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# AN EAST AFRICAN HUNTING TRIP

A DESCRIPTION OF A RECENT JOURNEY INTO A LAND STILL RICH IN A VARIETY OF INTERESTING GAME ANIMALS

By E. A. SYKES

self quite naturally gravitated towards each other shortly after my arrival on a visit to this country recently. As an Englishman who has been devoted to shooting for many years past, in different parts of the world, it has been intensely interesting to me to learn through its pages of game animals new to me, of the different conditions under which they are hunted and of the different weapons used. The war has made Britons realize—or such few of them that did not do so before—that there are but few essential differences

between our American cousins and ourselves and certainly none that ought not to be easily bridged over, with a little good will. There is plenty of good will as far as we are concerned and if we can get into closer touch with each other over subjects like sport, so much the better.

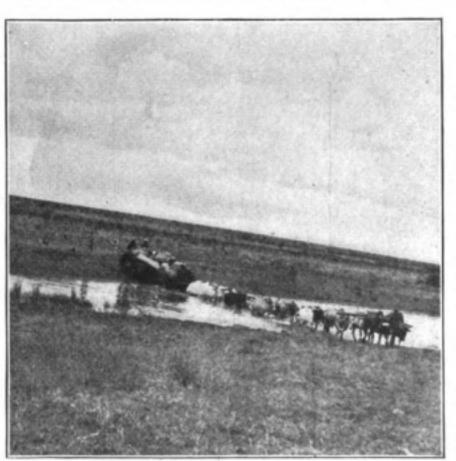
I was told the other day by an American friend that he believed the English lived anywhere but in England. The wandering instinct certainly has a very firm grip on us but we have no monopoly in that respect, and it has been my privilege to meet many Americans, the world over, who possessed that and the hunting instinct as well.

Perhaps of all game-countries, East Africa holds the palm for quantity and variety and perhaps, too, no country has been so exhaustively written about, so I feel duly apologetic in offering your readers the following brief description

of a shoot I was fortunate enough to have in British East Africa in the autumn of last year.

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THE particular district in which I hunted was the Laikipia Plateau, from south of Rumuruti to the junction of the Guaso Nyiro and the Guaso Narok, and although most of it is directly on the equator, the high altitude (from 5,700 to 8,000 feet) gives it a climate which almost entitles it to be called a "white man's country." It is mainly uninhabited except for a sprinkling of recently-arrived soldier settlers, and a few Samburu and forest-dwelling Wanderobo. On certain prescribed routes one may meet an occasional Somali trader, bringing cattle and ponies from



On the way to the game country

the north; otherwise it belongs so far to the game and the hunter.

The country is of a varied nature,

bare open plains alternating with impenetrable tropical forest, rocky gullies and thick thorn scrub, the latter very trying to clothes and temper. The South African Dutchman knew what he was about when he christened the "wait-a-bit" thorn. Deep-sea fish hooks are the only things that bear comparison for holding capacity. The lofty Aberdare range bounded one-quarter of the horison, and on clear days we could generally see Kenia, a snow-capped peak of over 18,000 feet. Very rarely could any of the landscape be described as "typically African," and most assuredly the climate

was not typically equatorial. At one or two camps we roasted in the day-time and woke up to find a white frost on the ground.

Each variety of country possesses its own particular form of animal life. The forests hold the shy bush buck and shyer bongo, the grassy opens are the haunt of the hartebeest, Grant's and Thomson's gazelles and the eland; long grass and sparse cover harbor duilier, reed buck and the graceful impalla. A prowl along a stream bed or swampy bottom generally rewards one with a sight of the waterbuck, one of the handsomest of the antelope kind. Streams of any depth, with papyrus, reed or other suitable growth on their banks, are the home of the hippo. Buffalo in these days are covert-loving animals, and for the most part are never found in the open except when feeding in the late afternoon and very

early morning. The rhino seems indifferent as to his habitat and I have found him in thick cover as well as on open plains. Lion, Original from

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leopard and cheetah may be found, if you are lucky enough, in any likely bit of bush and sometimes in very unlikely places indeed. The elephant lives in the bamboo forests high up on the slopes of the Aberdares, migrating at times across the plains to the forest on the lower levels. I have only mentioned a few of the antelope that exist and I have said nothing of the pig nor of the various lesser cats, but I hope I have said enough to show that there is ample game to satisfy the most exacting taste.

But do not imagine from the existance of so varied and numerous a fauna that East African game is at all easy to hunt and kill. Animals over there are no fonder of human beings than anywhere else and some of them are apt to be rather irritable if close acquaintance is sought. Their successful pursuit implies as much skill in woodcraft as in other countries and calls for considerable endurance in high temperatures. Neither frequent mirage on the plains, nor the high altitude, conduce to steady shooting and until one gets used to the country, it is very difficult to judge distances.

Travelling in the district I am describing is done either by a caravan of native porters, who carry your goods and food on their heads, or by ox-wagon on routes where there is sufficient water and the bush is not too thick to force a way through. Sometimes a combination of the two methods is employed with the idea of using the wagon as a base camp when on the edge of impassable country, with the porters available for the establishment of subsidiary camps in places where the ox-wagon cannot penetrate. I was accompanied by two white

friends on this occasion and, employing the last-named method, we found that cutting things down to their finest point, we needed an ox-wagon, sixteen oxen and about forty natives to transport our belongings and look after our needs for the space of two months. This probably sounds as if we were doing things on an ultraluxurious scale, but climatic conditions do not permit the simpler and preferable methods of this country. The white nan in East Africa needs considerably

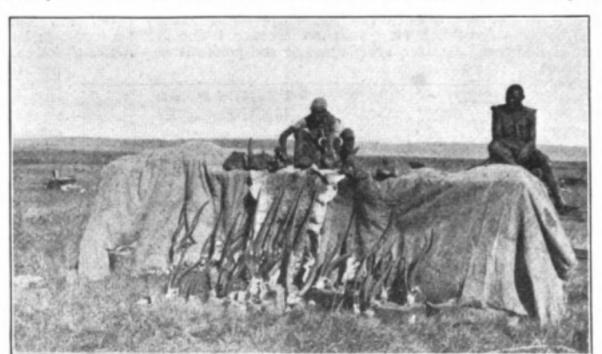
more comfort than in temperate climates to enable him to retain his health. There is the equatorial sun to be guarded against, sudden chills which if neglected lead to dysentery, and the ever-present malaria. These matters require constant vigilance if one wants to keep fit. Our own personal belongings went into one or two tin boxes apiece; the rest of the impedimenta consisted of the heavy tents, porter's "posho" or meal, tinned provisions, salt for curing skins, and two or three guns apiece.

Perhaps it does not appear enough to account for the forty men but of these latter eliminate the personal "boys," gun-bearers, the cook, skinner and one or two other dignitaries who will not carry loads, and then reckon that the rest of them carry not more than 60 lbs.



The rhino down for good

each, and that what they do carry represents all the absolute necessities for keeping you in the field for two months and you will come to the conclusion, as we did, that our outfit was a modest



A fine collection of heads and horns

one. The wealthy stranger in East Africa does things on a much more gorgeous scale, with a professional white hunter in attendance and enough porters to make the expedition look like the emigration of the Israelites.

FOR the first two or three days after leaving the settled areas, we saw no game on the line of march. After that, never a day passed without seeing herds of Burchell's zebra on the plains, together with the handsome little Thom-

son's gazelle. A stroll in the early morning or late afternoon on the edge of the nearest covert almost invariably rewarded us with a shot at duiker, water-buck, dik-dik or reedbuck, or if we took a shot-gun, maybe some of the feathered game would find its way to the pot. Though we bagged partridge of various species, spur-fowl, and in places, duck and geese, I grieve to say that none of us ever succeeded in shooting a guinea fowl, of which there was no lack. We should have taken along a .22 or other miniature rifle for these gentry, whose inconsiderate habit it is to run nimbly through the scrub until well out of range of a shot-gun and then take to their wings with a triumph-. ant cackle.

. The great charm of a stroll in the African bush is that one never knows what one will run across and one goes prepared accordingly. A day's bag consequently will be sometimes very mixed, often amusingly so. One memorable day produced a steinbuck, two rhino and a dik-dik, the last-named a miniature antelope the size of a hare. In addition, had we been so minded, we could have We took more pleasure shot giraffe. in watching for some little time a herd of these interesting but quite unsporting animals. As a rule, my companions and I hunted independently but that day we had elected to go out together and it was while waiting the issue of a futile attempt on the part of our men to drive herd of otherwise unapproachable eland that we became aware of fourteen giraffe feeding towards us from our rear. They were finally within rather less than 150 yards when they took the

alarm and for half an hour we had ample opportunity of watching these curious creatures through the glasses. I do not know the measurements of a full-grown giraffe but the biggest one of the herd must have stood between seven and eight feet at the shoulder, and when reaching up to crop the branch of a tree, the enormous neck appeared to roughly double that height.

The men's efforts resulting only in driving the cland the wrong way, we went on slowly to-

wards a group of rock hillocks. While cautiously skirting the base of one of these, my gun-bearers' keen eyes spotted three steinbuck on a patch of grass above us. A careful stalk brought me within 75 yards of them, a buck lying down and two rather watchful does feeding near him. There was enough of the buck visible to take the shot without whistling him to his feet and I broke up the pretty group with an & m/m, bullet through the buck's neck. He carried a good head and as it happened

was the only steinbuck we bagged on the trip.

Having disturbed the neighborhood by my shot, it seemed advisable to have lunch where we were. We made ourselves comfortable in the shade of some rocks, while the bearers squatted about us but ever with roaming eyes on the bush and plain below us. Half way through, an impalla disturbed the proceedings by appearing below us, about 120 yards away. It was not my shot but I happened to be nearest to the beast and any movement on the part of either of my companions to take the shot would have been in plain view, so the one who was next to me kindly pushed his 9 m/m Mauser over to me (my own rifle was some feet away) and missed that impalla very handsomely. It was a downhill shot, always a difficult one to me, and I discovered afterward that the sight on the rifle had been left with the 300 yard leaf up!

Apropos of this, while not blaming my friend in the least for having made the same mistake as I have made many times, I prefer nowadays never to alter my sights from the "point-blank" adjustment, merely aiming higher at longer ranges. It is not a specially difficult matter with a modern rifle to get to know the trajectory of one's weapon up to 300 yards and allow accordingly. Ordinarily, most shots are very well within that distance and one should not attempt longer ranges, though I must admit to occasionally being tempted when short of meat to pot some of the wary plains antelopes at 350 to 400 yards. I am not a good enough shot, however, to enjoy this long-range work and I always felt quite happy about it if the result was a clean miss, rather than a wounded beast to be chased and perhaps lost in the end.

WHEN the excitement produced by the impalla had died down we proceeded with lunch and a lazy cigarette afterward. One of my companions was sitting with his back against a rock scanning the plain through the glasses and presently discovered a rhino just below the crest of a slight rise, about two miles away. We all took a look then and discovered another one very near the first. Fully determined that those two rhino, now only black dots in the distance, should be ours before very long, we left the men where they were with strict injunctions to "stay put" and set out with only our gunbearers and one Wanderobo tracker, to make a detour through bush and low-lying ground, calculated to bring us down wind and within easy range of our quarry. One of my friends, somehow or other, lost touch with us in the bush and only two of us arrived at the spot where we had marked the rhino. No rhino was to be seen, however, although it was now open grass country. Convinced, nevertheless, that the beasts were not far off, we did some cautious counter-marching and at last I spotted a broad brown back, tail-on to me, almost hidden in the grass ninety yards away. Incidentally this was the first and only time, given equal opportunities, that I was ever able to discover the presence of game quicker than the natives.

The two animals had evidently lain down for a siesta, and though we could not spot the other one, we judged that it could not be very far away. I crept up quietly till I was within 50 or 60 yards of the beast I had spotted, and broadside on to him. Here I came to a halt, kneeling behind a small isolated bush, with the gunbearer and tracker squatting behind me. All I could see of the beast was the curve of his back, neither head, neck nor other vital spot being visible, and I was distinctly puzzled as to what to do next. The rhino himself however, cut the Gordian knot by suddenly rising to his feet; I take it that he had either winded us or heard some slight noise. He looked



Sulimani and the lioness

fixedly in my direction and I looked back, fascinated by the appearance of this pre-historic-looking creature.

Rhinos are very short-sighted and I was confident that he could not make me out, but I did not remain at gaze very long, and slowly raised the heavy rifle till the white enamel bead came to rest on his neck. The next instant I had pulled the trigger and had the satisfaction of seeing my first rhino drop in his tracks. Standing up for a better view, the first thing I saw was the other rhino, careering round in circles. My friend now came up level with me and explained that the second rhino had risen from the grass practically at the same moment as mine and that he had fired and hit. We must have shot simultaneously, as neither of us heard the other's shot. Judging from the way my beast collapsed we thought he was in less need of immediate attention than the other, whose maelstromlike progress had now taken it about 150 yards away. We each took another shot at the beast, without avail, and then decided to seek closer quarters. I realized, too, that my .600 was not the weapon for snap shots at running animals, however large, at 150 yards, and changed for the .400. I landed the next time with a head shot, my companion also scoring another hit, and rhino No. 2 came crashing down on its nose. Although we did not make a careful examination of the hits, I think that my friend's first shot must have been the fatal one, judging by the way blood was pouring out of the animal's mouth. He had scored just too far back for the heart shot and must have penetrated the lungs.

Now, a rhino is liberally endowed by nature with lung space, so much so that once it is penetrated he will choke to death in a remarkably short space of time. There was nothing suggestive of a charge in the antics of the beast; which was probably only fighting for the air denied it by the rush of blood from its lungs, and as we did not happen to be in its way, no trouble resulted. The whole episode took only a few minutes from the time we saw the first beast's back in the grass, and the satisfactory result was two rhino on very easy terms.

The hunter who had been lost now joined us, distinctly disappointed at not having been in at the death, but was as pleased as we were at our success. We went back to look at the first rhino, whose existence had been temporarily forgotten, and approached with a certain amount of respect, as I never quite trust the neck shot. If the spinal column is broken, death is of course instantaneous, but if the bullet passes slightly to one side of it without fracture resulting, the effect produced is often momentary paralysis, disconcertingly like death. However, there was no doubt in this case; he was still there, lying as he had fallen, with his head between his fore-legs.

Leaving the men to take off the horns and feet of the rhinos, we started back for camp, rounding off the day's bag with a dik-dik on the way. We also saw two wild dogs (Lycaon pictus) who were, unfortunately, too quick for the snapshot thrown after them. The total result for the day was, as aforesaid, one steinbuck, two rhino and a dik-dik. In addition, we had seen cland, impalla, wild dog, and, on the plains, herds of zebra, Grant and Thomson's gazelles. As far as my limited experience of only one district of East Africa goes, this was a somewhat exceptional day, but serves to give an idea of the prodigality with which nature has stocked this hunter's paradise.

NO description of East Africa would be complete without a reference to the lion. He may not, indeed, be the "king of beasts"—he sometimes comports himself in anything but a regal manner—but he is none the less always an interesting and imposing personage, splendidly equipped by nature to do battle and obviously endowed with no small measure of intelligence. By habit mainly

(Continued on page 135)

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### AN EAST AFRICAN HUNTING TRIP

(Continued from page 103)

nocturnal, it seems largely a matter of luck whether one sees him or not, and certainly there are many residents in East Africa of sporting proclivities who have never seen one in years.

On this trip we traversed a country where lions were positively known to be, so the usual precautions were taken at night to safeguard the draught and riding-animals. We occasionally heard a far-off roar after dark and sometimes came on more or less recent tracks, and sat up two nights over kills, but never did we get a glimpse of one until the trip was almost over and we were again on the verge of the outlying settled dis-For some reason, only known to the Red Gods, all the luck came my way. The first time I came to anything like close quarters was one very early morning when my two gunbearers, the tracker and I set out, with malice aforethought, to visit the carcass of an oryx I had killed the previous afternoon. The kill was on the edge of a dense patch of bush and Sulimani, who was leading the way, suddenly stiffened into a dusky image. He had seen a lion leave the carcass and disappear into the bush. Examination showed that a portion of the oryx had been eaten and that some part had been dragged off. The tracker, without a word, led off after the meat, and for the next half hour we followed that lion in a mazy pattern through the scrub. His tracks were plain on the dew-covered ground, and we must at times have been pretty close to him.

We found where he had jettisoned a hind leg of the oryx and we sat over that for another half hour in the vain hope that he would be hungry or un-intelligent enough to come and fetch it. After that we gave it up as a bad job, and I did not once view the beast. The tracker smiled his cheerful grin and pointed to my boots, to account for the failure. I had gone as quietly as I could but I could not compete with my naked Wanderobo follower. The white man must have boots and clothes, and no matter of what materials they are, he can never hope to move through tangled scrub with the perfect ease and silence of the black man.

The second lion episode was not a success, either, but it gave me all the thrills I wanted for a quarter of an hour or so and this time at least I saw my game. I had left camp before daybreak with my usual three native followers to try for a solitary buffalo whose tracks we had seen the previous afternoon. We duly picked up these but could not find any more recent ones, and while searching about in the scrub, the Wanderobo came on lion spoor, so fresh that there was little doubt that the beast was very close to us, in all probability just taking cover for the day after a night's hunting.

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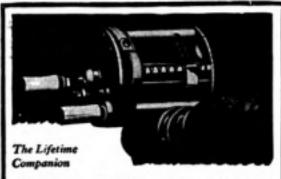
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and were striking at each other and rolling on their backs for all the world like two kittens. We watched them for maybe half a minute, though it seemed much longer, and then they disappeared very suddenly, and the opening in which they had been playing was filled momentarily by a yellow flash as a lioness bounded across and away from us. She vanished in the bush as quickly as she appeared, without offering a possible shot. The presence of cubs complicated matters and we took up the advance again with rather more caution than before.

In another twenty yards or so, we were brought up all standing by an angry growl on our right and very close. We peered through the tangle without being able to see anything. The tracker held up two forefingers to indicate that we had another lion to deal with now, but we were only able to make out, by the irritated rumble, that he was making off at right angles to our line of advance. We went on again but did not get very far before we were once more halted by a short growl, this time on our left. Facing about quickly, I just managed to spot a maned lion about fifteen yards off and slightly in the rear of us. It was just a glimpse before the bush swallowed him up, too, and again I failed to get a shot. Once more we went on. We had only about seventy-five yards to go before the scrub thinned out higher up on the hillside and we got through without further incident except a view of a lioness bounding over a rock some way above us and another going full pelt over a ridge two hundred yards away, both utterly impossible shots.

We went back to where we had first disturbed the lions and the tracks showed that there had been five full-grown beasts besides the two cubs, a pretty handful to deal with if there had been any trouble. The band had dispersed in different directions and though we followed one or two of the tracks for some time, we did not succeed in coming up again to any of the beasts, and as we and the lions had now thoroughly disturbed the haunt of our original quarry, the buffalo, we gave it up and went back to camp for breakfast.

DID at last get my lion, in the last week of the trip. On this occasion I ran into two lions in some bush. The male, a handsome, maned fellow, was too quick for me, but the lioness gave me a shot as she was moving off. I hit her too far back, but just under the spine, and the heavy 400 grain bullet knocked all the fight out of her. Sulimani, for the first and only time, lost his head, and loosed off with my light rifle, hitting her amidships, but again too far back to touch a vital spot. She slunk off to some thick stuff a few yards off and I ran in and finished her with a brain shot. We were only a mile away from the wagon and I sent back the second gunbearer to bring the skinner. The latter duly turned up and the rest of the safari with him. Each man shook me violently by the hand and made as much noise as he could. I was glad that

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and were striking at each other and rolling on their backs for all the world like two kittens. We watched them for maybe half a minute, though it seemed much longer, and then they disappeared very suddenly, and the opening in which they had been playing was filled momentarily by a yellow flash as a lioness bounded across and away from us. She vanished in the bush as quickly as she appeared, without offering a possible shot. The presence of cubs complicated matters and we took up the advance again with rather more caution than before.

In another twenty yards or so, we were brought up all standing by an angry growl on our right and very close. We peered through the tangle without being able to see anything. The tracker held up two forefingers to indicate that we had another lion to deal with now, but we were only able to make out, by the irritated rumble, that he was making off at right angles to our line of advance. We went on again but did not get very far before we were once more halted by a short growl, this time on our left. Facing about quickly, I just managed to spot a maned lion about fifteen yards off and slightly in the rear of us. It was just a glimpse before the bush swallowed him up, too, and again I failed to get a shot. Once more we went on. We had only about seventy-five yards to go before the scrub thinned out higher up on the hillside and we got through without further incident except a view of a lioness bounding over a rock some way above us and another going full pelt over a ridge two hundred yards away, both utterly impossible shots.

We went back to where we had first disturbed the lions and the tracks showed that there had been five full-grown beasts besides the two cubs, a pretty handful to deal with if there had been any trouble. The band had dispersed in different directions and though we followed one or two of the tracks for some time, we did not succeed in coming up again to any of the beasts, and as we and the lions had now thoroughly disturbed the haunt of our original quarry, the buffalo, we gave it up and went back to camp for breakfast.

DID at last get my lion, in the last week of the trip. On this occasion I ran into two lions in some bush. The male, a handsome, maned fellow, was too quick for me, but the lioness gave me a shot as she was moving off. I hit her too far back, but just under the spine, and the heavy 400 grain bullet knocked all the fight out of her. Sulimani, for the first and only time, lost his head, and loosed off with my light rifle, hitting her amidships, but again too far back to touch a vital spot. She slunk off to some thick stuff a few yards off and I ran in and finished her with a brain shot. We were only a mile away from the wagon and I sent back the second gunbearer to bring the skinner. The latter duly turned up and the rest of the safari with him. Each man shook me violently by the hand and made as much noise as he could. I was glad that

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my friends, moving at a more dignified pace than the natives, arrived after the song and dance were over; I felt much less embarrassed.

Sulimani was very apologetic for shooting. A gunbearer's duty is to be always at his master's elbow in the field, to be ready with fresh cartridges the instant the spent ones are ejected, to hand up the heavy rifle when dangerous game is afoot, to stand unperturbed behind his master when the latter is charged and perhaps misses, and to shoot only when it is absolutely necessary in order to save his employer's life. Both Sulimani and I were fully aware of the nature of a gunbearer's duties and I did not appreciate more holes in my lion's skin than were strictly necessary, but I could not bring myself to reproach him. I began to wonder whether I could do any better myself, or indeed, one half so well, if our jobs were reversed, as these three followers of mine. The tracker was only armed with a spear, Sulimani had my light rifle, which he was not supposed to use, and the second bearer that day had nothing in the nature of a weapon at all, the heavy gun having been left behind, as we were not expecting anything very big. All the latter did after I wounded the lioness was to quietly draw Sulimani's long knife from its sheath and calmly carry on, although it was still on the cards that the lioness might pull herself together sufficiently to give us an exceedingly unpleasant time. All three natives had seen me on occasion do some mighty bad shooting and for all they knew I might fail them at a pinch, yet they followed me without the slightest hesitation and even ran ahead to show me the lioness's last lurking place, though as careful as ever not to get in my way while I fired the last shot. And only a little broader grin than usual when it was all over to show that there had been anything at all out of the way!

If I had been in Sulimani's place, nothing on earth would have prevented me in the circumstances from using the weapon in my hands, and I did not feel that it was an occasion for reproof. I felt much more inclined to take my hat off to the three of them, and if I had another opportunity I would unhesitatingly employ them again. Never presuming, and always keen on finding game under arduous conditions of heat, wet and long marches, I somehow felt that men of their qualities were perhaps not so low in the scale of humanity as we white men have placed them, or that if they were, perhaps it is not worth while for us to be quite so high up.

I was glad that I had been able to shoot my one lion on foot, although as I have indicated, I did, in desperation, spend two unavailing nights in a tree waiting for lions that would not come. It seems to me that when one sets out to kill lions for one's amusement, that it is only fair to play the game on as even terms as are consistent with the supposition that one is worth rather more in this world than a lion, and the possession of a rifle gives one just the necessary advantage. I have nothing



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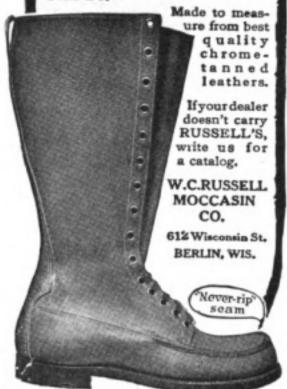
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however, against a settler taking every means in his power to rid himself of lions or other beasts that prey on his cattle. Sometimes the luck is with the settler who sits up over a kill, and I know of two who, working together, accounted for seven lions in one night. Another settler of my acquaintance, sitting up over his cattle boma, shot one of his own oxen. It is a chilly and uncertain business.

OF elephant and buffalo, I can say nothing from personal experience. On one occasion we were a day too late for a small herd of the former, and had no time then to turn back, and on two occasions I got within 15 yards of a solitary buffalo, after very hard work, for the meagre satisfaction of hearing a mighty crash as the animal made off in dense bush without even giving me a glimpse of him.

I saw hippo in Lakes Nakuru and Olbolosset but did not take them seriously enough to wait for them on the banks and I did not want to shoot them in the water. The nearest I ever got to one was when I was stalking my best waterbuck one evening on the edge of a swamp, on the Guaso Narok. A hippo snorted once or twice within a few yards of me, but as those few yards consisted of dense papyrus growing out of 6 or 8 feet of flood water, I preferred to go after the water buck.

My bag at the end of the trip was 39. all told, which comprised lion, rhino, Burchell's zebra, warthog, and specimens of twelve species of antelope, including one of the somewhat rare topi. We were not fortunate enough to get kudu or gerenuk, two much-prized and soughtafter trophies, and I was sorry that I eft East Africa without obtaining a hot at wildebeest, which are so commor n some parts but which apparently are not found at all on the Laikipia plateau. I was told I had made a good average collection for the district shot over and at any rate whether good, bad or indifferent, I felt very pleased with it and would like to live the trip all over again, including-if I could not do so on any other terms-the bout of fever which laid me low for a week.

Reptiles and insects caused us very little concern, except on one occasion when our Kavirondo driver light-heartedly stirred up a bee's nest. Ten minutes sufficed to scatter oxen, ponies and men over the adjacent three square miles of East Africa and two and a half hours elapsed before the bees were appeased, the safari collected again and the march resumed. The oxen cut capers incredible in such serious-minded beasts, the ponies finally took refuge in a stream and the surrounding country was a busy scene as white men and black ran hither and thither with waving arms, each with a halo of angry bees. Gradually we collected into little groups round smoke fires, in the shelter of which we lay prone and choking. Now and then a nigger, clad solely in a scanty blanket, would break across the open to some other place of fancied security. These wild dashes Dwighealwhathehed with hilarious enjoyment

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(continued on page 142)

by everyone within sight. Usually, the nigger would find the opposition too strong for the dash to be completed and he would hurl himeslf face down on the ground, wrapping his blanket around his This ostrich-like procedure resulted in baring most of the rest of his person and the immediate attack in mass on the exposed parts compensated the rest of us for a considerable amount of our own tribulations.

If I may be pardoned for saying so, it appears to me that the gun crank flourishes in even greater numbers in this country than in my own, and I add the following remarks on rifles in the hope that they may perhaps interest someone, although the types described are apparently very different from those used here. But I should like it understood that I am only giving my views, for what they are worth, on a subject on which many are better qualified to speak and on which every man holds his own opinions and decides for himself. 'My "battery" consisted of the following four weapons:

A .600 bore, double-barrel. Charge, 100 grains cordite, 900 grain bullet. This weapon was intended for close quarters only at the heaviest game. Its weight was 141/2 pounds and if I could not handle it easily I should scrap it unhesitatingly for something lighter, as I consider it a great mistake for a man to use a rifle which is too heavy for him. Although by no means a fashionable size, this, and the .577, are to my mind the only satisfactory modern equivalents of the heavy black powder rifles of 12, 10, and 8 bore, which so long filled the bill when a smashing, knock-down blow was required. In order not to get this effect at both ends, my .600 was fitted with a rubber anti-recoil heel-pad, which answered its purpose admirably, and the weapon was by no means uncomfortable to fire. The only occasion on which I used it was at the rhino, and as I got that with a neck shot, for which almost any other rifle would have done as well, I cannot say anything of its stopping qualities. I was sorry that the Buffalo did not allow me an opportunity of using it on them, as I intended. The only other man I heard of who used this size was a well-known and successful elephant hunter; nearly everyone nowadays using rifles of the .450 cordite group for heavy African or Indian game.

A .400, double-barrel. Charge, 55 grains cordite, 400 grain bullet. This is the nearest approach to an "all-around" rifle (in the existence of which I thoroughly disbelieve) that I have yet come across, and I have used it with success on all sorts of game, from ibex, deer and wild boar, to lion and the tough African antelope, some of which latter are very heavy beasts and seemed to me to be particularly tenacious of life. The heavy, soft-nosed bullet gives a paralysing shock and the trajectory is sufficiently flat for ordinary sporting ranges. The weight of the rifle is 101/2 pounds, which I can carry all day without discomfort. It is beautifully balanced, most of the weight being between the hands, and it is possible to make very quick shooting

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(Continued from page 139)

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(continued on page 142)

by everyone within sight. Usually, the nigger would find the opposition too strong for the dash to be completed and he would hurl himeslf face down on the ground, wrapping his blanket around his This ostrich-like procedure resulted in baring most of the rest of his person and the immediate attack in mass on the exposed parts compensated the rest of us for a considerable amount of our own tribulations.

If I may be pardoned for saying so, it appears to me that the gun crank flourishes in even greater numbers in this country than in my own, and I add the following remarks on rifles in the hope that they may perhaps interest someone, although the types described are apparently very different from those used here. But I should like it understood that I am only giving my views, for what they are worth, on a subject on which many are better qualified to speak and on which every man holds his own opinions and decides for himself. 'My "battery" consisted of the following four weapons:

A .600 bore, double-barrel. Charge, 100 grains cordite, 900 grain bullet. This weapon was intended for close quarters only at the heaviest game. Its weight was 141/2 pounds and if I could not handle it easily I should scrap it unhesitatingly for something lighter, as I consider it a great mistake for a man to use a rifle which is too heavy for him. Although by no means a fashionable size, this, and the .577, are to my mind the only satisfactory modern equivalents of the heavy black powder rifles of 12, 10, and 8 bore, which so long filled the bill when a smashing, knock-down blow was required. In order not to get this effect at both ends, my .600 was fitted with a rubber anti-recoil heel-pad, which answered its purpose admirably, and the weapon was by no means uncomfortable to fire. The only occasion on which I used it was at the rhino, and as I got that with a neck shot, for which almost any other rifle would have done as well, I cannot say anything of its stopping qualities. I was sorry that the Buffalo did not allow me an opportunity of using it on them, as I intended. The only other man I heard of who used this size was a well-known and successful elephant hunter; nearly everyone nowadays using rifles of the .450 cordite group for heavy African or Indian game.

A .400, double-barrel. Charge, 55 grains cordite, 400 grain bullet. This is the nearest approach to an "all-around" rifle (in the existence of which I thoroughly disbelieve) that I have yet come across, and I have used it with success on all sorts of game, from ibex, deer and wild boar, to lion and the tough African antelope, some of which latter are very heavy beasts and seemed to me to be particularly tenacious of life. The heavy, soft-nosed bullet gives a paralysing shock and the trajectory is sufficiently flat for ordinary sporting ranges. The weight of the rifle is 101/2 pounds, which I can carry all day without discomfort. It is beautifully balanced, most of the weight being between the hands, and it is possible to make very quick shooting

Owith at frand I invariably use the Lyman Digitized by Sherisers mention Porest and Stream NIVER STON MICHIGAN

pecp-sight, which is fitted behind the top lever on the grip. If penetration is required, solid nickel-covered bullets are used. I did most of my shooting in East Africa with this rifle, carrying it slung over my right shoulder, when there was no immediate need for it.

A word as to slings. I have never found them in the way but often a great assistance. The metal swivels usually supplied are apt to be noisy just when one wants to be particularly silent and I prefer to take them off and fasten the sling to the eyes on the rifle with rawhide laces instead.

A 12 bore Shot and Ball Gun, taken along originally as a spare in case of accident to one of the other rifles, and lent to one of my companions who had no second gun with him. As much to my regret as his, he had no opportunity to use it on heavy game and I was thus unable to try it out except at a target. It is, of course, meant for close quarters in thick covert, and makes very good grouping up to 100 yards, which is par It weighs 8 excellence its distance. pounds, has 28-inch barrels, rifled at the muzzle, and carries a sharp-pointed brass-capped bullet of 750 grains, driven by the cordite equivalent of 7 drams of black powder. It should be excellent for all soft-skinned game, and friends in India who have used similar guns for jungle-shooting speak very highly of its handiness and stopping properties. should not be confused with the ordinary 12 bore ball and shot gun, the charge for which is only 31/2 to 4 drams of black powder or its smokeless equivalent, which I consider unduly small for the heavy

All the three double-barreled weapons described above were of the hammerless, self-ejecting type.

An 8 m/m Mannlicher-Schönauer, bought second-hand in Nairobi to take the place of a magnum small bore I had brought with me, the ammunition for which (immediately post-war stuff) proved so unreliable as to entirely preclude the use of the rifle. I used the Mannlicher-Schönauer a fair amount for small game and should consider it by far the neatest of the bolt-action magazine rifles with which I am acquainted. So far as small game was concerned, its accuracy and killing qualities were quite satisfactory, but as neither the sighting nor stocking suited me, I more or less abandoned it in favor of the .400. I had never used a magazine rifle before and perhaps the experience was not a fortunate one as it only confirmed me in my devotion to the double-barrel type of rifle for game-shooting. The latter, in my humble opinion, has the following advantages over any magazine weapon and which the latter's multiplicity of shots and lighter weight do not appear to me to compensate for:

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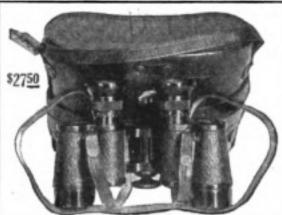
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