

VOLUME 3 No. 1 MARCH 1967

Price: Three shillings or U.S. cents 50

# AFRICANA

Incorporating The East African Wild Life Society's Review

*Beal*

1967

**THE  
ANIMAL  
EXPORT  
TRADE**



# SANCTUARY FOR RHINOS

PROFESSOR Carl Thunberg, of Uppsala approached his massive working table where, between plant presses, drawings, piles of leather-bound volumes and a whole array of bottles and flasks of all colours and sizes, there stood several blackish, beaker-shaped objects, which looked as if they had been carved from a horny substance.

The Professor drew forward one of these vessels and examined it with interest. He then reached for a flask and poured some liquid into the strange goblet. Next the scientist let his hand hover over the many small containers, as if undecided which one to choose.

When he finally picked one up, he read the faded and stained label, uncorked it, and passed its open mouth under his nose, before adding a few drops of its contents to the liquid in the vessel.

He bent forward, his eyes fixed on the goblet, apparently waiting for something to happen. The expected reaction did not seem to occur. After a while the Professor shook his head, walked over to the sink and emptied the vessel. He repeated the procedure without losing any time, using some drops out of another of his many little glass bottles — but with the same negative result.

After a few hours' work, Carl Thunberg stepped to a writing desk, sharpened a goose quill and wrote: 'The horns of the rhinoceros were kept by some people in town and country, not only as rarities, but as useful in diseases, and for the purpose of detecting poison. As to the former of these intentions, the fine shavings of the horns, taken internally, were supposed to cure convulsions and spasms in children.

"With respect to the latter, it was generally believed that goblets made of these horns in a turner's lathe, would discover a poisonous draught that was put into them by making the liquor ferment till it ran quite out of the goblet.

"Such horns as were taken from a rhinoceros calf were said to be the best, and the most to be depended on. Such goblets are frequently set in gold and silver and are regarded as suitable presents to kings, persons of distinction or particular friends; or else they are sold at a high price, sometimes at the rate of fifty-six dollars a goblet.

"When I tried these horns, both wrought and unwrought — both old

and young horns — with several sorts of poisons — weak as well as strong — I observed not the least motion of effervescence; and when a solution of corrosive sublimate, or other similar substance, was poured into one of these horns, there arose only a few bubbles, produced by the air which had been enclosed in the pores of the horn, and which was now disengaged from it.

"Besides the use of its horns for goblets and handles of swords and daggers, there is scarcely any part of the animal which is not employed medicinally in the countries it inhabits.'

Carl Thunberg, like his friend and colleague Andrew Sparrman, had chosen South Africa as a field for his natural history explorations, and he was to go down in history as the 'Father of Cape Botany'. As most other eighteenth-century scientists, he had a wide range of interests and was fascinated by problems of the most diverse kind.

He knew the African rhinoceros in its native haunts, and in Cape Town, the halfway-house between East and West, he was well placed to learn something of the strange beliefs attached to these animals. Some of the superstitions he recorded had actually reached Europe many hundred years before and were still firmly accepted by most people.

It needed a man like Thunberg, a born scientist, always striving after the truth and not satisfied with what he was told from mere hearsay, to put one of these beliefs to the test and to prove it utterly false!

We shall never know what our ice-age ancestors thought of the woolly rhinoceros. Was it, to them, just an abundant source of meat, provided they could trap one in a cleverly hidden pit, or did they consider it

*One of the most  
significant studies of  
rhino ever published, the book  
'SOS RHINO'  
is by  
CHARLES GUGGISBERG,  
well-known  
East African zoologist.  
The book was considered of  
vital interest to  
conservationists everywhere  
and  
special arrangements  
were made with the publishers  
to reproduce in  
AFRICANA  
the last chapter, in its entirety.  
(A review of the book appears  
on page 32).*

as a creature full of magical properties? Was any special significance attached to certain parts of its carcass? The Cro-Magnon people, who left us those magnificent cave paintings, very probably had elaborate cults connected with the animals they hunted.

And the Shamans may well have accorded such an imposing beast as the rhinoceros a more than ordinary part in their world of animistic make-belief. However, be that as it may, we can be absolutely certain that many of the superstitions concerning rhino, which in eastern countries are widely believed even today, originated thousands of years

ago and probably had their roots in prehistoric times.

In the fourth century BC there lived a Greek, Ctesias by name, whose knowledge of medical matters secured him the position of court physician with Queen Parysatis of Persia and later with her son, Artaxerxes II. Being of an enquiring mind, Ctesias gathered an enormous amount of miscellaneous information and is reputed to have written no fewer than twenty-three books.

One of the most popular of his works dealt with India, and it was destined to become a fountainhead

*(Continued overleaf)*

into which many later writers and historians dipped very freely.

They did not realise that Ctesias was a rather gullible person, who could not distinguish the true from the fabulous and therefore cheerfully populated far-away India with worms seven cubits long, which habitually fed on oxen and camels, as well as with 'Sciapodes' or 'Shady-feet' — people who had such enormous feet that they lay on their backs and used them as sunshades.

He reported Indian princes as going to war with 100,000 elephants, of which 3,000 specially chosen ones were used only to demolish fortifications, and he also mentioned a beast called the 'Indian Ass', which carried a horn in the middle of its forehead. A drinking cup made from one of these horns was a very useful thing to possess, Ctesias said, for it had the property of detecting poison.

There can be no doubt about the 'Indian Ass' with its miraculous horn being the first reference to the rhinoceros by a western author. Ctesias himself never visited India and certainly had no opportunity of seeing one of these animals.

## SANCTUARY FOR RHINOS

(Continued from previous page)

Many of his informants may have been speaking from hearsay, others probably drew largely on their imagination. How would even a modern naturalist describe a beast he had never seen and of which there are no pictures, basing his account merely on some vague and contradictory rumours?

In what he wrote about the 'Indian Ass', Ctesias may even have got several animals mixed up together, producing something of a chimaera, which, in addition to the frontal horn, was supposed to have cloven hooves, a horse's mane, a dark red head, a white body and a boar's tail, but of which the rhinoceros was the main component.

The pen-portrait of an animal drawn by somebody who believed in the existence of the 'Sciapodes' and camel-eating worms, should, of course, not be taken too literally.

But that is exactly what future generations were to do, and this first

and very fanciful description of the rhinoceros crept into the works of many authors who should have known better.

Aristotle was very puzzled by it, but he never had an opportunity to check the stories told by Ctesias. Pondering over the book dealing with India, he came to the conclusion that there had to be two one-horned animals, the actual 'Indian Ass', which would have one hoof, like all donkeys Aristotle had ever seen, and the 'Oryx' with two.

The Sage of Stagira obviously nursed a very shrewd suspicion that Ctesias had got his animals somewhat muddled, but he took the 'ass' too seriously. For the cloven hoofs, mentioned in Ctesias' description, he picked on the Arabian oryx, of which some vague reports had reached him, assuming that this beast, too, had but one horn.

Had Aristotle joined the Indian expedition of his former pupil,

Alexander the Great, the unicorn story might have taken a very different course, for participants in this adventurous campaign must have become quite well acquainted with the 'Indian Ass' of Ctesias even if they never came across the 'Sciapodes'.

It was only during the reign of Ptolemy Philometor that Agatharchides of Alexandria, in summarising the Greek discoveries in the Erythrean Sea, as the Indian Ocean was then called, gave a recognisable description of the rhinoceros.

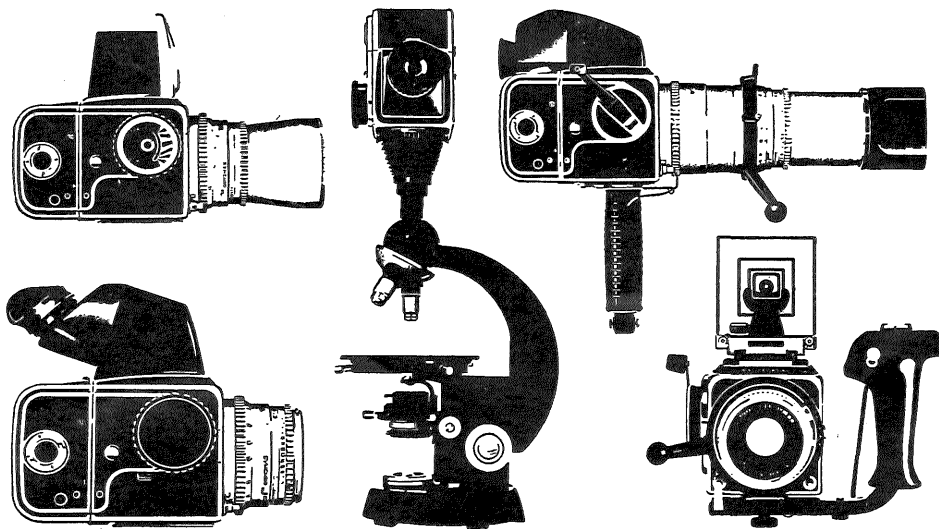
He may well have been the first author to write from personal experience, for the Ptolemies kept big menageries, and it is known that Philometor once paraded a rhinoceros through his capital, together with a whole host of other animals.

Meanwhile, the Romans had embarked on their imperial career.

(Continued on page 12)

*WHITE RHINO, so rare in East Africa that these two were imported from another part of the African Continent to take up their permanent home at Meru National Park, Kenya.*

When you buy one  
they're all within reach



Plus several hundred others we don't have space enough to show. This is why the Hasselblad 500C is an unusually economical camera. One example: You don't need an extra camera. Change the film magazine and switch from black/white to colour in the middle of a roll — or to cut film.

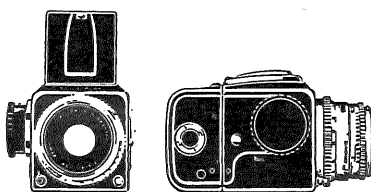
From macrophotography to long-range telephoto shots.

From studio subjects to high-speed press work. Anyone who says a Hasselblad is expensive just doesn't own one.

2 1/4 x 2 1/4 in. single-lens reflex camera with 80 mm f/2.8

Zeiss Planar lens. Five additional lenses with focal lengths ranging from 50 to 500 mm, all with fully synchronized between-the-lens shutters and automatic diaphragm. Interchangeable film magazines. Focusing hood interchangeable with other finders, film winder knob interchangeable with rapid winding crank, etc.

Want to know more about the Hasselblad? Your dealer will be pleased to demonstrate it: or you may prefer to contact the Hasselblad agent in East Africa: Kodak (East Africa) Limited P.O. Box 28, Nairobi.



Hasselblad 500C standard

H A S S E L B L A D





# SANCTUARY FOR RHINOS

(Continued from page 10)

which led to a considerable extension of the known world. Of the various surviving records dealing with Roman explorations, one of the most fascinating concerns a diplomatic mission which the Governor of Tunis sent to Garama, the present-day town of Jerma, where the King of the Garamantes held court.

The legation was led by one Julius Maternus, an officer who found it good policy to join the Garamantes in a military expedition against their southern neighbours, the 'Aethiopians'. He thus became the first European to cross the Sahara and to reach the Sudanese steppes somewhere near Lake Chad. In his report of the campaign he mentioned a place called Agisymba, explaining that this meant 'where the rhinoceroses foregather', probably a waterhole visited by a great number of these animals, as some pools in the dry and arid parts of Kenya are even today.

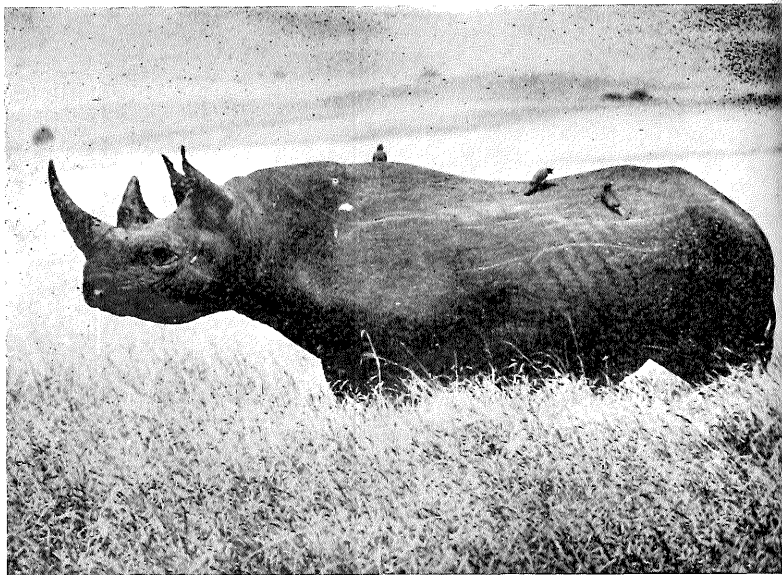
We can imagine the Roman watching with amazement, as the huge creatures, squealing and puffing, chased each other around in the strong light of the desert moon. There appears to be some un-

certainly about the exact date of Julius Maternus' great adventure, but it is possible that by that time the inhabitants of Rome had already had a chance to see a rhinoceros, for one is said to have been brought back from Africa by Pompey the Great (106-48 bc). Another rhinoceros was put on view in the triumph Augustus arranged in 29 bc to celebrate the conquest of Cleopatra's Egypt.

From then on beasts of this kind appeared at fairly frequent intervals in menageries and circus games. Marcus Valerius Martial, the poet who lived from AD 40 to AD 100, tells us, that in the arena the rhinoceroses were the most terrible fighters of all the animals, lifting bears right off the ground on their horns.

Deeply impressed by such performances, Oppian was carried away into stating that a rhino's horn was hard enough to pierce brass and the most solid of rocks. All rhinoceroses were males, he went on, for nobody had ever seen a female specimen. They could therefore not be born in the normal way and probably came out of the rock.

Another titbit of Oppian's rhino-



*NGORONGORO* rhino, near the Mungi River of Tanzania. Serious efforts to stop poaching in the Crater soon had beneficial effect and preserved the numbers of these world-famous animals.

ceros lore consisted of the information that these animals carried golden hair on their foreheads.

There came the chaotic conditions following the final collapse of the Roman Empire and later the rapid spread of Islam from its cradle in the Arabian deserts, which very effectively cut off re-emergent Europe both from the East and from direct access to Africa south of the Sahara.

Whatever knowledge the Greeks and Romans had accumulated with

respect to the animals occurring in these lands, became a dim and distorted memory. The descriptions of Pliny, Oppian, Aelian and others had given of the rhinoceros could still be consulted, but they were all strongly tainted by Ctesias, and the animal which had been such a familiar sight in Roman arenas changed its shape to the 'Unicorn'—a horse with a long, flowing mane and a horn in the middle of the forehead. What kind of a horn would such a creature be carrying?

# AFRICAN TOURS AND HOTELS LTD

have pleasure in announcing that the  
NAIROBI TOUR AND HOTEL BOOKING CENTRE

is now open in KENYATTA AVENUE

NAIROBI, where all your TOUR AND HOTEL

reservations in East Africa can be made.

## Why waste time and money in making your own Reservations?

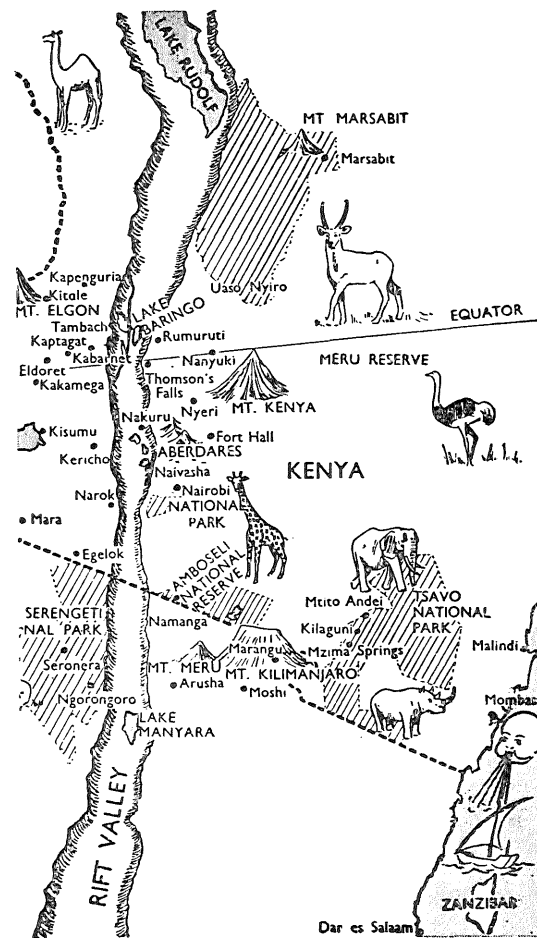
*Let us have the pleasure of organising your  
tour, whether by land or air,*

to any or all of the tourist centres.

*Our EXPERIENCED STAFF IS AT YOUR SERVICE*

*Call, write, phone or cable*

P.O. Box 7470 NAIROBI Cable: "AFTOURS" Telephone 23316





It had to be something spectacular — and truly spectacular horns began at that time to turn up in Europe, nine feet or more in length, and twisted in a highly ornamental, clock-wise spiral. Surely, those must be the horns of the fabulous 'monoceros' — and as such they were used in innumerable artistic and heraldic representations.

Those horns did, of course, not come from the mysterious East, or from the burning deserts of Africa, but from the far north, and they were in reality the tusks of the narwhal. Thus was created another composite creature, no less strange than the 'Indian Ass' of Ctesias.

Many a learned and well documented essay has been written, speculating on how the unicorn of European legend came into being. One author tried to prove its derivation from — of all things — a snake, the horned viper of eastern lands.

Others discovered a ready-made 'unicorn' on the monumental Gate of Ishtar at Babylon, which was excavated and restored by Professor Koldewey at the beginning of our century.

This is probably the same creature which, under the name of *Re'em*, makes a few nebulous appearances in the Hebrew version of the Old Testament. The word 'Re'em', incidentally, has been translated as 'monoceros' in the Septaginta and as 'unicornus' in the Vulgate.

There have been suggestions that the unicorn of Babylon is in actual fact an auerocks, depicted in profile with only one horn showing. This may well be so, but nobody seems to have considered the alternative of its being an exact parallel to the European unicorn, an even earlier attempt by an artist to represent the Indian rhinoceros of which vague reports had come to him, but which neither he nor any of his contemporaries had ever seen.

An echo of the rhinoceros is perhaps also to be detected in another monster striding across the brick walls of the Gate of Ishtar, the Sarrush or Babylonian dragon, which has in all seriousness been regarded as a dinosaur. It looks obvious to me that in the case of the 'Sarrush' we are dealing with the brain-child of an artist who let his imagination run riot — as artists will sometimes do even today.

It has often been said that the miraculous attributes of the legendary unicorn later came to be transferred to the rhinoceroses. What really happened must surely have been the exact opposite: the superstitions woven around the one-horned rhinoceros of the East

were added to the image the Western world constructed on the basis of the not very accurate descriptions the Greeks and Romans had given of the real 'monoceros'. We know that at the time when Ctesias resided at the Persian court, rhino horn was supposed to be useful for detecting poison. This was around 400 BC, and we can safely assume that the belief goes back even very much farther.

Goblets of more or less the same kind as those Thunberg tested in the eighteenth century may well have been on sale in Mohenjo Daro and Harappa, the two emporiums of the ancient Indus Valley civilisation. It is not by accident that we find the same properties attributed to the horn of the medieval unicorn, even if that horn was borrowed from the narwhal of the northern seas and grafted on to a creature looking like a horse.

The unicorn, so the bestiaries said, always preceded the other animals to the drinking places, dipping its horn into the pool in order to make sure that the water had not been poisoned!

The Christian world did, however, add its own quota of marvels to the saga of the unicorn. Because of its presumed invincibility in battle to which Martial, Oppian and others had testified, the church very early began to make allegorical use of it.

There originated a charming tale that it could only be overpowered if first induced to put its head into the lap of a virgin, and in due course the unicorn came to stand for chastity itself. In representations of the Annunciation it sometimes took the place of the angel, and finally it even symbolised the Holy Spirit!

Unicorn's horn — or Alicorn, as it was called — played a very important part in European medical history. Even though there were early doubts about its effectiveness — Conrad Gesner himself was not too sure about it and only prescribed alicorn when the patient insisted upon this drug — it enjoyed, for hundreds of years, a very high reputation as a regular cure-all, and the narwhal tusk became practically the symbol of the apothecary's trade.

In England, alicorn was last mentioned as an officially recognised drug in a list published in 1741, but the unicorn, its mane streaming in the wind, can still be met with as the trade-mark of Burroughs Wellcome & Co., one of the world's leading pharmaceutical firms. While alicorn was usually identical with the narwhal tusk, fossil elephant tusks and rhinoceros horns went under that name as well.

(Continued overleaf)

**EXAKTA**  
*Varex II b*



## THE COMPLETE SYSTEM OF PHOTOGRAPHY

*with over 300 accessories for every conceivable application. Whatever the job EXAKTA has the accessory for it.*

*We are Exakta specialists and can show you the full range of this excellent equipment and give advice on its many applications.*

*Complete and post the coupon below for descriptive literature of all EXAKTA equipment.*

**COMPLETE CAMERA WITH CASE FROM ONLY 750/-**

Sole Distributors:



**PHOTOGRAPHIC (WHOLESALE)**

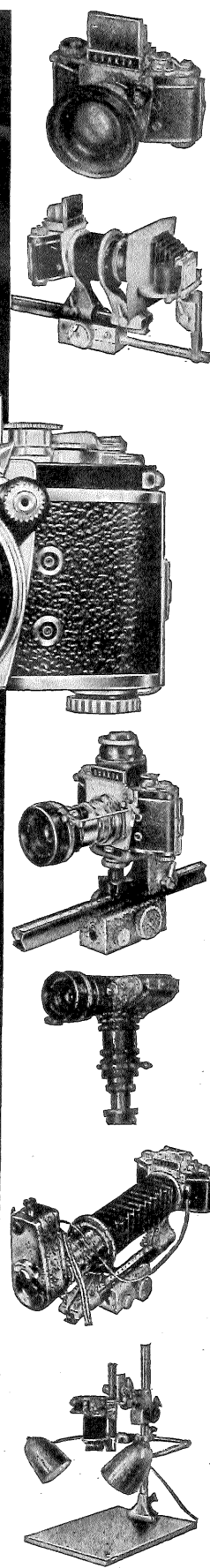
P.O. BOX 683, NAIROBI  
TEL: 20592

NAIROBI DAR ES SALAAM  
KAMPALA

Please send further information on the EXAKTA system.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....



In 1590, Pope Gregory XIV was presented with the horn of an Indian rhino which, even though it differed from the approved horn of the unicorn, was obviously regarded as the real article.

When the Pope, already ailing at the time he received the gift, was on his death bed, the tip of the horn was cut off, ground to powder and administered to him, though without bringing about the hoped-for recovery. This horn, with its decorative leather sheath, was sold by auction in 1909 and finally found its way into the American Museum of Natural History.

The mythical unicorn died a very slow death, for it had somehow detached itself completely from the animal.

It continued to prance about not only on innumerable heraldic designs and on boards hanging outside apothecaries' shops, but also in the minds of a good many people who were convinced that it was only a matter of time until an explorer would bring back definite news of its existence from a remote desert or some fever-ridden jungle. Even during the last century there were rumours of its having been seen in the interior of South Africa and on the Tibetan Highlands.

Travellers and naturalists discussed it as seriously as the Yeti

## SANCTUARY FOR RHINOS

(Continued from previous page)

has been discussed in our own days — and all they had to do was to go to the nearest zoo and look at the Indian rhinoceros. There was the real unicorn, the creature Ctesias had called the 'Indian Ass', the animal of which Thunberg had said, that there was scarcely any part of its body the inhabitants of eastern lands did not employ medically!

If a rhinoceros is killed in the Nepal Terai, in the jungles of Burma, Indochina, or Siam, in the forests of Malaya, Sumatra, or Borneo, very little of the carcass is left to rot. Bullet holes are plugged, so that the blood cannot flow out.

The blood is then collected, for in certain areas rhino blood is supposed to facilitate the departure of the soul of a dying person and to ensure its happy arrival at whatever place it may be bound for. Before the last war, a pound of brown paper soaked with rhino's blood fetched as much as five shillings.

The hunters extricate the bladder and take great care not to spill any of the urine, which is considered as an antiseptic and also serves as a general charm against disease, ghosts and evil spirits. For this purpose it has to be placed in a vessel and hung over the door.

The rhinoceros keeper of the Calcutta Zoo is said to be very eager not to let the urine of his charges go to waste as there is always a brisk demand for this fluid. The hide, some bones, the intestines, and the stomach contents all have their place in eastern pharmacopoeas.

If the carcass contains an embryo, there is great rejoicing among the hunters, for a rhino foetus is especially valued in medical practice.

The great prize is, of course, the horn, which has been thought to have the power of detecting poison for thousands of years. This must have made a rhino horn goblet an extremely precious object for whole dynasties of oriental potentates!

It has already been shown that the story was also widely credited in Europe until science proved it to be fallacious. In Asia the belief still survives, but in this respect rhino horn has lost a lot of its former importance, the part poison used to play in the noble game of politics having been taken by the sub-machine gun and the hand grenade.

A rhino's horn is supposed to ease childbirth if placed under the

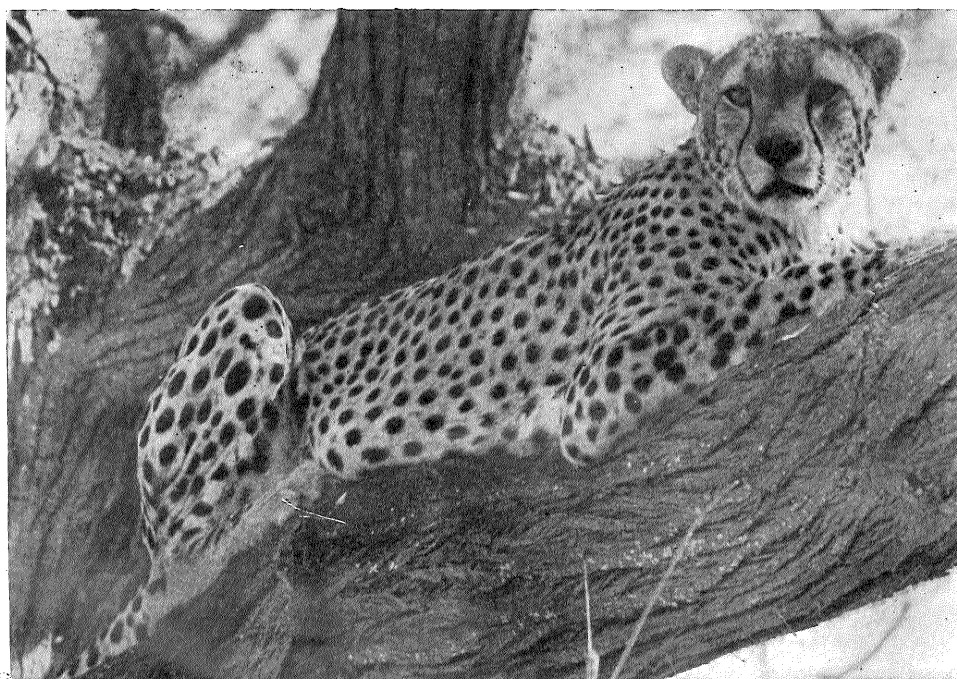
woman's bed, and Gee reports that persons owning one of these miracle-working objects rent it out to expectant mothers for a sum equivalent to about £30 a time. Water, in which a horn has been thoroughly soaked, is presumed to turn into an elixir of life, to be sipped a spoonful at a time each day.

The superstition that has done more harm to the rhinoceros family than all others is undoubtedly the Chinese belief in the powerful aphrodisiac properties of the horns. Through the centuries untold generations of aged gentlemen have been imbibing powdered rhino horn in some appropriate drink, hoping to feel like a twenty-year-old when next entering the harem!

Around the middle of the eighteenth century Thunberg destroyed the trust in rhino horns as a poison detector. It took very much longer to ascertain whether the properties ascribed to them by the Chinese were really based on fact.

Considering the well-known origin of these nasal processes as mere excrescences of the skin, it has been confidently assumed for a considerable time that the elderly gentlemen mentioned above might just as well have swallowed their

(Continued on page 29)



Member of the East African Wild Life Society, the East African Association of Tour Operators, the Automobile Association and the East African Professional Hunters' Association. Photo by: N. SUTHERST

# IVORY SAFARIS LIMITED

PHOTOGRAPHIC AND GAME VIEWING SAFARIS • BIG GAME FISHING  
AIR SAFARIS and HUNTING

Have you been  
on Safari in Africa?  
Have you experienced  
the excitement of seeing  
wild animals in a superb setting?

We will give  
you expert advice  
and every assistance  
with that personal service  
that makes all the difference.

PLEASE SEND FOR BROCHURE  
Caxton House • Kenyatta Avenue  
Cables: Ivorari • P.O. Box 5209  
Telephone 23013/26808/26623  
NAIROBI, KENYA

# SANCTUARY FOR RHINOS

(Continued from page 14)

own hairs or part of their finger- and toe-nails, for all the benefits to their virility they derived from rhino horn powder. But assumption is not scientific proof, and only quite recently have methods been developed which allow exhaustive tests into the biochemical and hormonal properties of any kind of substance.

Such tests have now been carried out on rhino horn by several chemical laboratories, and it can definitely be stated that all of them have turned out completely negative. Science has given the final verdict, and we know once and for all that thousands and thousands of rhinoceroses have been butchered in order to pander to a stupid superstition!

The black market in horn for alleged aphrodisiac manufacture is, of course, the main reason for the precarious position in which the rhino family finds itself today.

Some idea of the extent of the slaughter may be gathered from the fact that in the seventeenth century Siam exported up to one thousand rhino horns a year. In the eighteenth century the figure dropped to an average of 500 a year, and in 1830 only 60 horns and 100 skins left the country.

In the *New History of the T'ang Dynasty* (618-906), it is stated that 'Java produces tortoise shells, gold and silver, rhinoceros-horns and ivory'. Sumatra and Malaya are mentioned in the same work as further countries exporting rhino horn. Travellers who visited Java in the seventeenth century reported the horns being in great demand, and in the nineteenth century Chinese and Arab traders living on the island paid ten to twenty guilders per horn, and were ready to give up to fifty guilders for an especially good specimen.

In the nineties the price had risen to anything from forty to 150 guilders. In Sumatra, Carl Bock, the explorer and natural history collector, had a horn offered to him at the price of eighty guilders.

Between the two World Wars the Chinese in Malaya brought horns at £2 and more per ounce, while their value on the Calcutta market at that time was literally about half their weight in gold. One single horn brought in by a poacher is known to have fetched £150.

No wonder, that the last surviving rhinos everywhere were caught in pits, speared, shot at with muzzle-loaders and modern high-velocity rifles, and that gangs of poachers penetrated into their most remote strongholds.

'In Northern Pahang', Hubback wrote, 'the largest of the Federated Malay States and the least developed, a tremendous amount of destruction was done to the rhinoceros population at the beginning of the century, despite the fact that from 1896 there was a law in Pahang, making it a punishable offence for any person who was not licensed so to do, to capture, kill or wound any rhinoceros.'

'Not that anyone was either licensed or punished. These poachers were not hampered in any way by an enforcement of the law, and the inertness of the government must be considered as a contributory cause for the disappearance of the rhinoceros.'

'Many years ago, I had the following conversation with an old Malay on the disappearance of the rhinoceros from much of the country where we were at the time. I had been for some weeks trying to locate rhinoceroses, but without success.

"What," I said, "has become of all the rhino?" — "I do not know," he answered.

"Do you remember if there were many here during your youth, because there must have been many at some time or other, according to the number of game trails I have seen which were obviously made by rhinoceroses?"

"Yes, there were very many when I was a boy. I remember a man, who devoted all his time to catching rhino in pits, coming here with a sack full of rhino's horns. I have not seen a rhino horn now for years, nor do I know where all the animals can have gone to!" — I had my answer.'

This sums up the situation all over Southern Asia, from the Sunderbans to the Mekong Valley, and from Nepal to Sarawak!

As long as there was a fairly plentiful supply of Asiatic horns, the Chinese buyers were not much interested in those coming from Africa. This attitude changed with the rapid extermination of the Javan, Sumatran and Indian rhinoceroses throughout most of their area of distribution, and African horns became a very desirable substitute.

Up to that time, the horns of the two African species had mainly served for the carving of drinking cups, snuff boxes, handles for knives, swords and war-axes, no superstitious significance whatever being attached to them by any of the indigenous people of Africa.



UNATTRACTIVE, perhaps, by some standards, this baby rhino is nevertheless the scion of an endangered species.

In certain areas shields and whips were made from the skin, but as a whole, killing rhinoceroses could not be called an especially lucrative occupation, and professional hunters, white and native, concentrated their efforts on the ivory-carrying elephant.

The near-extermination of the southern white rhinoceros was mainly due to the ridiculous ease with which the animals could be killed. Their meat was probably valued higher than their horns. Their rapid decline in Mashonaland and Matabeleland towards the end of the last century may, however, have had something to do with the increasing demands for African rhino horns from the Far East.

Rhino did eventually get more protection, but the Far-Eastern demand rose to a point where unscrupulous traders found it worth their while to send out whole armies of poachers in order to fill their warehouses with horns.

I have outlined the tremendous reduction in the numbers of the once common black rhinoceros that has taken place since the beginning of the century, and it cannot be stressed too emphatically that these animals have not been killed to feed starving African tribes, nor

have they stood in the way of progress and civilisation.

They did not even provide *Homo sapiens* with some primary substance he cannot do without, like those other long-suffering mammals, the whales. Not one of the usual vague and more or less hypocritical excuses so often brought forward in order to justify wholesale slaughter fits the case of the rhinoceroses.

The tragic truth is that they had to die because a number of shady operators saw an opportunity to line their pockets by providing superstitious fools with a spurious drug!

If the men who pull the ropes of the illicit trade in rhino horns had lived in the East Africa of a century ago, they would have made fat profits out of the slave trade, without, however, enduring any of the hardships and dangers slave-hunters in the interior encountered. In the asphalt jungle of a modern city they would probably control strings of dope-peddlers.

The slaughter which has lasted for so long, is going on. In 1959, Hong Kong quotations for good rhino horns stood at 85 shillings per pound — reason enough for the

(Continued overleaf)



crooked traders to continue in business.

What can be done to secure the survival of the five species of rhinoceroses?

In most Asiatic countries in which rhino still occur, they enjoy absolute legal protection — but nothing, or very little, is done to enforce this protection outside the few existing reserves.

It must be admitted that in many places effective law-enforcement is practically impossible. Armies of game rangers would be necessary to control the remote jungle areas, and even if such armies were available, the poachers, with their local knowledge, would still have things very much their own way.

The widespread superstitions concerning the medical properties of almost every part of a rhino's carcass offer such a tremendous inducement to the hunters, the killing of even one single specimen is so enormously lucrative for the jungle folk, that we cannot reasonably blame the governments for what is happening outside the areas which have been set aside as sanctuaries.

More could — and should — be done to apprehend and punish people who are in possession of horns or other parts of rhinos, but in some countries, possessing and selling 'medicines derived from rhinoceroses' is not even illegal! This means that anybody who gets away with killing an animal — and this is very easy indeed — can afterwards reap the full profit from the spoils of his illegal action.

Wherever there is no law against the possession and sale of rhino medicines, the authorities are simply

## SANCTUARY FOR RHINOS

(Continued from previous page)

playing into the hands of the poachers, and any law protecting the rhino is a piece of sheer hypocrisy.

One is deeply shocked to read the following lines in Lee Talbot's excellent report *A Look at Threatened Species*, which was published in 1959: 'Although the live animal is protected by law in the Union of Burma, it is legal to sell rhino blood and other parts as medicine, and in recent years several rhinos have been killed on official permits by high Burmese for medicinal purposes.'

The 'medicinal purposes', for which the poor beasts were murdered, are entirely imaginary, and one should expect 'high officials' of any country in the world to know this by now, even if the unsophisticated inhabitants of the jungle do not.

There is, of course, the possibility that the officials were perfectly aware of the uselessness of the rhino medicines and only killed the animals for the sake of financial gain. Let us hope that things have changed since Talbot visited Burma — otherwise there will be no rhinoceros left in that country within very few years.

The black rhinoceros can still be shot for sport in many parts of Africa, and it is high time that this unfortunate state of affairs was changed. In principle I am not against hunting. Frequently it is absolutely necessary to shoot animals in order to re-establish the disturbed balance of nature. But to go out in a Land-rover, accompanied

by a highly efficient professional hunter, in order to shoot an animal which is under heavy pressure from poachers and is getting rarer every day, can hardly be rated as a sporting achievement, especially since this particular quarry can be killed so easily.

Any true sportsman must surely realise that the position of the people who are doing their utmost to put down illegal slaughter of rhino both in Africa and Asia becomes very badly prejudiced if money can buy the right to kill these animals with the full approval of the authorities.

Hunting is a good sport, but its participants should never become accomplices in the extermination of a rapidly diminishing species! From the moment the killing of rhino under a sportsman's licence is stopped, the possession of horns or other rhino trophies not registered before that date must, of course, become illegal.

We hear a lot about African unity — here is an excellent opportunity for Pan-African co-operation, with rigorous steps to be taken in all countries concerned to enforce the absolute protection of the rhino! In this way a devastating blow could be dealt to the elusive middlemen who grow rich by smuggling rhino horns to the East.

The creation of sufficient reserves and national parks in suitable localities — suitable from the animals' point of view! — is naturally one of the very best ways to preserve our dwindling wildlife. The reader

will remember with what success the southern white rhino, reduced to a point where it seemed impossible for them to breed up again, were saved through the Umfolozi Reserve being established in the nick of time.

Really to serve its purpose, a reserve naturally has to be a sanctuary, not only in the name, but in actual fact. It must be managed and guarded by a highly qualified and well-paid staff, for it is absolutely useless to hand rangers' badges to a few poor and uneducated native hunters, give them very little pay and put them in charge of a reserve, expecting them to protect rhinoceroses and other animals.

In due course they will probably fall in with the poachers and get their share of the spoils. Draw your rangers from the hunting tribes by all means, for those are the people well versed in practical nature lore, but instruct them thoroughly, give them a course in game management, pay them adequately, and most important of all, make them proud to be the men chosen to look after one of the nation's treasure houses. Several African countries — Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania among them — already have a considerable number of devoted native game rangers, who take a keen personal interest in the animals they have to guard and who are ready to risk their lives in defence of their charges.

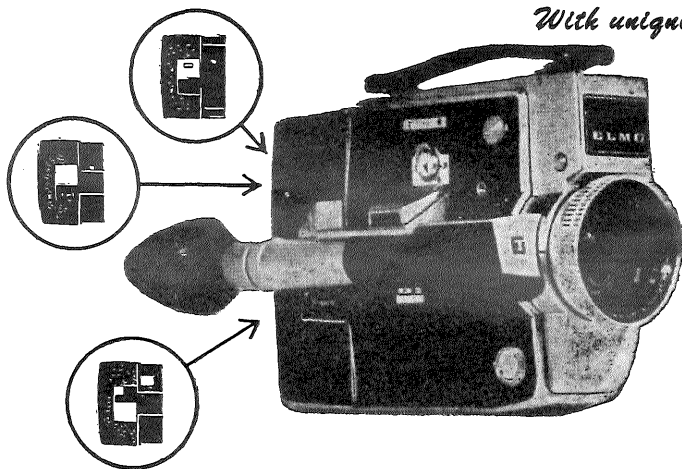
This is the kind of staff to build up in a reserve, if it is to be of any use at all. It is definitely a case where only the very best is good enough ...

It may not always be possible to establish a reserve in the place

# ELMO

## ELMO C 300—SUPER 8 CAMERA

ALSO USABLE WITH SINGLE AND DOUBLE FILMS

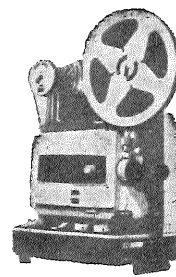


*With unique interchangeable film cartridge system, Elmo C-300 accepts Super-8, Single-8 and Double-8 films with equal ease.*

- ◆ Razor sharp f/1.8 9mm—36mm zoom lens for the maximum photographic effect.
- ◆ Fully automatic TTL electric-eye system with manual exposure setting override.
- ◆ Bright through-the-lens finder with split-image focusing device, automatic/manual zooming.
- ◆ Single-8 and Double-8 magazines are provided as optional accessory.

**HAGEMeyer TRADING CO. (E.A) LTD.** P.O. Box 2386 KAMPALA

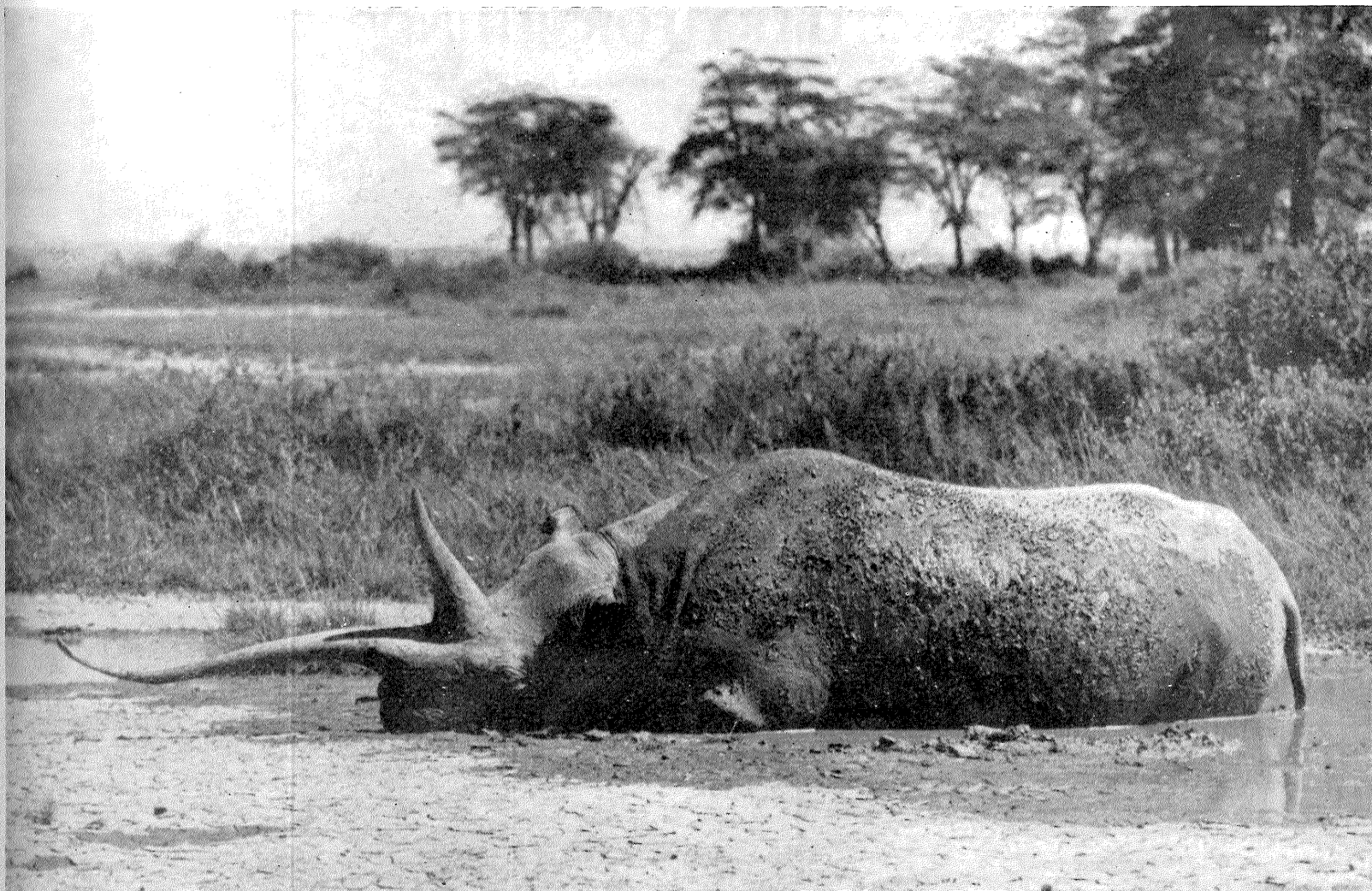
### ELMO FP-A DUAL PROJECTOR



Usable for both Super-8 and Double-8 films with unique single action, shift-sprocket operation.

Also at NAIROBI and MOMBASA





*A UGANDA RHINO in one of its favoured places — a mud wallow in a National Park. The mud, as it dries and cakes, cleans off some of the insects which adhere to the tough skin. (Photo: C. A. Spinage)*

where it is most urgently needed, for wherever animals are threatened through loss of habitat caused by human population pressure, there usually is not enough land available to safeguard the last survivors. The situation in the West Nile and West Madi Districts of Uganda, where after a very promising beginning the protection of the white rhino has utterly broken down, is a good example of this.

The authorities have taken the one way out in the circumstances: realising that the rhino west of the river would most certainly be doomed in the near future, they decided to move as many as possible into the nearest properly guarded and administered reserve, in this case the Murchison Falls National Park.

On the first expedition, the rhino had to be lassooed in the old fashioned rough-and-tumble way, because the right tranquilising drugs had not been projected and three rhinos were lost, eight being transferred to the Park.

On a later attempt, the remaining rhino were darted by means of a crossbow from a pursuing Land-Rover and even from a helicopter. Both these operations were featured in 'Survival', the Anglia Television

series of wildlife documentaries to which Survival Books are so closely allied.

These two catching operations have now provided Murchison Falls National Park with sixteen white rhinos which, with luck, will prove a satisfactory breeding nucleus.

The darting which involves tranquilising with Sernylon is being used in South Africa, in order to prevent overcrowding the Umfolozi Reserve. The surplus rhino are being transported to other sanctuaries, both within and outside their former range.

In Kenya a considerable number of black rhino have in recent years been removed to various reserves from areas needed for settlement — a very encouraging change-over from the rhino massacre mentioned in an earlier chapter. In Tanganyika rhino have recently been brought to an island in Lake Victoria.

Operations like moving the white rhino across the Nile into the Murchison Falls Park can only be undertaken at considerable expense and may sometimes be beyond the means at present available to the countries involved. Fortunately

*(Continued overleaf)*



*PAINTINGS, BATIKS AND  
SCULPTURE*

BY

LOCAL ARTISTS AT

**New Stanley Art Gallery**

P.O. Box 75 • Nairobi • Telephone: 27456



there now exists an international body which can offer support to projects of this kind. I am, of course, referring to the World Wildlife Fund.

In the few years of its existence, this organisation has already left its mark in many parts of the globe. Considerable funds have, for instance, been made available for the transfer of the white rhino in Uganda, for moving surplus rhino from Umfolozi to reserves in Southern Rhodesia, and for research into the ecological requirements of the Javan and Sumatran rhinoceroses.

The World Wildlife Fund is working in close co-operation with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, which has established a Survival Service Commission in order to make a careful study of the numerous species of animals and birds threatened with extinction, and to work out proposals on how pressure can be reduced and survival guaranteed.

The present position of the rhino being what it is, a special Rhinoceros Group has been formed within the Survival Service Commission. It is doing excellent work under the able chairmanship of Dr. W. T. Schaurte, a well-known German industrialist who is devoting a considerable amount of time and energy to the problems of these much harassed animals.

It must be pointed out that the World Wildlife Fund can only give help if it, in turn, gets full support. Many a worthwhile project has had to be shelved because there simply was not enough money in hand. It is up to all of us to keep this excellent organisation on its feet.

Ever since he fashioned his first stone axe, man has been a ruthless despoiler of the animal world — now is his chance to turn round and hold out a helping hand to the creatures which share this planet with him!

As things are today, I am sure that it should be possible to preserve the African rhinoceroses for posterity. We have seen how well the white rhino respond to protection, and the black species is still numerous enough to stand a good chance. In stating this, I do not want to appear unduly optimistic for, as I have pointed out before, there is absolutely no room for complacency.

I only want to stress that, given the necessary goodwill, efficient co-operation between the various African countries, and the courage not to back away from taking stern measures, there is no reason why these interesting creatures should not remain with us. They could, on the other hand, be wiped out within the next ten years!

# SANCTUARY FOR RHINOS

(Continued from previous page)

As far as the Asiatic rhinoceroses are concerned, the situation is very much worse. Of the three, the Indian rhino is the most numerous, and some of the reserves in which it still occurs, can certainly be considered as very well guarded and efficiently managed. All of them are, unfortunately, surrounded by a rapidly increasing population which is highly superstitious with regard to rhinoceroses, and there is no doubt whatever that widespread political troubles or a decline of government interest in conservation would immediately bring about poaching on a very massive scale.

There is also the fact that the reserves are situated in one of the world's danger areas. A few years ago there was a full-scale war on the borders of Assam, and one shudders at the thought of what might have happened to the rhino if the Chinese armies had poured down into the plains!

At the moment, the Kaziranga rhinoceroses are doing so well that a few specimens can be caught from time to time, to be sold to zoological gardens. Gadadhar and Joy-mothi of the Basle Zoo both came from Kaziranga, and we know now that the species will breed well in captivity. There are already so many individuals outside Assam, Bengal and Nepal, that the Indian rhinoceros could perhaps be saved in the same way as Pere David's deer and the European bison, in case of some man-made catastrophe overwhelming the reserve.

Nobody seems yet to have considered the possibility of establishing a rhino sanctuary in some politically stable corner of the world. One could well visualize fifteen to twenty Indian rhinos doing well and increasing in numbers within a large enclosure in Florida, Louisiana, or on the Gulf Coast of Texas. Such a scheme for providing additional safeguards for the original unicorn should not be beyond what can be achieved in international co-operation.

The future of the other two Asiatic species can only be viewed with utmost concern. The Sumatran rhino has the advantage of larger numbers, but the surviving individuals are scattered over an enormous area, and the few groups which have a certain amount of protection seem to be rather small. The last Javan rhino are all gathered in one area, where a fairly close watch can be kept over them.

Their numbers, though terribly low, are probably not less than were those of the white rhino in the Umfolozi area at the turn of the

century. Unfortunately, their rate of reproduction seems to be far from satisfactory. From the information available, it is not yet clear if poachers somehow sneak in and get most of the calves, or if there are some biological or ecological factors which keep the rhino from breeding properly.

In addition, the concentration of the whole surviving stock in one single reserve is not without its dangers. While the existing Sumatran rhinoceroses could not possibly all be wiped out within a few weeks, this might easily happen to the Javan rhino. A serious political upheaval would almost certainly bring about a breakdown in the administration of Ujung Kulon and leave the animals at the mercy of the poachers. What, if Krakatoa Volcano, only fifty miles away in the Sunda Strait, should blow up again, as it did in 1883, wreaking terrible havoc all along the coastal areas of Java and Sumatra? The last Javan rhino could be annihilated in a few minutes!

So precarious is the status of these latter two species within their last remaining habitats, that the establishment of a stock in captivity, or in the semi-captivity of a safe and strictly controlled game park, is of the utmost importance.

It may be the only real chance we have of preserving them, but, as far as I know, there is at the moment no Javan rhinoceros in any zoo, and Betina, the Basle Zoo's Sumatran rhinoceros, unfortunately died before a mate could be found for her.

It might perhaps be possible, in an all-out effort untainted by petty national jealousies and similar useless idiosyncrasies, to get together ten or a dozen individuals of the Sumatran species in one safe place. But we may well have missed our

chance as far as the Javan rhino is concerned.

Time is, unfortunately, running out on us, and running out fast! There is talk of wiping out the superstitious beliefs so harmful to the rhino by means of education. An excellent idea — if that education had started several hundred years ago! By all means, let us do what we can, but personally I cannot see much benefit coming from such a scheme before it is too late and all the Asian rhinos have been killed. Just look at all the mumbajumbo still surviving in even the most highly-developed European countries!

Whatever we decide to do in order to save Asiatic rhinoceroses — and more particularly the Javan and Sumatran species — it has to be done now, and there is no room for half-measures.

Any delay may cause them to be added to the shockingly long list of animals that will never be seen again — Steller's sea cow, bluebuck and quagga, auerchs, European wild horse and Syrian ass, dodo, solitaire, great auk, Carolina parakeet, passenger pigeon, Cuban ara, Eskimo curlew, and pinkheaded duck.

These are only a few of the mammals and birds mankind has exterminated by over-exploitation and even persecution. Many more have been thoughtlessly pushed out of existence by the destruction of their habitat or by the cats, dogs, pigs and rats that man has loosed upon them.

Grim as this tally of the lost ones is, we can take some small comfort from the presence amongst us of a few animals which had almost gone and which were saved at the very last moment. The southern white rhinoceros is one of them.

If they could be saved, why should we not be able to extend our thought and care to the really hard-pressed species, the Indian, Sumatran, and Javan rhino?

## Review

*S.O.S. RHINO*, by C. A. W. Guggisberg. (Published by the East African Publishing House, Nairobi, and Andre Deutsch, London; Sh. 27/6 in Britain.)

WE RATE this book one of the most definitive which has come our way for many months and accordingly we made special arrangements with the publishers and author in order to be able to bring to *AFRICANA* readers the significant last chapter, entitled *Rhinoceros and Man*.

As can be seen, Dr. Guggisberg's style is entertaining narrative, drawing on history and backed by immense knowledge of his subject. His plea for a world-wide movement to prevent the destruction of the comparatively few rhino which remain will not go unheeded, therefore.

This volume, one of the "Survival" series, edited by Colin Willock, has been published in close association with Britain's Anglia Television's Natural History Unit, which has already drawn attention to the plight of the species.

Well recommended.