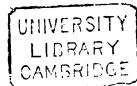




The Author



418.c.93.122
LAND OF ELEPHANTS

Big-Game Hunting in Kenya,
Tanganyika and Uganda

by

COUNT ZSIGMOND SZÉCHENYI



PUTNAM
COVENT GARDEN LONDON

1935

vi. 209



I always invited her to a cup of tea

CHAPTER XVI

LIONS

February, 1934.

IN Tanganyika again; in the country between the Mbalangetti and the Duma rivers, near the south-east corner of Lake Victoria.

There is no equal in all East Africa to this region. Here, at any rate partly, quite paradisical conditions still prevail. Here lion and buffalo may be hunted unlimitedly; they are not rationed to hunters by law, and not even a permit is needed to shoot them!

As a matter of fact, a licence is needed, because though lion and buffalo may be shot without one, antelopes and gazelles may not, and without these one's larder would suffer.

Why the law does not protect buffalo and lions here I do not know. Perhaps because practically nobody comes here. It is a long way away, beyond even the Serengeti; not many people know about it, and, moreover, this is sleeping-sickness country. And so it does not interest the majority of safaris.

In the course of my other travels I had not even heard of this bit of country. And now I am only here by the grace of my friend Captain Murray-Smith; and first of all I had to promise I would not tell a single soul in Nairobi where we had been or how many lions we had seen.



The Rhinoceros

Lions

For a little we still lay there revelling in the sight of them. They licked their paws, yawned, stretched in perfect contentment. Then we left them. Let them yawn on in peace.

As we were going back to continue our photography of the dead lion, a rhinoceros crossed our path. We were down-wind, the country was good, with plenty of good, substantial trees for cover. We subjected the old iron-sides to a perfect bombardment of photography.

We carried on with him for about ten minutes. Finally we got so close to him that he heard the click of the camera. Round he whirled towards us, fuming, his nose down to charge, but neither seeing us nor getting our wind. When he grew tired of that attitude and made off, we threw stones at him, till he turned round, whereupon we dodged behind our trees again.

But finally he sent us flying, and flying for all we were worth, and we only breathed again when he gave up the chase and made off without having forced us to use our rifles. I had shot the two rhinos allowed me by my license some time ago.

Then I photographed the two dead lions. Unfortunately while we had been away, a matter of a couple of hours, they had so stiffened that we could hardly force them into the positions we wanted. That is obvious in the pictures. They look like two frozen poodles.

Then we hastily set about skinning them; and it was high time, for they had already lain there unskinned longer than they ought to have. I was