

P78
1291a
AFA

THE ARAB AND THE AFRICAN

*EXPERIENCES IN EASTERN EQUATORIAL AFRICA
DURING A RESIDENCE OF THREE YEARS*

BY

S. TRISTRAM PRUEN, M.D.

Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS



DARF PUBLISHERS LIMITED

LONDON

1986

1841

V1338

by Solomon, 'Come with me from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards.' The district around and near Mpwapwa, and, I believe, all along the range, abounds in lion, leopard, hyena, rhinoceros, elephant, giraffe, buffalo, zebra, antelope, eland, gazelle, monkey, wild boar, porcupine, coney, jackal, serval, genet, mongoose, civet cat, and other small carnivora. In the small lakes near and among the hills there are also hippopotamus and crocodile.

In the frequent visits which at one time I used to pay to Kisokwe, a village seven miles from Mpwapwa, where I was living, I had to walk five miles across a plain, three of the miles being along a well-worn caravan path through the jungle. Going by night it was a rare thing to see wild animals except hyenas, as they all seem to shun proximity to man; but, returning in the morning, my native boy often showed me the tracks of the different animals which had crossed our path the night before. It was some time before I learned to distinguish the different footprints myself, and to the last I could not recognise them with anything like the facility which the natives showed in doing it.

The hyenas are the animals most frequently seen and heard. Sometimes they can be heard soon

itself to keep out of his sight. Presently he discovers one of his enemies, and at once prepares to make off in an opposite direction, when a sharp bark immediately in front of him pulls him suddenly up, and an attempt to alter his course and escape by another way is checked in the same manner. At last he gets frantic, and makes a rush, unheeding the barks in front of him; but by this time the whole circle have closed in, and one or two have got their fangs into him. He shakes them off; they have delayed, not stopped him, and he rushes away again; but the delay has given time for others to get ahead of him, and again he is seized, and again, until finally he succumbs to his many enemies, who in an hour will have left nothing of him but his larger bones for the hyenas who will scour the ground that night.

I never once saw a hippopotamus or rhinoceros, but occasionally came across the tracks of the latter. The natives are much afraid of the rhinoceros; in fact, he and the solitary buffalo are far more dreaded than the lion, as these do occasionally attack man unprovoked, though as a rule, they are not very formidable foes, and with care can be hunted without any great danger. The rhinoceros is chiefly hunted for its horns, the buffalo for both skin and horns, as the natives make sandals, which are much

prized for their toughness, out of buffalo-hide. The hippopotamus is hunted more especially for its teeth, many tons of which are annually sent to Europe, and there sold as an inferior quality of ivory for knife-handles and suchlike purposes. The hippopotamus is generally trapped, a heavily-weighted spear being suspended over its run, and a cord so arranged across the path, that when it is displaced by the foot of the animal, the spear is released, and plunges into its back, the animal going off not far away to die from the bleeding, which enables the hunter who has set the trap to track his victim to its death-place.

Elephants roam the forests in many districts, but they seem to be most plentiful north-east of Uganda, in the district first explored by Count Teleky, so that the best hunting-ground and the approaches to it are now in the hands of the Imperial British East Africa Company. A hunter, who lived on Lake Nyassa, told me that the natives about there go out in parties of about twenty armed with old muskets to hunt the elephant. Having sighted their game, they cautiously creep up to within a few yards of him, and then, all firing together, give him a regular broadside. But the aim is so bad, and the penetration of their missiles so feeble, that the elephant