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THE AUTHOR.

A GAME RANGER'S NOTE BOOK

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route. The country they crossed is void of paths and water, and it was by no means unusual to have to make a forced trek from water-hole to water-hole, fifty miles apart. I have vivid recollection of such a stern chase: we had to march from daylight one day till 2 p.m. the next, only halting during the darkest hours. A water-hole thought to be reliable was on our route, and we had finished our allowance, two pints daily, when ten miles from that reliable water-hole. We arrived there at ten in the morning of a scorching day, to find the place dry—bone-dry. And then we had to trek on to a hill, where I knew there was water, fifteen hours' march distant and hard going. It was not the mileage that irked, it was the state of exhaustion. We reached the water at two o'clock next day, after thirty-eight hours without a drink. I knew then what it is to be thirsty all over.

You don't know what you can do till you try—or necessity for trying is forced on you.

CHAPTER XIV

RHINOCEROS

Common black rhino generally distributed and numerous—Holmwood's—Constancy of horn character in Holmwood's or Forest race—Plains rhino now driven to forests by settlement—Variation of horns in different districts—Curious horns—Horns of *holmwoodi*—Quickly retires before settlement—Acquires nocturnal habit when much disturbed—Cause of sinister reputation—Breeding habits—Favourite resort—The rhino-bird—Principal food—Preference for wilted euphorbia—Introduction of melons—Regularity of habits—Daily and nightly routine—Rhino at night—Rhino of the south appears to drink every night—Greater savagery of small northern districts race—Differences in habits of northern rhino—Aloes eaten for moisture—Studies at a water-hole—Voice—A night's experience on the Olgere River—Rhino paths—Encounter with a cow—Rhino paths to be avoided when camping—Adventure with visitor at night—Proofs of the cow's progress through camp—Rhino on trek—Seasonal movements in the north easily explained—Digging for water.

THE common rhino—in this country we never give him his name at length—is very generally distributed, except in the tropical coast belt, which extends from the Sabaki River south to the old Anglo-German border. I once found fresh tracks in some old shambas on the coast north of that river where the country, though outside the tropical belt, is very dry and arid, but this was so unusual I made note of the incident. Rhino are numerous—during the rains, at all events—in the dry Taru desert, which lies just inland of the tropical belt; also along the Tana River and in the bush country of Ukambani. In the last-named region they are very plentiful. I find in my diary a note that in course of one day's march on the Yatta Plains I saw eleven, while the boys who did not

leave the beaten track reported having seen ten. *R. bicornis* occurs as far north as the Northern Eusso Nyiro. Beyond the river the species becomes smaller and smaller as you travel northward, until, in the Lake Rudolph region, the size sinks to its minimum.

R. bicornis holmwoodi is the sub-species named after Mr. Holmwood. This race affects the forests, not the open plains and scrub land, and is distinguished by the long, thin, tapering horns.

Before we began the process of settlement in the country it was strictly accurate to say that the horn formation referred to as distinctive of these forest rhino was "constant"—if the term may be used in this connection. No matter from what part of the Protectorate, whether from the forests of Kilimanjaro, Kenya, Elgon, or other district, the horns of the animals never varied; they were, as I have said, thin, long, and tapering, both in bull and cow. The horns of a forest rhino could be distinguished at a glance from those of a plains rhino. But settlement has brought about a change that must be noticed here, though it involves premature reference to habit: no beast has retired more rapidly before the encroachment of man than the rhino. Intelligence is not considered his strongest point, but he has wit enough to take warning by the fate of those of his friends who remain within reach of a rifle, and change his habitat wherever man has settled. Leaving his old haunts, the open plains, to sheep and wire fences, he takes up his residence in the forests, whence he emerges by night to feed and drink. This change of habit and habitat on the part of the plains rhino in settled areas renders now much less marked the difference between the horns of plains and forest races. It remains to see, whether in the course

of generations the animals which have acquired the forest habit will take upon them the horn formation of the true forest race.

Horns vary much in different districts. In the dry country of the Southern Reserve they are very short and thick, and those carried by rhino found along the edge of the bush veldt are frequently distinguished by their equality of length. I remember an example killed near Kiu, whose horns were respectively 26 and 25 inches long. In the bush country of Ukambani, near the Tana, the horns are at once short and slender, the length seldom exceeding even 19 inches. Again, the horns found in the Lake Rudolph region differ from those elsewhere, being small, from 16 to 20 inches, and very cylindrical, with comparatively small bases; horns in other districts showing marked expansion at the base. Some very fine horns have come from the Sotik, which lies south-west of the Mau escarpment. These are both long and heavy, deep from front to back, with a long posterior horn.

In the Southern Reserve I used to know individual rhino which carried particularly fine horns. There was a certain old cow, for instance—she haunted one particular water-hole, and I dare say she still flourishes—the peculiarity of whose horns always excited my cupidity: they were of equal length, and of unusual thickness at the base. Another cow of my acquaintance was easily recognisable by the curious forward cast of her horn, a variation occasionally seen. That cow, I fear, is no more; I have reason to think that she strayed across the railway, for she vanished from my ken. The most peculiar horns within my knowledge adorned a head obtained by Mr. Frank Baden-Powell; the anterior projects straight out from the

nose like that of some beetle; the owner must have found it inconvenient when feeding. Rhino which inhabit the open plains often show that distinct flattening of the anterior horn which is characteristic of the horns of *R. simus*, the so-called "white" rhino, a peculiarity, no doubt, due to friction against the ground while the animal is feeding.

The horns of *holmwoodi*, the forest race, sometimes attain to an extraordinary length. The longest of which I have heard was the specimen given by the Masai chief, Sandeyo, to Mr. Maclellan; it had been cut into a walking stick, and even in that shape was 44 inches long. I have an idea that the original was said to have been 2 inches longer. The longest horn I have seen in the natural state—one of 42 inches—was picked up in the Mau Forest. It is difficult to believe that these long slender horns are those of bulls. Recently I saw one from a rhino killed on the edge of the Aberdare Forest which measured 32 inches. I should have regarded it as unmistakably that of a cow, had not the man who shot the owner assured me it was the horn of a male.

A few years ago, before the Rift Valley was brought under settlement, some exceedingly fine horns were obtained from that district—long, thin and tapering. To-day the rhino has vanished from the valley proper, ousted by sheep and wire fences. There are, however, on both sides of the valley big forests swarming with them, and I hope the survivors of the valley animals have found refuge with their forest comrades.

The promptitude with which the rhino changes his mode of life is his security. When too frequently disturbed, he not only retires from the open to the forest, but acquires the nocturnal habit. Only where he



RHINO WITH MALFORMED HORNS SHOT BY MR. AUGUSTINE HEALY.

dwells unvexed by man does he feed by day. Otherwise he sleeps, and it is this habit of sleeping in the open by daylight that has done something to gain for him his sinister reputation—I write now of the rhino of the south. It is generally the animal rudely awakened from midday repose that makes the unprovoked charge that wins for the species a bad name. Only a day or two before these notes were written, while cantering back to camp through some low bushes, an old rhino, roused by the horse passing within 20 yards, jumped to his feet and gave chase, snorting with rage. Of course, he was quickly distanced, and finding himself no match for us, stood a moment, then turned away into thicker scrub, where no doubt, he finished his sleep. I passed six others in a few miles, and all but one were lying down. I had gone out the same way about six o'clock in the morning, and at that hour all were on their feet, but at rest, under trees.

I have not been able to learn much concerning the strictly domestic affairs of the species. The young would seem to be produced at all seasons of the year, but perhaps more mere babies are seen about the time the long rains cease—the end of May. Once only have I seen a cow giving suck; she was lying down as a sow does under the same circumstances. I cannot say whether this is the normal attitude, but think not.

The young one runs with the dam till it is almost as big as she is. When the calf is small the mother is seldom, to my knowledge, accompanied by a bull, but when it has attained nearly adult size there is usually a bull in attendance, from which facts we may draw inferences concerning the breeding habit. More than once I have seen a cow accompanied by a tiny calf

and also a youngster almost as big as herself—no doubt the baby's predecessor, with his nose very much out of joint. When the animals are on the move the young one most often follows its mother; sometimes it runs in front, but I have never seen the dam guiding her progeny with her horn, as is said to be the practice of the white rhinoceros.

Their favourite resort is the thorn bush, but in the Game Reserve and other secluded places they may still be seen feeding or sleeping out on the open plains. They often select a solitary tree in an open space for their day resting-place, and usually lie head downwind. When stretched out on his side, as his habit is, the beast looks very like a huge pig, and his movements as he rises confirm the resemblance. If unattended by rhinoceros-birds or tick-birds, they may be easily approached while asleep; not so if the guardian fowl is on duty. It is curious to see the state into which the rhino is thrown if his attendant birds fly up, and he, risen to his feet, cannot see the cause of their alarm. Equally curious is the obviously soothing effect on his nerves if the birds, satisfied that their anxiety was groundless, return to him again. It would really seem as though the birds had genuine understanding of what constitutes danger and what does not. When on a rhino or other wild animal they give the alarm at the approach of man, whereas when perched on donkeys or cattle they take little notice or none of humanity.

For a considerable time I was under the impression that the rhino of the plains fed on grass, and am indebted to Sir F. J. Jackson for pointing out that they feed on the tiny thorn bushes which flourish among the herbage. I have no doubt that they do eat some

grass, but these little bushes form their staple diet. The mistake was one for which I could forgive myself, so inconspicuous are the bushes, eaten down by the beasts, and also burned by the fires that sweep the plains every dry season. Now that the rhino have been reduced in numbers, and fires are, as far as possible, prevented near Nairobi and the settlements on the Athi Plains, these bushes are growing into quite respectable trees.

The rhino displays a marked preference for the euphorbia, a fact well known to the Wakamba, who take advantage of it. These people affirm that if a euphorbia be felled the rhino will soon discover it, but will not eat until the shoots begin to wilt; then they come every night and browse till the tree is denuded of all the small branches. I once found a euphorbia thus stripped of small shoots, and was speculating on the identity of the animal which had eaten them, when a boy told me this fact relating to rhino. Hence, the practice of the Wakamba sportsman who cuts down a tree, and when the animals find it, sits up by night with his bow and poisoned arrows.

So far as I am aware, there is not in this colony any indigenous plant which takes the place of the sama, or wild water-melon, of the South African deserts, for which game animals display such partiality. Some years ago Mr. R. B. Woosnam obtained seeds of the sama, and planted them at various places near the railway along the edge of the Southern Reserve. They did not do very well the first year, only a few melons about the size of an orange were brought in, and nothing much was heard of the experimental planting till after the November rains (which, by the way, were very small), of 1913, when some Masai reported the melons

to be flourishing. In the early part of the following year men brought in fruit about as big as one's head, with the information that there were plenty more, but as the game ate them as soon as they began to turn yellow, no good ones were left. This report—from the point of view of the game preserver, as well as that of other people, was eminently satisfactory, so I lost no time in collecting seed, small packets of which I sent to officers stationed in the drier parts of the country, asking them to plant it.

I hope the sama will become well established, as the Masai took very kindly to it. Up till the time they brought in the large melons they were unaware that the fruit was good to eat. When I set the example they followed it, and did not take long to make up their minds that this was an article of diet deserving of their attention. One shrewd man collected the seeds from the melon he was eating, saying he should plant them near his manyatta, and the rest of the party took up the idea with enthusiasm. Masai are not cultivators, and so far as their co-operation is concerned, the sama will only flourish if it can dispense with the care an agriculturally minded people might bestow. But I trust the game may benefit.

Rhino are very regular in their habits, and where undisturbed they wander little; it is almost certain that an animal will be found at the same place at the same hour every day. His routine would appear to be this: during the heat of the day he sleeps in the shade of trees or bushes, his feathered allies acting as sentries. About four o'clock he gets up and starts feeding towards the water, which he reaches soon after sundown. He drinks quite early in the evening. It would seem as though rhino felt it imperative to

slake their thirst soon after sunset, for if they have dawdled by the way they will cease feeding and trot the intervening distance. I have often seen them come thus, trotting at a good round pace water-ward directly the sun had gone down. One bright moonlight night on the Kenna River I was able to watch the movements of four from the moment they came within sight, about a mile away; they advanced at a trot as long as I watched.

After drinking they play. The rhino appears at his best at night, and gambols in sheer lightness of heart. I have seen them romping like a lot of overgrown pigs in the neighbourhood of the drinking-place. Pig-like, too, they will wallow in the mud and then trot away to the nearest tree, against which they enjoy the luxury of hide-scratching. Playing thus and feeding, they pass some hours of the night. Before the sun rises they go to the water again, and as dawn approaches trek for the day resort. The day resting-place may be within four or five miles of the water, or it may be as much as ten. This habit of lying-up well away from the water is very marked. Thus, rhino are extremely numerous on the Eusso Nyiro, but you would form a different opinion did you march along the river itself; take your way four or five miles from the stream and you may see as many as ten in course of the day's travel.

I think the rhino of the southern districts visit the water every night. Experience gained in these parts of the country leads me to regard them as tolerably safe guides to water, their presence indicating stream or pool within ten miles or less.

The smaller variety of rhino found north of the Eusso Nyiro differs from him of the more southerly districts,

both in character and habit. These small beasts appear to me much more savage than the common *bicornis*; they charge on small provocation, as I discovered one day in the Orr Valley, when a bull assumed the offensive and came very near getting the best of it. They seem to be of much less thirsty habit than the animal of the south; they lie up for the day at much greater distances from the water. I have found them fully thirty miles from any pool or river, and the fact proves that they cannot drink every night. Also they seem to prefer dirty water—holes in which they can wallow—to the clear waters of a stream. Their choice of resting-place for the day also differs. They select, not the shade of tree or bush out on the open plain, but ascend the little rocky kopjes to make their day-bed. I noticed this all over the hot, dry country, often finding the beds on the highest points of the hills. This preference, I presume, to be dictated by desire for coolness and air; the fact that on the hill-tops they are less likely to be disturbed by the Samburu hunters, who kill many, may also have its influence. As already said, the rhino is quick to change his habit in response to necessity. At some of the more isolated water-holes in the north rhino drink during the daytime. I have seen a photograph of eight round a drinking-place. This, however, is unusual, and points to scarcity of water.

The natives maintain that where the various aloes flourish, neither rhino nor elephant drink as often as they do in districts where these plants are absent, and I can answer for it that where aloes and kindred vegetation are plentiful, balls of fibrous tissue may be found, showing that the sap and green stuff are swallowed and the woody matter rejected. As these

plants contain a large amount of sap it is quite likely that they, to some extent at least, take the place of water. With regard to the less frequent drinking of the northern variety, too, I must mention that throughout the area it affects there is a shrub, the potato-like swellings of whose roots contain what, to all intents and purposes, is water, and these roots are eagerly dug up by the rhino, among other animals.

As they feed after drinking for the most part, the dung, as a rule, lies very much more thickly in the vicinity of water. I particularly noticed this near the Salt River. The fact is worth noticing as a helpful guide to the neighbourhood of water. The same applies to elephants.

A frequented drinking-place is an admirable situation if you wish to study the rhino in his hours of ease and gaiety, but I cannot recommend it if you want to sleep. This applies to the dry country where water-holes are few and far between, and the nocturnal visitors, in consequence, many. When encamped near water in the northern districts I was disturbed several times by rhino before I abjured such sites altogether. They came to the pools in surprising numbers, and, if they did not stampede the pack-animals and boys, kept every one awake. The rhino encountered by day gives the impression that he holds silence first among virtues; the most one ever hears from him is the snort he emits as he gets your wind—often, in bush country, the first intimation of his presence. When observed in his hours of relaxation, let me say after you have spent a night near a water-hole, you discover that he is by no means so taciturn as his demeanour by day gives reason to suppose. The tempest of grunting and squealing keeps you awake from dark till dawn. Per-

haps a quotation from my diary will serve to exhibit the feelings inspired by rhino in a tired man at night. It refers to an experience on the Olgerei River—one that taught me the discretion I now urge in respect of camping:

"This camp has proved a gay one! Before it was dark last night a rhino came to the water-hole about 100 yards away, and within two hours there were eleven of the devils at the water. Twice the camp was turned out, as they tried the road on which we were camped (an extremely foolish thing to do anywhere in rhino country). At one time two appeared to go mad and marched up and down as if they were holding the river against all comers; they made a great noise, so much so that at last I got sick of it, and fired a shot to shut them up. I had a grand view of them, as it was bright moonlight and, the camp being on a high bank of the river, it was even better than one would expect, as the sand is of the whitest and the animals showed up well. After I fired things were quiet for a bit, till an old cow and calf passed the camp within 10 yards and caused a stampede. One half of the camp went up thorn trees, while the other half went into the blue. Called by the guard, I dashed out and turned the wrong way—perhaps as well, for I should most likely have shot her. As it was, she was just off when I saw her. This little trot round gave me something to think about, as my bare feet collected several thorns. After this the porters gave up all ideas of sleep—they had a few thorns to pick out as well.

"At daylight there were still two rhino at the water."

I once saw a great gathering on the Olgerei at a biggish pool. Rhino began to arrive about six o'clock, and from that time till moon-set we counted over thirty visitors. Some of them were still in the vicinity at dawn.

In districts where water is scarce and rhino are many, the animals traverse the same route night after night to the drinking-place, and wear a path often a foot deep; these trails, about 20 inches wide, are beautifully smooth. The beast needs a path little more than twice the width of his foot; by reason of the breadth of his body and the shortness of his legs the fore and hind foot on either side make a track of their own. In sand a tiny ridge is sometimes found between the tracks of right and left feet. The rhino has none of the sagacity of the elephant as a road-maker; he does not trouble to seek easy gradients, but goes wherever he can scramble, and, despite his unwieldiness, can climb like a goat. His paths through bush do not lend themselves with any facility to man's uses; his height being from 4 feet 6 inches to 5 feet, he clears a tunnel suitable for his own stature and no more; hence, the man must go stooping, and that is a disadvantage when there is a possibility of meeting the rightful owner. I realised this acutely when my map work required me to climb for the purpose of taking bearings. It was necessary to follow the rhino paths, and I always used them, feeling that if I *did* encounter a rhino descending in a hurry it was odds on him. Possibility crystallised into fact at last; I met a cow coming down—by good luck I realised the position before she did and dropped her dead at less than ten paces. The incident did nothing to steady my nerves for subsequent work of the same kind.

A word regarding these rhino paths: Never allow camp to be pitched on one, even if old; the beasts show singular fidelity to their trodden paths and always use them, and, should a travelling rhino approach down-wind, thus receiving no timely warning, the

chances are he will come upon the camp before he knows it, when he will charge straight through, scattering tents, fires—everything that comes in his way. And should there be pack animals they will be stampeded. I learnt my lesson on this point at Elmenteita.

I was travelling with a veterinary officer, and we had camped not more than 100 yards from the house of the Hon. G. Cole, with whom we dined. About half-past nine we returned to camp, where we were sharing a tent, and, after doing a little writing and attending to some of my gear, I went out to look round the traps I had set for small mammals bespoken by a naturalist at home. It was bright moonlight, so I did not take a lamp. I was about 50 yards from the tent when I suddenly heard from up-wind a noise such as might be expected from a motor car gone mad, and saw a cloud of white dust coming towards the tent; it passed close to me and I saw that it was raised by a rhino followed by a half-grown calf. The next minute there was crash, a squeal, and then another crash and a chorus of yells, and something came through the bush towards me. As I had no weapon I made myself as small as I could behind a bush, and next minute three boys uttering panic-stricken cries, rushed almost over me. I hurried back, to find my companion creeping out from under the fly of the overthrown tent, and I'm afraid when he asked in a very sleepy voice, "Was it a whirlwind?" I forgot the danger through which he had just passed and roared with laughter. I did not laugh long, for one of the boys shouted that Tofiki, my servant, who had been with me many years, was hurt. He had received a nasty cut on his head, and two other boys were also injured. Tofiki soon came round and was not much the worse, but the other two

had been trampled by the rhino, and were so badly bruised we had to carry them to the railway next day. By the time I had ascertained the extent of the damage to the boys, Cole arrived, bringing a lamp, and we proceeded to inspect the tent. The rhino had torn her way through it, breaking the camp-bed to pieces; she had first stepped on my pillow, which bore a muddy imprint of her foot, and then on a box of stores, which included a tin of jam, and the tin had burst, smothering everything with its contents. For 20 yards in front of the tent, stores, blankets, and odds and ends were strewn, including the lamp which had been standing close by the vet.'s bedside, and we found the wreck of the box on which it had stood. After leaving our tent the rhino had deliberately charged that of the boys, and, hitting it about a quarter of the way down one side, came out at the other. As there were eight boys inside, it was surprising that only three were hurt, and none of these really seriously.

A strange thing about the business was that Cole had lived at this boma for several years without seeing a rhino. My opinion is that we were encamped on a track this animal had been accustomed to use years before, and she, suddenly finding herself among houses and bomas, lost her head and charged the tent which was on the road. By sheer luck this was the only night during that trip on which we had not tied up the horses in front of the tent, otherwise there can be little doubt one or more of them would have been killed.

This sort of thing is by no means of common occurrence, but the incident serves to point the moral set above: Avoid rhino tracks for camping. If obliged to camp on such a path, I always try and stop the road

some distance away, so that, if an animal does happen to be travelling, he may receive timely warning to make a detour or turn back.

Though faithful, as already said, to one locality as a rule when left undisturbed, the rhino sometimes is seized with the trekking spirit. At such periods—usually about the end of the rains—you will observe spoor, all leading in one direction. Along the high ridge of the Mau as many as seven and eight have been seen at this time of the year, travelling not in a troop, but in file, a few hundred paces between the leader and the last. Such travels are performed, for the most part, by night, but a gentleman whose farm is crossed by the trail used on these occasions told me he had seen fourteen or fifteen animals going in the same direction within a couple of days; how many passed in the night cannot be said.

These travellers are apparently forest rhino, and I fancy they trek thus in search of some particular food they know to exist at this time in certain places.

There is a seasonal movement among the rhino of the northern districts, dictated by the presence or absence of water. During the rains, when facilities for drinking are everywhere, the animals distribute themselves over the whole country. The rains at an end, the smaller water-holes dry up, and the rhino move to the vicinity of the larger pools, which last longer, and, as these give out, they move back and back until they arrive within reach of the permanent resources of river or large pool. This entails somewhat extensive travelling. Some of the water-holes that serve for a time after the cessation of the rains are at a considerable distance from the rivers, and the rhino haunt their neighbourhood till there is little but mud remaining, when they set off

and trek swiftly to the dependable drinking-places—it may be fifty miles away. Night journeys are usually made at a trot; those undertaken in the heat of day, probably under stress of thirst, more deliberately.

When occasion compels, the rhino will dig for water, and at this he is an adept, using his forefeet, and throwing out the sand between his hind legs, like a dog. In this way he will excavate a hole in the sand 18 inches or 2 feet deep till he reaches water, for the presence of which he must have very keen intuition. Such holes are used by other game until the sides are trodden in; then you may see in the traces of their sharp hoofs the endeavours of antelope to emulate the navvy work of the rhino. Antelopes do not excel at digging, their feet not being adapted for such uses, and they seldom attempt it, except in the case of an old rhino excavation which has been partially filled in by the collapse of the sides. Lions will sometimes try and scratch down to water in these partly filled holes, but I have never seen evidence of a lion's attempt to sink a well on his own account.

CHAPTER XV

RHINOCEROS (*continued*)

Varying opinions of character—A dispassionate opinion—Inoffensive—Vicious—Trespassing—Bad sight and inquisitive disposition explain his conduct—Safari stampeded—Charge easily stopped as a rule—An unprovoked attack—Greater savagery of the northern race—Forest rhino ill-tempered—The Kenya rogue—My first rhino an outlaw—A race from a rhino—Masai method of moving—Generally inoffensive in the south—My mule bolts—Killing in self-defence in the north—Greatest danger—Killing with a revolver bullet—Where to place the shot—A kill on the Aberdares—Wandorobo methods of killing—Masai methods—Wakamba methods—Pack animals stampeded.

NO animal in Africa furnishes a more fruitful topic of dispute, and none has given cause for more bad language; he is an unfailing subject of discussion when men from the wilds meet, and one hears the most diverse opinions of his character, disposition, and ways. I write now of the southern animal.

One man will maintain that the rhino should be put on the vermin list and shot out for a menace to human life who charges on sight or scent; for a mischievous, troublesome creature who ruins the settler's fences and crops. The rhino, say such, is a useless, ugly, dangerous brute, who has no place in the twentieth century at all.

Another takes the rhino's part. He will uphold the beast for a sporting old chap, ready for a row if you want one, but not going out of his way to look for trouble. If he *does* charge your caravan—well! give him the road and he will do no harm. The advocate of the rhino will urge that no animal gives way more

rapidly before civilisation, and that not half a dozen cases of fence-breaking can be put in the indictment against him.

To render justice, it is necessary to take a middle course. It must be admitted that the rhino cannot remain in the settled areas, but he knows that himself, and is moving out for good reasons of his own. The danger to human life may be admitted also, but with reservations; one has only to contrast the number of rhino killed—or, better, the great numbers met—with the total mishaps to man in any given year. The result is to show a tolerably clean record for the prisoner at the bar. Let me give a couple of illustrations of rhino conduct to show the case for and case against the charge of danger to humanity.

I had made an unsuccessful stalk after eland on the Yatta Plains, in the Ukambani District, and while returning to camp encountered a rhino. He displayed so much interest in our movements I thought he meant to charge; he did not, however, and I took no notice of him. Next morning, marching over the same ground a rhino jumped out of a wallow near the track, causing a general stampede for the nearest trees. A little further on two eland bulls crossed our path, and I bagged one. Keeping the gun-bearers to skin and cut up the meat, I sent the porters forward to the camping-place with orders to return and carry in the beef. While we were cutting up the eland a rhino came, had a good look, and strolled away again. The carcass being jointed, I left the gun-bearers to await the boys, and set out for camp, about an hour's walk. On the way I met no fewer than five more rhino, and when I reached camp the boys reported having seen ten since they left us busy with the eland. After making

sure that things in camp were ship-shape I went for a look round, and had not gone more than 400 yards when I saw four more rhino—but these would probably have been among the ten seen by the boys. I have seen more rhino in a day since then, but never so many at such close quarters nor such pacific examples of their kind. Even the beast we disturbed in his mud-bath did not attempt to charge, he merely ran alongside the safari till the men fled up trees.

Now another incident—for the prosecution this time: while cantering home to camp through some low bushes, an old bull, roused by the horse passing within 20 yards, jumped to his feet and gave chase, snorting with rage. Of course, he was quickly distanced, and, finding himself no match for the horse, pulled up, stood a moment and then turned off into thicker scrub, where I doubt not he finished the sleep we had disturbed.

It is that habit of sleeping by day that lies at the root of the rhino's evil reputation. It is generally an animal rudely awakened from his midday repose that makes the blind, unprovoked charge which gains a bad name for the species.

Then as regards the count which accuses him of damage to fences and crops. Reports of such misdoings are few, the rhino, in the exercise of a wise discretion, vacating the settled lands as soon as he discovers they are no place for him who would live at peace. Now and again, as has happened on Lord Delamere's estate, some misguided beast will entangle himself in a fence and carry away half a dozen posts and a furlong or so of wire. It must be allowed that if such trespassing is rare, the extent of the damage done atones for infrequency. A very heavy bill for repairs is inevitable

when so large and heavy a beast becomes involved with wire fencing. Similarly with crops: invasion of cultivated lands is unusual, but when it does occur there is havoc; there can be no doubt concerning the identity of the visitor after a rhino has explored the field.

I make allowances for him. Providence has endued the beast with indifferent sight and an inquisitive disposition. If he could see better there would be fewer accidents to safaris—not that they are many, as it is, for you don't reckon a stampede as an accident. I am convinced that, as often as not, it is shortness of sight that causes him to come blundering through the line of men. He gets their wind, knows there is danger toward, and, unable to see, accepts the guidance of his nose and goes straight for the imagined foe. I have known him come at that clumsy gallop to within 70 yards or thereabout, then, at last seeing the men, turn aside.

On several occasions when travelling in the Southern Reserve I have had rhino pass through the caravan, but never had a man touched. Once, being some distance ahead and to one side of the route the men followed, I roused a beast who started off direct downwind, and thus encountered the men at close quarters, an eminence having hidden him till he was almost upon the safari. I was on high ground and watched the whole business through the glasses; the expedition with which loads were dropped and the men bolted in all directions was very comical. The loads lay, a long irregular line, and I waited to see whether the rhino would vent his feelings on them. Watching, I discovered a figure I made out to be my boy Tofiki, calmly seated on a load. His temerity was justified, for the rhino sheered off and passed by. When we

reached camp I asked Tofiki why he did not run away with the rest. "Oh! I wanted to show these *washenzi* (wild people) that we are not afraid of rhino!" It is due to *washenzi* to say they soon learn that the rhino is really not so black as he is painted.

As a rule the beast is easily stopped by firing a shot in the air, or, what I have found even more efficacious, a shout from four or five men; the noise seems to wake him up to realities.

But there are exceptions. Recently I heard of the killing of several Wakamba. In another case a surveyor's boy, carrying his master's instruments, was charged; the boy escaped, but the instruments were broken. And it is not invariably the rhino who has been disturbed in his rest that charges. I was once attacked by an old female without the least provocation. She caught sight of us at a range of about 60 yards, and at once assumed the offensive; shouting gave her pause, and she swung off, to trot a short distance in another direction, then ill-temper supervened, and she came at us again. She meant business this time, and, deaf to shouts, was within 20 yards when I fired and partially stopped her; my gun-bearer, firing the next moment, broke her hip and brought her down. It is fair to say that this was the only time in eleven years spent, off and on, on the Southern Reserve that a rhino ever deliberately charged me, and, having regard to the opportunities the species has enjoyed, I think it proves my point that he rarely attacks unprovoked.

When I first went north I took with me indulgent opinions concerning the rhino, but speedily discovered that the disposition of the southern race is not that of the northern. I was deliberately charged several



Martin Johnson.

A FOREST RHINO.

times in the course of my first trip, and was compelled to the conclusion stated in the last chapter—that these smaller rhino are far more savage than the race we have been discussing.

Again, forest rhino are ill-tempered beasts by comparison with those of the open lands. I think I have heard of more fatalities to natives in the country round about the Kenya Forest than in any other district. I don't forget that a few individuals may, by their misconduct, earn an evil reputation for a locality, but the place mentioned had, let us say, more than its share of bad characters. At one time the main road from Meru to Jombani was practically closed by a rhino who used to attack the passers-by; he killed two or three people before the District Officer made an end of him. He died as he had lived, charging and injuring one of his slayer's gun-bearers.

It will be admitted that there is ample scope for the differences of opinion referred to on a former page.

I am almost afraid to begin writing of adventures with rhino. Everywhere common, and often aggressive from stupidity when not of malice, interviews with them are of almost every-day occurrence. I select a few notes from my diaries, which may serve to help the reader who wishes to form his own judgment.

My first rhino, a fine bull, was shot at the request of the Public Works Inspector at Nakuru, who reported that his men refused to stay at their work on a section of the line, owing to the hostile attitude of a male, female, and young one. About ten days before his letter reached me the railway staff, or some of it, had spent the shining hours up telegraph poles, the rhino family seeing to it that they stayed there. The incident may have been the outcome of a bad shot made with

a Snider rifle by one of the men. He fired, but did not know whether he had hit his mark, but, however that may have been, those rhino had declared war on railway men.

In obedience to the summons, I went to the place, and, when approaching the spot, pushed on ahead of my safari, keeping a look-out for the enemy. Presently I heard a shout, and, glancing back, saw a rhino "going for" my caravan in very resolute fashion. I was too far off to reach the men before he did, so, sitting down, fired at 200 yards with my .450. Much to my surprise, and to the delighted relief of the porters, he dropped dead, the bullet meant for his shoulder having broken his neck. When we went to look at him we found the remains of the cow and her calf lying side by side. The railway man's Snider bullet had, no doubt, inflicted a mortal wound on the mother, and the calf, deprived of milk, died by her side. The horns of the bull were 27 inches; those of the female 28 inches.

One of the original surveyors for the proposed Magadi Line through the Southern Reserve had a disagreeable experience while at his work. He was riding a mule, and when a rhino burst out of the bush his mount bolted. Before he could pull up the man had lost practically every rag of clothing, and not a little of his skin, in the thickets of "wait-a-bit." But that incident reflects less on the disposition of the rhino than on the innate malignity of mules and the efficiency of African thorns.

The same official was tossed by a rhino near Lake Rudolph about a year afterwards. He had to be carried for a week, but was eventually little the worse for the experience.

Some men are singularly unfortunate in attracting the attentions of this animal. They seem to be as steel

to a magnet, for if there is a rhino in the neighbourhood, he seems to find that man out and go for him. I have noticed that the keen shooting-man seldom possesses this undesirable fascination; it is usually one who has no use for rhino or who has shot all his licence allows.

Of course, the rhino, like any other beast worth shooting, will often put up a fight when wounded, but nobody with a spark of sportsmanship in him will find fault with that, and if a man is hurt now and again under such circumstances, the fact can hardly be reckoned against the animal.

Generally speaking, the rhino merely wants to be let alone. An early experience comes to mind as illustrating this. It was in 1901. I was crossing the Southern Reserve to Mount Kilimanjaro, and on the first day's march. We stampeded a troop of zebra, and, as they split into two lots, a something was seen moving in the cloud of dust between. My first impression was that a lion had pulled down one of the troop, but next moment a rhino showed up, shaking his head and looking angry. He trotted past within a couple of hundred yards and took no notice of us. An hour or two later, while we were following some lions I did not want to alarm, Mogari stopped and pointed at something just in front; it was a huge rhino, lying asleep among rocks. The question was how to dislodge him without making so much noise that the lions would be warned, for we could not pass undiscovered, owing to the direction of the wind, which would betray the safari to the rhino. One of the Masai offered to spear the beast, but this I forbade. Then the man picked up a couple of stones, and, creeping within 20 yards, tapped them gently together. Slight as was the noise

it sufficed. Up jumped the rhino and stood looking round. He saw us and advanced a few paces, then, suddenly deciding that he wanted nothing to do with us, went away with his tail in the air.

Rhino often pass the day in the midst of other game. That same afternoon, having climbed a hill for a view of the country, I saw from the summit thousands of kongoni, granti, thomsoni, and zebra, and with them a few ostriches and wildebeest. Among this mingled crowd I counted five rhino.

Looking through my journal of this trip I find reference day after day to rhino. They were very numerous in these parts. Next day we saw many, having eight in sight at one time: two cows with small calves, one with a half-grown youngster and a bull in attendance, and one solitary male. Three of these were directly in our path, and I had to drive them aside with revolver shots in the air. They took hardly any notice of the first shot, but stood stupidly gazing at us within 50 yards; not until I fired a third time did they turn and trot away. They went quite unconcernedly, without fear and without haste. What struck me equally at the time was that the porters took as little notice of the rhino as the rhino did of us. A few days before they would have bolted in all directions; they had become used to rhino. Another trifle remains in mind connected with that interview. While I was firing, a troop of female granti stood within 200 yards, perfectly indifferent to the reports, and when we moved on they crossed our track within 100 yards of the rearmost man.

When rhino were near our route, my method was to walk towards them with my gun-bearer Mogari, while the safari passed on its way, but often we came within

100 yards of animals, which did not even rise to their feet to look at us. I need hardly say that this only occurred when they lay up-wind; if down-wind of us it was always necessary to drive them off. Once when I had left the safari the men disturbed two, which passed within a few yards of me as I sat on an ant-hill; they saw, but, so to speak, cut me dead. You may sometimes startle a rhino without being charged. One day, armed with a .410 collecting gun, I met one face to face as I walked round a thorn-bush; there wasn't 5 yards between us. I made a splendid jump into a thorn-bush and he went off like an express train. I remember the day for another reason. I saw no fewer than three leopards: the last, a big one, I put up out of long grass on my way back to camp after meeting that rhino. This is the sort of thing that happens when one is armed with a collecting gun; it doesn't occur when you have a rifle.

A mule is not to be trusted in the presence of rhino. It was on the trip above referred to, my first through the Southern Reserve. We had crossed the desert to Lake Nigeri, a very trying march, and we did not reach the water till eight o'clock. Just before we got in a rhino appeared out of the gloom, and the mule I was riding bolted with me for half a mile. I don't know how she kept her feet in the dark over such ground as we traversed, but she never made a mistake. I must admit that the rhino looked unnatural: he was white, the result of wallowing in a clay that occurs in this district, but I only discovered the explanation afterwards.

Travelling down the Northern Eusso Nyiro we found very many, always provided our route was not close to the river. Once, making a short cut across a big

bend, we saw twelve in about two hours. None of these gave us any trouble, but, while following the stream through the deep gorge above the Chanler Falls, a young bull and a big cow suddenly appeared from the river, in which they had been lying, and the bull advanced straight for the porters. He was about 50 yards away when I brought him down with a .256 in the shoulder, and one or two more killed him, half way up the bank. This was the second rhino I had been obliged to kill in order to protect my men during eleven years spent in game country. I had to kill two others in self-defence while in the Northern District: one was the female I met while climbing a hill by a rhino path, mentioned in the last chapter. She was so close I was obliged to fire, and by good fortune dropped her dead with a bullet through the eye. She apparently did not see me, nor was she in any way alarmed, but it is not safe to take chances on a track through thick bush when you come face to face with the beasts at 10 yards. I dared not try and drive her off by shouting or firing in the air, for she would have been certain to charge at that distance, and I could not have escaped her rush. The other one I also met in thick bush. I would have left him alone had it not been that I was weak from fever and in no condition to take risks.

The greatest danger from rhino arises when one is not on the look-out for them. An early experience taught me this. Armed with a light rifle I was stalking some palla on the Thika River, and, while making my way through open bush, had my attention diverted by movement on the right. It was a rhino cow and calf, walking straight for me! I lay down and lay still, and when mother and son were about twelve paces distant

she turned aside to a dunging-place—rhino resort regularly to the same spot for this purpose. Before leaving she proceeded to knock about the fresh droppings with her hind feet, which afforded me opportunity to put a solid bullet into the rifle. She then moved on past me, but this did nothing to allay my anxiety, for her course was taking her right into my wind. I was considering chances in no very happy frame of mind when I heard a stealthy movement behind, and lo! Mogari with the .450. Glad I was to get it! I could have killed then, but refrained. The cow had her calf, and, moreover, her horns were under 20 inches. She went quietly away, leaving me to follow the palla, but, of course, they had vanished by that time.

It is strange how easily one may overlook so large a beast, and the fact is one that contributes to the dangers of coming on them unaware. A bull I encountered the first time I paid a visit to Mount Erok, on the old German border, revealed himself in a fashion that gave me a fright. The guide and I were ahead of the safari, trying to find a water-hole; I was mounted, and carried only a revolver. As we came out of a patch of bush into an open glade some birds flew off an ant-hill in front. I was not taking any particular notice and did not observe the species. Next moment that "ant-hill" was on its feet, charging straight for us. I shouted to the boy behind to run for a tree, and crammed in the spurs, seeking to reach the open before the rhino got home, and there was precious little room for the manoeuvre. Fortunately, I was able to cut across his bows. Then, seeing that he was intent on the boy, I put a revolver bullet into his ribs and won his attentions for myself. He came for me promptly, and I sat down to ride, reflecting that if the

glade did not extend far or if the ground in front was bad there was trouble in store. There was nothing for it but to go, and the horse evidently thought so, too, for he showed a clean pair of heels, and, as good luck had it, the glade led us out upon a grassy flat. Arriving on the open ground I turned off sharp and the rhino went past, disturbing the caravan, though he did not go near it. He had been wallowing in red mud, and, as he lay on his side, had all the appearance of an ant-hill.

Mention of the use of the revolver to turn the rhino from the boy recalls one of the strangest shooting incidents I know. An official stationed at Nyeri, near Mount Kenya—a district that swarmed with rhino a few years ago—was anxious to get photos of them, and took the field armed with his camera and a long .38 revolver; he was supported by a friend with an 8-bore rifle. A rhino was found, stalked, and the photographer set to work getting his camera in order. Perhaps he was too exacting about pose or point of view, for his sitter grew restless and came to see what was going on. The photographer, wishing to warn him off, drew his revolver and fired. He had no thought of hitting; the shot was fired with the idea of frightening him in the usual way, but the bullet hit the beast in the neck. He ought to have turned tail and bolted, according to all rule and precedent, but he didn't; he dropped dead in his tracks! The 8-bore man followed up with a shot, but it was not required, for, as both men assured me, the rhino fell dead to that .38 revolver bullet.

There can be no doubt that a rhino, like every other animal, is easily killed with a small rifle if—I say if—you hit in exactly the right place, but, I need not add,

this is no argument for using a light rifle (to say nothing of revolvers), for so big a beast. Which remark concerning the "right place" suggests the reflection that the beginner's common fault is to put the bullet for the heart-shot too far back. The point to take, as the animal stands sideways on is, I always think, almost through the shoulder and one-third of the way from the bottom of the chest. If I tried for the heart-shot, I should like to be a wee bit behind, so as to put my bullet about 1 foot behind the shoulder, but directed so as to hit below the point of the shoulder on the other side. In this way one would have a good chance of cutting some of the big blood vessels as well as of reaching the heart.

Once, when driving bush-buck on the Aberdare Mountains, I was sitting on the steep hillside watching the flat below, over which I expected the boys to drive the game. Instead of bush-buck a very fine rhino came along. When just in front of me and about 100 yards away he stopped, turned his back, and stood listening to the approach of the boys. I gave him a .450 between the shoulders, which made him spin round in time to receive another in the ribs. On feeling the second shot away he went, downhill, for 100 yards or so, then suddenly his legs gave way and he turned clean over like a rabbit, dead.

No animal suffers more from the native hunter. The Wandorobo have always looked upon him as an easy prey, but did not worry him much till the trade in horns made his pursuit profitable. These people use chiefly the poisoned harpoon, like an elephant spear, but the long-bladed Masai spear is sometimes employed in a way that deserves mention. The method is to creep up to a sleeping rhino and drive in the spear

rather far back, but pointing as much as possible forward. This, of course, presupposes the absence of rhinoceros birds, which would rouse the quarry to his danger.

Masai moran will sometimes kill a rhino, particularly if the beast haunts the grazing ground of their cattle. They use their fighting spears, and make great efforts to lay hold of the tail and drive the weapon through the soft wall of the body forward into the heart or lungs. I once saw one of my men "tail" a wounded rhino and plunge his spear at least 2 feet into the body time after time. The same man, while with Mr. Radclyffe Dugmore, who was photographing rhino, buried his spear in one that charged the party.

The Wakamba kill him both for meat and for the horns. As a rule they use poisoned arrows or pitfalls, and the use of the former does something to account for the viciousness of the rhino in their country. An arrow fired at close quarters—and they are fired at very close quarters, the country being covered for the most part with bush—and, hitting squarely, will easily penetrate through the hide. But, as must often happen, the arrow does not hit squarely; it glances, inflicting a cut, and, being poisoned, the result is a festering sore that does not improve temper. Quite a number of Wakamba are killed in the bush, principally women and old men; old women with loads of firewood are frequent victims. The hunters are active enough to get out of the way when charged.

One's attitude towards the rhino is dictated largely by the constitution of the caravan. If you have porters carrying loads you regard his presence with an even mind; at worst, a charge means loads dropped and flight of the men up trees. But if you have pack-

animals the case is different. A charge then means trouble and plenty of it. The mules, donkeys, or camels stampede, shedding their burdens as they go—it may be over miles of country, which implies the loss, either for a time or altogether, of your means of transport. Once, when at Mount Nyiro, I sent my pack-beasts, camels and mules, back to Lisamis to bring on stores and "posho," expecting them to be away for eight days. They did not return for twenty, leaving me without "posho" for the men and without food of any sort for myself. The delay had been caused by a rhino who stampeded the whole outfit, which scattered, each according to its fancy. Fortunately, all the animals eventually went back to Lisamis, and my men found them there in a Samburu manyatta. But much "posho" had been lost and several boxes were broken.

This is the sort of thing that creates feeling against the rhino. At one time I was his staunch advocate. Now I esteem him less.