

Carl R. Green

423 N. C. St.

AN IVORY TRADER IN  
NORTH KENIA

THE RECORD OF AN EXPEDITION THROUGH  
KIKUYU TO GALLA-LAND IN EAST  
EQUATORIAL AFRICA

*WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE RENDILI AND  
BURKENEJI TRIBES*

BY

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

*WITH TWENTY-THREE ILLUSTRATIONS FROM  
PHOTOGRAPHS, AND A MAP*

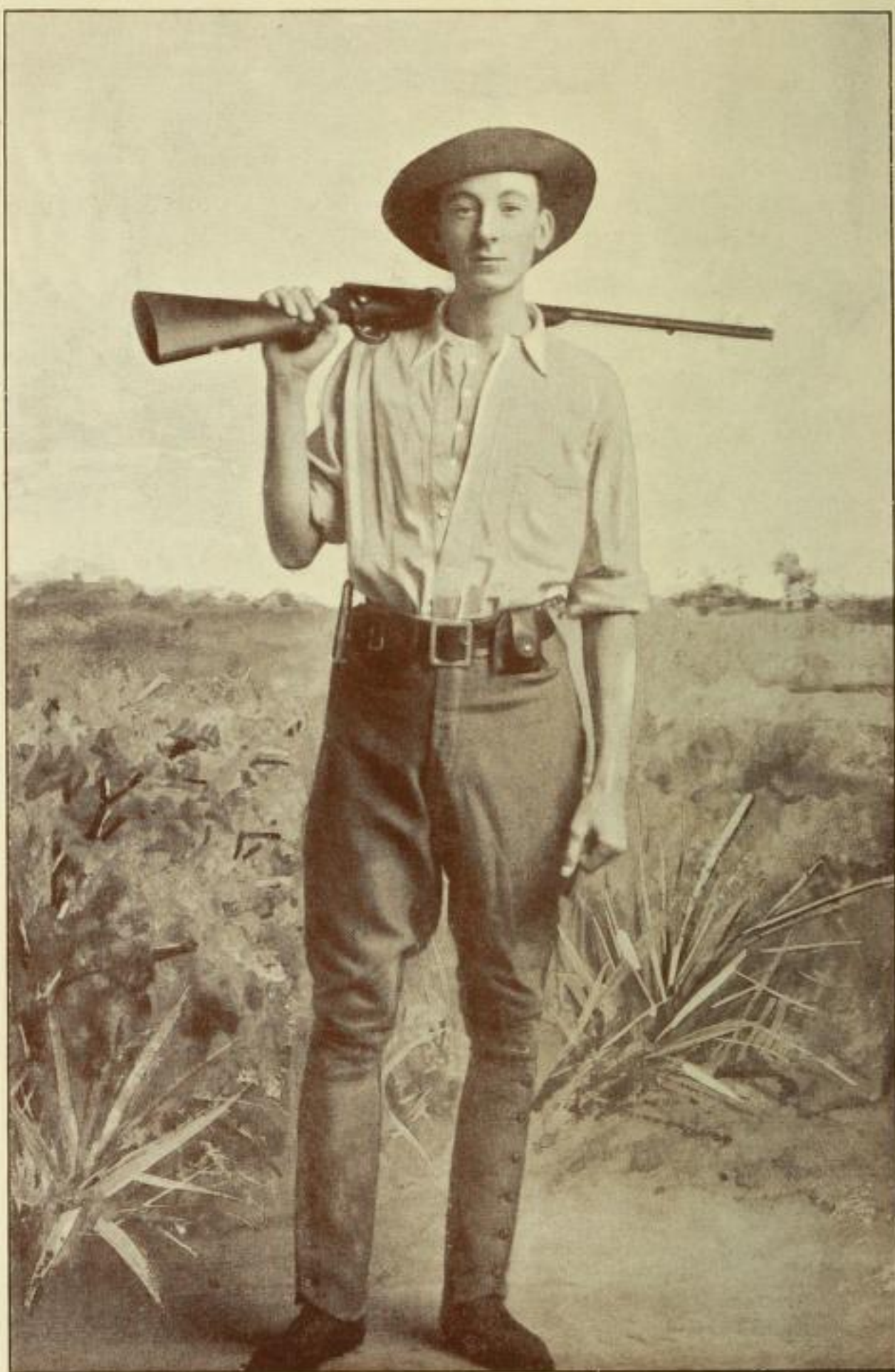
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THE AUTHOR.

# THROUGH KIKUYU TO GALLA-LAND

## INTRODUCTION.

My friend, George Henry West, and myself left Cairo in the latter part of the year 1899, with the intention of proceeding to Uganda *viâ* Zanzibar and Mombasa. George was an engineer in the service of the Irrigation Department of the Egyptian Government, and had gained a large and varied experience on the new works on the Barrage below Cairo, then being concluded, and in building, running, and repairing both locomotives and launches. As a profession I had followed the sea for three years, leaving it in 1896 in order to join the British South African Police, then engaged in subduing the native rebellion in Mashonaland. At the conclusion of hostilities I wandered over South Africa, and finally found my way to Egypt, where I met George West. A year later, accompanied by George, I was on my way southwards again, *en route* for British East Africa.

When George and I left Cairo, our idea was to go up-country as far as the Lake Victoria Nyanza, as we considered it extremely probable that there would be something for us to do in the engineering line, either in building launches or in the construction of small harbour works.

We reached Mombasa in due course, and from there

proceeded to Nairobi by the railway then in course of construction to Uganda. Nairobi is 327 miles from the coast, and is an important centre, being the head-quarters of both the Civil Administration of the Protectorate and the Uganda railway. On our arrival, George received an offer, which he accepted, to go up to the lake with a steamer, which was then on the way out from England in sections, and on his arrival at the lake with it to rebuild it. I remained in Nairobi.

In course of time I met the personage referred to in these pages as "El Hakim,"<sup>1</sup> whom I had known previously by repute. He was said to be one of the most daring and resolute, and at the same time one of the most unassuming Englishmen in the Protectorate; a dead shot, and a charming companion. He had been shooting in Somaliland and the neighbourhood of Lake Rudolph for the previous four years, and many were the stories told of his prowess among elephant and other big game.

It was with sincere pleasure, therefore, that I found I was able to do him sundry small services, and we soon became fast friends. In appearance he was nothing out of the common. He was by no means a big man—rather the reverse, in fact—and it was only on closer acquaintance that his striking personality impressed one.

He had dark hair and eyes, and an aquiline nose. He was a man of many and varied attainments. Primarily a member of the medical profession, his opinions on most other subjects were listened to with respect. A very precise speaker, he had a clear and impartial manner of reviewing anything under discussion which never failed to impress his hearers.

<sup>1</sup> *Anglice*, "The Doctor."

He was a leader one would have willingly followed to the end of the earth. When, therefore, he proposed that I should accompany him on an ivory trading expedition to Galla-land, that vast stretch of country lying between Mount Kenia on the south and Southern Somaliland on the north, which is nominally under the sphere of influence of the British East African Protectorate, I jumped at the chance; and it was so arranged. He had been over much of the ground we intended covering, and knew the country, so that it promised to be a most interesting trip.

About this time I heard from George that he was coming down country, as the steamer parts had not all arrived from England, and consequently it would probably be months before it would be ready for building. He had also had a bad attack of malarial fever in the unhealthy district immediately surrounding the lake at Ugowe Bay, and altogether he was not very fit. I suggested to El Hakim that George should join us in our proposed expedition, to which he readily agreed; so I wrote to George to that effect.

To render the prospect still more inviting, there existed a certain element of mystery with regard to the river Waso Nyiro (pronounced Wasso Nēro). It has always been supposed to rise in the Aberdare Range, but, as I shall show, I have very good reason to believe that it rises in the western slopes of Kenia Mountain itself. The Waso Nyiro does not empty itself into the sea, but ends in a swamp called Lorian, the position of which was supposed to have been fixed by an exploring party in 1893. But, as I shall also show in the course of this narrative, the position of Lorian varies.

The upper reaches of the Waso Nyiro were visited by the explorer Joseph Thompson, F.R.G.S., on his way to

Lake Baringo during his memorable journey through Masai Land in 1885.

In 1887-1888 a Hungarian nobleman, Count Samuel Teleki von Czeck, accompanied by Lieutenant Ludwig von Hohnel, of the Imperial Austrian Navy, undertook the stupendous journey which resulted in the discovery of Lakes Rudolph and Stephanie. Count Teleki, on his journey north, crossed the Waso Nyiro at a point in North-West Kenia near its source, while Lieutenant von Hohnel went two or three days' march still further down-stream.

A few years later, in 1892-1893, Professor J. W. Gregory, D.Sc., of the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, made, single-handed, a remarkable journey to Lake Baringo and Mount Kenia, and in the teeth of almost insuperable difficulties, ascended the western face of that mountain and climbed the peak.

At the same time, in the latter part of 1892, an American, Mr. William Astor Chanler, accompanied by Count Teleki's companion and chronicler, Lieutenant von Hohnel, started from a point in Formosa Bay on the East Coast, and made his way along the course of Tana River to North-East Kenia, intending later to go on to Lake Rudolph, and thence northward. He and his companion, deceived by the reports of the natives, which led them to believe that the Waso Nyiro emptied itself into an extensive lake, and fired by the idea of the possible discovery of another great African lake, made their way down to the Waso Nyiro, and after a fearful march, enduring the greatest hardships, eventually reached Lorian. To their great disappointment, it proved to be nothing more than a swamp, and they turned back without examining it. A few weeks later, Lieutenant von Hohnel, having been seriously injured by a rhinoceros, was sent down

to the coast, his life being despaired of. Shortly afterwards Mr. Chanler's men deserted him in a body, and returned to the coast also, thus bringing his journey to a premature conclusion; a much-to-be-regretted ending to a well-planned and well-equipped expedition.

As Mr. Chanler was returning to the coast he met Mr. A. H. Neumann coming up. Mr. Neumann spent the greater part of 1893 in shooting elephants in the Loroghi Mountains, after going north to Lake Rudolph. He also crossed the Waso Nyiro at a point north-east of Mount Kenia.

During the time Mr. Neumann was shooting in the Loroghi Mountains he was obliged to make periodical visits to M'thara, in North-East Kenia, in order to buy food from the natives, and on one such excursion he met Dr. Kolb, a German scientist, who was exploring North Kenia.

Dr. Kolb ascended Mount Kenia from the north, and then returned to Europe. An interesting account of his ascent of the mountain is published in Dr. Petermann's "Mitteilungen" (42 Band, 1896). Dr. Kolb then returned to Kenia in order to continue his observations, but he was unfortunately killed by a rhinoceros a couple of marches north of M'thara.

Lorian, therefore, with the exception of Mr. Chanler's hurried visit, was practically unexplored. At the commencement of our trip, El Hakim proposed that, if an opportunity occurred of visiting Lorian, we should take advantage of it, and endeavour to supplement Mr. Chanler's information. As will be seen, an opportunity did present itself, with what result a perusal of this account of our expedition will disclose.

we left Nairobi, the result of his recent severe illness in Uganda. When the tents were struck, we headed due northwards to Doenyo Sabuk, which was now beginning to show up more clearly on the horizon. It was about twenty miles distant, and we calculated that two days' further marching would take us round it.

Soon after we started Knapp shot a guinea-fowl. He used a Winchester repeating shot-gun, a perfectly horrible contrivance, of which he was very proud. When the cartridges were ejected it clanked and rattled like a collection of scrap iron being shaken in a sack.

During that march we had a maddening time with the ticks, with which the Athi plains are infested. They were large, flat, red ticks, similar to those I have seen in Rhodesia (*Ixodes plumbeus*?). They clung to our clothing and persons like limpets to a rock. We should not have minded a dozen or two, at least not so much, but they swarmed on us literally in thousands. We halted every few moments while Ramathani brushed us down, but, so soon as we were comparatively cleared of them, we picked up a fresh batch from the long grass. They bite very badly, and taking them by and large, as a sailor would say, they were very powerful and vigorous vermin; almost as vigorous as the language we wasted upon them.

About an hour after we started we sighted a rhinoceros fast asleep in the grass, about three hundred yards down wind. George and I examined him with the binoculars—the others were a mile ahead—and as we were not out looking for rhinoceros just then, we passed on. We had proceeded barely a quarter of a mile when a confused shouting from the rear caused us to look round. The sleeping rhinoceros had wakened, and proceeded to impress



the fact upon the safari. Having winded the men he incontinently charged them, and when George and I glanced back we saw the ungainly brute trotting backwards and forwards among our loads, which the men had hurriedly dropped while they scattered for dear life over the landscape. It was certainly very awkward, as it looked very much as if I should have to go back and slay it, which, I will confess, I was very loth to do, as Ramathani was some distance ahead with all my spare ammunition. The magazine of my .303 contained only half a dozen cartridges, with soft-nosed bullets. I diplomatically waited a while to see if the brute felt disposed to move; but it was apparently perfectly satisfied with its immediate surroundings, and stood over the deserted loads snorting and stamping and looking exceedingly ugly.

The cattle and donkeys, which were under Jumbi's charge, were also coming up. Jumbi came as near as he dared, and then halted, and waited in the rear till it should please the Bwana (meaning me) to drive the "kifaru" away. The rest of the porters having scuttled to what they considered a safe distance, sat down to await events with a stolid composure born of utter irresponsibility.

I felt, under the circumstances, that it was incumbent upon me to do something, it being so evidently expected; so I advanced towards the rhinoceros, not without some inward trepidation, as I greatly distrusted the .303. Walking to within fifty yards of the spot where it was stamping defiance, I shouted at it, and said shoo! as sometimes that will drive them away. It did not move this beast, however, so, mentally donning the black cap, I took careful aim, and planked a bullet in his shoulder! If it was undecided before the beast soon made up its mind then, and, jumping round

like a cat, came straight for me at a gallop, head down, ears and tail erect, and a nasty vicious business-like look about the tip of his horn that gave me cold chills down the spine. I don't wish to deny that I involuntarily turned and ran—almost anybody would, if they obeyed first impulses. I ran a few yards, but reason returned, and I remembered El Hakim's warning that to run under such circumstances was almost invariably fatal. I turned off sharply to the right, like the hunters in the story books, hoping that my pursuer would pass me, and try one of the porters; but he wouldn't; he had only one desire in the wide, wide world, and that was to interview me. I, on the other hand, was equally anxious not to be interviewed, but I must admit that at the moment I did not quite see how I was to avoid it. He was getting closer and closer at each stride, so there being logically no other way, I stopped and faced him.

I therefore knelt down and worked my magazine for all I was worth, fervently hoping that it would not jam. In less than ten seconds I put four bullets into the enraged animal at short range. All four took effect, as I distinctly saw the dust spurt from his hide in little puffs where they struck. At the fourth shot he swerved aside, when within fifteen yards of me, and as he turned I gave him my sixth and last cartridge in the flank to hasten his departure; and very glad indeed I was to see him go. He had six bullets in various parts of his anatomy; but I expect they did little more than break the skin, though the shock probably surprised him. He disappeared over a rise in the ground a mile away, still going strong; while I assumed a nonchalant and slightly bored air, and languidly ordered the men to take up their scattered loads and resume the march.

An hour or so after we reached and crossed the Athi

River. It was a hot and dusty tramp. Kriger being some miles ahead, had, with a laudable desire to guide us, fired the grass on his way. The result was hardly what he anticipated. The immense clouds of smoke gave us our direction perfectly well, but the fire barred our progress. Quite half a dozen times we had to rush through a gap in the flames, half choked and slightly singed. Once or twice I thought we should never get the mules or donkeys through at all, but we chivied them past the fire somehow. The burnt ground on the other side was simply horrible to walk on. I fully realized what the sensations of the "cat on hot bricks" of the proverb were. Kriger meant well, but, strange to say, neither George nor I felt at all thankful. As a matter of fact, our language was at times as hot as the ground underfoot, not so much on our own account as on that of our poor barefooted men.

The Athi was not very wide at the point where we crossed, but a little distance lower down it becomes a broad and noble stream flowing round the north side of Doenyo Sabuk till it joins the T'savo River about 120 miles south-east of that mountain, the two combining to form the Sabaki, which flows into the sea at Milindi. The Athi is full of fish, and we saw fresh hippopotamus' tracks near the spot where we camped at mid-day.

After lunch George and I went fishing with Kriger and Knapp: net result about 40 lbs. of fine fish, a large eel, and a mud turtle. Afterwards Kriger and I went out shooting. We were very unlucky. Out on the plains towards Doenyo Sabuk we saw vast herds of game, including congoni, thompsoni, zebra, impala, and waterbuck, but the country was perfectly flat and open and the wind most vexatiously variable, so that, do what we would, we could

not get within range. I managed to bag a hare with the before-mentioned piece of mechanism which Knapp mis-called a shot-gun. Soon afterwards we were traversing some broken rocky ground when Kriger suddenly exclaimed, "Look, there are some wild pig!" We started after them, and got within a hundred yards before we discovered that the supposed wild pig were a magnificent black-maned lion and four lionesses. They spotted us almost as soon as we had seen them, and when we tried to get near enough for a shot they walked into a patch of tall reeds and remained there growling, nor would they show themselves again. We did not think it good enough to tackle five lions in thick reeds, so we reluctantly withdrew.

Kriger had shot a lion some months previously, and was attacked and badly mauled by the lioness while examining the prostrate body of his quarry, his left arm being bitten through in several places. He struggled with her for some minutes, forcing his arm between her open jaws, and thereby preventing her from seizing his shoulder or throat. His life was only saved by a sudden fall backwards over a bank which was concealed by the undergrowth. The lioness was so surprised by his complete and utterly unexpected disappearance that, casting a bewildered look around, she turned and fled.

We continued our hunt for game, and presently Kriger wounded a congoni. It appeared very badly hit, and we followed it for several miles in the hope that it would drop; but it seemed to get stronger with every step, and finally, to our great disgust and disappointment, joined a herd and galloped away, while we sat down on the hard cold ground and bemoaned our luck. On the way back to camp—and a weary walk it was—we shot another solitary congoni at three

hundred yards' range, and fortunately hit him; but we put three bullets each into the beast before it dropped, so remarkably tenacious of life are these animals. We returned to camp at dusk, thoroughly tired out. I retired to rest immediately after dinner, thus concluding a not entirely uneventful day.

We did not march the next day, as El Hakim wished to examine the surrounding country from a farming and stock-raising point of view. He and Kriger rode off on the mules after breakfast with that intention. Knapp and I went fishing, while George—sensible chap—laid himself on the grass in the shade and watched us. Knapp caught one very fine fish weighing over 9 lbs., while I caught only two small fish and a sharp attack of fever. I returned to camp and climbed into my blankets. In an hour and a half my temperature rose to 105°, and I felt very queer indeed; but towards evening I recovered sufficiently to eat a little. El Hakim and Kriger returned at 6 p.m., having explored the adjacent country to their satisfaction, and on their return journey they shot a zebra and a congoni. Zebra meat is excellent eating, especially if it has been hung for three or four days. When cooked it is firm and white, in appearance somewhat resembling veal. We always secured the strip of flesh on each side of the backbone, called by the Swahilis "salala" (saddle), and also the under-cut, or "salala n'dani" (inside saddle), for our private consumption. The kidneys are very large, as big as one's fist; and they, as are also the brains, are excellent eating when fried in hippo fat.

We started at 7 a.m. on the following morning, El Hakim, Kriger, and Knapp going a long way ahead, leaving George and myself with the big mule, to look after the safari. George was still so queer that he could hardly sit on the

mule. He was constantly vomiting, and at every fresh paroxysm the mule shied, so that poor George had anything but a cheerful time. I did not know the way, and depended wholly for guidance on the spoor of the others who had started early.

Soon after starting, a pair of rhinoceros charged us, scattering the safari far and wide over the plain in a medley of men, loads, donkeys, and cattle. I went back with the 8-bore, which I had kept close to me since my experience two days before, but before I could get near them they made off again, nearly getting foul of Jumbi in their retreat. He had hidden himself in the grass, and they passed within a dozen yards of him without becoming aware of his presence.

I have mentioned that I was depending for guidance on the spoor of that portion of the caravan which had preceded me, so it can be imagined that I was exceedingly surprised to come upon a party of the men who had left camp before me, sitting down waiting for me to come up. On being questioned they stated that the "m'sungu" (white men) were "huko m'beli" (somewhere ahead), but as they had lagged behind, and so lost them, they had waited for me to come up and show them the way. I was in something of a quandary, as the ground being very rough and stony, no tracks were visible. After a moment's consideration I decided to make for the north end of Doenyo Sabuk, which was quite near, as I knew the others intended going somewhere in that direction. On the road I stalked and shot a congoni, but my Swahili aristocrats refused to touch the meat, as I, and not they, had cut its throat, consequently it was "haran" (*i.e.* sinful, forbidden). They were much less fastidious later on, and ate with avidity far less palatable food than freshly killed congoni.

After a solid eight hours' march I came up with the others. They had camped on the right bank of the Athi, which at this place is very broad and deep. It makes a vast curve here from due north to south-east, so that we were still on the wrong side of it, and would have to recross it in order to reach the Tana River. Kriger and Knapp were, as usual, fishing, and had caught some magnificent fish, averaging 9 lbs. to 10 lbs. each. On our arrival in camp, George and I had a refreshing wash and a cup of tea, which revived us considerably. In the evening I shot a crested crane (*Belearica Pavonina*) with the .303. George went to bed early, as he was very weak and exhausted; I did not feel very bright either, after the smart attack of fever I had had the day before, coupled with that day's eight-hour tramp in a blazing sun.

We did not move on the following day, as El Hakim wished to examine the surrounding country. He and Kriger accordingly saddled up the mules and made another excursion. They saw a leopard on the road about a mile out of camp, but the man who was carrying their guns was, unfortunately, some distance in the rear at the time. I believe El Hakim used bad language, but I could not say for certain, though I do know the gun-bearer looked very sorry for himself when they returned to camp in the evening. They saw some very pretty falls on the river lower down, situated in the midst of a very lovely stretch of park-like scenery. El Hakim was quite enthusiastic about them.

We spent the next day looking for a place to cross the river. It was from this camp that Kriger and Knapp were to return to their station, and our journey was really to begin. We examined a ford that Kriger knew of, two hours' journey up the river, but found the river in flood and the

ford deep water. On the way back El Hakim shot a congoni, which gave us a much-needed supply of fresh meat. As there seemed no other way out of the difficulty, we decided to build a raft. We found it a very tough task, there being no material at hand, as the wood growing near was all mimosa thorn, so hard and heavy when green that it will hardly float in water. We spent all the afternoon, waist-deep in the river, lashing logs together with strips of raw hide cut from the congoni skins. When the raft was finished, just before sundown, it looked very clumsy and unserviceable, and we had very grave doubts of its utility, as the volume of water in the river was very great, and the pressure on such an unwieldy structure was bound to be enormous—much more than any rope of ours would stand. However, that was a question that the morrow would decide; so we moored the raft to an island a few yards from the bank, and went back to camp for dinner.

We dined on the crane I had shot two days before. It was as large as a small turkey, and splendid eating, though my .303 had rather damaged it. El Hakim and I sat up late into the night, making final arrangements and writing letters, which Kriger was to take back with him next morning, when we intended to make a determined effort to cross the river *en route* for Mount Kenia and the "beyond."

Kriger and Knapp returned to Nairobi early on the morning of June 14th. They took our remaining cattle back, as we found them too much trouble, and El Hakim had others at Munithu, in North Kenia, which we could use if we required them for trade purposes. We bade them adieu, and they returned the compliment, wishing us all kinds of luck. They then departed on their homeward journey.





THE ATHI RIVER NEAR DOENYO SABUK.



CROSSING AN AFFLUENT OF THE SAGANA. (See page 50.)

very inconvenient. At dusk we ascended the outlying spurs, finding it very hard work, and soon after we camped for the night. I shot a congoni during the afternoon, which kept us in fresh meat for a day or two. That the estimate we had formed of the natural difficulties to be encountered was a correct one, we had many opportunities of verifying during the next two days. It was a perfectly horrible piece of country. It seemed to be a collection of rocky hills thrown down just anyhow, without the slightest regard for order. Long coarse grass and rank vegetation did their very best to impede our progress. We were retarded every half mile or so by steep descents, down which we toiled slowly and painfully, only to find a roaring rushing torrent at the bottom, that needed the most careful negotiation. Our poor donkeys suffered very much by the constant loading and unloading of their burdens, rendered necessary in order to cross some particularly obnoxious ravine, while the men's patience was severely tried.

In the early morning it was still worse, as the dense undergrowth was then soaked through with the heavy dew, which descended on us in icy showers as we forced our way through, thus adding to our other miseries. There was no game to speak of. I shot one solitary congoni at our first camp in this uninhabited wilderness, and on the same day we inadvertently walked on to a sleeping rhinoceros, which livened things up a little.

El Hakim was riding at the head of the safari, and George, on the other mule, was close behind him. I was walking a few yards behind George. Suddenly I saw El Hakim stiffen in his seat and kick his feet free of the stirrup-irons; a fraction of a second later he was out of the saddle and behind a bush, while George emulated his

example with a promptitude that could only have been rendered possible by the most urgent necessity, George being, as a rule, extremely deliberate in his movements, as befits a heavy man. At the same instant, with a rush and a snort, a large black rhinoceros galloped blindly at us. I took up an unobtrusive position behind an adjacent tree, with as little delay as possible consistent with my dignity, and the rhinoceros rushed past and disappeared. It appeared annoyed at being disturbed.

On the afternoon of the third day after leaving the Thika-Thika we got into some very dense scrub, and fairly lost ourselves. The bush was absolutely impenetrable, except for the low tunnels made by wandering hippopotamus, which indicated the presence of water not far off. These tunnels gave the scrub the appearance of a gigantic rabbit-warren, in which we had to walk bent double in order to make any headway at all. It was exceedingly hot and dusty, and we plunged about in the bewildering maze of tunnels till we were tired out, while seemingly no nearer to the opposite side. Presently the tunnel in which we were burrowing at the moment abruptly dipped downwards, and a few yards further on we emerged unexpectedly on the edge of a broad and noble river, which flowed swiftly and serenely past our delighted eyes.

We had no doubt that this was the Tana which we had not expected to reach for another day at least; a surmise which proved to be correct. It is called here the Sagana, or more rarely the Kilaluma (*i.e.* firewater). It is a very beautiful river, with very high perpendicular banks clothed in the most lovely verdure. Tall water-palms (*Raffia* sp.?) reared their stately heads far above the surrounding luxuriant vegetation; while tropical trees of many species formed

breaking the oath was made by N'Dominuki, and again the spectators shouted "Orioi muma." Koromo and I then dipped our pieces of liver in our own blood, and amid breathless silence exchanged pieces and devoured them. This was repeated three times to the accompaniment of renewed shouts from the spectators. The remainder of the liver was then handed round to the witnesses, who ate it, and the ceremony was concluded, it only remaining for me to make my new blood-brother a present.

The next morning our final preparations were completed, and N'Dominuki having come over early, we turned all the animals we were leaving behind over to him. He bade us adieu, with a wish that we might return safe and sound, and, what is more, he sincerely meant what he said.

After leaving our late camp we plunged once again into the thorn forest, which we soon crossed, emerging into the sparsely vegetated highland I have mentioned before as extending to the northward. The sun was very hot, and travelling slow and laborious, not so much from the nature of the ground, perhaps, as from the soft condition of the men after their long rest. The ground, nevertheless, made walking a wearisome task, as the loose pebbles and quartz blocks turned our ankles and bruised our shins.

After two hours' toiling we found ourselves on the edge of the tableland looking down a sharp declivity to the plain beneath, which stretched out in desolate barrenness as far as the eye could reach. It was a dreary khaki-coloured landscape, with peculiarly shaped hills in the extreme background. In the middle distance were belts of dusty-looking thorn trees, while here and there mounds of broken lava reared up their ugly masses to add to the general air of desolation. Somewhere ahead of us, about four days' march,

was the Waso Nyiro; and beyond that lay the desert again, stretching away up towards Lakes Rudolph and Stephanie, and thence onward to the hills of Abyssinia and Somaliland. The country we should have to cross in order to reach the Waso Nyiro was, as far as we knew, waterless, with the exception of one tiny brook, which flowed northward from M'thara, probably emptying itself into the Waso Nyiro. We followed it, therefore, in all its multitudinous windings, as, without it, we should have been in a sorry plight indeed.

As we descended to the plain the heat appreciably increased. We met several rhinoceros on the road, but we discreetly left them to their meditations. Apparently there had once been grass on the plain, but it had been burnt, and during the passage of our safari a fine, choking black dust arose, which, in combination with the dust from the dry red soil, formed a horrible compound that choked up our ears, eyes, noses, and throats in a most uncomfortable manner. For four hours we marched, and then camped on the banks of the stream.

Innumerable rhino tracks crossed in every direction, leading us to suppose that we were camped at the place where the brutes usually drank. George, hearing the shrill cries of some guinea-fowl from the opposite bank, sallied forth with the shot-gun, and soon the sound of many shots in quick succession showed that his energy was reaping its reward. He returned presently with eight birds, which were a very welcome addition to our larder.

We turned in early. During the night I was awakened by the sound of torrents of rain beating down on the tent. I rose and looked cautiously out. A noise from El Hakim's tent at once attracted my attention, and gazing in that direction I saw El Hakim himself, clad only in a diminutive

shirt, busily engaged in placing the ground-sheet of his tent over the stacked loads. He was getting splashed considerably. I did not disturb him, but retired once more to my blankets, perfectly satisfied that the loads were being properly looked after.

In the morning the sky was as clear as crystal, while the parched earth showed no traces of the heavy shower that had fallen during the night. We travelled over the same kind of country as that traversed the day before, dry brown earth, burnt grass, and loose stones being the most noticeable features, if I except the ubiquitous rhinoceros, of which truly there were more than "a genteel sufficiency." In fact, they proved a terrible nuisance, as we had sometimes to make long *détours* in order to avoid them. They were not only capable of doing so, but seemed only too anxious to upset our safari. The men were mortally afraid of them, and much preferred their room to their company.

After a couple of hours on the road we saw in the distance a large swamp, which we had not previously noticed, surrounded for a radius of a mile or so by thorn-bush, which grew a great deal thicker than on other parts of the plain. The quantity of game we saw on the road was simply incredible. Vast herds of oryx, zebra, and grantei, roamed over the landscape; ostriches and giraffes were also in sight, and, of course, rhinoceros. It is a sportsman's paradise, and as yet, with one or two exceptions, untouched.

When we reached the swamp the safari was halted to allow the stragglers to come up. While waiting I saw something sticking out of the grass a hundred yards away, to which I called El Hakim's attention. He observed it attentively through the binoculars for a moment, and then turned to me with an exclamation of satisfaction, softly

palms that fringe the banks, and by the greater greenness of the vegetation in its immediate vicinity. At first we thought that if we followed the general direction of the river, viz. eastward, we should never be far from the water, whether it was in sight at the moment or not. Two or three days' journey, however, undeceived us on that point. The river, as a matter of fact, winds about in a most extraordinary manner, and on several occasions when, thinking we were near the river, we halted for the purpose of camping, we found, owing to an utterly unexpected turn, that it was really miles away. Consequently we adopted the more fatiguing but safer course of following it in all its windings.

Just such an experience befell us on the morning we left "Green Camp." Away to the eastward of that place, and about ten miles distant, was a mass of gneiss rock known as Mount Sheba, towering 500 feet above the plain, and 3500 feet above sea-level. We knew the river flowed within a mile or two of it, but on which side, whether to the north or south, we were uncertain. We therefore made for the north end of the mountain, as, if the river flowed to the south, we should necessarily meet it, while if it went to the north we should still be going right.

The first hour's march was fairly easy. Level stretches of sand covered with patches of mineral salts, and dotted with stunted thorn trees, offered no great impediment to our progress. Several rhinoceros were browsing about, one brute being right in our path. We cautiously approached and shouted at him, but he did not seem disposed to move. On approaching nearer we saw that he was wounded, a great hole in his ribs showing that he had been fighting his brother rhinoceros, and had, apparently, considerably the worst of the argument. Rhinoceros are inveterate fighters

amongst themselves ; and of all the animals shot during the expedition there was not one who did not show healed or partially healed wounds somewhere in the region of the ribs. As this particular beast would not move, I started forward with the intention of shooting him, but he suddenly awoke to the exigencies of the situation, and quietly trotted out of harm's way.

As we proceeded, smooth patches of black lava showed themselves above the surface of the sand, and quartzose rocks occurred here and there. Half a mile further on rose a plateau about 25 feet high, apparently composed of some black substance. It lay right in our path, and we pushed forward towards it in order to more closely examine it. When we arrived at the foot, we found, to our dismay, that it was composed of blocks of black vesicular lava, varying in size from a football to an ordinary trunk. It stretched in either direction, left and right, as far as the eye could see, and there was no alternative but to attempt to cross over the top, which we were very loth to do, although we consoled ourselves with the thought that it would only be for a few hundred yards. We therefore scrambled to the summit, and only then got a faint idea of what was before us.

The whole country round was covered with loose blocks of lava to a depth of 30 to 50 feet. The surface was not even fairly level, but was irregularly disposed in heaps, forming little hills and valleys of loose and often insecurely poised stones. There was a great and ever-present risk of a careless movement bringing two or three tons of stuff rolling down, and obliterating the unfortunate individual who had disturbed the *status quo*. The hard slag-like blocks were perforated by innumerable holes caused by air-bubbles when



the lava was fluid, giving them the structure and appearance of a dark brown, or black, petrified sponge, the ragged edges of which soon reduced our boots to ribbons. The men who were wearing sandals suffered severely, as did the animals. It was, of course, impossible to ride, the mules having painfully hard work even to get along alone.

Imagine a tiny ant endeavouring to clamber across a newly laid, unrolled cinder-track, and you will have our position precisely. There was, however, no help for it; the cinder-heap, as we dubbed it, had to be crossed. We advanced slowly and painfully for over two hours, but, to our inexpressible disappointment, saw no signs of nearing the other side. The heat of the sun was terrific. Its rays, beating vertically down, were readily absorbed by the lava, seemingly almost causing it to glow in the intense heat, which, radiating afresh from under our feet, gave us the feeling of being slowly baked in an immense oven.

At the end of the second hour we halted for a space, dead beat. Sitting still in the sun we found was much worse than walking, so we resumed our painful march, climbing slowly and wearily over the interminable lava-heaps, following a faint track made by wandering rhinoceros. Here and there a few stunted thorn bushes made a pitiful struggle for existence, though how they managed to live we could not imagine, seeing that the closest scrutiny failed to show any traces of soil, their roots seemingly going straight down between the blocks of lava. As we walked, El Hakim suddenly jogged me in the ribs with his elbow, thus calling my attention to a couple of giraffe which were standing about fifty yards ahead watching us. Strange to say, they did not exhibit the least alarm, but watched us till we had approached to within twenty yards, when they turned and

shambled off, with their ungainly heads swaying to and fro like the masthead of a ship in a seaway.

A few minutes later we walked round a corner right on to a rhinoceros. He faced round, and we instantly scattered. I made for the lee side of a convenient lava-heap, and loaded my .303; El Hakim and George following suit. The slight noise we made in doing so scared the brute, for he suddenly turned and trotted away over the loose lava as if it were a lawn, and, notwithstanding his bulk, without a sound.

We toiled onwards for another couple of hours, when our hearts were gladdened by an appearance of smoothness under-foot. It was only temporary, however, and soon we were again continuing our unequal struggle with nature. Slowly and mechanically we toiled along, El Hakim, George and I, and our personal servants; the rest of the safari had long since tailed off, and were scattered in twos and threes along the path in our rear.

The sun rose higher and higher as the morning advanced, and scorched us till it seemed as if we had not a single drop of moisture left in our bruised and wearied bodies. I feebly wondered if we were doomed to be a sort of modern edition of the "Wandering Jew," with Dante's "Inferno" as the sphere of operations. When I suggested the idea to my companions in a vain attempt at a joke, it did not provoke even a smile. Our boots were ruined, and our feet sore and cramped from springing from one piece of loose rock to another. The lava rolled and slipped from under us, bruising our ankles; we were parched with thirst, hot, dog-tired, and altogether in a most miserable plight.

Suddenly George gave vent to a feeble hurrah! El Hakim and I gazed wonderingly at him, trying to grasp the reason for such a singular demonstration. He indicated by

a gesture that we should look ahead. We did so, and immediately endeavoured, as well as our parched and swollen tongues would permit, to follow his example, though the attempt was more or less a failure. There before us was a sharp dip; at the foot stretched one of the familiar, gravelly, sandy plains covered with thorn trees. We had grumbled enough at them heretofore, but after that terrific "cinder-heap" the thorn-covered plain seemed a veritable paradise.

As if to make amends for our sufferings, we at that moment caught sight of Mount Sheba, which was our objective on leaving camp that morning. It was, alas! still some miles distant, but it meant water.

Away we went at a quick walk, animated by only one desire—the desire for water. There were no signs of our safari, but we knew that they could easily follow our tracks, so we hurried on. Hour after hour we pushed on, now walking and anon half running, in our eagerness to reach the river. We met several rhinoceros, but such was our hurry we did not stop to speak. Suddenly a group of the thrice-blessed Doum palms appeared at the bottom of a valley. We raced down the slope, and there at the bottom lay a pool of beautiful, cool, clear, sparkling water. Ye gods! what pen can hope to adequately describe the supreme delight of a long, long draught of cool, pure water, after hours of such a sun as we had been exposed to on the "cinder-heap?" We lay down on our stomachs, and, plunging our faces beneath the surface, drank our fill of the life-preserving fluid. When we were satisfied, we laved our chests, and, playing with the water, watched the sparkling crystal drops drip from our fingers and fall with a musical splash into the parent pool. It was not such a long time, after all, that we had been without water, but the sun was

terribly fierce on the heaps of lava, and, in addition, the horrible uncertainty as to whether we were not going further and further away from water, increased our thirst to quite an abnormal degree.

Afterwards we despatched the two or three men who had accompanied us on the backward track, to communicate the joyful news to the rest of the safari, and to relieve of their burdens those on whom the long and arduous march had had most effect. In the course of an hour or so some of the men began to arrive in twos and threes. The others, we found, were not far behind, so we went on, and in another half-hour reached the river.

Whether it was the contrast to what we had just undergone or not, the river appeared to us to be as near an approach to Paradise as it is possible to get in this world. The swift water rushing past, here over rocks in miniature cataracts, and there over smooth gravel beds, gave forth a musical murmur in the highest degree conducive to slumber. As our tents, eatables, and, indeed, all our personal equipment were somewhere behind, halfway between the river and the "cinder-heap," we slumbered accordingly under the grateful shade of the palms.

A curious fact which I have often noticed on a long and fatiguing march is that, as in this instance, when the first of one's men get into camp, they are invariably the men who are carrying the loads of trade goods, the cloth, or, unkindest cut of all, the cooking utensils!

Towards evening the rest of the safari staggered in, some of the men having been twelve hours on the road. One man had fallen from exhaustion and died on that awful "cinder-heap," his load having been brought on by Jumbi. We had made, I suppose, about six miles in a bee line from our last

camp, though how much ground we had actually covered in our laborious march it is difficult to say.

At the conclusion of our breakfast-dinner-supper we turned in, thoroughly tired out; but, as it happened, we were destined not to enjoy a quiet night's repose. First Ramathani came into the tent; he held an egg in his hand—a guinea-fowl's egg.

"The men found this, Bwana," said he.

Now, I fancied an egg very much, so I awakened George. "I'll go halves with you," said I, when I had induced sufficient wakefulness in him to understand what I was saying.

Ramathani was accordingly ordered to boil the egg. I lent him my watch, so that he should boil it for exactly three minutes, neither more nor less. Meanwhile I secured two spoons and the pepper-box, and we waited expectantly till Ramathani reappeared bearing the precious egg cooked to a turn. I took it and rapped it with my spoon. Hardly had I touched it before it exploded with a loud report, and flew to pieces. It was empty inside, at least it appeared empty; a second after it blew up George looked blankly at me, and I returned the compliment, and we were still gazing at each other when the after-effect, so to speak, struck us. Then, choking, we made a dive for the open air. Hastily summoning Ramathani, we bade him penetrate to the interior of the tent, open both ends, and then wave a blanket till the sewer gas, or whatever it was, had dispersed, a proceeding which occupied some time. We then turned in again, and slept peacefully, though odorously, till somewhere about midnight.

Suddenly a cry of "Moto! moto!" (Fire! fire!) rang out, accompanied by a terrible roaring and crackling. Out we rushed, clad only in our shirts—the night was warm—to

find one portion of the camp in a blaze. We seized blankets, sacking, anything we could get hold of, and furiously attacked the flames.

The dry grass and reeds burned like paper, but the great danger lay in the palm trees. If once they caught fire, our tents, stores, and, in fact, everything, would be utterly destroyed. We fought, therefore, for our very existence. Fortunately we managed, by the most strenuous exertions, to keep the flames clear of the palms, and, after an hour's hard work, to entirely subdue them. Our bare feet and legs were slightly burnt, and my shirt was scorched, but beyond that no serious damage was done. We turned in again at 2 a.m., and slept undisturbed till 7 a.m., when we once more resumed our march.

We intended to go only a short distance, in order to give the men a rest after their fatiguing exertions of the previous day. The country was by no means level, and here and there showed a tendency to produce more lava-blocks, but we met with nothing that seriously impeded our progress. We saw a herd of zebra in the distance, but they were very shy and wary. Our men, with that reckless improvidence which distinguishes the Swahili "pagazi" (porter), had already consumed the twelve days' store of grain and flour which we had brought from M'thara, and had now (six days after leaving that place) only a few pieces of buffalo-meat left. It was imperative, therefore, that we should shoot some meat for them.

Smooth patches of sand, interspersed with bare rock, now became the predominant features of the landscape, and game was very hard to approach in consequence.

The river, which we sedulously followed, was distinguished by the line of palms which fringed the banks. It flowed in

places at the foot of frowning cliffs of gneiss, their rugged scarps inhabited by countless monkeys and baboons which chattered incessantly, skipping from ledge to ledge, apparently the only animated creatures in the whole sun-baked, dun-coloured landscape. I successfully stalked and shot a grantei, which, in my opinion, is the very best eating of all East African gazelles. Saddle of grantei, after being hung two or three days, is a joint fit for a monarch. We were very anxious to shoot a rhinoceros for the men, which was probably the reason why we saw none, notwithstanding that they had been so indecently numerous during the previous few days.

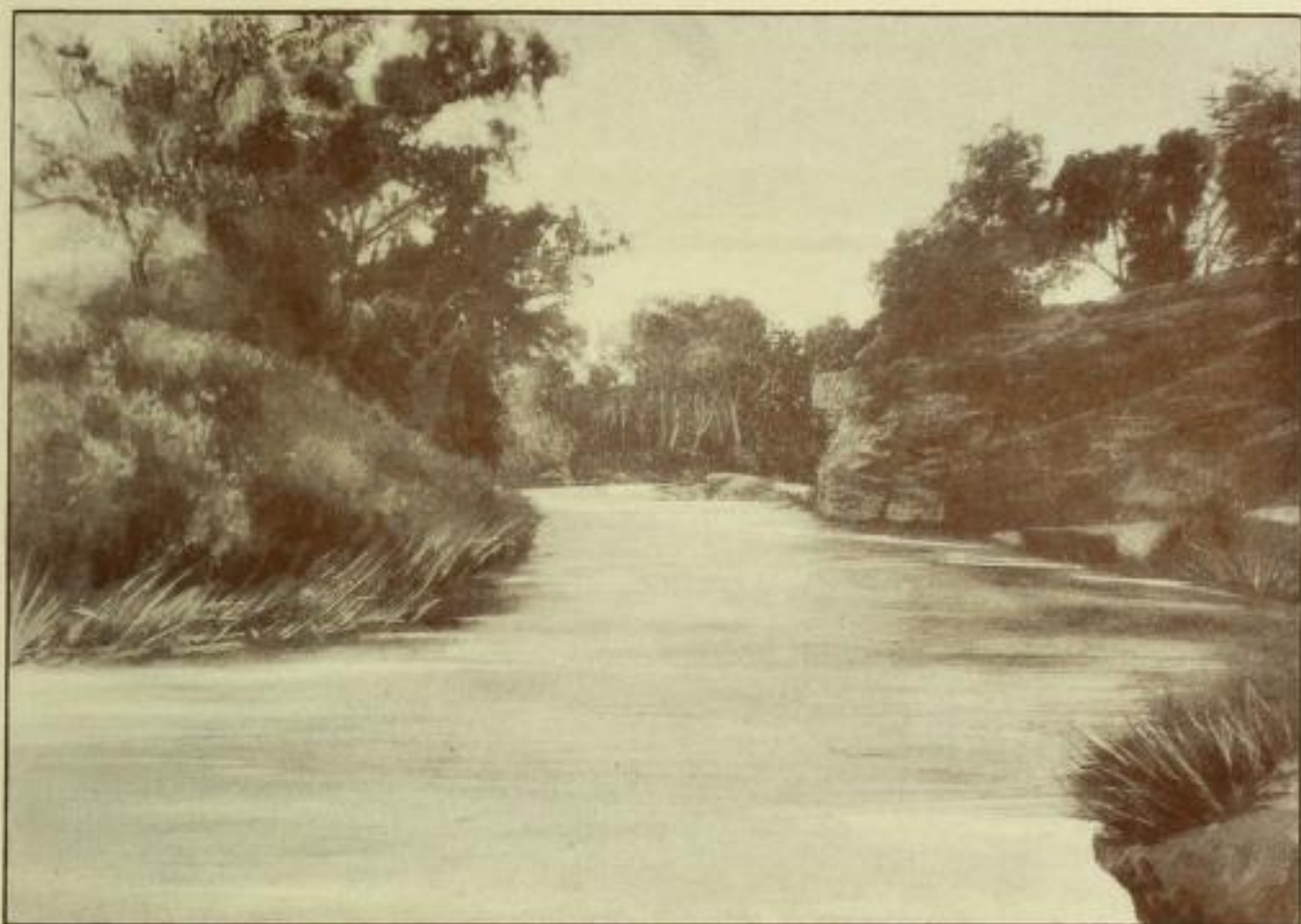
We camped at ten o'clock in the forenoon on the bank of the river, which here flows over gigantic boulders of gneiss, and sometimes white sandstone or granite. In the afternoon we saw large herds of game a mile or so from camp, principally oryx, zebra, and grantei. They were strangely shy, and, the country being perfectly open, I found it impossible to get nearer than 800 yards to them.

The following day we were off again soon after sunrise. El Hakim shot a small grantei soon after starting. We also saw a herd of buffalo, but could not get within range, as they took alarm, plunged into the river, and, swimming across, retired to the safety of the country on the other side. We also saw some giraffe on the opposite bank, but this portion of the river was unfordable. El Hakim went out in the afternoon to try to shoot meat for the men, but could not get within range of two rhinoceros, the only animals he saw. Food for the men was getting rather a pressing question, and when we resumed the march on the following morning, George and I took a different path from that of the safari, but parallel to it, in the hope that we might see game.

During the whole march we never saw a single head,

and we arrived at the place where the safari had halted, thoroughly tired and disgusted. As we got in, El Hakim had just sighted a rhinoceros, and, seizing his rifle, he mounted the mule and gave chase. The rhinoceros, however, retreated, followed at full speed by El Hakim, while George and I had an opportunity of enjoying the unique sight of a mounted rhinoceros hunt. When it came to speed, however, the rhino was an easy first, and El Hakim returned, hot, weary, and, worse still, unsuccessful.





VIEW ON THE WASO NYIRO, NEAR "SWAMP CAMP."



CUTTING UP A RHINOCEROS FOR FOOD. (See page 190.)

made matters very unpleasant for a while, and we were quite half a mile on our road before finally getting rid of them. Taking a short cut across the mouth of a big curve made by the river hereabouts, we travelled to our camp of July 31st, missing the one of August 1st, passing on the way the remains of a vast Rendili encampment several years old.

Soon afterwards our men were gladdened by the sight of a rhinoceros accompanied by a *m'toto* (young one), and El Hakim and George immediately set off in chase of her. Suddenly, to our astonishment, we heard the sound of a shot from the other side of a ridge in front. The chase of the rhinoceros was at once abandoned, and we raced up the slope, expecting we knew not what. Nothing! absolutely nothing! met our eager gaze; the country stretched at our feet was the usual gravelly, stony abomination studded with the thorn trees we were so accustomed to; the course of the river showing in the distance as a darker green line in the brown landscape. Strain our gaze as we might, nothing in the way of a safari met our eyes. It was inexplicable. We could have sworn we heard a shot, and so also could the men; but nevertheless the landscape appeared absolutely deserted. I fired a shot from my own rifle, but, beyond the multitudinous echoes, there was no response. We treated the occurrence as we would any other riddle, and gave it up, and once more proceeded on our way.

Presently another rhinoceros hove in sight, and El Hakim started for him. He had almost got within comfortable range of the brute, which, unconscious of its danger, was busily feeding, when the men, discovering what he was after, raised yells of delight at the prospect of a feed at last, and to El Hakim's intense annoyance startled his quarry, which

made off at a gallop. He returned in a towering passion—"Wewe Kula mejani sassi" (You can eat grass now), said he. "I'm not going to be made a fool of when I am trying to shoot meat for you," and mounting his mule he resumed his place at the head of the safari.

Towards evening we reached our old camp of July 31st, and on arrival we immediately sent men back to try to discover if there were any signs of another safari in the neighbourhood. One of the men also was missing, together with his rifle and a valuable load of cloth. We thought that he might have sat down to rest and fallen asleep, and let the safari pass on, so we sent Jumbi up the summit of a lofty hill near the camp, with a gamekeeper's flare which burnt for five minutes with a brilliant blue light, and would be visible in that clear atmosphere and at that height for several miles. As he did not turn up that night or the next morning in spite of the most diligent search by the parties of men we sent out, we concluded that he had deserted and gone back to M'thara. The other men whom we had sent to look for and report on the possible presence of another safari in the neighbourhood returned, stating that they had seen no signs of a safari whatever. We questioned the men as to whether any of them had fired the shot, but they each and all denied it; besides, the shot had seemed to come from the front. It was a mystery which we never solved.

Next morning I left camp half an hour before the safari, in order to try to shoot some meat before the caravan, with its varied noises, frightened the game away. A mile or so out of camp I saw a solitary oryx (*Oryx beisa*) feeding in the open. There was no cover, and the need was urgent, so I sank my scruples about shooting at a long range, and

crawling to just within two hundred yards I let drive at it with the .303. My bullet struck it in the ribs, but failed to knock the beast over. A second shot clean through the shoulder did the business, however. I waited till the safari came up with me, and joined them. The flesh of the oryx is tough and tasteless, and when dried the hide is extraordinarily hard, and as stiff as a board.

At the end of a two and a half hours' march we reached the camp at which we had such a narrow escape from destruction by fire on July 30th. It was now completely burnt out, having evidently caught fire again after our departure. The fire had spread very much, the palms for over two miles along the bank being reduced to a collection of mere blackened poles, in many places still smouldering. Camping was out of the question, so we went on again for another hour and a half. As we were crossing a small sand river which ran across our path, a herd of water-buck dashed out from among the palms forty yards ahead, racing across our front in fine style. It was a chance not to be missed, and raising my .303 I took a snapshot and brought one down with a bullet through the shoulder. Two or three hundred yards further on I unexpectedly came upon a small herd of grantei, and another lucky shot laid low a fine buck; not at all a bad morning's work in a district so devoid of game as that through which we were passing.

Soon after I shot the water-buck we deviated to the right, and, entering the belt of palms, selected a shady spot a few yards from the river and halted for a meal which we called breakfast, though it was past midday. At three o'clock in the afternoon we were again on the road, and remembering the "cinder-heap," kept close to the river-bank. It was no use, however, as we discovered to our intense disgust that the

lava came right down to the river, and there ended abruptly, as there were no traces of it on the opposite bank. Its difficulties, were, however, modified to a great extent by the fact that it was possible at intervals to descend to the water's edge, and march for sometimes a quarter or even half a mile along the smooth sand.

After more than two hours' wearisome tramp, we got into the open plains stretching away to the "Green Camp." It was then growing dusk, and as we had still some miles to go, we hurried forward. Presently a solitary rhinoceros appeared, quietly feeding, about three hundred yards away to our right. El Hakim inquired if I would shoot it, but as I was hot, tired, and perhaps a little short-tempered, I declined, hinting that I was anxious to see him put his precepts on short-range shooting into practice. It was an ungracious speech, and El Hakim would have been quite right to have ignored my remark. As it was, he merely sniffed, but dismounted, and taking his .577 from Juma pointedly asked George if he would like to accompany him, an offer George accepted with alacrity. El Hakim walked down, followed by George, and, then advanced cautiously to within twenty yards of the unsuspecting rhinoceros. He then raised his rifle, and, pausing a moment to aim, pulled the trigger. A puff of dense white smoke appeared, followed an instant later by a heavy report. The stricken rhinoceros jumped, then galloped madly away, with a bullet through the lungs, falling dead before it had gone fifty yards.

It was a pretty exhibition, and it looked so absurdly simple that when, on the report of El Hakim's rifle, a second rhinoceros jumped up from the grass between us, where it had been lying unobserved, I snatched the Martini from Ramathani, and slipping a cartridge into the breech, ran up

to within sixty yards of it, and kneeling down banged off at its shoulder. I admit that sixty yards was a long and unsportsmanlike range, but I was anxious to bag the beast before El Hakim, who was approaching it on his return from the dead rhinoceros, in a direction at right angles to my line of fire, could get within range. Of course my rhino, when hit, behaved quite differently to El Hakim's. It galloped madly, it is true, but in my direction. It came straight for me, its head lowered and tail up, and I slipped another cartridge into my rifle, fully expecting to see fireworks within a very few seconds. Nearer and nearer it came, but just as I braced myself up for the shot that should decide my fate, my antagonist swerved aside and commenced what Neumann calls the rhino's death-waltz, which consists of backing round and round with its head in the air, until it succumbs. In another moment he was down, and as I surveyed my prostrate quarry I mentally patted myself on the back for what I considered a good performance.

My self-congratulations, however, were rudely dispelled by El Hakim, who had come silently behind me, remarking in his quiet voice, "H'm-m, just the sort of thing you would do," thereby covering me with confusion; I ventured to remonstrate, and he then asked me where I had hit the beast. I showed him: the bullet had missed the shoulder and struck the neck, severing the main artery and the wind-pipe—cutting the beast's throat, in fact. "Does not that emphasize what I have told you?" he inquired. "If you had gone close enough to be certain of placing your bullet in the shoulder, you would not have run the risk you did. As it is, it is a very lucky thing for you that your bullet struck the artery; so you see you owe your freedom from accident more to good luck than good shooting."

I admitted the justice of the rebuke, and determined to manage things better next time.

On the next occasion I tackled a rhinoceros I endeavoured to put into practice the lesson I had learnt, though it could hardly be considered a happy attempt. This time the fault lay in carelessness due to over-confidence. It was in this way. We were going across a piece of open country in the near neighbourhood of the Waso Nyiro, when we saw a rhinoceros just within a fringe of stunted thorn bush, some four hundred yards to the right. El Hakim looked at me inquiringly. I nodded, and, taking the Martini, placed a couple of cartridges in the pocket of my shirt and set out, never doubting but that one cartridge would be sufficient. By careful stalking I got to within fifteen yards of the rhino, and aiming at the shoulder pulled the trigger. To my horror I saw the blood appear on his withers, the bullet striking too high up, just wounding sufficiently to annoy, but not disable him. The rhino at first stood still, and then slowly walked away. I was unwilling to risk my last cartridge on a doubtful shot, so I remained passive. Presently he stopped again a few yards further on, and loading up again I made a move to try to get nearer. In so doing I unavoidably made a slight noise on the loose stones underfoot, which was apparently what the rhino was waiting for, as he came round like a flash and charged me. I went hot and cold by turns as I remembered how much depended on my solitary cartridge, and as further disguise was useless, I dashed to leeward of a small heap of stones two or three feet high, which lay a yard or two away on my right. Round came the rhinoceros after me, and I dodged to the other side, and, a favourable opportunity presenting itself, I put my bullet fairly into his spine, dropping him dead not three yards from me. I breathed

a great sigh of relief, and walking back to El Hakim and George, who had been watching the performance, assumed an air of great nonchalance, and casually asked El Hakim for a cigar. That gentleman gazed steadily at me for a moment, but said never a word, and we resumed our interrupted march in silence.

Having now bagged two rhinoceros, we determined to push on to the "Green Camp," though darkness had already fallen and the bulk of the safari were still some distance behind. Leaving the mules in charge of Ramathani, El Hakim, George, and I pushed forward on foot. We marched on and on, but no sign of the camp we were looking for appeared, and we were inclined to think that we had mistaken our way in the darkness. At seven o'clock in the evening, however, we reached it. It seemed almost like coming home. I had been on my feet since half-past five in the morning, and was thoroughly done up. El Hakim and George were not much better, as riding a mule at a walk becomes very tiring after some hours in the saddle. We three gathered some dry wood and lit a large fire to guide our men, who presently straggled in two or three at a time, till all had arrived, with the exception of Jumbi, his assistants, and the animals. As they had not turned up at ten o'clock in the evening, we got out a large signal rocket, and after some searching found a suitable stick and set it off.

Something, however, went wrong, as instead of ascending the rocket described a low curve in the air and then pitched into the dry grass in front of the camp, instantly setting it into a blaze. We had to bestir ourselves *then*. It took us an hour of hard work coupled with some small amount of profanity to get the flames subdued.

The humour of the situation then struck us, and we

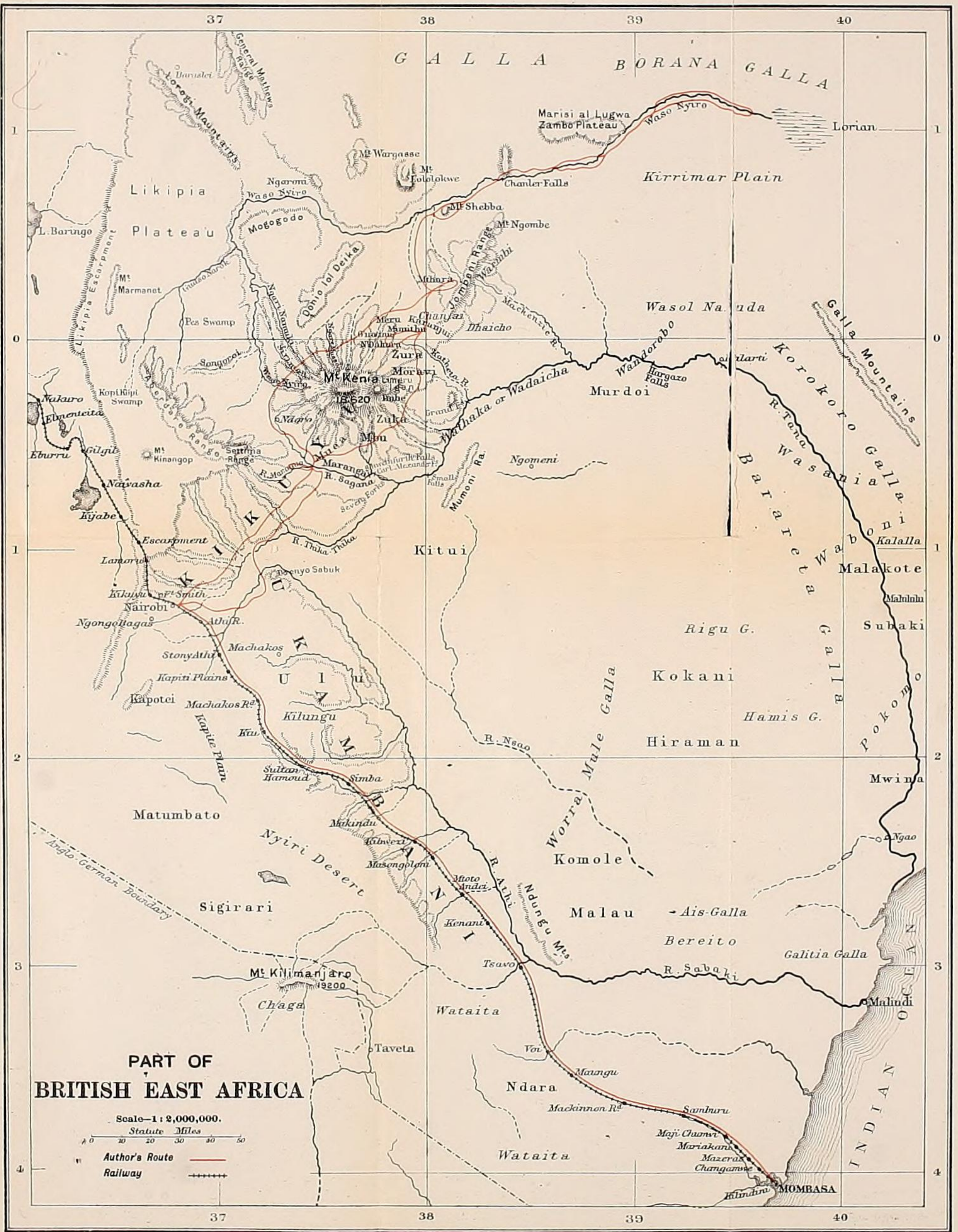


laughed till our sides ached, to the great astonishment of our poor perspiring men, who could not see anything funny in it at all. Another rocket was then sent up with better results, as it ascended to a great height and burst most satisfactorily with a loud report and a shower of multi-coloured stars. It answered its purpose, as half an hour afterwards Jumbi and his assistants came in with the animals, all dead beat, having been over fourteen hours on the road.

On the morning of August the 15th we had camped for breakfast on the river-bank, when we were greatly excited by a sight of two sheep grazing peacefully further down the river. Our men immediately started in pursuit, and captured them after an exciting chase. They were of the fat-tailed variety, and were Rendili sheep beyond a doubt. All that afternoon was spent in searching the country round, but we saw no signs that led us to believe that the country was inhabited. El Hakim shot a rhinoceros while we were out. It was feeding in the open. He was carrying the .577, and proceeded to stalk it, accompanied by George, who carried the .450 Express. When within thirty yards of the rhino, El Hakim motioned to George to remain where he was; he himself crawled thirty yards to the left, so that hunters and hunted formed a triangle. El Hakim fired, and the rhino, on receiving the shot, charged straight down upon George. It was then that I had an opportunity of observing a wonderful exhibition of nerve and true sportsmanship on George's part, begotten of the confidence we both placed in El Hakim's skill. Holding his rifle at the ready, George awaited the wounded beast's mad rush without a tremor, refraining from firing in order not to spoil El Hakim's second barrel—a confidence which was fully justified by the result, as that individual's left barrel spoke when the enraged rhinoceros was within a dozen yards of George, dropping it dead with a bullet through the heart. George afterwards declared that he could not have stood the strain much longer, and would have fired in a few seconds more. We had now sufficient meat for our immediate needs, and were still determined to push on, though the country seemed almost entirely devoid of game, and feeding ourselves and our men was getting to be quite a serious problem. A rhinoceros only lasted the

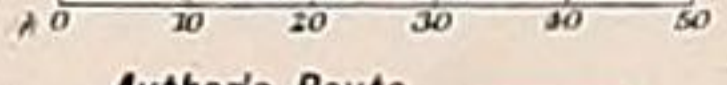
men two days, as, in spite of its huge bulk, it cuts up very badly, there being a good deal of waste; and, in addition, the men, who even at ordinary times were tremendous meat-eaters, in the entire absence of cereals, developed a carnal appetite that can only be described as monumental.

Returning to the spot where we had lunched, we resumed the march, going another mile down the river before camping. When the tents were pitched, Ramathani busied himself in cooking our unpalatable meal of grantei-steak fried in an insufficiency of fat. Soon afterwards we heard an excited shriek of "Afreet! afreet!" (Devil, devil) from Ramathani and some of the other men near him. He rushed up to me and implored me to bring my "bunduki ya n'dege" (literally, "bird-gun") and slay the "afreet." I laughingly inquired where the "afreet" was, and he pointed upwards into the branches of a large tree, whose branches spread laterally over the fire at which he was cooking. I could not see anything, and was about to turn away, ridiculing him; but the men appeared so genuinely terror-stricken that I paused and looked up again. Judge of my surprise when I discovered that the "afreet" was nothing more than a large water-lizard stretched out on a branch. A dose of No. 6 shot on the side of the head brought it down with a thump on the ground. Examination showed that none of my shot had penetrated its skull or body, it being merely stunned by the shock. None of the men could be induced to touch it under any pretext whatever, saying that it was highly poisonous, and its bite meant instant death; so, seizing it by the tail, I carried it over to our table. It woke up while I was carrying it, and, squirming upwards, attempted to bite me, causing me to drop it hurriedly, to the intense amusement of the men. I killed and dissected it. Its heart beat for



**PART OF  
BRITISH EAST AFRICA**

Scale—1 : 2,000,000.  
Statute Miles



Author's Route ———  
Railway - - - - -