

MR. ROWLAND WARD.

Undoubtedly, "familiarity breeds contempt," otherwise my host couldn't have displayed the cool indifference which distinguished him as we sat



Photo by Mendelssohn, Pembridge Crescent, W.

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at luncheon, while all the time the jungle around us was teeming with wild beasts, ferociously thirsting, as my imagination pictured them, for our blood. As to myself, being a very susceptible subject, I was readily infected with his callousness to danger, and my behaviour, I hope, passed for real bravery. Possibly, I was a little sceptical as to the presence of the savage brutes, for Nature struck me as being strangely silent, yet I had been creditably assured that game abounded in the neighbourhood; besides, I remembered that I was seated in the midst of Mr. Rowland Ward's own "preserves," which enjoy a world-wide reputation among sportsmen. Presently, it occurred to me to congratulate him on having kept a whole skin amidst so many lurking dangers, but I resisted the temptation, as being a remark too pointed to be made to the St. Pelagius of Piccadilly.

"You must know that what I really wanted to be when I left school was a sculptor," Mr. Ward remarked as we settled down to cigars in his pleasant snugery, where sporting prints, water-colours, and photographs join hands with French and Italian bronzes, inlaid furniture, and exquisite embroideries. "At school I was always casting the boys' feet and hands, and when I left I got several commissions for the modelling of hands and making of

coloured busts. In course of time I founded this business, my father and grandfather having been fine naturalists, and having done so, you can easily understand that I turned my love of modelling to profitable account, imparting to my specimens as much verisimilitude to Nature as possible in pose, expression, and the characteristic features of the animal under treatment. Hitherto taxidermists had, to a great extent, been content to sew up a skin and stuff it so that it presented as much idea of a living creature as an animal out of a child's Noah's Ark. But I was determined to make my trade an artistic one, by taking Nature on every occasion as my teacher."

"And you have certainly succeeded; but I am interrupting your story."

"Frequently I model in clay a group in miniature, as, for instance, these lions engaged in a death struggle," he explained, as he placed a charming clay study before me. "This serves to show my workpeople what I want done. Then a sort of framework of wood and iron rods is constructed, and over it is built up a model, and this is covered with a composition, and while it is still wet the skin is placed on it, and the finer modelling of the wrinkles, veins, and expressions is put in. Then the eyes, lips, gums, and tongue are the closest of imitations possible. What I had been doing for many years with individual specimens I displayed collectively in a grand trophy at the Indian and Colonial Exhibition of 1886, where a highly realistic jungle scene was represented to the minutest detail."

"Oh, yes; I remember it perfectly. It was quite a revelation to the world of the high degree of excellence in the artistic grouping of the flora and fauna of the tropical countries to which taxidermy could attain. And you have turned your craft to utilitarian purposes, have you not, in mounting?"

"Yes; but I don't want to turn your visit into an advertisement, so we will pass over the lampstands, &c."

"*Imprimis* you are the naturalist—quite so, I understand. Well, I suppose, Mr. Ward, you receive a considerable quantity of 'stuff' at times?"

"Yes, at times, but nothing to what we used to get. As, when formerly we received van-loads from the great hunting-grounds in America, we may now be said to get only a cabful, with a few pairs of horns. Why, frequently we would have, perhaps, sixty rhinoceroses and 300 grizzly bears consigned to us from one shooting party alone. But the march of civilisation is very injurious to our business, for lions and the larger mammalia are yearly diminishing in number; indeed, it is chiefly only from the 'fly' country and the fever-infested districts that game is now obtainable. It is very noticeable how game increases where trade languishes. For example, the Soudan, which our Government, somehow or other, refuses to open up, is at the present moment full of game, it having increased these last few years. It should be reached *via* Abyssinia."

"Of course, you have at times exceedingly rare specimens sent you, as, for instance—"

"Well, off-hand, without referring to my work on the 'Horn

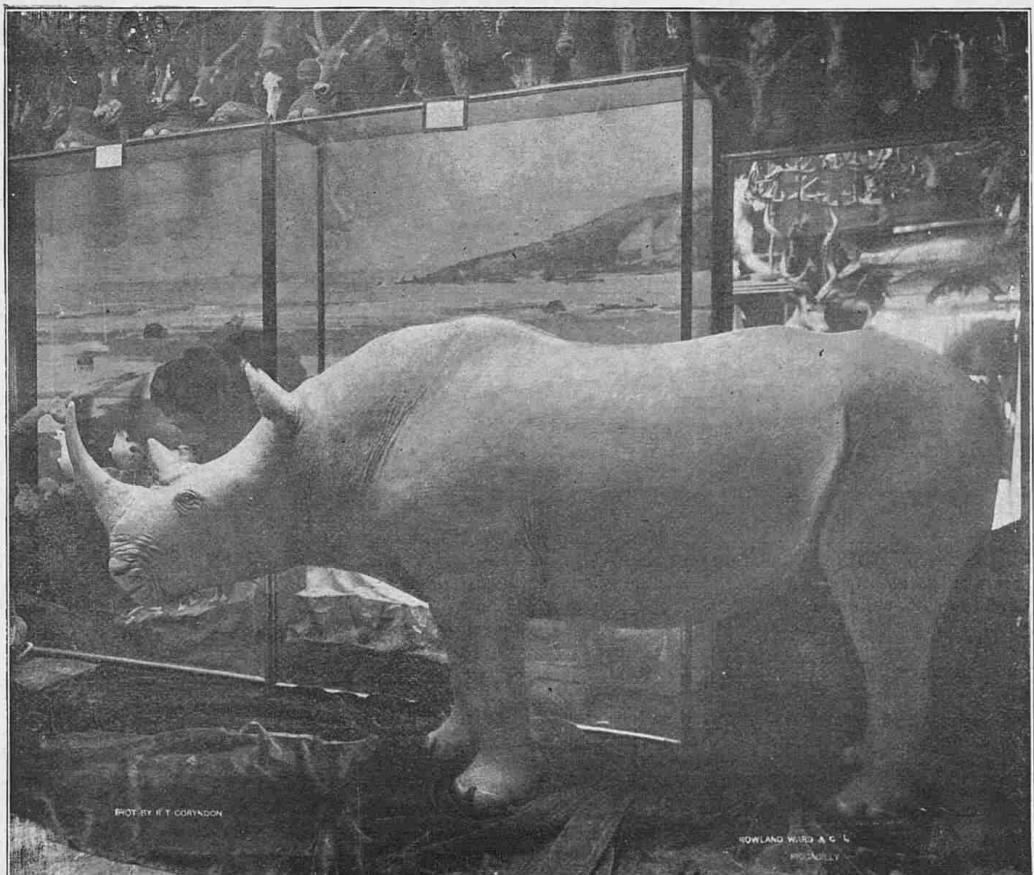


Photo by Russ. & Co., Baker Street, W.

THE WHITE RHINOCEROS.

Measurements of the Great Game of the World,' I may omit some that I would like to mention. However, some of our rarest receipts have been Marco Polo's sheep (*Ovis Poli*) from Tibet, shot by the Earl of Dunmore and Mr. St. George Littledale; Jackson's haartebeest, killed by the late Sir Gerald Portal in Uganda; a musk-ox (*Ovibus moschatus*), which fell to Mr. Warburton Pike's rifle in Arctic North America. Lately we received a new kind of zebra and some novel species of giraffe from the Somali country."

The first "white" rhinoceros which has ever reached this country has been preserved by Mr. Ward. It was shot last July by Mr. R. T. Coryndon, who says the white rhino is all but extinct now, thanks to the enormous amount of good eating he carries about with him. Mr. Coryndon was fortunate enough to find a couple of these rare animals quietly grazing together, and now one goes to the Natural History Museum and the other to swell the big private collection of the Hon. Walter Rothschild at Tring. The white rhinos are the second largest mammals in the world. The one in Piccadilly stands over 6 ft., and the largest "black" on record was 4 ft. 10 in. in height. The front horn is also very long, and on it can be seen the marks made by the hunter when he sharpened his knife on it to cut the tough skin, which in places is three inches thick. Seven bullets were required to give the animal his quietus, and when cutting him up for transport and cleaning his skeleton four old lead bullets and two hammered-iron ones were found, so it was evident that he had been through the wars before. One other difference between

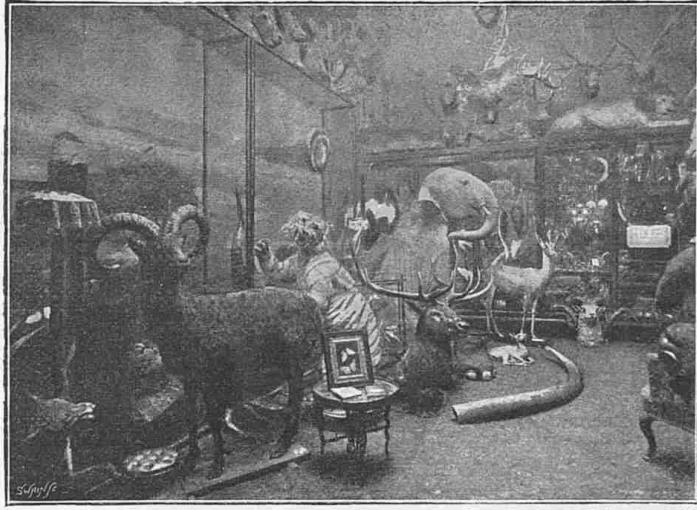


Photo by Russell, Baker Street, W.

INTERIOR OF MR. WARD'S SHOW-ROOM.

this and the black sort is in the shape of the mouth. The white rhino has a huge square jaw, and equally long, straight, and square india-rubber-like lips, whereas the black rhino has a prehensile upper lip.

"Your *clientèle* must be very large, Mr. Ward?" I remarked.

"Yes, indeed. People seem to like our work, and send to us from all parts of the world, from the Prince of Wales downwards. We have done a good deal for the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Boris of Russia, Mr. F. C. Selous, Mr. Astor Chandler, and Lord Delamere, who sent thirty lions from Somaliland."

"You don't approve of arsenical preservative or of native 'cures,' I believe?"

"Good gracious, no! We have not used any poisonous substance for fully twenty years. I recommend alum and carbolic acid for preserving the skins of mammalia, fishes, reptiles—in England we use alum on the bones alone; but for birds I advocate the free use of my own specific, 'Taxidermine,' while against the ravages of insects on skins nothing beats turpentine, provided there be no metallic lustre on the feathers. For transporting the hides of big animals, where it can be procured, a pickle of alum and salt answers admirably. The monster elephant shot by the Duke of Edinburgh arrived here perfectly fresh in a cask filled with these diluted constituents."

"And you have, I suppose, like everyone else, some tastes outside your profession?"

"Oh, yes; I am fond of photography. Those views of Egypt and Algeria on the walls represent a few of many I took—some considerably out of the beaten track of travellers. Then, I used to be fond of boating when I had a place near Maidenhead. At that time I speculated a good deal in canoes. I must have imported some hundreds of bass-wood canoes from Canada, which, by my having them built of sizes to fit into one another, I had brought over to this country with the greatest economy."

Then we discussed a variety of subjects, more fully treated of in "The Sportsman's Handbook," having reference to sport, including the advantages of light rifles, provided sureness of aim and a knowledge of the locality where fatal shots should be planted are possessed by the hunter, and these are demonstrated in the work; and so I wound up a very pleasant interview by a visit to the show-room, where every beast, bird, and reptile were posed so naturally as to suggest a hasty retreat before the shades of night overtook me and wakened them into life.

T. H. L.

BETWEEN THE INNINGS.

VI.—TURNED OUT TO GRASS.

"I don't agree with you at all," said the Secretary, warmly. He was addressing the Honorary Member, who had advanced the paradox that golf was the better game, as it could be played later in life.

"The old cricketer does not ask for anyone's pity. I enjoy my Saturday afternoons now, watching the young ones come on, quite as much as when I was in active service myself."

"That's very well," said the Treasurer, "when a man stands voluntarily on one side; but when he finds himself superannuated, as he thinks, years before his time, the position of onlooker is less easy. A man, Barlow, that I used to meet in business was a case in point. At one time he had been the very backbone of a large club and the idol of a whole suburb. It had been no uncommon thing for him to be cheered in the Broadway of a Saturday evening, and whenever he was given out 'leg before wicket' the local gallery accused the umpire of foul play. As time went on his achievements dropped off somewhat, and the space, when he stooped, between his fingers and the turf increased year by year. One day the ex-champion found himself shunted. A new captain had arisen, who had discovered that the effort to find suitable places in the field for five cricketers who could neither run nor throw was aging him before his time; so the team was reorganised, and the old warhorse turned out to grass. Barlow might still have got games occasionally, but he was too proud to put his name down in the book. Repeated disaster, he thought, would show the club its mistake, and the Committee would come to him in the end hat in hand. Under the influence of this hope, his character as a sportsman deteriorated considerably, and when the batting of the side broke down, as it did occasionally, his satisfaction was only partially concealed. Little by little he got out of the way of practising, and took to cultivating a liver instead, and, although in the spring-time he still dreamed of heading the batting lists again, his career was generally looked upon as definitely at an end."

"At last, by accident, he found a place in the best match on the card. The M.C.C. had arrived upon the ground with twelve men, and it had been hurriedly determined to play that number upon each side.

"It was a baking hot day; the scoring was heavy, and Barlow, who was last upon the list, did not get in until ten minutes to seven. He was told to play for a draw, and the Captain primed him with needlessly minute directions for accomplishing this task. The veteran was irritated. He lashed out savagely at the very first ball and lifted it into the road-six. Encouraged by the shouts that greeted this feat, he took his block six inches beyond the crease and started to force the game. In spite of phenomenal hitting and the most frantically short runs, the last ball was delivered with the M.C.C. still four runs to the good. Barlow pulled it round in the direction of long leg. Had it reached the boundary, the match would have ended in a tie, but it stopped about five yards short, and every spectator stood up and shouted himself hoarse, while the two batsmen raced madly up and down the wicket. A couple of sprinters would have got the runs for certain, but one of the men was shockingly out of condition, and had already done more than he should. Turning for the fourth run, Barlow felt something give way, and he was rather relieved than otherwise to find, as he reached the other end, that the ball was almost in the wicket-keeper's hands. 'Come on!' screamed his speedier partner, now only a few yards behind him. Barlow turned, like the hero he was, and toiled once more up the pitch. How slowly he travelled! He heard the wicket behind him put down, and the appeal given in the batsman's favour. He was nearly home when the ball overtook him. He stumbled on to his hands and knees, but the bowler fumbled for a second, and before he could knock off the bails the veteran had rolled over the crease and the great match was won."

"You may reckon that both men came in for a tremendous reception when they returned to the Pavilion; but Barlow walked straight into the dressing-room without speaking to a soul. Then he broke out, and his voice was thick, like that of a man consumed by passion, 'What did the fellows mean by the way they had spoken to him when he went in? Did they think he did not know what to do without their assistance? A lot of stuck-up schoolboys! A parcel—' And then, without any warning, he fell heavily on the floor.

"At that moment, the Captain, who had watched the finish of the game from underneath the screen, was walking across the ground to ask Barlow to play in the eleven for the remainder of the season. 'He should never have been left out,' he meditated uneasily. He was shoving his way through the crowd that had gathered in front of the Pavilion, whose cries of 'Well plied, Barlow!' and eulogistic cat-calls were mingled with expressions of impatience at the delay in having these tributes acknowledged, when a scared face looked out from the dressing-room and asked them to go away. The Old Crock lay dead."

B. A. CLARKE,

CAUTIOUS.

RAGGED HAGGARD (*who has been reading an almanac*): "Dis is funny! If a Chinaman saves a man's life, he is compelled by law to support him de rest of his days."

WEARY WALKER: "Huh! It's 'bout de same in dis country. If you save an innercent maiden from drowndin', you're expected to marry her. I've quit goin' to de seashore, jest on dat account."—*Puck*.