beer, and went in swimming. I had been looking forward for some weeks to all three occupations and was completely content. There is a cold ocean current sweeping up the coast that cools off Lobito as well as the swimming. We sailed at last on Monday, October 8th, 1923, on the S.S. Wangoni, for England, twenty-four days away.

THE END

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