

Trapping a Rhinoceros.

A TRAVELLER with three Dutch hunters had some exciting adventures in the Transvaal country a few months ago in attempting to capture a rhinoceros.

We came upon a big two-horned fellow suddenly (says one of the hunters), and had to climb a tree to escape his horns.

The animal made for the tent of our party, a short distance away, but a system of simple defence, of wire brush, foiled him, and he made off.

A pit was dug in the swamp, and a nice fat native, which is calculated to make almost any rhinoceros hungry, sent out to decoy the prey. Soon after we heard the shrill notes of the rhinoceros bird, which is invariably found in the company of the beast.

The native came through the clearing with the old fellow in tow. The former had a start of about thirty feet, and when they passed the mound upon which we had stationed ourselves he had lost five feet of that, although running like a train.

The rhinoceros was a big one, unusually black, and he ran with his snout down and his tail erect. We cheered the native to encourage him, and away the two went up the trail we had tampered with.

Had the race been ten yards longer the native would have had to leave the path to avoid death. As he neared the pit, he ran along the right-hand edge of it, while the rhinoceros thundered along the centre.

He was within twelve feet of the heels of the runner when his feet let go of solid earth and plunged him head first into the pit. We heard him grunt from where we stood, and it was plain that his tumble had knocked the breath out of him.

As he struck he rolled over on his right side, and by the time we reached the pit he was helpless.

We had come prepared for just such a job as we now had on hand. The huge animal must be got on board the barge provided for that purpose, but we were in no hurry to begin. We got our ropes and chains ashore, drove stout stakes where they would be wanted, and moved the barge to a convenient spot. By this time it was dark, and we tied the old fellow's hind-legs together and left him.

After breakfast next morning we began work. We first hobbled our prisoner, and then hoisted him out of the pit. The first thing he did was to make a rush, but it was a failure.

We got purchase tackles on him, and led them away to trees and staples, and by these means we checked him up or warped him along as willed. All we had to do was to keep clear of his wicked horns.

By noon we had him safe on-board the barge, one half of which was given him. We had managed his capture without inflicting any injury.

He was eventually landed without a piece of skin rubbed off, and is no doubt alive now. His age was estimated at thirty years when captured, and he was considered good for fifty or sixty years more.

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