

THE
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OF
SPORT

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pool. The construction of such a shelter is of importance, because a rhino will charge through brushwood easily; the writer has a lively recollection of part of a night spent in a flimsy zeriba in close proximity to a wounded rhino, whose breathing could be heard distinctly through the screen of thorns. A strong thorn tree should be chosen, with a thick stem, which should form the back of the shelter. The overhanging branches may be pulled down in front and at the sides as a screen, and it is an advantage to have it so situated that the ground falls away steeply in front to the pool.

Rhinoceroses go at a great pace, and it requires a good horse to overtake one. Sir Samuel Baker, in his *Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia*, gives a graphic description of a rhinoceros hunt in which he took part, he and his companions, who were Arab elephant-hunters, being mounted and armed with swords.

Somalis kill the rhinoceros with the Midgan bow and poisoned arrows. The hide is valuable for shields, as many as from fifteen to twenty being cut from the skin of a single bull. It is also made into whips, and Abyssinians make the horns into cups, about which there is a superstition that any poison placed therein is neutralised. The flesh is fairly eatable and makes good soup.

As the track may have to be followed for hours, by the time the hide has been removed—which is done in large slabs, these having been previously marked out on the body—and the return journey to camp accomplished, it may be already sunset; so it is advisable, when starting on such a hunt, to take an attendant with water and food, and, if it is intended to bring in the head and shields, a camel should also accompany the party. A good plan, after killing one or more rhinos, if water can be found not far off, is to send for the caravan and camp by the carcasses, when they can be cut up at leisure. Among Somalis, who, about food, are even more fastidious than other Mohammedan races, most of the meat is wasted.

A good pair of horns will measure about 20 inches for the front and 6 for the back horn. The skin of the head is very difficult to remove without damage at the point where it fits over the lumps which form the support to the horns. The horns themselves come off in one piece with the skin.

Authorities on the subject seem to agree that there is little in the colour of the so-called "black" rhinoceros to distinguish it from the "white." The natural colour is a dark brownish-grey, and over this is generally superimposed the colour of the last mud pool in which the beast has bathed.

The most suitable weapons for this sport are perhaps a Lee-Metford rifle with the ordinary military bullet, used in conjunction with a double 8-bore "Paradox" gun, the Lee-Metford

being excellent for a quiet head shot if backed up by the larger weapon when the animal is on the move. The writer does not advise attacking this animal with the small-bore alone. The chest and shoulder are good places to aim at under ordinary circumstances when the animal is moving. The writer has used together a double 4-bore rifle firing 14 drs. of powder and a spherical bullet, and an 8-bore "Paradox" gun firing 10 drs. and a conical steel-core bullet, and prefers the latter, being quite as effective, more accurate, lighter to carry, and handier to use. Some writers, however, have depended entirely on much smaller and lighter weapons with successful results.

H. G. C. SWAYNE.

INDIA—In British India there are three varieties of rhinoceros. In the Sunderbund is found the lesser only. In Assam and the Dooars are *R. indicus* and also the lesser (*R. sondaicus*). In Burma there are certainly two, if not three varieties. I know the lesser is found as well as the two-horned, and it is reported that the larger also exists, but of that I am not sure. The two-horned variety, of which I only killed one, extends from Chittagong southwards, and is also found in Sumatra, Java, and some of the larger islands. Its skin is as smooth as a buffalo's, but in habits and customs it much resembles the other species of the family. A curious variety of this rhinoceros was secured by Captain Hood and is now, I believe, in the Zoological Gardens. Its ears are somewhat tessellated. The larger rhinoceros has only one horn,



INDIAN RHINOCEROS.

Measurements—Av. height at shoulder, 69 in.; av. horn meas., 15 in.; max. horn meas., 24 in.

seldom eighteen inches long, generally a good deal less. This so-called horn is but a conglomeration of hairs, and is liable to be detached either through injury or disease, when another grows in its place. The skin is very thick, with a deep fold at the setting on the head, another

behind the shoulder, and a third in front of the thighs. Two large incisors are in each jaw, with two smaller intermediate ones below, and two still smaller outside the upper incisors, the last not always present. The general colour is dusky black. The dimensions of one I killed were as follows. Extreme length of body $12\frac{1}{2}$ feet; tail 2 feet; height 6 feet 2 inches; horn 14 inches. These animals delight in swamps, lie up in mud holes, and frequent even running rivers. The lesser rhinoceros, *R. sondaicus*, I have shot on the left bank of the Brahmapootra river, but never came across it on the right bank, though doubtless it exists there too, as they are wandering beasts. In appearance it somewhat resembles the larger, but the folds are not so pronounced, and the shields are covered with tubercles. It is said to be attracted by fire; the Burmese assert that it even devours it.

Although in their wild state I have seen elephants and rhinoceros feeding not far apart, yet these domestic slaves, when in captivity, fear the rhinoceros far more than they do a tiger. I have seen rhinoceros and buffaloes lying down in the same mud hole, with only a few yards between them.

These animals live in such remote localities that they are only disturbed now and then by some enterprising hunter. To find them in fairly open ground, the sportsman must be in their preserves at daybreak, for they soon retire into impenetrable thickets and lie up during the day. They are naturally timid, more anxious to escape than fight, and are far easier to kill than many other wild beasts, notwithstanding their hide. This, whilst on the animal, is easily penetrated, but, if removed and dried in the sun, it becomes very hard. Though the living hide is anything but impenetrable, to reach a vital spot a bullet has to pass through a mass of blubber, muscle and bone. To hunt them successfully, large bores, hardened bullets, and fully five or six drachms of powder are requisite. If driven to bay after being wounded, a rhinoceros will charge savagely. He does not use the horn for offensive purposes, but his incisors, which much resemble the tusks of a boar, though far thicker. If one of them can close, he will leave his marks for ever. I have seen an elephant's foot cut to the bone. The horns are but poor trophies, but the Assamese, Chinese, and Tibetans prize them greatly, and will give as much as forty-five rupees a *seer* (2 lbs.) for them. Although many castes of Brahmins, Hindoos and Mawarries eschew all flesh, living on grain only, some of them make an exception in favour of the flesh of this pachyderm. I have been asked to dry the tongues for them, and these they pulverise, bottle, and indulge in a pinch or two if unwell. The Assamese prefer its flesh to all other, and used to follow me about like so many vultures.

No sooner was the life of one extinct, than they would rush knife in hand and not leave a scrap on the skeleton. Even the hide they roast and eat as we do the crackling of pig.

F. T. POLLOK.

RIDING—As this is hardly the place for any attempt to give details, I shall here limit myself to general principles, with the advice to readers, who wish to study the subject thoroughly, to consult the Bibliography at the end of the article.

As there are several kinds of riding which widely differ from each other in principles and practice, I shall consider the chief of them separately; but, before doing so, I wish to advance a plea for tolerance. We are all so enamoured of our own methods that, naturally, we are prone unduly to depreciate those of others. Hence the average English hunting man regards a French exponent of *l'équitation savante* with a self-satisfied air of superiority, if not of contempt, which is fully reciprocated; while a broncho buster, with equally bad reason, would look upon them both as duffers. Most men who have hunted much in the Shires know that the fact of a man being a brilliant steeplechase rider is not sufficient to enable him to get into the first flight out hunting, no matter how well he may be mounted. Again, very few of the best Australian steeplechase jockeys can sit a bad buckjumper successfully.

Different systems of riding—The chief systems of riding practised in different parts of the world may be roughly enumerated as follows: (1) Ordinary riding; (2) rough riding; (3) high school riding; (4) military riding; and (5) ladies' riding.

General principles—The chief principle which governs all kinds of good riding is that the rider should as a rule ride by balance, and should reserve his or her powers of grip for those supreme moments when grip is indispensable for security of seat. This maxim is founded on the fact that grip can be obtained only by muscular contraction, and that muscles which continue in a state of contraction become very soon tired. The principle here enunciated has been followed from time immemorial by persons who, although they did not reason it out, recognise the fact that good horsemanship was incompatible with stiffness, which, in the rider, is obtained by muscular contraction. Another great principle is that the rider, when he wants to get the weight back, should do so by the play of the hip joints—thus bringing the upper part of the body to the rear—and not by sitting back in the saddle. In fact, one should always sit well forward in the saddle, and, if necessary, lean back. In all kinds of riding, the reins should be held fairly long, so as to allow full freedom to the horse's head and neck without any risk of the rider being pulled forward. A great number