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Misc. 5. 91. 35

SHOTS AND SNAPSHOTS

IN

BRITISH EAST AFRICA

BY

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INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE

WITH FIFTY-ONE ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS
AND TWO MAPS



LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

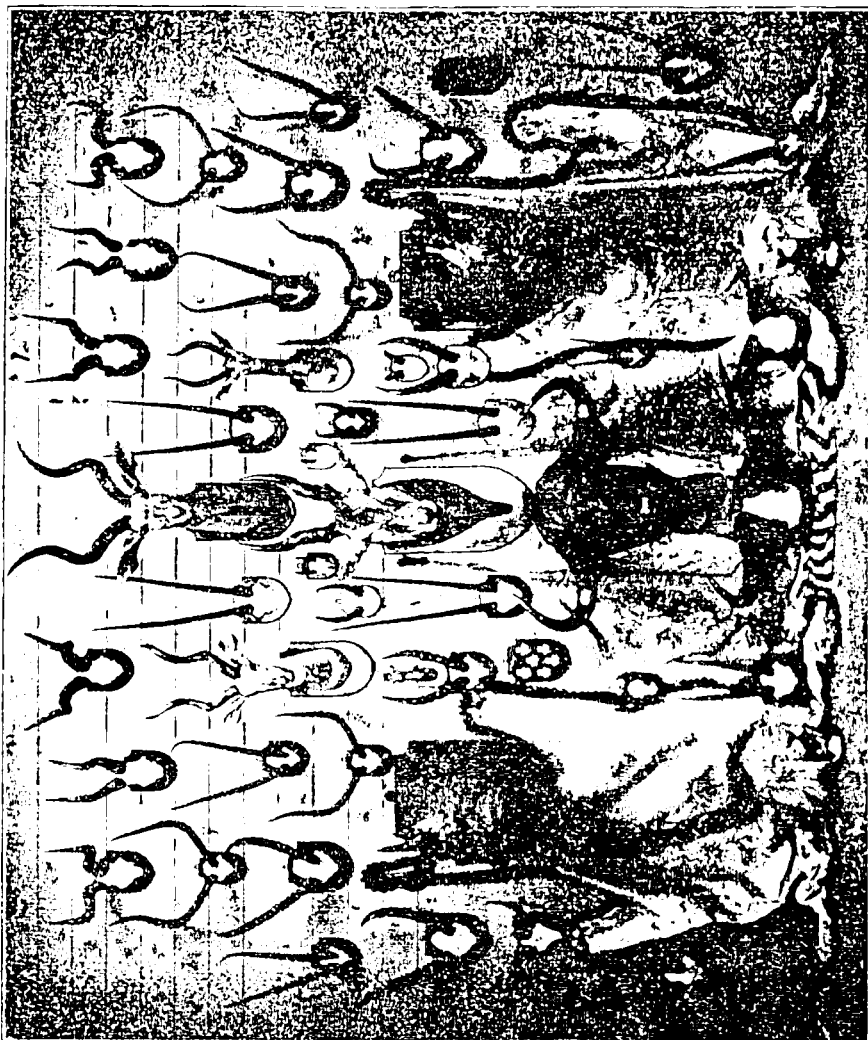
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found many such pits high up on Mount Kenia, which had been dug by Wanderobo hunters, but they had left a couple of years before.

RHINOCEROS

Rhinoceros bicornis. Swahili, *kifaru.* Masai, *E-Muny.* Kikuyu, *M'buria* or *Huria.* Boran, *Warsis.* Somali, *Wil.*

The African rhinoceros has two horns, which distinguishes him from the Indian rhinoceros with only one, and his skin does not lie in folds. The front horn of the African rhino is the longer, and a good horn will measure twenty-eight inches, but twenty inches is what you may expect to get now. The horns of the cow are thinner, and sometimes longer. These horns are composed of agglutinated hairs, which form a coarse matting at the base, and after the animal has been killed the horns become detached from the skin of the head in a few days.

The rhinoceros is extremely formidable in appearance, and dates from the Tertiary period, the geological age of great saurians and mammals. Perhaps it is his ancient lineage which makes him so blind. I think it is clear that he cannot distinguish objects well at a distance of even ten paces, and I have verified this from my own experience. However, his sense of smell is very good, and he can get your wind from a distance of three or four hundred yards ; and as he usually



MY FIRST RHINOCEROS

runs away upwind he charges—in your direction. As he can run over bad ground at the rate of a hundred yards in ten seconds, and he can turn very quickly, running away from him is no good; and you must either get up a tree or stand quietly and shoot him if he charges home, which in general he will not do.

The rhinoceros weighs a little over a ton, stands about five feet at the shoulder, and his length runs to eleven or twelve feet, excluding the tail, which adds another couple of feet. He is not unlike a small elephant in his body, and his head is the head of a pig, with small pig eyes and prehensile upper lip. The hide is an inch thick, and can be made into table-tops, which polish till transparent, whips—the “kiboko,” which is really the Swahili word for hippopotamus—and sticks. The feet also form a characteristic trophy. The horns may be mounted on a mount by themselves, or the whole head may be set up, which is not particularly handsome.

So many rhino have been shot charging that the number allowed on a sportsman's licence has been reduced from two to one in 1912, though rhino are common enough. If you shoot a charging rhino in addition to the one allowed, the horns are sold by Government through the Government Auctioneer in Nairobi, and fetch about three rupees twelve annas per lb. You may buy them in through the auctioneer.

Owing to the thickness of the hide, a solid bullet from a heavy cordite rifle should be used, and the shot behind the shoulder is best. If the rhino is charging you, you should wait till he is within twenty yards, and shoot him in the neck; or if you have a small-bore rifle and soft-nosed bullets only, you may wait till he is ten yards off, and shoot him above the second horn, where the skull is quite thin. Some people consider that the rhinoceros is a comparatively harmless and much misunderstood animal, but the general opinion about him is that he is a dangerous nuisance. In India, when hunting with elephants in the Terai, an elephant will always run from a charging rhino, and the mahout lets him run, as if the rhino got his charge home he would run under the elephant and cut him open with his horn. Rhino are very numerous on the Northern Uaso Nyiro, though few have horns over fifteen inches long. I found that they lay up on the bushy sides of koppies during the day, and came down two or three miles to the river to drink at night.

The tracks of the rhino are distinguished from those of the hippo by the fact that rhino have three toes and hippo have four. Rhino paths are trodden smooth, but hippo paths have a ridge in the middle, as the hippo does not put his right foot in front of his left, but waddles down the track.

Rhino are usually found in open bush with grass, not more than a few miles from water, and they are widely distributed. They are found on both sides of the Tana River, on the Northern Uaso Nyiro, on the Guaso Nyiro, on Laikipia plateau, at Lakes Baringo and Natron, at Kitui, on the German boundary, and from Kiu to Kilimanjaro and near Simba.

LION

Felix leo. Swahili, *Simba.* Masai, *Ol-ngatuny* or *Ol-owaru-kitok.*
Kikuyu, *Gatoni.* Boran, *Nench.* Somali, *Libba.*

Lions are so well known that little description is required. I may note that male lions average about nine feet from nose to tip of tail, measured straight, and a ten foot one is exceptionally large; females average eight feet. They are therefore somewhat smaller than tigers, and the skins are not so handsome. The skin of the lioness shows faint spots. Male lions sometimes have good manes, and sometimes little or no mane. They are the only members of the cat tribe which have a tuft of long hair at the tip of the tail. They usually inhabit rolling grassy plains, near rivers, where there is plenty of game, and they are especially fond of zebra. Lions live in the same locality, and hunt the same places every night. When hunting they are usually silent, but it is said that one will drive game by roaring while