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H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES

SPORT AND TRAVEL IN EAST AFRICA

An Account of Two Visits

1928 AND 1930

Compiled from the Private Diaries of
H.R.H. The Prince of Wales

BY

PATRICK R. CHALMERS

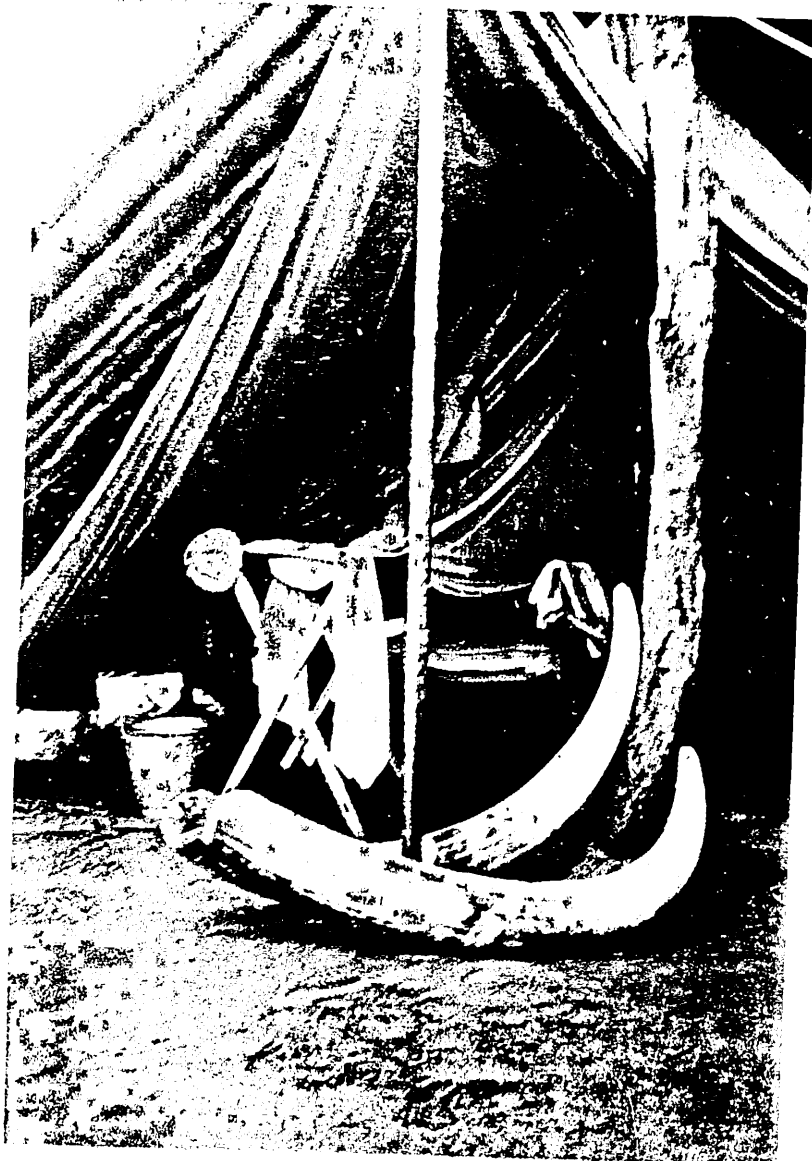
with three maps and thirty-seven
reproductions of photographs
taken by

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
and others

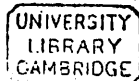


LONDON
PHILIP ALLAN

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130 lbs. OF IVORY

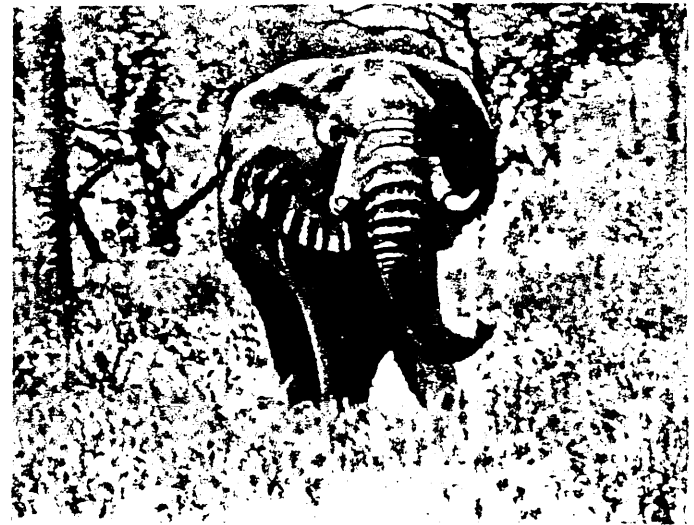


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as she was under way, her screw kicking the warm Albert water into a wake of spangles. On board the *Samuel Baker* H.R.H. was joined by three interesting additions to his party. Dr. Peacock, a most lucky arrival, as it was to turn out, Captain R. J. D. Salmon, Game Ranger of Uganda, and Pete Pearson, as experienced an elephant hunter as was Mr. Allan Quatermain himself.

Ndandumire is a village on the left bank of the Victorian Nile and it is situated at the juncture of river and lake. The *Samuel* was due there at eleven o'clock. At Ndandumire it was proposed to tranship into the S.S. *Lugard* of the River Nile Service and to proceed up the Victoria Nile forthwith. But as this transfer of passengers was just about to be made, Trotter collapsed with a heart attack, probably brought on by the heat. It was then that Dr. Peacock was found so apropos a companion. He took immediate charge, had a section of the *Samuel's* railing removed, and through this egress he got Trotter, who was unconscious, carried on board the *Lugard*. Again luck was with the invalid for the *Lugard* carried an ice-machine, and H.R.H.'s cabin, which he insisted that Trotter should occupy, was reasonably commodious and cool. The *Samuel Baker* was sent back to Butiaba, at a rate of knots, to dispatch a telegram to Entebbe for those extra remedies which the patient required. A serious illness in the wilderness, even with an excellent physician to advise, is an alarming matter. The next few hours were spent



'WILD LIFE OF ALL KINDS HAD BEEN PLENTIFUL.'

A CABLE FROM HOME

"To-morrow", said Blixen, "I shall have a rhinoceros to show you". Anticipating the picture his hearers went to bed.

In Africa there is the black rhinoceros and the white rhinoceros and yet, almost, there are not two rhinoceroses but one rhinoceros. For the white rhino is scarcely lighter in colour than is the black rhino. The adjective white was supplied by the people of Pretoria because this rhinoceros, which in old days was not rare, used to roll in, and plaster itself with, a light-coloured local mud. In the same way deerstalkers in Athol and elsewhere will speak of a 'black stag', by which they mean not that the royal referred to is really black but that it has been rolling in a peat hag. The differences between the two species of rhinoceroses are: (1) The white rhinoceros is far bigger than the black, it probably weighs twice as much as the latter beast; (2) The white has a squarish muzzle and a long skull; (3) The black has a prehensile tip to the upper lip; (4) The white eats grass; the black lives on the green leaf of the thornbush; (5) The black is infinitely the more aggressive of the pair; (6) When the white rhinoceros is on the move its tail curls up in a corkscrew as the tail of a porker, whereas the black rhinoceros, who charges, carries his tail up stiffly as a poker and as straight as a footrule.

The black rhinoceros is common from Abyssinia to Cape Colony. The white rhinoceros is rare, local and strictly preserved. There are a few left in Zulu-

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land ; after that they are not met with again till one has worked north to a patch of country on the west bank of the Nile, a corner which just includes Northern Uganda, the Belgian Congo and the Southern Sudan. Black rhinos are found by ones and twos. They usually occur in thorn scrub where they lie up during the heat of the day. They are un-alert but when suddenly disturbed are apt to be pugnacious. That is, they are inclined to charge—out of curiosity, some say. The rhinoceros is short-sighted but he has a nimble nose, and if he gets the scent of a man he will charge by sense of smell. That is to say, he will come thundering on the line and, weighing tons, whether he does so out of pugnacity or from inquisitiveness makes little difference to his objective.

Next day, Sunday, 25th November, camp was quitted after breakfast and H.R.H. drove five miles to where Blixen had harboured his beast. On arrival we found that the rhinoceros was lying down in very thick cover. It was decided that Lascelles should climb a tree which commanded a view over the tall grass and bush. From this security he might, it was hoped, achieve with a cine-camera a good 'movie'. H.R.H. took up a more mobile position down wind and behind a bush. Blixen then threw himself in the covert, which he proceeded to draw with great skill and not a little pluck.

Presently it was obvious that something big and heavy was afoot. The dark, impenetrable brushwood



• WITH A CUMBERSOME LITTLE CALF •



• BROKE AWAY AT A LUMBERING GALLOP •

A CABLE FROM HOME

rocked and crashed. Then a cow rhinoceros and a cumbersome little calf broke away at a lumbering gallop. The two passed within twenty yards of H.R.H. but, a bush being inconvenient, for all that he saw of the interesting pair he might have been in Pall Mall. Lascelles was luckier, and turning his camera's handle to good purpose he procured an excellent picture. "Hard luck, Sir", said Blixen to H.R.H., "but please to come this way". So he was followed—for twelve long forest miles.

Blixen then indicated a thornbrake of the sort that fenced about the Sleeping Beauty in the fairy tale. "I have a rhinoceros in there", said Blixen. He posted his cameras and beat the brake out to them. He had been wrong about the rhinoceros, for the covert contained nothing more exciting than a mon-goose. "We will get back to the cars and have a cup of tea", said Blixen. And, after a fifteen-mile walk, this is all that in fact was ultimately accomplished.

Next day camp was moved to another beauty spot, some two miles from the Dodoma-Arusha road, between Babati and the ancient location on Pienaar's Heights. Arrived there, Fournie took possession of H.R.H. and, with Blixen and Finch-Hatton as lieutenants, proceeded once more to look for buffalo. They walked many miles. But at last their glasses were glued on certain specks upon a distant hillside, specks that moved like animalculæ under a microscope. "Buffalo, yes", said Fournie. He stalked them and,

sake it was time he took a rest. They arrived at the foot of the hills. As they reached the higher ground the going became thick and difficult and the spoor less easy to follow. So to save time, and to avoid a zigzagging here and there, it was decided to separate into short distances and advance in line through the bush as though walking up partridges. The luck was with Finch-Hatton, on the flank. He had not gone far when he heard an elephant moving to his right. Wishing to make sure that it really *was* Pontius, he stalked it with care, and presently saw a huge shape, like a cathedral, moving along the hill-side. He got within forty yards and saw that it was Pontius himself. It was a colossal beast, and its tusks must have weighed at least 125 pounds apiece. Denys Finch-Hatton faded into the shadows and whispered to the Prince of Wales to come and take the shot. But as the latter advanced, stumbling among the thorns, the elephant stopped, cocked his ears forward and stood statue still. He had 'the wind'. There came a crash in the bushes, and Pontius the Pilate was gone at a gallop.

His pursuers sat down and looked at their feet. It was hopeless to go on now. Still, *something* had been achieved. A wild elephant had been followed for seventy wild miles, and in the end that elephant had been overtaken. It was his luck that let him off. The three said all the 'if onlys' that are: the long lunch on the first day's trek, the proneness of man who wears boots to get blisters, the folly of not having

made a *détour* to stalk him upwind! They were all very tired, their feet were raw, their food and water were finished. They were thirty miles from the railway and they walked those thirty miles in their sleep. And so the story was done.

Meantime at Mbuyumi the camp party had not been without its excitements. Legh and Aird had each shot a rhinoceros—sitters both. But Legh, in attempting to photograph another one at too close quarters, had had an extremely fortunate escape. He had stalked it successfully and was busily engaged with his camera, when suddenly round swung the rhinoceros and charged. Anderson, who had been standing at Legh's elbow, promptly fired, at seven yards' range. The brute stopped at the shot and slowly sank down—dead, it was presumed, for a ducat. Anderson then, leaning his rifle against a stump, went with his camera to take a 'close-up' of the dead beast. But the latter still had life in him, and got on to his legs with remarkable agility. Anderson, who is lame, had only just time to hop to his rifle and throw it up as the huge beast was into him. He pulled at point blank range and down came the rhinoceros like a house. It dropped literally at his feet. Said Legh to Anderson, "I thought you said that no chances should be taken with wounded game, and yet you—". Said Anderson to Legh, "Oh, shut up".

A day or so later the Mbuyumi party had another rhinoceros adventure. Going round 'kills' in the

hope that lions might have been before them, they came across a rhinoceros asleep in the sun. They proceeded to photograph him as he slept. Of a sudden the rhinoceros woke, and, seeing himself to be closely encompassed by four men, he got up and charged. Each one of the party maintained afterwards that the sleeper's animosity was directed against himself personally. But Eyre it was who fired a bullet, *ping*, into the ground beneath the nose of the on-comer, who, seeing the dust fly, decided to be off and was—in a safe direction.

The day following the return of H.R.H. from the Paré Hills picnic, Legh and Aird went to a camp at the north end of Lake Jipi, at the foot of the hills. They found little doing there, no game in the district, no trace of lion or buffalo to be seen. And so, as there was no scarcity of mosquitoes and tse-tse in the papyrus swamps around the lake, they returned, after two days, to Mbuyumi.

Arrived there, Aird shot a leopard. 'Kills' had been put out as usual for lions, and at daybreak Legh went round these 'kills' alone. At one of these *bonnes bouches* the leopard was regaling himself when Legh approached, and hearing him coming, promptly hopped up into a tree close to the 'kill'. Legh passed under the tree and did not notice the leopard, which happily remained where it was. An hour later Aird and Eyre, walking in the same direction, looked up into the tree. And there sat the leopard and Aird

added its skin to his collection. Legh had a lucky escape, for it is a favourite trick of leopards in a tree to jump down upon anything that passes beneath them.

Leopards are dangerous animals but some people make pets of them. Eyre told us that he knew a man who had a pet leopard. The leopard walked about the house and garden at will during the day, but at night it was shut up, for its own good and for the safety of the public, in a pen-kennel. One night the leopard-fancier awoke and, in the white moonlight, he saw the leopard in his room. Now a leopard at night, even a tame leopard, is uncertain and not to be encouraged. So the owner jumped up, seized the leopard by the scruff of the neck and spanked it heartily with a slipper. He then dragged it to its kennel. There he was greeted affectionately by the kennel's usual occupant. . . . It was a trespasser from the bush who had been in his bedroom, whom he had cuffed, whom he had lugged downstairs.

On 19th February, H.R.H., Finch-Hatton and Blixen, recovered more or less of their blisters, returned by train to Maungu. They hoped for better luck this time. And they set out in the direction of the Sangalla Hills, intending to walk east through the bush immediately to south of the railway and later to rejoin the train where they had left it. But there was no fortune to their safari. They saw neither elephants nor the spoor of elephants. They said that they supposed there would be no thrill in big game

in. And accept Finch-Hatton did. He refused, in fact, no hospitality that was offered—fire, eggs, *chupattis* and coffee were all taken by him and wanted. But the native blankets were another story. The creature known at home as the Margate tortoise, here, in the land of Ham, draws no colour line. What it left of Finch-Hatton returned to camp early next morning.

The art circle with its cameras was off early. The rain had stopped, the light was very excellent, the warm, dripping, sun-washed world seemed alive and splendidly pulsing. Lizards ran everywhere, green lizards and gold, and all Insectdom piped and twittered, hummed and whirled. And four miles south of camp a broad river-shallow was found. In the middle of it stood, ankle-deep, an enormous elephant. He had lovely tusks and he was completely preoccupied. He was approached with discretion. He stood swaying gently and murmuring to himself. Thus occupied, some excellent studies of him were obtained. He showed no sign of annoyance. It is of course easier to get a picture of an elephant in a sanctuary or reserve than it is elsewhere. But it does not always mean that because he is sacrosanct he is saintly. On the contrary at times. And an elephant is too big to be bad-tempered without danger both to you and to himself. For a solid, hard-nosed bullet is the only possible cure for a really rogue elephant. Therefore the film artist who films big game must be, and as a rule is, pre-

pared, should occasion arise, to shoot quick and shoot straight.

This particular elephant, however, was all for peace and quiet. He was left gently rocking himself, soliloquising and twitching forward his great grey ears when the flies became too teasing troublesome.

Shortly afterwards a rhinoceros was almost walked on. He was asleep in the sun, a huge prehistoric beast and no relation to the matron at Mashuru. It was decided that H.R.H. should make his own personal copyright film of him and that no other should have a share in the picture. But first the subject must be woken up. The artist arranged himself in position and requested Ritchie to inform the rhinoceros that it was about to be filmed. Ritchie shouted the news into its ear. The rhino, thereupon waking, lumbered on to his legs and stood blinking his little short-sighted pig eyes. He obviously felt both liverish and irritable. He swung his great horned head about and blinked sulkily here and sulkily there. Sullenly he wondered who had disturbed him. And he had every intention of finding out. Lastly he caught sight of the camera. He snorted angrily and charged it.

The Prince said afterwards that he felt, at that moment, like a practical joker caught out by a victim who lacks a sense of humour. But it was (he said) Finch-Hatton and Ritchie who were responsible for the safety of the operator. So he kept on turning

the handle and hoping for the best. The best had been had the rhinoceros done a swerve from the 'heave-to' shots that promptly kicked up the dust at his feet, but devil a swerve did he. So, as he was by now within a stride or so of the instrument, Ritchie and Finch-Hatton fired into the brown of him. At the shock he swung left, a ponderous point or so, missing the camera by nearly a yard. As he passed out of focus H.R.H. hopped aside and Ritchie placed a final bullet behind the big shoulder. Down he came like a load of bricks and, with a grunt, he died. But (so said H.R.H.) it *was* bad luck that so gallant an old chap should have so forced one's hands. And, after all, the film was a failure. For when developed the action was seen to cease at the most exciting moment. It ceased with the rhino just about to make matchwood of the camera. That is to say, just as the two second shots were fired. H.R.H. was conscious that he had not moved his stance. But he said he supposed that he was a person of curiosity who must always know just what's going to happen now. He had wanted to see. And you cannot see properly if your eyes are glued to the finder of a camera. So, for one personal moment, he had stopped filming and thus spoiled a fine picture.

After this the expedition walked home to tea, meeting game of all kinds as it went. In camp were found the Griggs, the Delameres, and other friends from Nairobi, all of whom had come to spend a few

days under canvas. They had made bad time from Nairobi owing to the rains of yesterday and had eventually been compelled to abandon their cars, one in the middle of, and the rest on the wrong bank of, the Sand River. From there they got a message through to Selengei, whence assistance was sent, and the river falling, they were soon able to cross and to cover the remaining twelve miles without further delay. Campbell Black had arrived earlier in the day by air, and he now took von Blixen over to Voi in his 'Moth' to smell out the latest rumour of elephants and the movements of elephants.

Now the *bonne bouche* that the picnic had promised was the hope that a Masai lion hunt would be witnessed. But something must first be said of the Masai people themselves. The Masai are the most famous of all the East African tribes, and in headlong courage no warrior race in wide Africa was ever their master—Chaka's impis not excepted. But the Ama-Zulu and the Masai were, of course, quite off each other's beats. The Masai, a race of pastoral nomads, formerly wandered, where grazing was best, between Lakes Rudolf in the north and Nyasa in the south. The Masai are a noble-looking, attractive people, and though to-day they are under white control and confined to a reserve that extends, roughly, from Nairobi to Kilimanjaro, they are still divided into military clans and still enforce, as of old, a kind of martial training upon their young men.

so exciting a spectacle as it sounds. You cannot see much, there is too much greenery and too much broken ground. The action, moreover, is frequently spread over half a parish. Nero, if a spectator only, must keep in the background ; but if it's a thrill that he wants, it is his for the taking. In that case he must, his imperial self, take spear and shield, and step into the circus, the arena that looks so sunny, so safe and so empty and where every little green bush may hide three hundredweights of steel-tipped catamount. You may think it gladiatorial, but, were you thinking of the lions, it is a quicker way to go than is, as a rule, the way of the rifle. And if you were thinking of the men—just enquire of a young Masai buck !

Now it was partly to assist at one of these rough-and-tumbles that the Prince of Wales was in the wilderness. And in the evening Buxton allowed the Masai to send out their harbourers. The scene of the hunt so desired was to be laid along the banks of the Sand River, between Selengei and Mashuru. Had the harbourers had any luck it would have been a fine show that they would have staged, because a long ridge overlooks the riverbed, and in the amphitheatre, in the convenient gorse-like bush below, it was hoped that the lions might be cornered. But when morning came the draw was a blank one.

Ritchie, who was in charge of the Reserve, was deeply distressed. He took it as personal. Then he remembered his counter attraction—the old cow

rhinoceros and her baby. So he cheered up and, after luncheon, a procession of cars zigzagged over the veld to call upon her. She and her calf were at home, but she, poor old lady, was so unhappy and upset at sight of so many visitors that the latter came away and left her. Coming home another old rhino was seen enjoying a roll on the veld. But the memory of the rhino who had been filmed in the morning made for caution and he was not inspected too closely.

Early next day H.R.H. went flying with Campbell Black. The 'Moth' took off below camp and, mounting, made for Kilimanjaro. Higher it climbed and higher. The view was very wonderful. Below was Lake Amboseli, about it a vast area of swampy, shallow pools and dense bush which stretched eastward away to the Tsavo River. Westward was to see, ridge upon ridge, the Great Rift Valley where the Athi goes punctuated always with diamond falls. And, forever ahead of the fliers, rose the huge pile of the Great Mountain, cloud-capped Kilimanjaro. And into the blanket of the clouds the Moth went too and, when it sailed out of them, far below, in the sun dazzle, the great domed peak of Kibo glittered in a mail of snow and ice. Glacier after glacier lifted as the Moth soared and circled among the great peaks. It seemed another world after the green tropics. Then the plane dropped through the clouds again, found forest and open grassland, picked up Longido Hill in the west and came home to camp.

came back to the river and the *Lugard* dropped downstream to anchor for the night off Rhino Camp.

Rhino Camp is so called because it was the camp from whence President Theodore Roosevelt and his party, in 1908, shot so many of the scarce and harmless white rhinoceroses. Apart from this fame, Rhino Camp is to-day the river port which links up with the short-cut to the Belgian Congo.

Upon the same day Legh and Aird returned from the Tangi River Camp. Their unsuccessful trip ended dismally, the pair being caught in a deluge of rain just as they arrived on the river bank opposite Packwach and the *Lugard*. So rough was the Nile that their boatmen would not risk a crossing until the storm blew itself out, which it did with the sunset.

Next day the steamer moved downstream to Liri. On the bank stood a black rhinoceros and his family. H.R.H. landed and took some studies of them until one, becoming resentful, charged so determinedly that Finch-Hatton had to choose, and choose quickly, between shooting the rhinoceros or seeing him make pulp and matchwood of the Prince of Wales and his camera. Legh and Aird, once more, went to look for elephants, this time with Jardine and on the banks of the Victoria Nile; they returned next day and, as before, they had looked in vain.

On March the 20th the *Lugard* went downstream again and anchored opposite the Zoko Forest, which was drawn blank and she steamed back to Rhino

Camp. Here it was found that Sayer had arrived, opportunely, with the Wolseley cars, which he had brought by road from Tororo, *via* Lira, Kitgum, Torit and Juba, a run of 600 miles. He had hit things off exactly, for here he was with the cars, and here, to-morrow, would be the Prince de Ligne and the Baron van Zuylen, from the Congo, to make final arrangements for H.R.H.'s visit to Belgian territory. These ambassadors would not have to wait. The road could be taken immediately. And next day, 21st March, taken it was soon after breakfast, for Arua, forty-five miles away.

Arua is the ultimate station on the Belgian Congo frontier. Finch-Hatton and Salmon were of the safari. And it had not gone far when the former, halting his car, which was leading, motioned that the whole column should also pull up. He pointed and, following his out-thrown right hand, the company, standing up, stared at a lightly-bushed vista in the green landscape. And there they saw a herd of twenty obvious rhinoceroses. But they were larger than any rhinoceros ever seen.

Finch-Hatton approached and explained. "White rhinoceros", said he briefly, "better photograph them".

So the cameras were recovered from the baggage lorry, and H.R.H. walked right up to the herd and took pictures. The huge and gentle monsters (the white, or Burchell's rhinoceros, is second only to the elephant in

magnitude) watched him mildly and, if one ventured too near, never thought of charging, but instead trotted off twenty yards or so, their tails in air, and, stopping, wheeled about and watched the visitors as mildly as before.

As previously stated, the adjective *white* is wrongly applied to Burchell's rhinoceros, and there is little in his colour scheme to distinguish him from the common black rhinoceros. But he stands a good foot taller than his cousin, six feet or more at the shoulder is no uncommon height for him. He is more gregarious than the black rhinoceros—here was a herd of twenty—more placid in disposition, nor does he violently resent human intrusion on his privacy. His single horn is longer than the larger of the two horns carried by the smaller animal, indeed a white rhinoceros may wear a yard of unicorn on his head. It is this ornament, combined with the ease with which he may be walked up to and shot down, that has so nearly resulted in his extinction. It is estimated that there are not 130 specimens left in Uganda. But to-day the law has come to his aid and he enjoys a complete immunity from those who would shoot him because he is big and rare.

Most people who go to photograph or shoot South African game are charged sooner or later by the black rhinoceros. Or they consider themselves to have been so charged. Yet it is doubtful if the rhinoceros attacks with malice. One in a hundred may be evilly dis-

posed, but the remaining ninety-nine are actuated by a sort of curiosity coupled with a desire to leave your neighbourhood as soon as may be. A rhinoceros is very short-sighted (his range of vision is probably about thirty yards) and he relies on a keenness of nose to inform him of an intruder. He cannot tell the whereabouts of a foe who is down-wind of him. So when he picks up a scent that is strange and probably hostile, he, anxious to know the worst perhaps, bolts up-wind and relies on his formidable appearance to rout whatever enemy may be in front of him. He may possibly feel himself to be surrounded by enemies and would rather in that case break through where he can locate them than face the unknown. Thus will a herd of Highland deer sometimes act when a 'drive' is in process. Then, if they suspect the posted rifles in the passes, they will break irrevocably back through a hundred seen foes rather than face the unseen that they suspect.

A black rhinoceros once set going rarely stops. He goes straight and fast, pounding up-wind. He is huge and heavy and armour-plated, and his skull has the might of a battering-ram. It is odds, says he, that he will scare the foe into giving him the road of escape. Thus his charge is merely a case of 'Out of my road!' He can sometimes be shifted a point or so by a shot, and he can nearly always be dodged—provided that he has not got too close to you before you make your jump aside. But, having dodged him,

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he won't as a rule come back to look for you. On he will go until the thunder of his going dies down in the forest.

The cameras were packed up again and Arua was reached without further excitements. Here H.R.H. stayed the night with Nelson (the District Commissioner) and played a game of golf with him in the afternoon. And here was made the beginning of the end of the Prince's second African trip. For from Arua next day the spare luggage was despatched to Cairo in charge of Younger of the Uganda Police. When it had been seen off H.R.H. played golf again and shortly before lunch M. Moeller, the Belgian Governor of the Province Orientale, with Mme. Moeller, came to pay his respects.

After lunch H.R.H. left by car with the Prince de Ligne for Watsa, in Belgian territory, a hundred and thirty miles away. On an excellent road (but no better than the roads of Uganda) Watsa was reached before dinner-time. Dr. Marshall, Salmon and Jardine stayed in Arua. In Watsa supplies were purchased and next morning Watsa was deserted for Gombari. Gombari was arrived at in time for lunch with the District Commissioner. The latter had arranged a most interesting *ngoma* of the pygmies whereof H.R.H. took pictures. Round the little dancers sat the little elders of the tribe. And as they sat they smoked, through long sticks, an evilly smelling, smouldering chopped grass. This burning mixture



' SMOKED THROUGH LONG STICKS '



' EVIDENCE OF COMPLETE . . . ENJOYMENT '

