

# Sport and Adventure in Gallaland.

BY A. ARKELL-HARDWICK, F.R.G.S.

## II.

The narrative of a most eventful journey from Kikuyu, in British East Africa, to Gallaland, viâ Mount Kenia. Much of the country traversed is very little known, and Mr. Hardwick's party suffered much from the difficulties of the route, want of food when game was scarce, and the attacks of hostile natives.



WHEN we had laid in a sufficient supply of meat we continued our journey down the Waso Nyiro. The country hereabouts is covered with mineral salts. Wide expanses of carbonate of soda glitter in the sun with blinding radiance, while great masses of lava occur here and there. One layer, twenty-five feet in thickness, consisting of blocks of black vesicular lava, gave us a great deal of trouble, besides causing us no small anxiety. The blocks varied in size from a football to a small trunk; they were very sharp and jagged, and soon cut our boots to ribbons. If the reader will imagine a stream of ants endeavouring to cross an extensive bed of small coke our position will be grasped at once. The almost vertical sun beat down with merciless severity, and the lava absorbing a large amount of the heat, this heat was again given forth by radiation, so that at times we seemed to be walking on a veritable furnace. A dreadful thirst assailed us, and many of the men dropped from the combined effects of the terrific heat and exhaustion. After a march of an hour or so we considered that it was quite time we reached the other side, and pressed forward with greater speed. Hour after hour we toiled along among the piles of loosely-poised blocks of lava, which rolled and slipped continually under our feet, threatening at times to disturb the equilibrium of other adjacent piles, with great danger of their rolling down and crushing us. Our one desire was water. It was now quite as difficult to turn back as to go forward, so we kept doggedly on with the few followers who remained with us. The bulk of our men had dropped out one by one, utterly exhausted. We pushed on in the hope of reaching the farther side of the "cinder heap," as we called it, and there finding water which we could send back to those who remained behind.

At last, when hope had almost utterly expired, with our heads swimming and tongues parched

and swollen, we reached a spot where the layer of lava seemed thinner, and presently a stretch of light soil appeared with a few blades of stunted yellow grass growing upon it. We raised a feeble cheer and staggered forward, only to relapse once more into blank despair, as we found that it was but a few yards in extent. On the other side the lava appeared once more, black and forbidding as ever. Still we pushed forward, though no pen can describe the horrors of that unending tramp. We finally became apathetic, moving along like automata, gazing listlessly forward with unseeing eyes. Once a pair of giraffes crossed our path. They stood and gazed awhile and then fled. A rhinoceros also passed within twenty yards of us, and, notwithstanding his huge bulk, trotted lightly and easily over the lava blocks.

Late in the afternoon we reached the edge of this fearful plateau and descended to the sandy plain which lay beneath. It was covered with coarse scrub and clumps of sharp, jagged thorns, but by contrast with the inferno we had just quitted it seemed a very paradise. We had still a long and weary three-hour march before we reached the river once more, but everything has an end, and towards evening we threw ourselves down in the shade of the palms on the river bank, absolutely dead beat. We had no food and no tents or camp equipment, these being strewn along the road behind us, as the men halted one by one and fell out exhausted. We sent those men who had kept up with us to carry water to those still upon the road, but it was nearly eight hours later before they all turned up. They came into camp in groups of three or four, and, throwing down their loads, collapsed in a heap on the ground. One man died on that terrible "cinder heap," and was left where he fell by his comrades.

During the night some of the men managed to set the grass within the camp on fire. All hands turned out and, armed with blankets,

sacks, and buckets of water, fought madly against the fierce flames, which sprang up everywhere from the dry vegetation. Had the fire caught the palms nothing could have saved us, as the camp must inevitably have been destroyed.

On the fourth or fifth day after leaving the "Green Camp" we reached a large swamp of brackish water several miles in area. We camped upon a patch of green grass at the end of the swamp nearest the river. A peculiar



"ALL HANDS FOUGHT MADLY AGAINST THE FIERCE FLAMES."

After an hour's hard work, however, we managed to subdue the flames and retired to rest once again. We were all more or less singed in places, as we had turned out in our shirts and barefooted, so that we were by no means well protected.

Next morning we started down the river once more, taking particular care to keep near the banks, our experience of short cuts the day before having been particularly unfortunate. For some days we tramped along, the country growing wilder and more desolate as we advanced farther to the eastward. Gravel or red earth strewn with boulders and blocks of lava or quartz, with a scanty growth of thorn trees, formed as uninviting a landscape as one could wish to see. Here and there rose towering masses of rock, principally red and pink gneiss. On the faces of the cliffs adjoining the river troops of monkeys and baboons skipped and chattered unceasingly. The only restful feature in the landscape was the long line of palms which marked the sinuous course of the river. Game was growing scarcer and we had some difficulty in feeding the caravan.

circumstance connected with this swamp was that its bed was at least eighty feet higher than that of the river, which here flowed at the bottom of a deep cañon, and into which it emptied itself by a cascade of water, highly impregnated with minerals, which tumbled over the edge of the cliff.

As we had so far seen no signs of the Rendile and Burkeneji tribes, of whom we were in search, we determined to retrace our steps up the river to the "Green Camp," and from there strike northward to Mount Lololokwe, in the hope of finding them in that locality. We therefore arose early next morning and departed, being hastened thereto by dense clouds of tiny midges, which arose from the swamp and ferociously attacked both man and beast, driving us all nearly frantic. They were exceedingly small, but their sting was most venomous, and soon our faces, necks, and arms were itching madly from innumerable bites. It was not until we were nearly half a mile from the swamp that we were free from these pests.

On the day that we reached the "Green Camp" we shot a couple of rhinoceroses, which

were immediately cut up for food by our half-starved retainers. My rhinoceros made things very unpleasant for me until I finally downed him. I fired at him with the Martini at twenty yards. Being so close to him I aimed somewhat carelessly, with the result that I hit him rather too high up in the shoulder and wounded without disabling him. On receiving the shot he stood quite still for a moment and then walked slowly away. Thinking I was going to lose him I moved cautiously forward, but stumbled over a small heap of loose stones in doing so. Round came my quarry and charged me, while I hastily reloaded, finding, to my consternation, that I had but one cartridge left. I dodged behind the stone heap, but the rhino dodged also, and we met face to face on the opposite side. I had no time to weigh chances, so, raising my rifle, I let him have my last cartridge in the neck, and by great good luck succeeded in smashing his spine. He dropped dead instantly within three yards of me, thus relieving my mind considerably, for I must confess I had already commenced to dwell with unpleasant persistence upon fractures, dislocations, and other inconveniences incidental to a meeting with an enraged and wounded rhinoceros. However, "all's well that end's well," and my late antagonist proved a welcome addition to our commissariat.

When we reached the "Green Camp" we sent a few men back to M'thara to try to obtain a couple of Wandorobbo guides. These Wandorobbo are great hunters. They have no settled habitation, but travel about from place to place in small bands to any spot where game is to be found. They kill elephants by means of a heavy spear with a poisoned barb loosely fitted into a socket at the head. Creeping into the bush to the spot where the elephant is feeding, the Wandorobbo hunter watches his opportunity and selects a place in the flank of the huge beast, where the skin is thinner than on the rest of the body, and with a quick movement plunges his spear into his vitals. He then disappears into the bush with great agility. The startled elephant breaks away through the bush, and the heavy spear-shaft drops to the ground, leaving the poisoned barb to do its deadly work in the animal's body. Sometimes the hunter is caught and instantly killed by the enraged elephant; but I did not learn that such an occurrence spoilt the appetites of the surviving members of the band.

After five days' absence the men whom we sent to M'thara returned, having secured two Wandorobbo guides, who informed us that the Rendile were situated by the river, much

farther down than the swamp at which we had camped. We therefore started once more on our journey down stream, but at the first halt, to our utter dismay, the guides suddenly bolted and disappeared into the surrounding bush, eluding all search. We were utterly at a loss to account for their singular action, and a cross-examination of our men threw no light upon the matter. We finally put it down to the perversity of things in general and native guides in particular.

We then held a consultation, and as a result decided to continue our march down the river until we found the Rendile, as, at any rate, we had now definite information of their whereabouts. For the next few days we tramped steadily eastward, the country becoming daily more forbidding in its aspect. For many miles, in certain places, the ground was covered with loose stones, which rolled and slipped underfoot, bruising our ankles and making a long march an event to be painfully remembered. With the exception of the palms on the river bank, a few aloes and scattered thorn trees were the only representatives of the vegetable world. These, in combination with the great red masses of gneiss rock, some of which were several hundred feet in height, and patches of brown, soft earth into which we sank above the ankles at every step, formed as desolate and dreary a landscape as could be found in Africa. Game, too, became very scarce, and we began to feel the sharp pinch of hunger.

At length the men could go no farther, and one afternoon we halted on the river bank and decided to camp there all the next day, sending a few men on ahead in light marching order to see if they could discover anything of the whereabouts of the Rendile. If they did not, we promised to turn back. We had scarcely made these arrangements, however, when a shout from some of our men of "People! people! We can see many people!" aroused us. Inquiry elicited the fact that a body of men were approaching our camp from down the river. When they reached us we found to our inexpressible relief that they were some eighty of the men of the Somalis' caravan previously mentioned, which left M'thara two or three days before us. Their leader, Mokojori, informed us that their main body under Ismail was even then camped among the Rendile villages five days' march farther down the river! His party had been sent to buy food at Dhaicho, a settlement on the other side of the Jombeni hills, the home of the Wa'Embe, and were now on their way thither. They very kindly lent us one of their number as a guide, and then proceeded on their way. We resumed our march

the following morning, and after four days' hard travelling arrived, tired, footsore, and hungry, within sight of the long-desired encampments of the Rendile and Burkeneji tribes.

We were well received, and at once proceeded to make ourselves comfortable. Ismail had constructed a large thorn stockade and pitched his camp inside. When we arrived he was engaged in dispatching parties of men provided with cloths, iron and brass wire, and beads in every direction, for the purpose of buying ivory and camels from the Rendile.

As soon as we had settled down in our own camps we received visits from several of the Rendile chiefs. In appearance these nomads of the desert were most prepossessing. Well built and of fine physique, they exhibited none of the characteristics of the negro. Their jet-black hair was long and straight, their foreheads were high, and noses inclined to be aquiline. Their jaws and chins were firm and clean cut, while in colour they ranged from dark brown to olive. They were clad in ample cloaks of white cloth ornamented with fringes of small red beads, and presented an appearance infinitely superior to the natives farther south.

The tribe is very wealthy as natives go, some of the more powerful individuals among them possessing thousands of sheep, goats, and camels. One chief named Lubo possessed no fewer than sixteen thousand camels, with sheep and goats innumerable. Though they are gentle in their manners almost to the point of absurdity, they are fierce fighters on occasion. Almost all of the old men bore the marks of spear wounds gained in their youth in sanguinary conflicts with the Borana, who live more to the northwards in the Arushi Galla country; and with the Turkana, who live to the west of Lake Rudolph. Their weapons consist of a light spear and shield of buffalo or ox hide of a peculiar narrow oblong shape. We were informed that the young men who wished to demonstrate their courage were in the habit of throwing their shields away at the commencement of a fight and receiving upon their left forearm the spear-thrusts they were unable to dodge.

We found them, in spite of their wealth, most persistent beggars. They would sit in front of our tents for hours while begging for a bit of brass wire or a few beads. When remonstrated with they would raise their eyebrows gently in mild surprise and say, "Is it not good to give?" When we retorted that if that were so why did they not give *us* something, they answered still more surprisedly, "You have never asked!" When we pointed out that it was not the custom of the white man to beg, they were quite unable to understand.

The climate here was delightful—very hot, but the air was dry and clear. The Rendile lived on milk, of which they obtained immense quantities from their vast flocks and herds, though, strange to say, they owned very few cattle. They milk their camels, sheep, and goats indiscriminately, pouring the mixed product into vessels of wood or plaited string made watertight with gum. After our long spell of a purely meat diet we followed their example and lived for some weeks on milk, which we bought from them. A few beads would purchase about a gallon of milk, which we boiled, and this, with the addition of a saccharine tabloid from the medicine chest, made a nourishing if somewhat unsatisfying meal. The three of us usually consumed about two gallons per day each when we could get it, and personally I never felt so well in my life, and I gained a stone in weight.

Small-pox was raging with great violence in the tribe and the deaths were very numerous, the population of some of the villages being so depleted that the survivors were unable to drive all their animals down to water at once, but instead took the sheep down to the river one day and the camels the next, and so on alternately.

The Burkeneji, who are also known as the Samburu, were very different to their neighbours both in appearance and disposition. The two tribes lived and wandered over the country together, but remained perfectly distinct from one another in language and habits. The Burkeneji closely approached the negro type, with their broad, flat noses and prognathous jaws. In their behaviour to us they were sullen and inclined to be quarrelsome; indeed, upon one occasion there was some friction between them and a party of our men, and a spear was thrown, though, happily, without fatal result. Fortunately, we managed to smooth the affair over without further hostilities. I could never rightly understand their relations with the Rendile. I was informed that at one time they were the slaves of the latter, but they have so increased in numbers (while the Rendile, owing to the small-pox, have proportionately decreased) that they are now a force to be reckoned with. They act as a kind of standing army to the Rendile, and in return reserve to themselves the right to loot the flocks and herds of their erstwhile masters. The Rendile more than once complained to us after some particularly daring theft, but, strange to say, they were never moved to resentment or retaliation, at least so far as I could ascertain.

At this time the Somali caravan met with a terrible disaster. The party of eighty men, under the headman whom we had met upon the road and who lent us a guide, had not returned

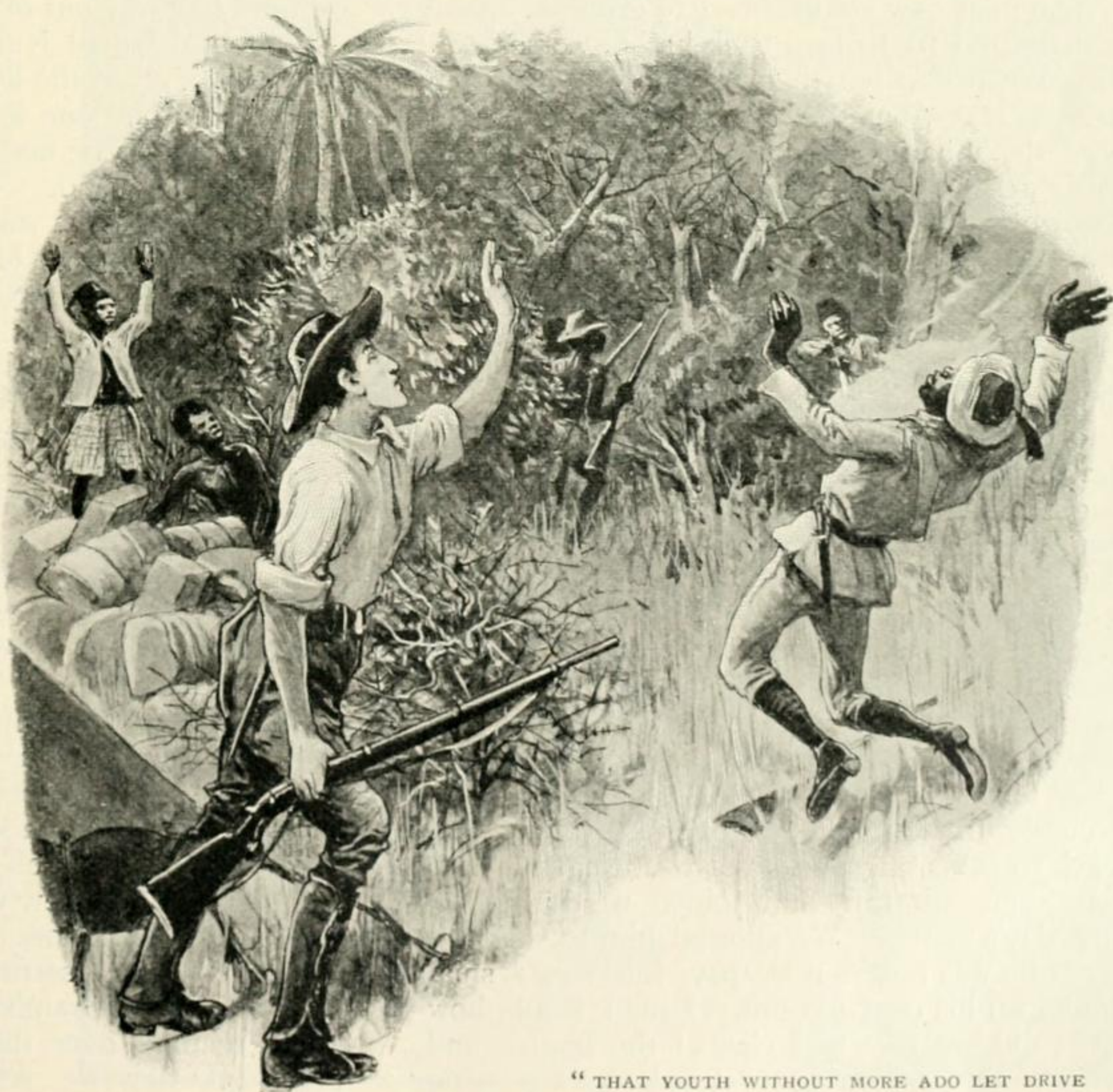
at the expected time. A few days after our arrival among the Rendile a group of haggard and travel-stained men, to the number of sixteen, staggered into Ismail's camp, the sole survivors of the large party which he had sent to buy food at Dhaicho. Their story was very brief, but to the point. The day after they met us they left the river and struck southwards across the desert in the direction of the Jombeni hills. The water-hole at which they had intended camping was found to be dry, so they pushed on. For three days they pressed blindly forward in the scorching sun, suffering untold agonies for want of water. On the afternoon of the fourth day they reached the foot of the hills and found a small pool. They threw themselves down and drank as only men in a similar plight could drink, and then, overcome with fatigue, they lay down to sleep. The Wa'Embe had watched their arrival from the hills, and while they slept descended and attacked them in overwhelming force. The poor wretches, enfeebled by their sufferings, made practically no defence, but were massacred in detail as they attempted to flee. Spear and sword soon did their ghastly work, and over sixty men perished before the dusk descended and put a stop to the butchery. Only a few of the more active succeeded in getting away and regaining their camp.

After two or three weeks' stay among the Rendile, it occurred to us to make the attempt to reach the Lorian swamp, into which the Waso Nyiro empties itself. This swamp was discovered by Mr. Astor Chanler in 1893. He and his companion, Lieutenant Ludwig Von Hohnel, of the Imperial Austrian Navy, having heard, when travelling

on the upper reaches of the Waso Nyiro, that a large lake existed somewhere to the eastward, determined to make an effort to reach it. They were fired by the hope of discovering another great African lake, and when, after a tremendous march, suffering incredible hardships by the way, they found that it was only a swamp after all, they were so disgusted and disappointed that they turned back at once without examining it further. We hoped, therefore, to reach Lorian and examine it more particularly, a hope, alas! doomed to disappointment.

Leaving our Rendile camp in charge of our headman with the bulk of the porters, we started with only a dozen men in light marching order. Tents and camp equipment were all left behind; a couple of blankets apiece, a spare shirt or two, a quantity of ammunition, and a couple of cooking-pots constituting our sole impedimenta.

For the first day or two the travelling was fairly easy, but after that the character of the country completely changed. The Waso Nyiro now flowed through the barren desert, and at times patches of brown earth several square miles in extent materially impeded our progress.



"THAT YOUTH WITHOUT MORE ADD LET DRIVE AT ISMAIL."

This brown earth was of the consistency of starch and seemed to be undermined in every direction by holes and burrows. We sank up to our knees at every step, while the mules floundered along in a most pitiful manner. It was utterly impossible to ride them. Our passage caused clouds of fine dust to rise, which nearly choked us, filling our eyes, ears, and nostrils in a particularly uncomfortable and irritating manner. At other times we would meet with great patches of smooth white sand, looking to the eye as firm and hard as possible, but we found it every whit as treacherous as the brown earth. It gave way under our feet and caused us endless trouble and fatigue in traversing it. Rhinoceroses were also disgustingly frequent and frightened the men considerably. Great crocodiles, ranging in colour from bright yellow and bright green to dark brown, basked in the sun upon the mud of the river banks. One of the loathsome reptiles captured and devoured our little dog without giving us a chance of retaliation, an event which damped our spirits considerably, as we were exceedingly fond of the animal, which had endeared itself to us all by its winning disposition and playful manners.

The men now commenced to grumble openly and desired us to turn back before worse befell us. We persuaded them to keep up for a day or two longer, but they were already half mutinous, which handicapped us somewhat. Two of them deserted, and the others showed signs of following their example. "We have come to the end of the world," said they; "let us go back. There are many devils here, and we are greatly afraid!"

To cut a long story short, we reached the limit of Mr. Chanler's journey in 1893, only to find that Lorian had receded still more to the eastward, doubtless owing to the drought, which had already lasted for three years at the time of our visit. We shot a hippopotamus and a couple of buffalo, which gave us a sufficient supply of food to take us back to our Rendile camp, a matter of seven days' journey. Those seven days were among the hardest we had yet experienced, but we pegged away and eventually arrived safely, footsore and half-starved.

A fortnight later we bade farewell to our Rendile friends and commenced our march back to M'thara. A Somali youth named Barri left their caravan and joined us during our first day's march. We allowed him to stay with us as he was not in their pay, but was a small trader on his own account. Ismail Robli, however, did not take that view of the matter, and, as we were preparing to break up our camp preparatory to resuming our march on the

second day, he appeared in a state of great excitement with a few armed followers, having marched all night in order to overtake us. He demanded that Barri should be given up to him, but as that youth had left our camp two or three hours earlier to try to procure some milk for us from a distant Burkeneji village we were unable to comply with his request.

In the meantime some of Ismail's men were hunting about round our camp, and at that moment Barri returned. Two of the Somalis rushed at him, threatening him with loaded rifles and demanding his immediate surrender. Barri's reply was a shot from his Martini, which sent them helter-skelter behind a neighbouring bush, from whence they opened a parley while endeavouring to get a shot at him. Barri, however, was equally wary, and another bullet from his rifle showed them that he was very much on the alert. Ismail, hearing the shots, rushed out of our camp with his rifle and ran at Barri, threatening to shoot him. That youth without more ado let drive at Ismail, bringing him down, and then turned and fled into the bush and got clear away. We had rushed after Ismail in order to prevent bloodshed, but it all happened with such rapidity that Ismail was shot before we were half-way out of camp.

We found Ismail lying upon the ground with a bullet wound in the leg just above the ankle. Fortunately the bone was not shattered, and the injury proved to be nothing more serious than a severe flesh wound. We dressed the injury and then rigged up a sort of ambulance, in which we sent Ismail back to his own camp. Barri rejoined us some days later when we were farther down the river. As he had acted purely in self-defence we could not find it in our hearts to condemn him, and therefore allowed him to remain with us, more especially as his life would not have been worth a moment's purchase in the Somali camp had we sent him back.

During our ten days' march back to our "Green Camp" we suffered considerably from want of food. Game was scarce and the formation of the country made the travelling exceedingly arduous. With great good fortune we secured a hippopotamus which was disporting itself in a pool in the river, and that helped us somewhat; but just before that a solitary partridge between us formed the only meal my two companions and myself had made in two days.

At length, however, we reached the "Green Camp," and once more revelled in an abundance of meat, which we secured from among the vast herds of zebra, Grant's gazelle, and waterbuck which roamed over the surrounding country. The next day we resumed our journey to M'thara. On the first march we shot a young

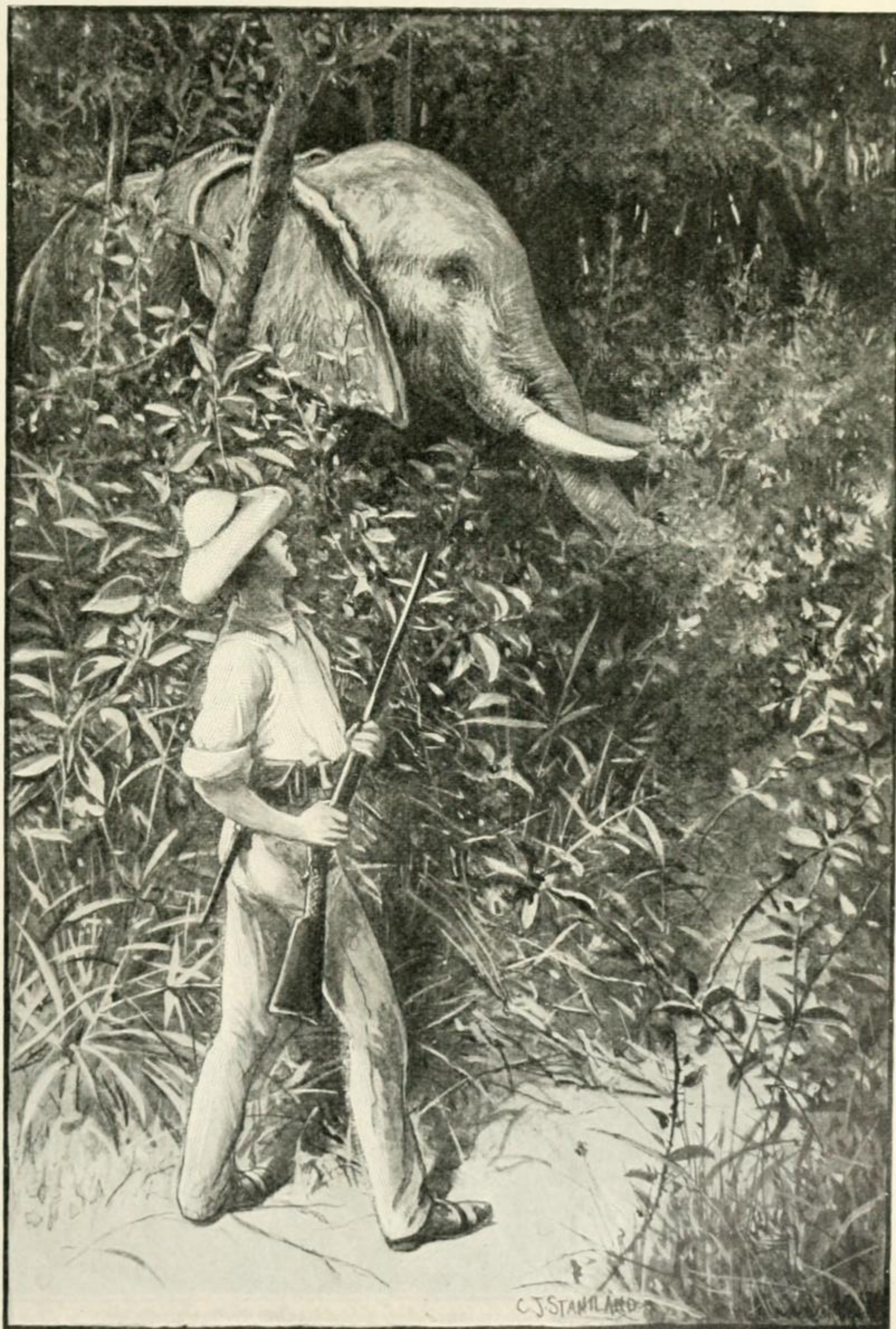
bull elephant, a portion of which we added to our larder.

When we reached M'thara we found a famine in the land, the bean crop having failed for want of rain. To add to our embarrassments we found that the natives of Munithu, who had plenty of food, were hostile, and when we marched over to Munithu for the purpose of buying food for our journey round West Kenia we were attacked, and only after a severe running fight for over five hours did we succeed in regaining our M'thara camp.

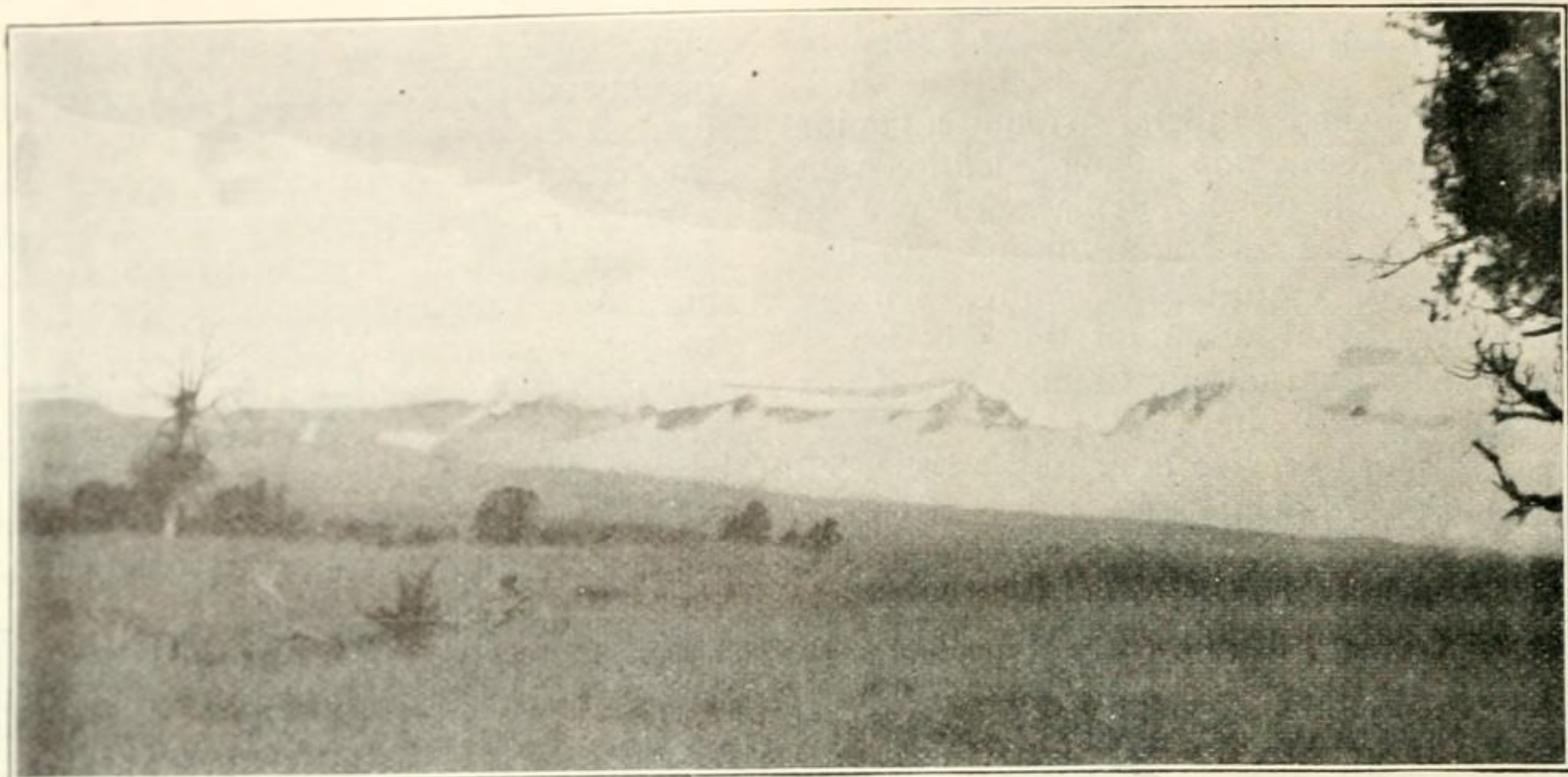
During our stay at M'thara we shot another elephant in the thorn forest adjacent to our camp. He was a fine beast, and gave us a three hours' stern chase after receiving the first shot, which, however, ultimately proved fatal. It was probably the same beast which had disappointed me so during our stay in this part of the forest three months before. I was sitting in camp one day when I heard some guinea-fowl calling in the forest outside the camp. Seizing my gun, I sallied forth, intent upon securing a bird or two for the pot. I was wearing a pair of thin rubber shoes, and, creeping quietly through the bush, wandered some distance from camp. Presently, as I got farther into the forest, the vegetation grew extremely dense, and I was compelled to follow a narrow game-track in order to make any headway at all. Suddenly I saw a large, brown, shapeless mass looming through the undergrowth a few yards away. Halting instantly, I gazed upon it, wondering what on earth it could be. I could not make it out, and crept noiselessly nearer in order to get a better

view. When within ten or fifteen yards the object suddenly moved, and an enormous head, flanked by a pair of magnificent tusks, swung into view; and there I stood, armed only with a 20-bore shot-gun, gazing into the face of an old bull elephant. For an instant I stood still, and then, cautiously backing down the path, I made for camp with all speed for a rifle, but when I returned an hour later the elephant had withdrawn into the deeper recesses of the forest and could not be found.

The weather now changed and the long-delayed rains commenced to descend in earnest.



"FOR AN INSTANT I STOOD STILL."

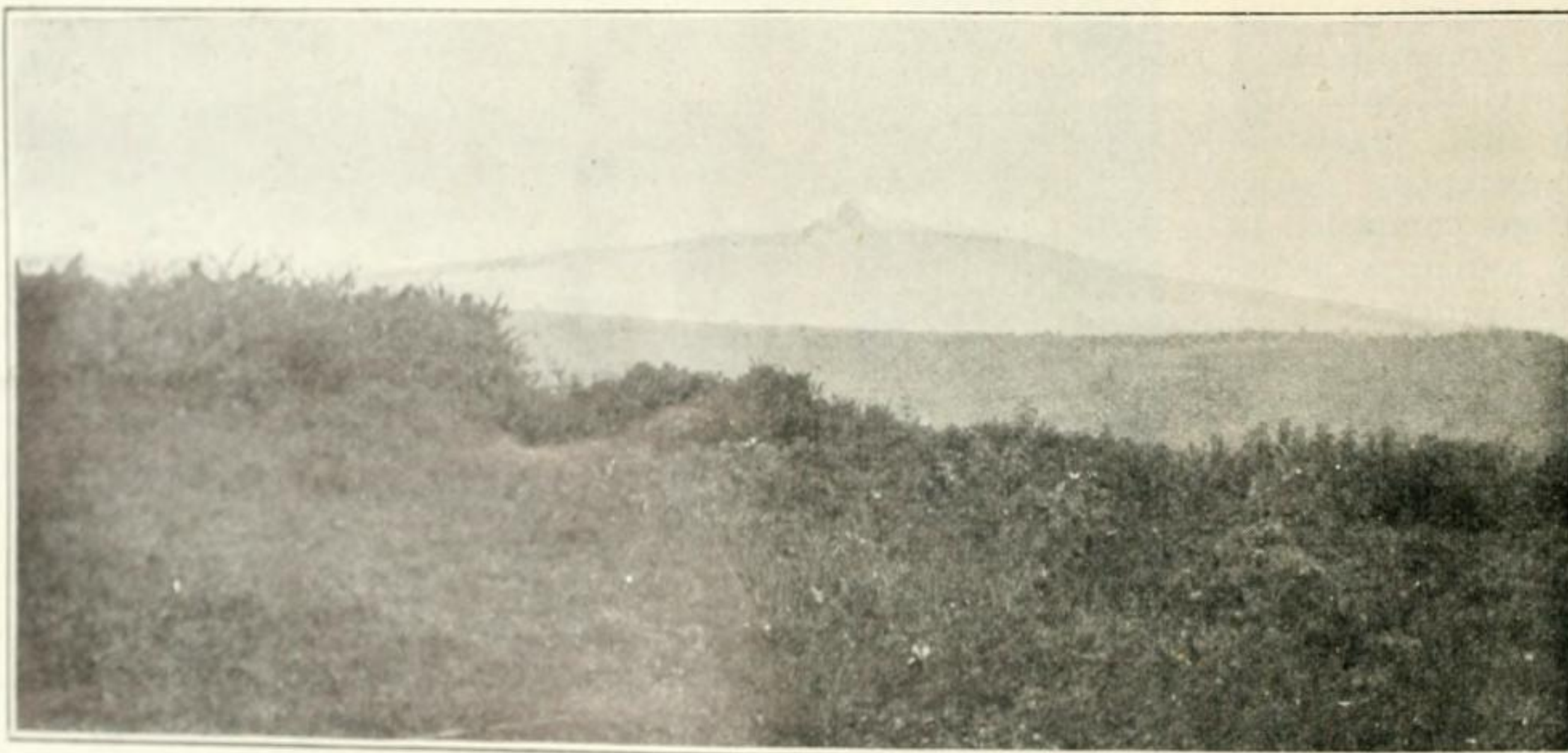


MOUNT KENIA FROM THE NORTH—ALTHOUGH SITUATED ALMOST ON THE EQUATOR IT IS CROWNED WITH EVERLASTING SNOW.  
*From a Photo.*

We had collected a few loads of food for our journey round the inhospitable country to the north and west of Mount Kenia, and only waited for a favourable opportunity to start. At last it came, and we bade farewell to our friends in M'thara. From the first the travelling was wretched. It rained hard day after day, and as we ascended the lower slopes of the mountains the air grew chilly, and altogether matters were as uncomfortable as they could possibly be. We kept doggedly on, however, and put mile after mile behind us as we advanced steadily homeward. Soon the country grew more open, and we traversed vast undulated uplands covered with short green grass. Several herds of zebra grazed about, but they were so shy that it was impossible to get within range, though we tried frequently, as our food supply was again

running low. These uplands were divided by enormous ravines, which radiated from the central peak of Kenia like the spokes of a wheel. They were densely forested. Immense cedars and podocarpus of enormous growth abounded on every side. Several large rivers flow northwards from Kenia, eventually joining the Waso Nyiro, which itself rises in North-West Kenia.

As seen from the north, the central peak of this stupendous mountain presents a magnificent appearance. Though situated only a few miles south of the Equator, its altitude is so great that it is crowned with everlasting snow. The sides of the peak are so precipitous in places that the snow has no hold and falls off, leaving exposed great patches of bare black rock. I managed to secure a photograph of the peak



MOUNT KENIA FROM THE SOUTH-WEST—SEVERAL LARGE RIVERS HAVE THEIR SOURCES NEAR THIS GREAT PEAK.  
*From a Photo.*



from the north side, when for a few moments it happened to be partially uncovered by the drifting cloud-banks, which sometimes conceal it for weeks together.

After ten days' marching we reached the Masai settlement at Kwa Ngombe, or N'doro,

thickly-populated country to Maranga, where we were warmly welcomed by the chief, our old friend Manga. We were detained here a fortnight by the flooded condition of the Tana River, but eventually got across safely with all our impedimenta. We found that the Govern-



*From a*

A MASAI CHIEF AND HIS MEDICINE MAN.

*[Photo.*

in South-West Kenia, first visited in 1887 by Count Teleki, the discoverer of Lakes Rudolph and Stephanie, who, indeed, is the only other white man who has been there. We were not very hospitably received, as the Masai chief demanded a heavy tribute, which we emphatically refused to pay, and he left our camp in a very abrupt and discourteous manner. At this place we procured guides, who took us through

ment had built a new station and fort at M'biri, a matter of a couple of hours' walk from the Tana, and here, in the person of the officer in charge of the troops, we saw the first white face we had seen for six months. On leaving M'biri a march of eight or ten days took us safely into Nairobi and civilization, and thus ended our expedition to Mount Kenia and the Waso Nyiro.