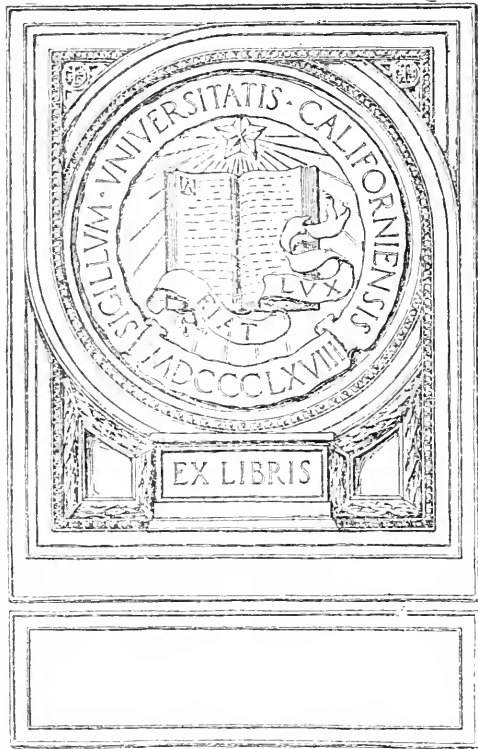
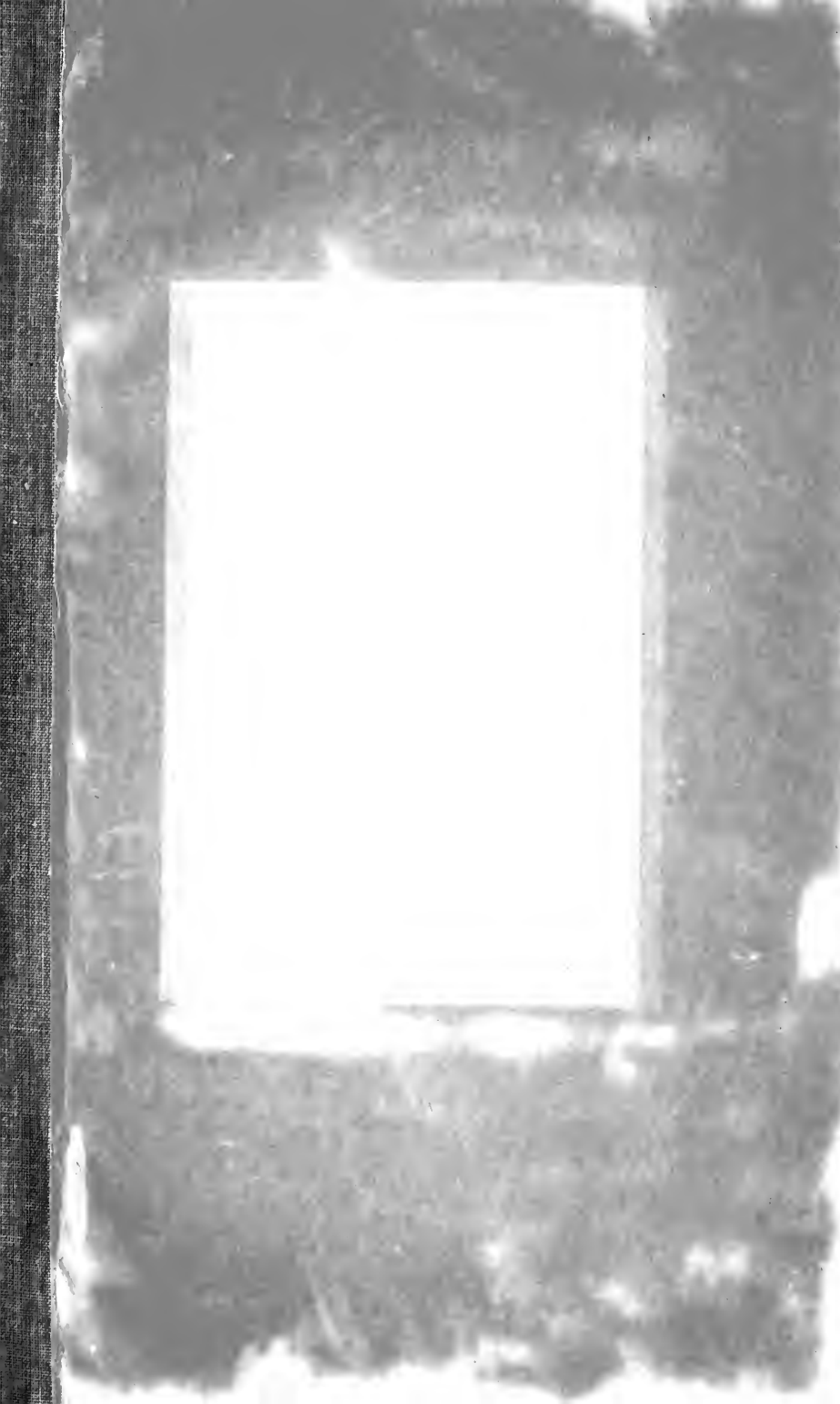


MY SOMALI BOOK

A Record of Two Shooting Trips

CAPTAIN A. H. E. MOSSE, F.Z.S.





MY SOMALI BOOK

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THE KING.

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MY SOMALI BOOK

A RECORD OF TWO SHOOTING TRIPS

BY

CAPTAIN A. H. E. MOSSE, F.Z.S.

INDIAN ARMY



ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR
AND WITH SKETCHES AND COVER-DESIGN BY

LIEUT. D. D. HASKARD, R.A.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

COL. H. G. C. SWAYNE, R.E., F.Z.S.

AUTHOR OF "SEVENTEEN TRIPS IN SOMALILAND"

LONDON

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1913

TO
K. C. M.

507284

PREFACE

OF the making of books upon big game shooting, of late years, there may seem to be no end. For the production of another some apology may appear necessary. But I have no intention of apologising. This book was written in the first instance for my own amusement, during a period when I found myself stationed in an out-of-the-way corner of India, where of other white men there were none. If an excuse be needed for its publication, it may perhaps be found in the fact that whereas there have been many recent works upon sport in other parts of Africa, Somaliland has for a number of years been left out in the cold. Moreover, judging by myself, I believe that a new work of this kind, provided it be true, will always be of interest to the brotherhood of big game hunters—no small class at the present day. That this book of mine will make any appeal to a wider public is more than I can venture to expect; though to some few, especially if they be lovers of Nature, I hope that it may. To this end the pen-and-ink sketches with which it is illustrated should be of material assistance, for I am confident I shall not be alone in thinking them attractive; and I cannot be sufficiently grateful to their creator, my friend Mr. Haskard, for the pains

he has bestowed upon them. Their truth and their artistic qualities speak for themselves.

I consider myself fortunate, also, in being honoured with an Introduction from the pen of Colonel H. G. C. Swayne, R.F., one of the first and greatest of the Somali explorers, whose name will be familiar to many of my readers as an authority both upon the country of which I write, and upon big game shooting generally. To him, for his kind interest in this work of mine, are due my most grateful thanks.

I must also express my indebtedness for valuable criticisms upon the chapter on rifles, etc., to Captain Godfrey Marchant, I.A.; and to my cousin, H. F. M. Tyler, I.C.S. This chapter, and that on some aspects of the theory of protective colouration in the larger animals, deal with somewhat controversial questions upon which I have no desire to lay down the law, but I hope that they may be found not entirely without value as contributions to their respective subjects.

It is not possible now, alas! for my thanks to reach one other friend to whose kindly interest and encouragement the existence of this book is in part due, and by whom three or four of the photographs reproduced in it were taken; I refer to the late Captain A. B. Eckford, of the Central India Horse, whose tragic death from a Persian raider's bullet, some months ago, has robbed the Indian Army of one of its most promising officers, and me of a valued personal friend. So untimely an end to such a life seems so cruelly unnecessary, but at least he died as he would have chosen, leading his men against a foe. His death is

unavenged, but by those who had the privilege of his friendship he is not, and will not, be forgotten.

Finally, my acknowledgments are due to the proprietors of the *Indian Field*, in the pages of which periodical an abridged account of my Somali experiences first appeared.

A. H. E. M.

LONDON,
August, 1913.



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INTRODUCTION

It is to be feared that the country, which has been the scene of Captain Mosse's experiences, will be closed for years to come. This is to be regretted not only by the shikari, but also by those, and they are many, who have really made friends with this cheery, kindly, intelligent, and least fanatical of Mahomedan races. It is to be regretted most by the few who knew the country in the earlier days, before it had begun to make history.

In 1884, it was an unknown wilderness nominally held by Egypt, with the little Mahomedan State of Harar in the south-west corner, presenting a bulwark towards Abyssinia.

We owe our first acquaintance with the Somalis to Sir Richard Burton, who went to Harar, and to an intrepid French explorer, Georges Revoil, who opened up the hills immediately behind the Warsangali and Mijerten coasts. In 1884 F. L. James explored the Webbe Shabeli River, and the Government of India took over Somaliland, with the exception of Harar, from Egypt, as a result of the Soudan retirement. In 1887 Harar fell into the hands of Abyssinia. From then onwards Somaliland was peacefully developed by the Indian Government. In the interior, Ogádén Somali raids on coast-bound caravans were checked; and the country was paying. At this period it may

be described as directly under India, with occasional interventions from Home.

In 1899 the activities of Abyssinia, awakened since the taking of Harar and further made easy by the free importation of arms from those parts of the coasts outside our influence, together with the prohibition on our own coast, roused the opposition of Ogádén, and the whole interior was thrown into a turmoil by the preaching of a Jihad against Abyssinia and against England by the "Mad Mullah." From this time the hitherto peaceful, economical development of the country was handicapped by heavy war-bills. About this time the affairs of Somaliland passed wholly into the hands of the Home Authorities.

Somaliland, which began to be known as a hole in John Bull's pocket, was, as can be seen by perusal of the newspapers of the day, drawn into the vortex of party politics at Home, and began to be used apparently as a stick by each political party to beat the other with.

We have now retired to the coast and have, it seems, allowed the interior tribes to acquire rifles, with which to find their own salvation. The happy hunting-grounds of the interior are now practically closed, and we shall hear little further in the newspapers of the Somali until the interests of white farmers from Nairobi, settled in the future round Mount Kenia and the sources of the Tana River to the south, or the politics of the Abyssinian neighbour to the west, re-awaken the attention of people in England.

Captain Mosse is a true sportsman. Like most Anglo-Indian and African Shikaris of the keenest

stamp, he shoots on foot, spares no pains, and accounts that species most valuable which gives most trouble ; he takes an interest in the ways of the people, the large game, and the birds, and gives us the result of much original observation. He gives us, too, most valuable information from the sportsman's point of view, as to the capabilities of the various types of modern weapons.

Through Captain Mosse's arguments on rifles runs a general tendency to uphold, up to a certain point, powerful rifles and moderately large calibres, wherein I absolutely agree with him ; though I would go still further than he does. One often travels thousands of miles by stream, hundreds of miles with pack transport, to get a shot at a particular species. One arrives at last, tired, carrying one's loaded rifle, at a point where one may, and sooner or later will, if one perseveres, see an animal for about three seconds. Here, to have carried a little extra weight is beside the point, so long as by careful perseverance one has got there. Then, in the name of all that is sensible, have the heaviest, most powerful, most efficient, weapon you can bring to the spot, provided you can carry it yourself and handle it with ease and quickness at the important moment. Its weight will help you to two trump cards in the game, stopping power and range combined ; it will give you a third trump card, that is, all the safety that an adequate weapon can provide ; without this you may have exciting adventures, but you will not shoot long, as some animal will, sooner or later, get you, if you persist in using very light rifles.

I agree with Captain Mosse that the true ball-and-shot gun has valuable properties, especially for a man of light physique, in the combination it affords of a large bullet with the handiness of a shot gun. I have found even the old black powder Paradox a very effective weapon.

I am in doubt, after long experience of both, which of the two weapons is better, (1) the heavier kind of magazine high-velocity rifle, with its half-dozen shots, which can be fired in fairly rapid succession, the hand automatically reloading by a few easy movements of the lever, leaving eye and brain free to watch the quickly-moving animal; or (2) the heavy double high-velocity rifle (or Paradox for thin-skinned game), with its first pair of shots delivered with lightning rapidity by merely slipping the finger to the second trigger or by using a single trigger twice. In the case of a double barrel, the first two shots, which do not always stop a buffalo or lion, are probably followed by fumbling in the pockets or cartridge-belt, searchings of memory as to which pocket they are in, and a look at the rifle to see which barrel has been already discharged and which has to be re-loaded. Meanwhile the animal has either got you, or has vanished.

As I say, I am still absolutely in doubt as to which it is best to use, a heavy magazine rifle of the type of which the .404 and .425 are the most notable examples; or the heavy to medium double high velocity rifle of .450 to .475 bore. I have found the .404 not at all too heavy for markhor ground, nor should the other magazine rifles named be too heavy. Any one using a magazine rifle should keep a full set

of dummy cartridges and constantly test the feeding action, for a jamb at the critical moment puts the rifle utterly out of action.

Captain Mosse would prefer the double rifle and, in that form, is inclined to consider anything above .400 bore rather heavy. My present practice is to carry a magazine rifle on the march, the double being usually unloaded, in the hands of an attendant; for close work, the double is best; for distant work the magazine rifle. For the smaller animals I would use the heavy rifles to avoid keeping up too many weapons, though of course they are over powerful for that purpose alone.

Captain Mosse considers the lion probably the most dangerous wild animal in attack. I think I would put the buffalo first, then the lion or tiger, then the leopard, elephant, Indian bear of the plains, and rhinoceros, in order as I have named them.

It is more difficult to take sides in the question of protective colouring. My experience is that in various surroundings, the giraffe in the dappled shade of a flat-topped giant mimosa; the zebra on a grass plain; the buffalo and elephant in heavy thicket; the black bear among the pine-stumps of a Himalayan glade; most wild animals, in fact, will generally find an environment, which will curiously chance to suit their colouring. They also to a certain extent reflect to the eye of the observer from their coats, however dull, the colours of objects round them.

It is, moreover, nearly certain that animals have, even within known history, changed their habits. It is said the American bison, conspicuous and hunted in

the plains, took to the bush before it was finally exterminated; may there not have been some other influence acting in ancient times, which originally drove it from the bush into the open?

While on this subject it is interesting to notice that the fighting *man* may be liable to similar changes in the matter of colouring of clothing. In the days of the short-range musket, conspicuous colouring was good enough; later, khaki was used; to-day a Continental nation is discussing a new fighting dress, and a distinctive uniform is preferred to khaki; to prevent any chance, it would seem, in these days of long ranges, of gunners peppering their own side.

The question of distinctive or protective colouring in animals is an intricate one, not yet solved, depending on a variety of reasons, and not alone on sex attraction or on the necessity of concealment for offence or defence.

Somaliland has been an ideal hunting ground. It is one great wilderness, practically without cultivation or villages, here nearly a thorny desert, there rising to the grandest plateau, anything up to 7000 feet, with woodland scenery of beauty perhaps unsurpassed elsewhere; you can go on horse-back, camel-back, or on foot, practically in any direction you like, if you carry a few days' supply of water. The people have an intense love of sport, not merely for meat, and in this they differ from most African races. They are naturally hospitable to strangers. The game is difficult to bring to bag, which is a recommendation to the true sportsman; and one is not bothered by mobs of half-tame zebras or hartebeestes ranging across the front,

when one is after rarer game, as they do in East Africa further south. I think that many men, whose wanderings with the rifle have been world-wide, will look back to their association with these plucky, sociable, and intelligent Somali hunters and camel-men, as among their pleasantest memories.

It is sad to think that political exigencies have now practically closed these regions; and the sportsman, at least, will welcome any complications in the future which will again open up the country, and give him back his lost hunting grounds.

H. G. C. SWAYNE.

1912.

MY SOMALI BOOK

CHAPTER I

Somaliland—First trip from Aden—Berbera: preliminary arrangements—
General description of Somaliland—Physical features, etc.—Inhabitants
—Fauna.

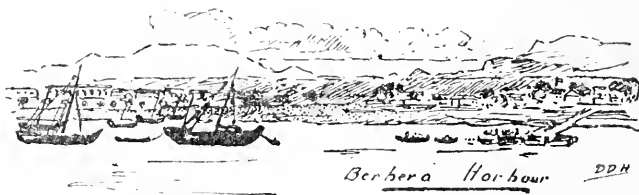
AN arid desert country beneath a scorching tropical sun: the home of a "Mad Mullah," cause of one of the most prolonged and least successful of our "little wars": absorbing blood and money but making no return: a sad example of our muddling policy, or want of policy; right or wrong that is, I think, a very prevalent impression of Somaliland.

But it has other and more pleasing aspects. Much of the country dry and barren it yet has striking variations of scenery. Its inhabitants, whether you like them or not, are an interesting race, with a higher place in the scale of humanity than the majority at least of the negro tribes. Their origin is somewhat uncertain, but they undoubtedly have a liberal strain of Arab blood, and their features, except to some extent their lips, show nothing of the negroid type. And from the sportsman's point of view, with which I am mainly concerned, the country still provides, though without such an extensive fauna as that of East Africa

for instance, one of the finest hunting-grounds in the world.

So that when I found myself condemned for a term of years to a sojourn on the barren rock of Aden, it was not surprising that the proximity of Somaliland seemed to afford some compensation in the prospect of an expedition to add to my experiences in the way of big game shooting, which hitherto had been confined to India.

Aden is the starting-point for nearly all expeditions to Somaliland, and it was not difficult to gather information as to ways and means. So it came about



that January, 1907, saw me, with four weeks' leave, on my way to Berbera in a little local steamer.

At Berbera I was met by H., an old friend stationed there, who was well up to the ropes and had undertaken to get my caravan together for me. The individual he had engaged for me as first shikari and head-man, a Somali of the Habr Awal tribe named Elmi Hirsi, 28 or 30 years of age, turned up at H.'s bungalow and we were soon discussing how to make the most of the four short weeks I had before me.

The line usually taken by shooting parties from Berbera starts with a four days' march southwest to Hargeisa, the most westerly of the then existing Government posts in the interior.

Between Berbera and Hargeisa, however, there was practically no shooting to be had, and H., who had already talked it over with Elmi, said I had much better, as my leave was so short, make a bee-line due south to the *Haud*, the great waterless plateau which extends across the centre of Somaliland, commencing a hundred miles from the coast. I should thus sooner have an opportunity of letting off my rifle, have a greater chance of getting a lion, and probably do better all round than would be possible, with my short leave, by following the more beaten track.

Had anything more been needed to quicken my decision, there lay on the floor of H.'s room the skin of one of the biggest lions ever killed in Somaliland. He had bagged it the previous month in Elmi's company, on a flying *trek* of a fortnight only, to the very place where he now wanted to send me. So that was settled.

The next thing was to decide that, for a month, it was better to hire camels than to buy; and after going over my kit, to calculate that I must take eight camels from Berbera. On nearing the waterless Haud, it would be necessary to hire four or five more to carry water only. There were other things to be considered; but as I propose, in a subsequent chapter, to go in some detail into the question of transport and general requirements for a trip such as mine, I need only say now that, thanks to H., everything was ready and the caravan started on its southward way by 1 p.m. on the following day—less than 48 hours after leaving Aden.

The human element in the caravan was composed

of John, my old Madrasi bearer, and an Indian Mahomedan police orderly who accompanied me from Aden, with eleven Somalis consisting of three shikaris, five camel-men, one syce, and two youngsters—a cook-boy to help John and a donkey-boy to look after the lesser animals. These latter were two donkeys, half a dozen sheep, and two milch-goats.

For my own riding, I had brought from Aden a half-bred Arab pony, Brian, and had hired a riding-mule to take his place when necessary or for Elmi to ride on occasion. There was also an extra "weight-carrying" donkey for John.

The eight camels, which completed the four-footed portion of the outfit, of course carried all the baggage, comprising stores, rifles and ammunition, personal kit, an 80-lb. tent, camp equipment, water-tanks, and rations for the men. This last consisted of rice, dates, and ghee (clarified butter); the amount for the whole trip calculated on a regulation daily allowance of 1 lb. rice, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. dates, and 2 oz. ghee per man. This would be supplemented by meat now and then when game was plentiful, and an occasional sheep. Except for meat and milk (sometimes), one cannot count upon obtaining any article of food in the interior, so everything had to be taken with us.

My battery consisted of a 12-bore shot gun, a .355 Mannlicher-Schönauer magazine rifle, and two double express (black powder) rifles, .500 and .577; the latter a grand killing weapon but decidedly heavy to carry about.

As I have said the caravan made a start at 1 o'clock, Elmi and I to follow later in the afternoon. But

before doing so I may as well try and give some slight idea of the nature of the country and its inhabitants, and the possibilities that lay before us, even if this involves little but a repetition of what others have written before.

Somaliland may be divided into three distinct tracts of country¹—

1. The fringe of maritime plain between the mountains and the sea.
2. The maritime hills : these form ridges parallel to the coast, and isolated peaks, connected by plateaux and low-lying valleys, and separated by a loftier mountain ridge, of which the Golis Range is the most noteworthy part, from
3. A series of raised plateaux to the south, gradually sloping down from the Abyssinian Highlands in the west to the eastern coast.

The British Protectorate occupies the north-central portion, with a coast-line of some 440 miles and an area of about 58,000 square miles, and extends inland in the centre for from 150 to 200 miles.*

To deal more particularly with the west-central portion of the Protectorate, with which I am personally acquainted. Near the coast the country is of a semi-desert character with little vegetation except stunted thorn-bushes. Vegetation increases, with thick jungle in places, as the altitude rises past the stony maritime hills up to the Golis Range, much of which is well-wooded. This district (between Golis and the sea) is known as Guban.

* *Vide* Military Report on Somaliland.

South of the Golis is Ogo, a district composed of comparatively flat country varying in character from thick thorn jungle to open scrub and grassy plains, which passes into the Haud, a great elevated undulating plateau that in and after the rainy season affords excellent pasture, but for some months in the year is waterless. Its surface is covered with jungle, sometimes very thick, sometimes fairly open, interspersed with areas of rolling plain; towards the east of a semi-desert character. Through the Haud runs the Anglo-Abyssinian boundary, a somewhat arbitrary line fixed by the Agreement of 1897, previous to which the British sphere of influence extended vaguely further to the south.

Of rivers there are in British Somaliland practically none. But there are many shallow sandy water-courses, which heavy rains fill with rushing streams for an hour or two, and as these subside leave pools that, except in the dry season, are an important source of water supply. But these and the pans of water in casual depressions dry up quickly with the cessation of the rains—dry up is hardly the right expression, as the trouble lies in the porous nature of the soil, which fails to retain the water on its surface. It follows that in the dry season wells are the only source of water supply, and these may be several days' journey apart.

It is a mistake to suppose that Somaliland is nowhere fertile, witness the vegetation on the Golis or in parts of Ogo-Guban. As a matter of fact, there is no lack of fertile soil and the rainfall is not deficient, so that the only thing necessary to complete the requirements of an agriculturist is the construction of

reservoirs to contain a permanent water supply, and this, we have the word of an engineer in Colonel Swayne, is perfectly practicable; indeed, he mentions the existence of traces of ancient tanks that must have been made and used long before the time of the Somal.

Whether the nature of the human element in the conditions of the present day could ever justify expenditure on such an object was more than doubtful while we still exerted a measure of control over the friendly tribes. Now that we have withdrawn to the



coast any discussion of the subject must be purely academic.

But so long as the Somali continues, as he has always done, to look upon a raid on his neighbours' property as the one form of recreation that is worth while, the risks of tempting fortune by the growth of crops of any kind would be too great for those who might otherwise be disposed to make the attempt. So it comes about that, except in isolated instances of settlements such as Hargeisa, under an influential Mullah whose holiness preserves him from molestation, cultivation is non-existent.

All the Somalis one comes across in the interior are nomad shepherds or, sometimes, members of trading

caravans. Permanent settlements are few and far between; the Somali's length of stay in any one place being regulated by considerations of pasturage and watering. His temporary huts are made of his camel mats hung on bent poles, the *karia* (encampment) being surrounded by a thorn zariba, thorn partitions inside making separate pens for the animals.

These animals consist of camels, sheep, goats and, in Western Somaliland, cattle, besides a few ponies, but the war has greatly decreased the numbers of the latter. A Somali reckons his principal wealth in camels. At times he lives almost entirely upon camel's milk, and thinks there is nothing to be compared to camel meat, but camels are too valuable to be eaten very frequently.

The Somali camel as a baggage animal is invaluable. Like every other camel, he is delicate in some ways, and therefore at times needs looking after. But he is no trouble to feed, like his often spoilt brother of Arabia, and can extract sustenance from the driest of thorns. He grumbles little, is more gentle, and is altogether a more amiable character, if less aristocratic, than the Asiatic breeds. I have never seen a Somali camel try to bite a man as a vicious brute will often do in India or Arabia—and no animal can give a more ghastly bite than the “hairy scary *oont*.”

The sheep are of a fat-tailed variety, small, with black heads, and no wool. They are exported in large numbers to Aden, providing indeed practically the only meat supply for that place.

Regarding the Somali himself one may hear many



A "BLOOD" OF THE RER ALI.



ON THE MARCH.

[To face p. 9.]

varying opinions; contact with civilisation certainly does not seem to improve him—as witness the particularly objectionable type that thrives, spite of many discouragements, in Aden. Even in his own country, so far as my experience goes, those who knew him best often like him least. He is extremely avaricious; he is vanity itself; he does not know the meaning of gratitude; he is the embodiment of laziness; he is an unmitigated liar; he is an accomplished thief; and he is careless and casual to a degree. These are some of the indictments, and I fear there is much of truth in all of them.

Is there something, I wonder, in the atmosphere of the Gulf of Aden that conduces to the growth of avarice? Shylock was a Jew of Venice, and I have known of Indian money-lenders whose thoroughness in the art of skinning a victim was—if thoroughness be a virtue in itself—worthy of all praise. But for sheer unadulterated greed commend me to a Somali or a petty Arab Sheikh of the Aden Hinterland.

And, while the climate of Aden has been painted in blacker lines than it really deserves, it is said with possible truth that after long residence there the white man deteriorates—in his attitude towards the root of all evil as in other things. And certainly I knew a man—but I mustn't tell tales out of Somaliland! To return to our Somali: there is another and more pleasing side to his picture. Colonel H. G. Swayne—and few know him so well—writes: “The Somali . . . is generally a good camel-man, a cheerful camp-follower, a trustworthy, loyal and attentive soldier; proud of the confidence reposed in him, quick

to learn new things, and wonderfully bright and intelligent. He is untiring on the march, often a reckless hunter, and will stand by his master splendidly." And again, "I have made many jungle trips in India and elsewhere, yet in no country have I had such obedient and cheerful followers and such pleasant native companions, despite their faults, as in Somaliland."

This estimate is every bit as true as the other. The Somali of the interior is not, as a rule, dishonest, though he can be an exasperating liar on occasion. And he is usually decent in his dress. Naturally indolent, he prefers to see the women do the work, but he has plenty of energy when he chooses to give it exercise, and in this respect is seen at his best on a shooting trip. And there is no doubt of his courage.



A Mahomedan of the Shafai Sect, the Somali is sometimes very particular about his religious observances, but the Arab despises him as not a true Mahomedan at all.

There is no occasion to detail the principal tribes, which are split up into innumerable sub-divisions. But mention must be made of the *Midgáns*, an outcast tribe of professional hunters. They hunt with bow and poisoned arrow, sometimes with dogs, and are wonderful trackers.

As to the provision which the country makes for the hunter: the principal game to be met with in Northern Somaliland comprises Elephant, Black Rhinoceros, Lion, Leopard, Chita (hunting-leopard),

Warthog, Ostrich, and twelve species of Antelope, to wit, Greater and Lesser Kudu, Oryx (Beisa), Swayne's Hartebeest, Sömmering's Gazelle (Somali-*Aoul*), Waller's Gazelle (*Gerenúk*), Clarke's Gazelle (*Dibatag*), Speke's and Pelzeln's Gazelles (both *Dhero* in Somali), *Baira*, Klipspringer (*Alakút*) and Phillips' Dik-dik (*Sákáro*). Two other species of dik-dik are to be found in Ogádén, the Abyssinian territory immediately south of the western Haud.

Of the above the shooting of elephants, which have grown scarce, has been entirely prohibited the last few years. The rhinoceros, not uncommon in Ogádén, sometimes in the summer travels as far north as the Protectorate border, but one must not expect to find any in British territory, except perhaps in one or two localities further east which are out of the sportsman's usual beats.

Among the antelopes the greater kudu affords the finest trophy, while the *dibatag* and *baira* are the rarest. The commonest species are the *aoul*, *gerenúk*, Speke's gazelle and oryx, with the little dik-dik everywhere except on the open plains. The lion is no longer abundant, but is still not very uncommon in some districts, while the leopard abounds, especially in the hills. The chita is not often met with. Of animals that hardly enter into the category of game the most prominent is the Spotted Hyæna (Somali-*warába*), and a pest he is at times; the smaller Striped Hyæna is rarer. Two species of Jackal are common. As to small game there are several species of bustard, guinea-fowl, partridge, sand-grouse and an occasional hare.

On my present trip I might hope to meet with any of the above game except elephant, rhino, hartebeest and *baira*. Further inland, in the Southern Ogádén, are to be found the Somali giraffe and Grévy's zebra, and on the banks of the Webi Shabeleh the Somali bushbuck and waterbuck and the hippopotamus: all in Abyssinian territory and considerably beyond our border or the reach of a short expedition.

These introductory remarks have given the caravan a good start on its first day's journey. It is time to follow.



CHAPTER II

Start from Berbera—First meeting with *aoul*: description—Deragodleh and Lafarug—Mandéra: lesser kudu: dik-dik—Birds: the millionaire myna: king-crow—The Somali leopard: sitting up for him: bad luck—Black-backed jackal—Greater kudu: a fine trophy—A leopard's "kill": no luck again—Carrion birds: crow and mongoose.

It was 3 p.m. on the 15th January when Elmi and I set out across the Maritime Plain in pursuit of our caravan. Interesting at first our way was not: a flat sandy soil, dotted with low scrubby thorn bushes and apparently devoid of animal life, except for a little ground squirrel and a sand-lizard with a very sharp-pointed tail, which he carries high in the air as he scuttles away. But our faces were to the wonderful south, and the Golis Mountains, rising into the distant sky, beckoned with a promise of everything of which my last two years at an office-desk had seemed to deny the existence.

We were about six miles on our road when I had my first glimpse of a dik-dik, and soon after Elmi spotted a little herd of lowland *dhero* (Pelzeln's gazelle), and very like they seemed to the familiar Indian *chinkara*. As the range of this species hardly extends beyond the Maritime Plain, I thought I would try for a shot just to see what it felt like to stalk a buck once more. But, as I told Elmi, he was not to expect much at first, as I had not touched a rifle for three

years. Near as it was to Berbera, the little gazelle were decidedly shy, and it took half an hour's manœuvring before I could get within 170 or 180 yards of a nice buck. And then : the sand had been heavy and I was out of training and the rifle wouldn't stay steady ; it was a long shot, too, at a small mark in the trying evening light ; moreover, my rifle was new and untried ; and so—I am sure there were several other excuses if I could only remember them—I missed.

We moved on, taking it easy ; for Brian, like his master, was somewhat out of condition, having done no work but trapping for a long time ; Elmi's mule, too, was not disposed to undue exertion. So it was getting dark when we came up with our camelry, immediately after which we halted for the night, having done about thirteen miles.

It was not worth while putting up a tent for a few hours, and it was a treat to sleep under the stars again and realise that one was far, and soon to be farther, from the haunts of men. At 3 a.m. we were up, but the caravan as a whole, was, like some of its individual members, not yet in training—had not yet found itself—so the business of loading up by starlight was not accomplished with the celerity that later on came to be the rule. It was consequently 4.30 by the time we were on the move.

At daylight Elmi and I left the caravan and bore off to one side. For a time the sand had ceased and our way lay among low rocky hills. We saw nothing of interest except two *dhero* (does) and a bustard, until near Deragodleh, our next halting-place, when,

as Elmi had predicted, we fell in with a herd of a dozen *aoul* (Sömmering's gazelle). They were shy and for an hour did not give us a chance, but at length we succeeded in waylaying them as they rounded the corner of a hill only 120 yards away. I opened fire and made, one after another, three misses at the leading buck, which Elmi said was the best; though to my eye all the horns carried by male and female alike seemed much of a muchness. It was only the third shot that I was able to locate as obviously high.

The *aoul* meanwhile were still quietly walking in single file. We were down wind of them and sheltered from view, and they did not seem to hear the crack of the Mannlicher. A fourth shot aimed low was more successful, and the buck dropped, but picked himself up, hit too far back. After following a couple of hundred yards I got in another shot, behind the shoulder, and he bounded forward and fell dead. Not a very good head though heavy, but it was a beginning.

The *aoul* is a handsome beast, about the size of the Indian blackbuck, but of stouter build, with a conspicuous white patch on the rump. The strongly annulated horns are of a very distinct type, the points curving sharply inwards towards each other. The female also has fairly long horns, but more slender and smoother, and often irregular in shape. Unlike the blackbuck, which it otherwise considerably resembles in its habits, the *aoul* rarely, in my experience, indulges in those wonderful high bounds so typical of the Indian species, whose every hoof would seem to carry a golf ball in its sole.

Kabarah, my second shikari, hearing the shots,

had come to meet us, and now helped to carry in the meat and horns to Deragodleh, where we arrived, to find the caravan unloading, at about 10 o'clock. A few shots at a target here confirmed the view that the Mannlicher was a trifle oversighted, and made for a better understanding between me and my weapon ; likewise satisfied Elmi that though I might be a duffer it was as yet "not proven." So far the impression Elmi had made upon me was a good one, but if our trip was to be a success it was necessary that the good impression should be in some degree mutual. No shikari can be expected to go on providing opportunities for a man who never takes advantage of them unless by accident.

Four hours' rest and we were on the march again, reaching Lafarug, where we encamped, at dusk ; the day's march being 25 miles. This time I found it a mistake not putting up a tent for the night, as the dew was extremely heavy. Soon after starting next morning I got another *aoul*, first shot this time.

Midday brought us to Mandera, a valley at the foot of the Golis. Before reaching our halting place, Elmi and I explored part of a patch of thick thorn jungle with an undergrowth of *hig* aloes (or rather *sansevieria*), in which lesser kudu were known to dwell. Kudu tracks there certainly were, fresh and stale, and presently, cautiously peering across an open glade, Elmi drew my attention to three forms partly visible under the trees on the far side some seventy yards away. I soon distinguished a young buck and a doe lesser kudu, but it was impossible to see what the third was like. So we waited two or three minutes

and then they began to get restless and in another moment were off. No. 3, who turned out to be a buck with a fine head, offered a chance of a stern shot going away fast at a hundred yards; but I did not think it good enough, hoping for a better opportunity which never came. I know the lesser kudu better now, he is the one of the Somali antelopes upon whom you must never count for an easier shot, but shoot on sight, if he offers a chance at all. More of him later.

My camping ground at Mandera was a charming spot on the wooded bank of a sandy river-bed. Besides lesser kudu in the jungle below, there were greater kudu in the hills above, the only place where I had any chance of seeing the latter this trip. Our original idea had been to press on at once to the Haud and try for kudu on our way back. But I felt that, once in the Haud, the hope of a lion would tempt me to stay there to the last possible moment and leave no time for kudu on the return journey. Next to a lion a good greater kudu head was the first object of my ambition. Moreover, I wanted an African leopard, and there was a much better chance of getting one here in the hills than further on. So it was decided to stay and make Mandera our headquarters for two or three days at least.

That evening I went out with a shot gun and bagged two dik-dik besides a couple of lesser bustard. The dik-dik is a quaint little beggar, with soft pretty skin and little toy horns two inches long. No bigger than a hare, he lies as close, then dashes off at great



speed ; or if he thinks himself unobserved, creeps silently away. He is never found away from cover.

One did not see many animals, but here at the foot of the Golis there was bird-life in plenty. Fine feathers make fine birds. The common Indian myna is an individual for whom I have a great personal esteem ; always cheerful in spite of his scientific misnomer (*Acridotheres tristis* !) and eminently respectable ; he is essentially *bourgeois*—and dresses accordingly.

At Mandera, however, I first made the acquaintance of another myna, evidently a younger brother who had left home to make his fortune ; and made it—in tinned grasshoppers or something of the sort. Having made his pile, he must dress as one who has the entry into the highest circles ; but here the erring instinct of the *nouveau riche* has led him astray. He appears to have taken as his model a la-di-da young gentleman, whose blood no doubt is blue as the sea, and his brains as watery, judging from the vacuous expression with which he swaggers about in a bright blue frock-coat with flowing tails and the fanciest of fancy waistcoats. Behold then Mr. Myna Junior in a coat and collar of brilliant metallic blue, with vest and knee-breeches of brightest orange-vermilion ! He has not gone as far as the flowing tails (perhaps his wife reminded him that his figure was just a shade too corpulent) ; all the same he certainly is a fine bird : how far what is best in Somali avine society may be taken in, I had no means of discovering. But, as they say, to one who knows the species, a certain type of South African millionaire is always recognisable, whether because or in spite of the huge diamond in his shirt-front ; so to

me this fine fellow inevitably betrayed his humble origin. Whether in his walk, his flight, his attitudes, his general behaviour, or his language, once a myna always a myna. And yet, if I only knew, he has probably even dropped the old family * name, for fear of calling to mind the tinned grasshoppers that paid his tailor's bills! I think I like old John Company Myna best.

Another familiar acquaintance was the drongo—the Indian king-crow—who don't care nothing for nobody, but sits on the donkey's back encouraging that placid creature to flush its rider's insect prey as effectively as ever two-legged beater flushed quail for Master. Then a discordant scream of rage, and the glossy black plumage and long forked tail flash in the sunlight as we turn to see what has evoked the sudden outburst of wrath. Among the thicker trees vanishes the silent shape of a dark grey buzzard, and the little champion returns from his pursuit in triumph. The king-crow is a pal of mine, though his usual discordant note is the reverse of musical.

They told me that Mandera was a good place for leopards: it was not long before I had evidence of the fact. A not inconsiderable acquaintance in India with the leopard (or panther as we call him there) has impressed me with a decided respect for his character and abilities, and this my meetings with his African brother have not decreased.

Tracking down a light-footed beast like a leopard in the Somali hills is, from the nature of the country, a more than difficult undertaking. It is usually, moreover, impossible to obtain a sufficiency of beaters

* *Acridotheres* = Grasshopper-hunter.

when wanted. Hence the marking down of one in his hiding place and driving him out, as frequently done in India, is rarely practicable. The usual recourse then is a bait at night. But there is generally no convenient tree to sit in, so the sportsman has resort to a zariba. Best a zariba occupied by a Somali encampment with their sheep and goats, for any leopard of the neighbourhood is certain to be aware of their presence, and as likely as not will come prowling round under cover of darkness in search of an opportunity of annexing one of the flock. The flock one might imagine was fairly safe within the thick thorn fence, some $4\frac{1}{2}$ or 5 feet in height, and with several human beings sleeping alongside. But supply the leopard's activity and daring with the stimulus of a little hunger, and he makes nothing of a leap over the thorn-fence into the enclosure and another leap out again, this time with a sheep. So it comes about that if a Somali *karia* (encampment) occupies a zariba for any length of time, a single leopard will sometimes quarter himself upon it and exact his toll with the utmost regularity two nights out of three, or even oftener. The tax would seem an unbearable one, but it is rarely that the Somali will take the trouble to try and circumvent the marauder. His whole wealth consists in his flocks, but an individual sheep costs little, and spite of his avarice the Mussulman fatalism of his nature endures the robbery, until one day he thinks of counting up the sheep he has lost, then curses all the robber's ancestral relatives and hurriedly shifts his encampment! From this it can be understood that the Somali will probably welcome the Sahib who

comes to shoot a leopard from his zariba ; but he will show no gratitude, and will demand an exorbitant price for a goat to be used as bait.

The *modus operandi* consists in making a loophole in the zariba fence about two feet from the ground, tying a goat up immediately outside and waiting for the panther to come. It is not a sporting method, but being the only one usually possible, it has to my thinking a sufficient excuse in the amount of damage to stock caused by the depredations of leopards. And, as will be seen, it is not nearly so simple a business as it sounds ; which fact, with the darkness and the nature of the beast with which one has to deal, combine to provide an element of excitement that makes the affair not quite the cold-blooded butchery that it might at first appear. While if the leopard is only wounded, one may have some nervous work in following him up next morning. As to the use of a live goat as bait, I confess I have no scruples. The goat objects at first to being tied up outside the zariba, but it certainly does not, as I once heard stated by a man with no personal knowledge of the subject, spend the time in a state of terror. While if the leopard is killed, the sacrifice of one goat means the saving alive of many.

On this occasion at Mandera my luck was out. I was sitting at a loop-hole in a neighbouring zariba at about 9 p.m., when suddenly the goat stiffened and tugged at its rope with the peculiar sneezing snort the goat tribe go in for when alarmed. I knew what that meant, had heard just one faint foot-fall. Next moment there was a rush, a gurgling scuffle, and the goat was gone ! The leopard's charge—he must have

been a heavy beast—had broken the rope clean. Of course there was a hue and cry and a rush out with lanterns to try and make him drop his prey, but it was no use, he had got clear away. This was the first, but not the last, time that I was fated to be scored off by a Somali leopard!

Well, we tied up another goat on the off-chance, and after an hour or so I went to sleep. At about 4 a.m. another leopard turned up and killed. I woke up, but it was a dark night, and, for half a minute or so, could make out nothing to shoot at; then just as I was getting some idea as to the beast's position he quietly slipped away: what roused his suspicions I don't know. I waited for him till daylight, but though I heard him once he did not show up again. To have two goats killed, and two leopards within a few feet of the muzzle of one's rifle in one night without a shot was more than ordinarily bad luck.

Next day I spent a long morning trying for lesser kudu. Had occasional glimpses of them but they were shy and I could not get a shot. The ground in their favourite cover was overgrown with the aloe-like *sansevieria*, the fibre of which may prove of considerable commercial value, if local conditions ever permit of its satisfactory cultivation.

I shot a jackal that afternoon from the tent door, one of the black-backed species. He has a handsome skin, but his singing is not in the same class with that of his Indian cousin, his serenading voice being decidedly weak and throaty in comparison.

On arrival at Mandera I had sent men out exploring the nearer hills (such of them as were not included in

the Game Reserve, the boundary of which passed through Mandera) in search of greater kudu. On the second morning, no news having come in, Elmi advised trying a big hill beyond.

Starting at daybreak, after an hour's ride, and an hour and a half's steady climb we got over the top of the big hill on to a sort of hilly plateau at an elevation of something over 5000 feet. The climb had been steep enough and hard work, but not difficult. Elmi pointed out a depression between two hills as the most likely place to hold kudu if there were any about ; so we started operations by a sort of beat here which proved blank. There were two recently arrived Somali *karias* close by, a fact which did not promise well for the proximity of kudu. It was now after 11 o'clock, so I sat down to wait for the tiffin-basket, then breakfast, and a rest, while two shikaris went over to another hill to prospect. They came back about 1.30 p.m., to say they had found nothing but stale tracks, so we started off in the one remaining direction that seemed of any use. We had only gone half a mile when we met a shepherd, who said he had seen a big kudu bull only a few minutes before. This was much more cheering, and we were soon on his tracks, but the ground was hard and stony, and we could not keep them for more than a short distance at a time. For an hour or more we searched for him, until at last Kabarah, my second shikari, spotted him not one hundred yards away. He was off again at once, making back towards the old feeding grounds that we had tried in the morning. Here the going was a little better, and the shikaris managed to keep on his tracks,

and for the next two hours stuck to his trail grandly, for the tracking was frequently very difficult, and though we must often have been very close to him he was an old hand and would not show himself or stop.

At last we were afraid it was no good ; it was 5.30 p.m. and the sun would set in less than half an hour, when, as we came round a corner on the side of a hill, Elmi grabbed my arm and pointed—there, about eighty yards down the hill-side, I saw the head and shoulders of the great antelope as he stood for a moment among some bushes, horns thrown back, looking up at us. It did not take five seconds to throw up the Mannlicher, aim behind the shoulder and fire. Away he crashed down the hill out of sight, but I knew I had him, and sure enough forty yards further we found him lying at his last gasp : a grand beast, as big as a large sambar stag, with a short mane and bearded throat and a really good head. The little split bullet had found his heart.

It was a great finish to a hard day's work. During the four hours we had been on his trail I had not had a glimpse of him the whole time, and but for the excellent tracking of my men should never have got him. We were three hours' journey from camp, so left Kabarah to take off the head and skin and keep them in an adjacent *karia* until the morning, while Elmi and I started to find our way down to our steeds. I was unquestionably fortunate in obtaining a big kudu at the first attempt ; the horns measured fifty inches on the curve, and had a fine wide spread, good for Somaliland. It was my one regret that it had been too dark to photograph him as he lay. Standing

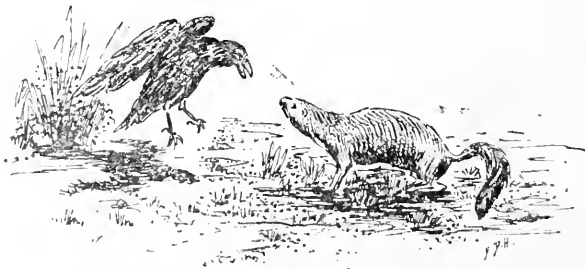
fourteen to fifteen hands at the shoulder, his magnificent spiral horns set on a graceful frame, the Greater Kudu is King among the antelopes: none of the other great African species, whether Eland or Sable, Gemsbok or Waterbuck, is quite his peer.

Next day; after another unsuccessful morning in the lesser kudu jungle, news came in about 3 p.m. of a goat having been killed by a leopard a couple of hours before on a hill-side three miles away. I hurried off to the spot and found that a shelter of branches had been constructed for me against the side of a rock, and the kill disposed twenty yards below on the hill-side. The chances were that the leopard would return before dark if he came at all. I was well concealed, and the arrangements were all very nice, but I did not like the kill having been moved, as had been done, some forty yards from where the leopard had left it. The skin also had been removed by the owner of the goat before my men arrived on the scene. These may or may not have been the reasons why, but the leopard failed to put in an appearance. However, I spent an interesting afternoon watching the scavengers who soon found out the kill. First, of course, came the crows—a crow like a small raven, but with a dark brown head. Then vultures of no less than six different species, the two who ruled the roost being a big bird,



with a smooth brown neck and a whitish ruff, and a great turkey-buzzard like the West Indian "John Crow," but bigger; then there was a bright tawny vulture with black points, as big as the other two, but with less force of character, besides three smaller kinds. A kite, darker and heavier than the Indian pariah kite, managed to collar a tit-bit and clear off with it, but was at once charged by a small light-coloured eagle—you should have heard the whack! as they met in mid-air; the kite was knocked endways, but clung manfully to his prize, and, recovering himself, dodged a second swoop and got clear away.

As sunset approached the vultures disappeared, and only a couple of crows remained. Then a mongoose appeared round a corner and went for one of the crows, who beat a retreat, but immediately returned to the attack and regained possession. This happened half a dozen times, the crow evidently having as wholesome a respect for the mongoose's sharp teeth as the latter had for his powerful bill. The mongoose was a handsome fellow, grayer and darker than the common Indian species, with a black tip to his tail and a black nose instead of a pink one.



CHAPTER III

Across the Golis Range—Adadleh—Chita—Speke's gazelle—Bull oryx wounded and lost—Description of *oryx beisa*—A jungle interlude—"Bounders" among beasts—The spotted hyæna: his character and habits—Description of *gerenuk*—Tuyo Plain—"Somajesti."

HAVING attained the main object of our stay at Mandera, we pushed on towards the Haud, crossing the Golis Range by the Jerato Pass, a fairly stiff climb for the camels. The fresh tracks of a pair of greater kudu bulls from the Reserve crossed our path, but we had no time to give to them, especially as the single specimen, which was all my license permitted, had been already bagged.

At midday we halted at Adadleh, where deep wells provide a permanent watering-place. Further on we could expect to find no water at this time of year, so hired six extra camels and laid in a supply of as much water as we could carry. There were three Habr Yunis *karias* there at the time with herds of two or three thousand camels. I also met there Elmi's brother, Kaalila Hirsi, in his day a famous shikari, but now an *akil* (head man) of his tribe (Habr Awal Makahil) and one of the finest looking Somalis I have seen.

That afternoon's march was through a country devoid of game—the nearest approach to such being some courier-plover, of which I shot a couple for the pot. But just before sunset, in open bush country,

Elmi suddenly stopped, exclaiming "*lippat!*" I could not think what on earth he meant until he used the Somali word, "*shabel,*" when I realised that his first effort was intended for "leopard." I spotted the beast just too late as it moved away among the bushes. Running to cut it off I saw, as I concluded, the same animal stand looking back eighty to one hundred yards away. I took a steady kneeling shot and heard the bullet tell, but apparently it sprang away, going as if unhurt, though in no great hurry. I followed, thinking its gait was not quite like that of an ordinary leopard, but I could not get a full view, and it quickly disappeared. Just then a shout came from behind: "*margaya!*" (dead!). Then it dawned on me that there had been two beasts, and I turned back to find I had bagged, not an ordinary leopard, but a small chita about three-quarters grown.

Owing to its standing higher than a leopard of the same age, and being partially concealed by grass, it had seemed bigger, while the greyish ground-colour of the pretty skin had not yet attained the reddish tinge of the adult chita. The other, which Elmi had seen first, must have been the mother. It was bad luck my not having seen her in time to appreciate the situation.

There is little real likeness between chita and leopard, and they should never be confused if seen clearly. The small round head; the longer limbs; the tucked-up appearance of the hind-quarters, built for speed; the only partially retractile claws; absence of a rosette pattern in the arrangement of the spots; the short mane; these comprise the principal points

3



GERENÚK.



ORYX BEISA.

[To face p. 29.]

in which the chita differs in appearance from his bolder and fiercer cousin.

It was very cold in camp that night, likewise when loading up again at dawn, which was hardly surprising seeing that the month was January and our elevation was over 4000 feet.

Continuing our southward way I shot my first *dhero*, of the plateau variety (*Gazella Spekei*), after a long stalk. This handsome little gazelle is very like the Indian *chinkara* in habits and appearance. He differs mainly in the darker median band, the different face-markings which show more black and white, and the possession above the nose of a peculiar patch of loose skin, which is often inflated, forming a quaint protuberance. The horns are much like the Indian gazelle's, but, on the average, shorter, at least in the buck. And, like the *chinkara* again, the little black tail is never still.

Twinkle, twinkle, little tail,
Does your ardour never fail?
How I wonder why you may
Never rest the live-long day!

The day's march of 27 miles ended at a zariba in the thick *khansa* (umbrella thorn) jungle, south of a place called Dafaroo. Here we found Kabarali, who had been sent on ahead prospecting. He reported *khabar* of leopard, oryx, and lesser kudu. We had had glimpses of oryx and *gerenuk* on the road shortly before halting, and, on the whole, thought it might be worth while staying at this spot for a day.

Out in the morning early, we found numerous tracks of oryx ("*arragis*," as Elmi pronounced it), and

after an hour came upon a herd. They were wary creatures, and though where the jungle was thick we could get fairly close to them, it was difficult to get a satisfactory opportunity, for I did not want to shoot until fairly certain. However, when I at length got in a shot at one which Elmi said was a bull—I could not tell the difference—at about 120 yards, it was



rather a snap, and I was not at all sure as to where I had hit him.

The herd dashed off: the wounded bull taking a line of his own. It then became a question of whether he was badly enough hit to allow us to come up with him. For two miles there was a certain amount of blood on the tracks, and we had two glimpses of him, but he kept on steadily down wind so always knew when we were approaching, and it was never open enough to afford a chance of a long shot. After about

three hours he got on to harder ground where tracking was very difficult, and I regretfully gave it up as a bad job, with the hope that, being a vegetarian, he would soon recover from the effects of a wound which I imagine was not a very serious one. I made an error in the first instance in following him up at once instead of giving him half an hour's law.

The beisa oryx (Somali *ba'id*) is an animal of striking appearance with the contrasted black and white of its face markings and its long, slender, slightly curving horns which are annulated half way up from the base, but—*pace* the fair authoress of *Two Dianas in Somaliland*—not spirally. It stands comparatively low for its size ($12\frac{1}{2}$ hands at the shoulder), for it is a heavy antelope; when alarmed it goes off at a lumbering bovine gallop, which is far from graceful, but would tax the paces of a good horse to keep up with: I believe, however, that its staying power is not great, and that in open country it can be ridden to a standstill.

At first sight the slenderness of the beisa's horns does not appear to be in keeping with its powerful build, but the combination grows upon one until it becomes difficult to imagine anything more suitable. Effective weapons these horns are too, and the owner does not lack the courage to use them to good purpose when cornered; a wounded individual therefore needs to be approached with care. This protection, however, does not avail to save the oryx from being the favourite prey of the lion in the Haud, though when the latter is discovered in time I believe a herd of oryx with young not infrequently succeed in beating him off.

Back in camp at 2 p.m., tired and disappointed. I put in the latter part of the afternoon in more restful fashion, sitting in a tree at the edge of the thick bush, where the leopard of which we had heard was supposed to dwell; a goat being tethered to a stump twenty yards away.

Nothing happened for an hour or so; then about half an hour before sunset some fifteen or twenty crows suddenly appeared from nowhere, and began flying round my tree and the goat, cawing uproariously and making a great to-do. I fancy my thoughts had been elsewhere, as with something of a start I turned my attention to the business in hand, realising that the corbies' behaviour might mean that the enemy was on the move.

Presently the cause (presumably) of all the commotion appeared in the shape of a black-backed jackal, who sat down on his haunches about thirty yards away from the goat, looking at her. At least he sat in the open facing the goat, but you would have thought that she was the last subject to have any interest for him. First he looked to one side and then to another, and perhaps gave his moustache a twirl as he cast a glance, a very casual glance, across the way. Then one of the crows made a swoop at him, to which he replied with just a shadow of a snarl, as who should flick his handkerchief and say, "Bother those flies!" One knew all the time that he wanted to come out with a big swear-word, but was not sure whether bad language was quite the thing just now in really good society. For it was clear that he desired to make a good impression, and he was certainly smartly dressed

and very spick and span ; the idea no doubt being to fascinate Mistress Nannie alike by his elegance and by his indifference to her charms.

The lady's attitude, however, is, and continues to be, one of disdain, tempered by suspicion ; till at last Master Jack, finding it slow (or getting hungry !) gets up and strolls, still in the most genteel fashion, toward her. But his advances are received in the most chilling manner as he walks round her, saying in a deprecatory sort of way, "Why so stand-offish to an old pal?" Nannie makes no pretensions to be anything but of the masses, who have not yet learned that language is intended for the concealment of thought, and whose modes of expression are vigorous. She keeps him at horn's length: "Garn! think I don't know yer? You dirty, mean, skulking son of a crab-eater!" Our jackal, living a hundred miles from the coast, has never seen a crab in his life, but he does not like being reminded of the family taste for such things, which is considered low. So he promptly loses his temper and makes a vicious snap at the goat's hind leg, the veneer of gentility vanishing at once. The goat twists nimbly round, keeping her horns, such as they are, towards him, and only says, "Think I'm afraid of you? You just hook it!" At this Jack puts on his deprecating air again: "What's the matter with you to-day, my dear? as if you didn't know I was only playing." "Don't you, 'my dear' me, you—you—crabby!" This is a little too much, and the reply is another savage snap which nearly gets home. But now poor Nannie is beginning to lose her self-confidence, and the tone of her "Yah!

Coward!" rises to something very like a scream for help. It seemed about time for Master to interfere, so I threw a cartridge at the little bounder and shook my rifle at him as he looked up. This caught his eye and he sheered off.

I am afraid the jackal is a "bounder," and a sneaking, cowardly one. The leopard and hyæna are bounders too. But the former, while a true cat and therefore of necessity a sneak, combines with canny caution a cool audacity that is unrivalled, and a brilliant, if ferocious, courage in fight. The hyæna, though he can, on occasion, be wonderfully silent in his movements, has not the habitual stealthiness of the leopard nor even of the jackal; he is therefore, in that sense only, less of a sneak, and when he does attack is usually fairly open in his methods. But he is a black coward—fortunately, for his immense power of jaw is such as to make him, if he only realised it, a most formidable foe to both man and beast.

Calling the jackal names seems to have led me into a dissertation on hyænas which I had not intended just here. However, these beasts are ubiquitous in Somaliland and may just as well be dealt with now as later, premising that my remarks refer more especially to the *warába* of the Somalis, the Spotted Hyæna. Coward though he ordinarily is, this animal is by no means lacking in audacity on occasion; and the estimates of his character by some writers which put him down as too cowardly to be in any way dangerous, and condemned to live entirely on offal because he dare not attack a living prey, are singularly wide of the mark, at any rate in Somaliland

Camera Adventures in the African Wilds is a fascinating and remarkable book, but its author's remarks that the hyæna "probably never attacks any wild creature unless it be wounded," and again, that it "will almost starve rather than attack a living creature," are based on insufficient knowledge of the animal in question.

It is certainly probable that the hyæna is rarely successful in an attack on any of the wary and agile antelope tribe, not because he is afraid to attack a gazelle, but because he can't catch it—lacking as he does either the stalking abilities of the big cats or the running powers of the hunting dog. But there can be no doubt that he occasionally surprises young animals of various species; and I once found the remains of a fox which the signs clearly showed had been ambushed and killed by a *warába*.

But with domestic animals, which it is not beyond his power to seize, it is quite another matter. The Somali's herd of goats and sheep are continually being attacked by hyænas in the daytime, and if the prey is comparatively seldom carried away it is because the hyæna's methods are clumsy and slow compared with the leopard's, so that he is often driven off before the robbery can be made good. The number of sheep and goats killed by hyænas, though not comparable with the slaughter by leopards, is still far from inconsiderable.

Nor do cattle escape; the *warába* not infrequently attacks and kills the small Somali cows, his method usually being to tear out their udders in the most cruel fashion. Similar and successful attacks even on straying,

camels are not unknown. The low-down character of the brute is manifest still more in his habit of taking a meal by snatches from an animal which he is unable or afraid to kill. Drake-Brockman (*Mammals of Somaliland*) states, "They will often attack horses, biting great pieces out of their hind-quarters." And even human beings sleeping out in the open are liable to be treated in similar fashion: I have seen several Somali faces disfigured in ghastly fashion by the passing bite of a hyæna; and small children are sometimes carried off. In fact, if he had the courage of his opinion, that mankind, like any other creature, is meat, I have no doubt that his man-eating proclivities would be far more notorious than the casual evil-doings of lion or tiger.

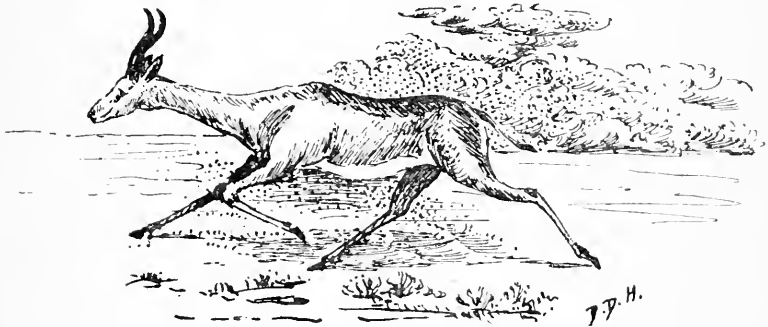
My personal experiences of the *warába* will be set down in due course; I have said enough here to show that while essentially a coward he is vermin of a dangerous and destructive type, and should be shot at sight, without any scruple on account of the good his scavenging propensities may do. Somaliland is not lacking in other scavengers, furred and feathered.

The smaller striped hyæna (Somali *didhar*) is much less abundant, though probably commoner than is often supposed, as it is shyer and less given to prowling round zaribas, and therefore less in evidence. It is identical with the Indian species, but appears to be decidedly more aggressive here than in India. My shikari told me that it occasionally develops a pleasing habit of running *amok* amongst a herd of sheep or goats, killing a dozen or more from sheer lust of slaughter. I hardly credited this story at the time,

but have since found it corroborated by Drake-Brockman, who says it is always an old animal that acts in this fashion, and is then given by the Somalis the distinctive name of *Whera*.

Moving on next morning the bush soon became more open and I had a shot at a *gerenúk* buck, which was unsuccessful, but he gave me another chance at 150 yards, and I dropped him with a bullet in the throat. I had had glimpses of this species before, but this was the first time I was able to see what it was really like.

The *gerenúk* (*Lithocranius Walleri*) is an animal deserving of special notice. Reckoned among the



gazelles, it is very distinct from any of them, noticeably in respect of the extraordinary length of neck which enables it, standing on its hind legs, to browse off foliage six feet or more from the ground. Hence the name, occasionally given it, of "giraffe-gazelle." Though sometimes found in fairly open country the *gerenúk* is more of a bush lover than the typical gazelles, from whom it differs further in that the females possess no horns. And its invariable gait when alarmed, a trot with long neck extended horizontally

to the front, tail down and head low, is far from elegant, and very unlike the graceful bounds of the *dhero*.

One of the commonest antelopes of Somaliland, though never found in large herds, it is generally looked upon as one of the most difficult to shoot. The buck's horns are not long and are difficult to make out as he stands staring at you with head thrown back, usually against a bad background of trees or bush, and by the time you have made up your mind that his head is worth having he has moved on. If he stands again, it is behind a bush, or else there is much the same difficulty of picking him out from the family which almost always accompanies him. If you can decide as to the quality of the buck's head when you first sight him well and good; but many's the *gerenúk* that I have followed and never fired at. On the other hand, *gerenúk*, when alarmed, have a habit of trotting in a circle instead of going right away, and, as antelopes go, are, I think, decidedly stupid, so that sometimes approaching them is the simplest thing possible.

The horns of the buck are very massive for the size of the animal, and in proportion to their length; and very distinctive in form, sloping back from the skull, on which they are set far forward, and at the tip curving forward into a pronounced hook, deeply corrugated at the base. The coat is a handsome one, the general colour being a sort of dark chestnut, with a slightly grizzled effect at close quarters, due apparently to the hairs being light in colour on their under side.

Presently we reached the Tuyu Plain, about 25 miles

wide, bare of anything but grass, which at this season of the year was short and scanty. It seemed, however, to provide sustenance for several herds of *aoul*, one of which I shot. We wanted to get across the Plain before dark, which meant a long march, so our midday halt lasted only $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Soon after starting again we came across an animal which looked rather like a big jackal and ran to ground in a fox-like earth, I could not then imagine what it might be. Elmi called it *Somajesti*.

At length, at sunset, having covered about 30 miles, we reached the fringe of open bush that marked the commencement of the Haud, and encamped in a zariba that lay handy. On the edge of the Plain I wounded and, I am sorry to say, lost an *aoul*, Brian was too fagged for the burst of speed needed to ride the buck down before he reached the cover of the bush. A search next morning showed that the hyænas had got him.



CHAPTER IV

The Haud—*Otocyon*—Midgán hunters—How to attract lions—My first *dibatag*—On the tracks of the King of Beasts: first sight of him—Blank days—Another long day after a lion: again but a glimpse—The Somali's bump of locality—Lose a donkey in an unusual way—Description of *dibatag*—Bad shooting—My first oryx—Northward again—Why I had no luck with lions.

WE were in the Haud at last; to me the land of promise, with the grand skin I had seen at Berbera in my mind's eye, all the more that we passed next day H.'s old zariba and saw there, still distinguishable, the bare patch of ground on which the trophy had been pegged out to dry.

This day we sent off four camels to Odweina, a post 40 miles to the north-east, for a fresh supply of water, in which one had to be decidedly economical. A bath was a luxury rarely to be afforded, and one had to be content with a sponge-down.

A day's march over a dry country, varying from thorn jungle interspersed with patches of high *durr* grass to fairly open ground, brought us in the evening to a zariba at Libah Gutair, where it seemed worth while to stay for a day or two and investigate the neighbourhood. Two *karias* moving north for water had reported lions about.

Shortly before reaching camp, after seeing a herd of thirty or forty oryx, which took no chances with suspicious characters like us, we came across a couple



*ORYX ASINUS.**



EAGLE IN THE HAUD.

[To face p. 41.]

* The Midgáns decoy the oryx with a donkey painted like an oryx and furnished with horns, as in above photo.

of animals that were new to me. I managed to hit one with a snap-shot, as he bolted from a bush 30 yards away. He was like a small fox, short in the leg, and with ears a size too large. General colour a dark greenish grey, with quite a good brush. I noticed that he seemed to run on his toes, as the claws formed the most distinctive part of his spoor; the claws themselves being decidedly weak and slender for a fox. This handsome little animal turned out to be the Long-eared Fox (*Otocyon megalotis*). The Somali name is *goleh warába*, which Drake-Brockman in his book translates into "possessor of a neck like a hyæna." In a letter to the *Field*, however, the same authority has given the meaning as having a *flank* like a hyæna, which is more in accordance with what a Somali told me. Personally I failed to see the resemblance. The one I shot yapped like a fox when hit, and I have heard a fox-like bark at night that I put down to this species, as I know of no other fox in Somaliland south of the Golis.

No *khobar* (news) next morning, so I went out in the afternoon after oryx. After following a small herd for a mile, I hit one, hard I thought, at 200 yards; but he made off and after a scanty blood-trail had failed, his spoor became hopelessly mixed up with other fresh tracks and we failed to find him again, which annoyed me considerably.

Later we met two Midgáns who had been hunting with equal unsuccess. These people hunt the oryx with dogs, the former when overtaken turning at bay to defy their enemies, when the Midgán seizes the opportunity of creeping up and letting fly his deadly

little poisoned arrows. I got them to join forces with me, as I was anxious to see their methods ; but though we found another herd of oryx, the dogs were tired or not keen for some reason or other, and were but half-hearted in their efforts, and we returned to camp empty-handed.

The following day we moved ten miles further on, seeing for the first time a lion's tracks a day or two



old, which cheered me up, for I was beginning to wonder if lions were a myth.

Elmi's method was to send out at daylight eight men in couples in four different directions to search for the fresh tracks of any lions that might have been in the neighbourhood during the night. I had to remain in camp in the mornings ready to start out if news came in from any of the trackers. These were usually back in camp by about eleven or twelve o'clock. If they had had no luck I used to go out in the afternoon after antelope. Then at night a donkey was tied up outside a loophole, in case of a nocturnal visit. And as such a visit was to be desired it became advisable

to send out an invitation to any lion there might be within reasonable distance. One reads in books of African travel of fires being lighted at night to keep off wild beasts. We went on a different principle, and used to light at sunset a bonfire to *attract* the lions. The lion seeing the smoke or scenting the fire in the distance pricks up his ears and thinks to himself, "That means menfolk and an encampment which signifies animals, camels, sheep, etc.; which, again, means meat! Nearly a week since I have had a decent dinner, that is obviously the place for me!" Anyway that is how he ought to reason if he does not—to your stay-at-home naturalist I suppose it is heresy to use the word "reason" in connection with a dumb beast! To supplement the effect of the bonfire, Elmi would go out at dusk and lift up his voice: "Lion! oh, Lion! Great Lion! where art thou? The feast is spread for thy Greatness!"

Next morning they told me that a lion had been heard roaring in the distance to the eastward at about 2 a.m., so we started early to try and hit off his trail. By 8.30 a.m. we had failed to find it and Elmi was not hopeful, when we suddenly came across a *dibatag* buck. Now the *dibatag* (*Ammodorcas Clarkei*) is an antelope that is found only in the Haud, and is distinctly a prize. It has, moreover, the reputation of being shy and difficult to shoot. So I declined to let the chance go as the buck was standing broadside on looking at me. Not an easy shot, as he was 200 yards away, and owing to the long grass I had to take the shot standing. He gave a bound into the air as I heard the bullet tell, and disappeared. I had dropped

my foresight a trifle and hit him low, so we had to follow him up and might have been a long time before bringing him to bay, as an antelope wounded in the stomach will travel far if not pressed to full speed, but for some unexpected assistance. This was afforded by a jackal, whose quick nose had detected the blood taint as the wounded buck passed the grass where he lay, and who took up the chase in front of us! He soon became aware of our proximity and retired, but he had forced the *dibatag* to a sprint by which it was quickly exhausted, and I soon had an opportunity of bringing it down. I shall describe the *dibatag* later, enough for the present that this was a good head and I was very pleased.

While this buck was being skinned a messenger turned up with news of fresh lion tracks on the far side of camp. We at once made our way back, had a hurried breakfast and started out again.

It was then 11.30 a.m. and it took us an hour to get on to the trail. There was a pair, lion and lioness, but after a time they separated and we followed the male. It was exciting work, as the bush was decidedly thick in places. We progressed at an average rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour, which on that ground was good tracking, and at about three o'clock Elmi caught a glimpse of him on the move and the next moment I saw him trot across an open space a hundred yards ahead. He looked a big fellow, with a fine dark mane, but I had no chance of a shot and we never got a sight of him again. He had had his morning's sleep and it was not hot, so he saw no reason to wait for us, and it was not open enough to try and ride him down. We

followed him until nearly dark and then had to give up. It was bad luck that what was probably a different lion's roar in the night had taken me out in the morning and made me so late in getting on his trail : if we could have come up with him before he had had his sleep out and while the sun was high we should probably have had him. However, it was something to have had even that glimpse of the King of Beasts in his native wilds and I still hoped for a closer acquaintance.

The next two days were blank except for the shooting of a doe *gerenúk* by mistake one evening, when I could not distinguish the buck's head in the dusk and was in want of meat. That did not interest the Somalis who, as a rule, will not eat the flesh of the *gerenúk*. It is difficult to understand why ; but so far as I can make out, the *gerenúk*, with long neck browsing on the thorn-trees and a somewhat camel-like profile, has for them associations with the camel on which their dependence is so great ; hence a vague idea that to eat its flesh might bring ill-luck upon their camel herds. Not that they have any objection to eating the camel itself when they can afford it ; very much the contrary, I have however heard of a different and rather fantastic reason in an alleged resemblance of certain physical functions in the *gerenúk* to the human kind.

A runner turned up from Berbera with welcome mails, and letters and writing up my journal helped to pass the long hours of the morning in camp waiting for *khabar* that did not come.

In the evenings, the air was full of the call of a

lesser bustard that was abundant in the Haud; a plaintive single note rather like the cheep of a turkey chick. This species was rather larger than the one I had found at Mandera and, unlike the latter, had a black breast.

Followed another strenuous though unsuccessful day. The tracks of a lion and lioness appeared in the morning just outside our zariba, and we found that one of them had lain down during the night only a few feet from the fence, but on the opposite side from that where the donkey was tied up. They had not made a circuit of the zariba as they often do, and apparently had not seen him. We took up the trail at 6.30 a.m. and, as before, the lion soon separated from his mate. For eight hours we followed him without success. My luck was out in two respects. To begin with, the lion would in the ordinary course have lain up in a shady spot before the sun began to get hot and we should, with any luck, have come up with him by midday at latest. But unfortunately it was a cloudy, cool day, with practically no sun at all until after one o'clock; so the lion, who had not dined, had kept on; and we had to keep on too. He probably would not have gone so far, cool as it was, except that he remembered (as it turned out) a place where he had killed an oryx three or four days earlier, and thought he might as well go on and see if there were any fragments from that meal remaining. About 2 p.m. we came upon the signs of the tragedy; also unfortunately found that two lions had visited the spot the day before, there were consequently quite a number of lions' "pugs" fresh and stale about the spot.

The result was a check of nearly half an hour before the shikaris had disentangled the puzzle and taken up our friend's tracks going away from the place. Herein lay the second piece of bad luck. As soon as our lion had satisfied himself that there were no scraps left he had betaken himself to the nearest shady thorn-tree to put in a late siesta, as there was no point in going any further. The tree he chose, as fate would have it, was only some eighty yards away from where our tracking had been checked at the scene of the old "kill." If we had been able to go straight on we should probably have come upon him before he was awake, but during twenty minutes or so of moving about, and, inevitably, a certain amount of talking close to him, he no doubt became restless, half awake, and then heard us. So when we found the tree growing out of an ant-hill beneath which he had been sleeping, he had moved, now on the look-out for us as he had not been before. That he had only awaked just in time was proved by the fact that we caught a glimpse of him only five minutes later—a tawny mane this time. But he was on the alert, and it was not hot enough to make him lazy, so that at 4 p.m., when he was clearly on the run, we left him and started back to camp where we arrived soon after seven, having walked about twenty-two miles and ridden fifteen. Never was mulligatawny soup so comforting! I had only eaten three biscuits since *chota hazri* of poached eggs and cocoa at 6 a.m. I don't think there is anything to beat mulligatawny after a long day of this sort, a fact which the faithful John duly kept in mind.

The wonderful "bump of locality," as distinguished

from a mere "eye for country," which uncivilised man so often, though not always, seems to possess—in common with the domestic cat—has always been a marvel to me, but I have never seen it so developed as among these Somalis. The Haud, for instance, is absolutely flat and only varies according as long grass or thorn bushes predominate, stretching for miles and miles in every direction without any sort of distinguishing landmark whatever. Yet on this occasion when we had tramped more than twenty miles, in anything but a straight line, after that tireless brute of a lion, and I asked where our camp was, Elmi pointed without hesitation; he was not quite sure about the distance, guessing sixteen miles (it proved to be about thirteen), but he had no doubt whatever as to the direction and led straight back on to our zariba, which was perhaps thirty or forty yards in diameter. When I say he guessed sixteen miles, I mean that he said five hours; they reckon distance, like the Arabs, by time, the calculation I found being based on a marching pace of about three miles an hour, or a shade more. When, however, as sometimes occurs, a Somali's estimate has no apparent basis whatever, this method is apt to be exasperating to our ridiculous European desire for comparative accuracy.

The following night I lost one of my two donkeys in an unexpected fashion. One was tethered as usual just outside the zariba, the other and a sheep were tied up at likely spots a couple of miles away; in the case of the latter animal, with a man in a tree above to scare off hyænas. This precaution did not seem to be necessary in the case of the donkey, not knowing

the *warába* then as well as I do now ; so I was correspondingly disgusted in the morning to find the poor beast had been killed and devoured by hyænas, having apparently been attacked by three at once. Elmi said he had never known of such a case before, and Drake-Brockman says these brutes seem to have a great respect for the donkey and he has never known them attack one. Mr. Selous, however, has mentioned similar cases.

Another change of camp. This was our furthest point, about 160 miles from the coast. Here I saw in ground which had been marshy in the rainy season, the dry imprints of the feet of a rhinoceros which had been there some months before.

The move brought no change of luck and the time had come to turn our steps to the north again. I got another *gerenúk* and two more *dibatag* however, both standing shots again, as the long *durr* grass, whose neighbourhood they are fond of, effectually prevents one from getting down on the knee or sitting, as I like to do where possible.

The *dibatag's* description, which I have omitted, may as well go in here. Having some affinities with the *gerenúk*, the *dibatag* is yet a distinct type, constituting a genus by itself. Smaller than the *gerenúk* it nevertheless stands high for a gazelle and has a long neck, like the former species browsing on the acacias and rarely, if ever, grazing. The buck alone has horns which, though small (ten inches is good), are handsome, curving forward in the reed-buck style. The coat is an uncommon colour, pretty purplish-grey, with the face markings a handsome red-brown. A

preserved skin after a time loses much of the grey effect, becoming decidedly browner.

Except that it is far more local in its distribution, the *dibatag* affects much the same sort of country as the *gerenúk*, avoiding the open plain or very thick bush. Its habits too are similar; but unlike the *gerenúk's* shame-faced gait, the *dibatag* trots away with his head well up and a jaunty carriage, a bizarre effect being afforded by the comparatively long tail which it carries up in the air, often curving over its back as if to meet the head. Slenderly built, it is altogether an elegant little creature.



Back to Libah Gutair, where we stayed one day, and I expended a good many cartridges. I had a shot at a *gerenúk* with a fine head, facing me at about 150 yards, and missed him; then sat down and made a misfire. Fired again, missed! The buck tossed his head and came about ten paces nearer to investigate. I had two more steady sitting shots and missed again—the *gerenúk* still interested. Before I could reload and miss him for the fifth time, however, he remembered an engagement elsewhere and, with a wave of his tail as he tucked it safely away between his legs, said Ta! Ta! I looked at Elmi. Elmi said, “Never

mind, Sahib." I did mind. For it was so flagrant. I was a fairly good shot once and had been flattering myself that I had recovered my form. And what made it worse was that I did not know why I had missed, for I had not misjudged the distance and my hand had seemed steady enough.

However, there was a measure of consolation in store. After following without success an oryx which twice stood behind a bush out of sight and snorted after the fashion of its kind as it dashed off, we were on our way back to camp when suddenly another bull oryx started up from under the shade of a tree and stood watching us only eighty or ninety yards away, thinking himself hidden, as he nearly was, by a clump of grass. I aimed where I judged his shoulder to be and heard the bullet tell on his tough hide as he spun round in a cloud of dust and disappeared. He stopped after going 150 yards or so, and I knew he must be very sick; I hit him again and he plunged away; a third shot high up as he galloped brought him to his knees, but he was up again at once, and it was only to a fourth bullet in the neck that he finally succumbed. A game beast and as tough as any animal I have hunted. It was satisfactory to have got an oryx at last; this one had an average head with 29-inch horns: *Oryx beisa* does not grow such long horns as its southern relative, the gemsbok. I noted with interest the thickness of the hide of the neck and withers, which is in great demand among the Somalis for the making of shields.

Marching back to the edge of the Haud we crossed the tracks, a day old, of a big lion, but could not stop

to think about him. My visit had been unfortunately timed. When we reached the Haud the last of several *karias* that had been pasturing there since the winter rains was departing; with their disappearance the lions that had been harrying them had scattered. Moreover, a lion rarely attacks a zariba when the moon is bright as it had been more or less during our time (only ten days after all) in the Haud. And now with Tuyo Plain in sight again I realised that for this trip my chances of a lion were gone. Better luck next time! For that there must be a next time I had already made up my mind.



CHAPTER V

Tuyo again—Secretary birds—Shooting *aoul* on the Plain : a grand gallop—Erratic shooting : the explanation—Two good heads—The *Khansa* bush : a leopard's "kill"—Bag a small leopard—Leopard and hyænas—A long day : the elusive lesser kudu—The Jerato Pass : *alakit* : an unintentional crime—Mandera again : meet H.—Shoot a lesser kudu at last—A good *gerenik*—Pelzeln's gazelle—Back in Berbera—The end of the trip.

CROSSING the Tuyo Plain once more I again saw the unknown *Somajesti*. He was standing looking at me not more than seventy or eighty yards away and I might have shot him easily enough, but thought he was a jackal until I put the glasses on him. Then I was struck by the resemblance of the head to that of a striped hyæna and the black markings on a pale tawny coat like no jackal that exists. As soon as I exchanged binocular for rifle of course he bolted, and reached his earth untouched by my snap-shot. I came to the conclusion that he might be an aard-wolf, an animal of whose existence so far north as Somaliland I had not been aware.

New to me also were a pair of birds I saw just afterwards which looked like giant silver pheasants feeding. When one stood upright, however, it altered his appearance considerably. He was white or pale grey above and black below, with a crest on his head and apparently an aquiline beak. When flying he looked not unlike a black and white stork without the long bill. I put them down as Secretary Birds.

I wanted a really good *aoul* head, but there were none visible until we were two-thirds of the way across the Plain, when we spied a scattered herd away to the west. I got up to within 250 yards, which was as near as they would allow on the flat open plain. Putting up the 300 yards sight, as I did not want to wound low, I fired and hit the selected buck. He did not fall and to my surprise the glasses showed him to be wounded a trifle far back and low. A second shot was a miss.

By this time the *aoul* had all run together and the wounded buck among them. I followed, trying to single him out and at last thought I marked him and fired, scoring a hit but again not a good one, the buck going off on three legs. I decided to try and ride him down, so mounted and started to gallop, ordering Elmi to follow with the mule. The wounded one got in among the herd and I rode straight at them. For a mile and a half it was a grand gallop, Brian going better than I ever thought he could do.

The *aoul*, about 150 in number, ran close together in a regular phalanx; a charge of shrapnel into the crowd would have bagged dozens. I expected to see them go right away as blackbuck do if they are not playing with you, but to my astonishment I quickly got up to within twenty or thirty yards of the herd and stayed there, though they were unquestionably in a fright and seemed to be going their hardest. Possibly they crowded each other somewhat, but even so, the *aoul* must be considerably inferior to most of the gazelles in speed.

I could not spot the wounded buck at first as he

kept on gamely on his three legs, but at length he fell out to one side and lay down. It was wonderful how he had stood the pace so long. I dismounted and gave him the *coup-de-grâce*, then waited for Elmi to come up with the mule. When he arrived I thought I would photograph him skinning the buck and went to take my kodak from the saddle. But Brian suddenly broke away and strolled off, the mule after him, and stop they would not. As I followed I noticed three *aoul*, that had not gone off with the main herd, standing watching not far off. One of them struck me as having a particularly good head, so I left the steeds to their own devices and presently had a shot at the big buck. Miss again! a second shot was a misfire, which did not improve matters; the buck moved on a bit but soon stood again. Once more I got to within 200—perhaps 170 yards—sat down and took a steady “pot shot” behind the shoulder with my usual sighting, taking particular care that the sights were upright, as I thought I might possibly have sinned in that respect before. I saw the bullet strike the ground some four feet short and a little to the right of his hind legs! I had begun to suspect that the hand and eye behind the gun were not altogether to blame for my erratic shooting: that shot to my mind proved it conclusively. I put in a cartridge from a fresh clip, fired again with the same aim and sighting as before, and the buck bounded forward and fell on his head, shot through the heart. Why? I’d have sworn the previous shot was equally steady and the aim as accurate. It seemed obvious that there was something wrong with some of the cartridges.

They say a bad workman blames his tools, but there is no gainsaying the fact that tools occasionally do go wrong! And the worst workman is he who fails to recognise the fact when it occurs. It was significant that two or three misfires I had had, all happened at times when the bullets were not going straight; which looked as if an individual clip of cartridges here and there had gone wrong, and this is what one might expect if the ammunition had been for too long exposed to a hot climate. Subsequently I found out that these cartridges, which I had obtained from a firm in Calcutta, so far from being fresh, had been in that place for two hot seasons. This being so, it was almost a foregone conclusion that some of the cartridges, loaded with a smokeless explosive, should have been adversely affected by the heat. Q. E. D. Moral, always get your ammunition out fresh from Home if possible.

To go back to our second *aoul*. He was dead enough this time and proved to have an exceptionally fine head, horns symmetrical and measuring $19\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The other was also a very good head, just under 18. It is worthy of note that the horns of *aoul* here and south of the Golis generally, while decidedly longer, are in my experience more slender and lighter than those found in Guban. What became of the buck first wounded I do not know, but suppose he must have slipped out of the herd on the far side and lain down unobserved when I started riding. I searched the plain with the glasses but could find no trace of him.

Meanwhile Brian and the mule were continuing their evening stroll, and we had to tramp another

two or three miles, each carrying an *aoul* head and Elmi a haunch of meat in addition, before they were captured. The caravan had long since vanished out of sight in the open bush that bordered the northern edge of the Plain.

Fortunately we were on a regular caravan track, but it was 8 o'clock before we arrived in camp and that was not as far on as we had originally intended. The Plain of Tuyu left behind, we were on the march in the *Khansa* bush next day, when soon after day-break we crossed the trail of a leopard's "kill." We followed it for a couple of miles to a bush where the "kill" (a kid) had been devoured and practically nothing left; there were two leopards, apparently a mother and a nearly full-grown cub. We tracked them on again for an hour or so, the soil being unusually favourable, and marked them down at length in a thicket of thorn bushes. Then I sent on a messenger to the caravan to order a halt for the day, having decided to sit up and try and draw the leopards with a goat in the afternoon. To that end I gave them from 3 till 5 p.m. with no result, which was disappointing, for I had the kodak carefully fixed up in the tree beside me in the hope of an opportunity for a "snap" before bringing the rifle into use!

Then with the nine men that were all I could raise we started a beat. It was pretty certain that the line a leopard would take on breaking cover would be towards another big thicket a quarter of a mile away, towards which they could go under cover all the way except for an open patch not fifteen yards across. So I took up my position behind a bush commanding

this, about ten yards to one side. As it was bound to be a case of quick snap-shooting at close range, if anything, and neither of the beasts was a big one, I decided that the 12-bore with buckshot was the best weapon to use. After a certain amount of uproar the cub broke, spotted me and tried to get back but was rolled over just in time, a female about three-quarters grown. Soon after the mother came but saw me before she was clear of the thicket, and my snap shot as she bolted back was too late. After that nothing would move her; the thorn bush would not burn and was impenetrable to anything less than half an hour's work with axes. The sun was going down and we had to give her up. Meanwhile, for the last fifteen minutes another leopard had been making its voice heard not far off, presumably the male calling to his mate. He did not seem to be more than two or three hundred yards away, so I thought it might be worth while tying up the goat for him in the dusk.

To think was to do, and I went back to the old tree. I had not been ready more than three or four minutes when a *warába* appeared and after a minute's reconnoitring went for the goat. I threw a cartridge at the brute, but he took no notice and seized the goat in the middle of the back. The only remedy left, I let go with my .500 and he staggered and disappeared. I sat tight, as the shot did not appear to have worried the leopard, who was talking again. Ten minutes passed and it was getting too dark, when there was a rush of a different kind, and it was the leopard this time that had the goat by the throat. There was just light enough to see him dimly. "At last!" I

thought, and was trying to make sure which end of the leopard was head and which was tail, when the vague forms of two big hyænas a few feet to one side caught the corner of my eye. They caught the leopard's eye too, and to my amazement he turned tail and slipped away into the thicket behind my tree, for all the world like a cat caught stealing the cream, while the *warábas* went in to dispose of his dinner !

I was never more disgusted in my life. Big, powerful brute though the Spotted Hyæna is, I would never have believed that even a pair of them would venture to attack a good-sized leopard, as this one appeared to be, with his double armoury of tooth and claw, and his agility so superior to their own ; and these two had not, so far as I saw, made any motion to attack. On the other hand, the *warába* in Somaliland, as I have already shown, seems to be undoubtedly a more aggressive animal than hyænas elsewhere, and if he did make up his mind to attack a leopard I am not sure that he would always come off second best. His hide is tough and would afford very considerable protection against the leopard's claws, while a single bite from those terrible jaws might suffice to disable the leopard effectually.

On the present occasion the leopard, who is a remarkable compound of daring and caution, had probably seen more than was possible to me, and knew that the numbers against him were overwhelming, for hardly a minute had elapsed before there were either six or seven hyænas fighting and tearing at the still warm corpse of the unfortunate goat. A ghastly orgie ! I held my hand until it was too dark to see the

leopard if he did return (there was no moon), and then opened fire, aiming after a fashion by ear instead of eye. I fired seven shots, but they did not seem to mind much, though one dropped and I hit another. Then I called up the shikaris and came down. I found that the dead hyæna had already been more or less torn to bits by his brethren, and the head (the skull was the only part of him I wanted) had disappeared. There was no more to be done, but to go back to camp to dinner and cogitate on the good luck of Somali leopards in general.

I have since learned that it is not very unusual for two or more hyænas in Somaliland to combine to drive a leopard, especially a small one, from its kill. And, of course, individual temperaments vary among beasts as among men. A leopard with less than the usual courage of its race would probably yield its kill without a struggle to an exceptionally bold hyæna.

Next morning's march was a long one, starting at 4 a.m., Elmi and I travelled several miles out of our way tracking a lesser kudu with a good head. Three times he let us approach within sixty or seventy yards, standing, invisible, behind a bush, and would then dash off without giving a chance. I did not get a shot at him and arrived in camp to breakfast at 1 o'clock, having done about 25 miles. An afternoon march of 15 miles brought us to Adadleh, where I went to bed rather weary and with a touch of fever.

The next morning I ought to have got a couple of *dhero*, but was still a bit feverish and shaky and could not hold straight. Crossing the Jerato Pass we saw a pair of dark-coloured animals, looking like small

goats, grazing on the rocky hill-side ; the glass showed one of them to have short straight horns. I thought they might be klipspringer, the shooting of which at that time was prohibited. I asked Elmi, but he did not know the English (or rather Dutch) name. He called them “*alakût*,” and said he knew of no regulation against shooting them. I thought that was good enough, especially as, I don't know why, I had an idea that the klipspringer was a reddish beast.

The klipspringer (Somali *alakût*, as I was soon to discover !) is an agile little antelope by no means



given to standing to be potted at. But *facilis est descensus* . . . ; since to shoot them was against the law of the land, these two made no objection to my approaching within fifty yards, they were close to the camel track and my being with the caravan probably disarmed their suspicions. I shot the buck, knocking a lot of hair out of him, rather spoiling the skin which I wanted ; so I proceeded to commit the further crime of shooting the doe, who had seemed little alarmed ; she was bigger than her mate.

The klipspringer has a peculiar coat with bristly

hairs loosely put in ; the hairs dark green banded with white, so that the general effect is a pretty greyish-green. The buck's horns are something like a bigger edition of the dik-dik's, some four inches in length.

At midday we reached Mandera, where I was surprised to find H. encamped. He had been suffering from fever and had taken two or three weeks' leave for a change in the hills. I decided to spend the night with him, and have a last try for lesser kudu in the morning, sending the caravan, however, on ahead. Elmi and I being mounted could do the journey to Berbera in a day less without difficulty, and could carry all we wanted for a couple of days on our animals.

It was from H. that I learned that the *alakút* is the klipspringer, so that I had committed a heinous breach of regulations. Of course I should never have dreamt of doing it intentionally, but the klipspringer is not rare, nor as a rule too easy to shoot, so there was no reason why it should be so rigorously protected, on the same footing as the elephant alone.

As a contrast, my license would have permitted me, if I could and would, to shoot ten *dibatag* or *baira*, both decidedly rarer and more worthy of protection than the klipspringer, as I pointed out at the time. These anomalies have since been rectified, the two last-named species having been accorded a greater measure of protection, and the prohibition against shooting the klipspringer removed. Under the circumstances I must confess my repentance for having added another species to my bag was but half-hearted.



RIVER-BED NEAR DAGA HAYER.



KLIPSPRINGER.

[To face p. 62.]

The following morning H. accompanied me with half a dozen men behind to try a drive as a last resource if necessary. I seemed to be in luck, for after half an hour we came across a bull with fair head who stopped to look at us from behind a bush some eighty yards away. I could see nothing but the tips of his horns, but risked a shot at where I thought his shoulder ought to be. However, his shoulder was not there, or my bullet was turned by a branch, and he bounded away untouched.

Then, as a last resort, we sent the men round to try a beat from the direction in which he had gone. I looked for a good tree, and climbed up, only to beat a hasty retreat, ingloriously driven out by a colony of vicious red ants. The white ants were less disobliging and presently one of their lofty edifices provided me with a fairly secure perch and a good view, with H. lower down, relieving me of the look-out on one side.

After half an hour the beat began, and presently the cries told us that there were kudu afoot. At length H. was the first to see a bull approaching on the left quietly enough. He carried a fair head, and I fired as he passed sixty yards away; at the shot he staggered and gave a bound, then walked, in rather dazed fashion, towards me, not knowing whence the sudden shock had come. He stood at about forty yards with his head up, and a bullet in the throat brought him down.

The head was a fair one though hardly good, rather smaller than the one I had missed, and which H.'s shikari said had broken back in the drive. H. had

brought me luck—my bag would have been incomplete without a lesser kudu. Several of the larger antelopes are more or less ungainly, but the lesser kudu need fear no comparisons. The poise of the elegant head, and the grace of the bound with which it clears the highest bush in its way are perfect, and the pretty striped coat is in keeping with the rest. Several of the Somali antelopes are lovely creatures, but the consensus of opinion awards the palm of beauty to the lesser kudu and, I think, with justice.

Breakfast with H., and then, leaving the kudu head and skin to be dried and sent after me, Elmi and I started at about 1.30 p.m. to ride the 25 miles to Deragodleh. After passing Lafarug we began to look out for *dhero*, as I had yet to obtain a specimen of the lowland variety. At about 5 o'clock we viewed a party of half a dozen as we thought. On nearer approach they struck me as very tall and brown for *dhero*, and next minute their long necks became more in evidence and betrayed the *gerenúk*, in unusually open country for them, which explained our mistake.



The big buck behind showed a fine pair of horns and I determined to have them. A convenient nullah gave me the opportunity of getting within a hundred yards out of sight, and I bagged the best *gerenúk* I had come across, 14-inch horns. The head strapped on behind the mule's saddle, we rode on to Deragodleh, arriving there after dark.

There I met an old Somali who had been a havildar

in the Aden Police, at that time under my charge, and we had a *bakh* (chat) over tea at the coffee-shop: coffee being what a Somali "coffee-shop" does not produce.

Moving on at 4 a.m., soon after daylight we found a couple of *dhero* bucks feeding with unexpected tameness near a flock of sheep. I shot one at short range, letting the second go as his head was only average. Further on we saw several small lots of *dhero*, but only one good buck, which was duly bagged, horns $11\frac{1}{4}$ inches. The lowland *dhero* (*G. Pelzelni*) much resembles in appearance and habits its relative of the higher altitudes (*G. Spekei*), differing in certain details of colouration and in the absence of a nasal prominence. The horns of the buck also average longer while those of the doe, on the contrary, are rather smaller.

Back in Berbera by 9.30 a.m. I had just time to pay off my following, pack up, get my kit and trophies through the customs, and catch the steamer to Aden the same afternoon.

A few concluding remarks on this trip. I had not got my lion; but otherwise, for the short time at my disposal, the trip had been a distinct success, and I had learnt a great deal. That this was so was in no small measure due to the valuable assistance and advice for which I was indebted to H. A word of praise to Elmi Hirsi, one of the most decent Somalis I have known, and a really first-class shikari, at any rate in his own country. Old John did splendidly, although his donkey broke down, so that after the first day he had to walk every yard of the way, and the caravan travelled in 25 days some 350 miles.

The .355 proved an effective rifle on the whole, but a rather lower trajectory would have been more useful at the longer ranges. And it failed to prove itself consistently powerful enough for oryx—being somewhat deficient in smashing power.



CHAPTER VI

Plans for a second trip—Things go wrong—M.'s success—My new battery—An aggravating delay—Start again—Berbera once more—Difficulties—Abdilleh Ashur—The rest of my following—The *kharij*—Start for Hargeisa—In the Reserve: partridges: sand-grouse—Weaver-birds: how to keep a husband out of mischief—Hitting a friend when he is down—Pork in sanctuary—Hargeisa: its inhabitants—The Emperor Menelek: "sacrament rations"—An irrelevant yarn: Colonial Office exports—The A. P. O.'s poultry—An ill-return for my host's hospitality.

EIGHTEEN months later came the end of my time in Aden, with fifteen months' furlough. My intention was to put in the first three months of my leave in Somaliland before going home. But "the best laid schemes of mice and men . . ."! Ten days before my leave was due, the Civil Surgeon, examining my throat which was giving trouble, said I was not fit for a shooting trip and must go straight home. Pleasing that, under the circumstances! However, there was no help for it. I had only had six months at home in eleven years, and was, no doubt, a good deal run down after three and a half years in Aden; and I might hope to go to Somaliland at the end of my furlough instead of the beginning in better condition for hard work.

I had already made most of the arrangements for my trip, and through H. had engaged as head shikari one Abdilleh (or Abdillahi) Ashur, a man with a great reputation. I now passed him on to a friend, M., of

the British Infantry Regiment then in Aden, commended the latter to H., wished him luck and departed homewards.

M. came home in December, lunched with me in Town, and told me all about his very successful two months' shoot. He had bagged several lions and a greater kudu with horns of record spread. Abdilleh, he said, had done him very well.

Of course I was keener than ever, and arranged to go out in June (1909), which would give me nearly three months. I wrote to ask H. to engage shikaris, including Abdilleh, and to buy camels for me. I had also written to H.M.'s Minister in Abyssinia to apply for a permit to shoot in Abyssinian territory, as I wanted to visit Ogádén.

Meanwhile I was getting together my battery, a more powerful one than I had on the first trip. It consisted of the following:—

(a) A D.B. 12-bore Paradox gun by Holland and Holland, shooting a Magnum charge of 33 grains revolver Cordite and a 735 grain bullet (hollow-pointed, also 780 grains solid).

(b) A D.B. .450/.400 Cordite rifle by Watson, shooting the standard charge of 60 grains Cordite (or rather the Axite equivalent in my cartridges) and a 400 grain bullet.

(c) A .318 "Accelerated Express" magazine rifle by Westley Richards, shooting 50 grains Axite and a 250 grain bullet, with a muzzle velocity of 2500 f.s.

(d) A .300 "Sherwood" miniature rifle for small animals and birds.

The .318, I considered, should be an ideal weapon

for general shooting in Somaliland. As to the Paradox, it remained to be seen how far it would bear me out in my fixed opinion that a good ball-and-shot gun is the best type of weapon for dealing with dangerous thin-skinned game: this by reason of its superior handiness combined with the consistent stopping power of a very heavy bullet with moderate velocity. The .400 was intended to supplement both and to deal with rhino if required.

At the last moment an unexpected difficulty arose regarding the issue of my permit to shoot in British Somaliland, which I need not go into now as it came right in the end, but one result of which was that H., believing my plans changed, could of course make no arrangements for me, and he left Somaliland on leave before hearing that I was definitely going out. In the second place, the uncertainty caused an exasperating delay of three weeks in my start from England.

However, at length I found myself on the 20th July back in Berbera, with my caravan to be got together instead of all being ready for me as I had hoped. My first anxiety was to get hold of a good head shikari. Abdilleh Ashur was away up country, my old friend Elmi Hirsi was not available, nor were one or two others whom I knew by reputation. Of course several candidates turned up, and P., the District Officer at Berbera, gave me a lot of assistance. Eventually I engaged provisionally two Midgáns, who had good certificates from men I knew; but I was not satisfied. The other Somalis look down on the Midgáns, so that a Midgán head shikari would necessitate my

engaging a separate "head man" to run the caravan, which I particularly did not want to do.

Meanwhile P. had kindly wired to the post nearest to where Abdilleh's section of the Habr Awal were then believed to be pasturing. He was found and to my great relief turned up on the 22nd. We soon came to terms and I sacked the two Midgáns with some consolatory *bakshish*. By the evening of the following day, the caravan was practically ready. I had bought a riding mule for 125s. and twelve camels at an average price of 55s., not cheap, as Government were buying and prices were up. I had not been able to bring a pony with me this time and it was difficult to get one in Berbera. They brought me a three-year-old to try, and I promptly fell off, saddle and all; it was so small that the girths could not be made tight enough! Eventually I picked up an old screw that looked as if he might have enough work in him for marching purposes.

Elmi Farah, my third shikari of 1907, came with me again in the same capacity; my No. 2 this time was one Henduleh, of the Habr Yunis sub-tribe, whose weak point was his inability to speak any language but his own. With Elmi I had to try and talk Arabic, while my medium of communication with Abdilleh was indifferently Hindustani or English.

The personal following which I brought over from Aden consisted of an Indian police orderly named Iddu Khan, a good man though not brilliant of intellect, and a Somali, named Abdi, as cook. I had known the latter for two or three years, but was taking his cooking capacities very much on trust. It had not seemed

worth while sending for John all the way from India, where he was waiting for my return.

I was only going to shoot in the Western District of the Protectorate, and was told that I had better make straight, in the first instance, for Hargeisa, where J., the Political Officer in charge, had his headquarters. This was not exactly what I had wanted to do, as it would involve a loss of several shooting days, but that could not be helped, and on the 24th July the caravan left Berbera.

I stayed another night in Berbera, as at that time of the year I had no desire to have to accommodate my pace to that of the caravan across the Maritime Plain, and P. kindly offered me a good riding-camel to get me quickly over the first two or three marches. Berbera, in July, when the hot *kharif* wind is blowing and the atmosphere is thick with whirling sand, is not an abode of bliss. But still less is there any joy in riding in the *kharif* across the hot sands of the Maritime Plain. Fortunately, however, during the afternoon and evening the *kharif* dies down, so I was able on the afternoon of the 28th to ride the twenty-five miles straight through to Deragodleh comfortably enough. Once you are used to it, a good riding-camel is, to my mind, provided the going is fairly level, an eminently satisfactory steed for a long distance ride. I say a good one advisedly, for few things are calculated to cause one more unalloyed misery and discomfort than a compulsory ride of even a few miles on an untrained or baggage camel—*experto crede*.

Next morning, just after sunrise, I passed within a few yards of a great marabou stork standing upon one

leg in an attitude of profound meditation. I had not the kodak with me, or should have stopped to take his picture. That was the only time I came across this weird bird, though I believe they are not uncommon.



I overtook the caravan at Lafarug, whence I sent P.'s camel back to Berbera. From this point our way lay westwards through the Reserve. Just before entering this I gave the '318 its first trial in the field, meeting a little party of plateau *dhero*. I missed the first shot, too high, but dropped the buck with the second at 170 paces. Thereafter four-footed game were in sanctuary, but there was no objection to shooting birds, and I bagged three or four partridges for the pot.

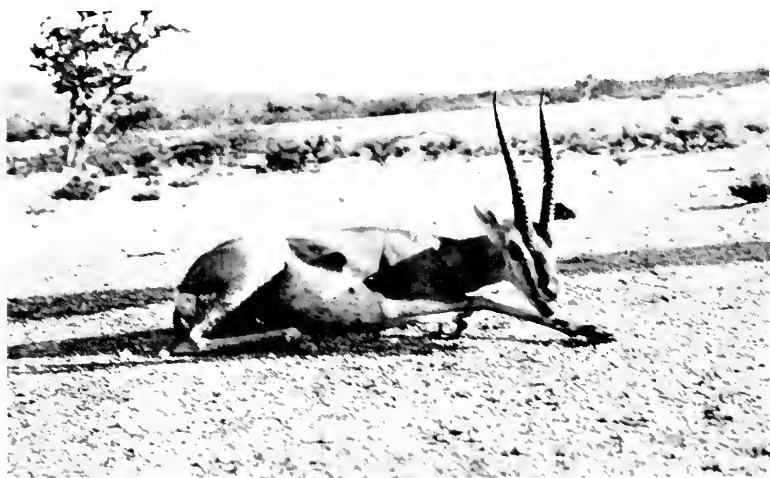
I was under the impression that the only partridges found in Africa were of the francolin family. This species, however, has not, to my mind, the francolin type of plumage, and its call is practically identical with the characteristic "*kur-teetur, kur-teetur, kur-teetur*" of the Indian grey partridge* (*ortygiornis* not *francolinus*), very different from the harsh notes of the true Indian francolins. Nor has it the upright carriage of head of the painted partridge, a typical francolin.

Another reminder of the Indian jungle was provided by sand-grouse coming to drink at dusk at a

* Since writing the above my attention has been called to the fact that under the latest classification this bird is included in the *Genus Francolinus* as *F. Pondicrianus*—an inclusion decidedly open to criticism.



SPEKE'S GAZELLE.



PELZELN'S GAZELLE.

[To face p. 72.]

pool in a water-course by which we encamped for the night. I did not succeed in shooting one of these, but from their crepuscular habit, like that of the painted grouse, but with a different note, I put them down as probably *P. Lichtensteini*.

Of other birds, there was a parrot, swift of flight like all its kind; dark grey-green above except for a bright green band above the tail, and bright orange-red below. Hornbills, easily distinguishable, apart from their rostral ornaments, by the peculiar undulations of their flight. Bustards of two or three species, large and small. Lively weaver-birds whose nesting-season was on: in one tree I counted upwards of fifty nests in the same style as those of their relative the Indian *baya*, but of grass instead of palm-fibre, and lacking the long pendent tubular entrance that adds so much character to the Indian nests.

Not that all those nests contained eggs by any means, or ever would contain them. Many were obviously incomplete, a cock-bird sitting in one, or fussing about it as if it was of far greater importance than the more finished construction on the next branch, within which his lady was quietly attending to her own particular duty. The cock-bird in his summer suit of brilliant yellow looks a flighty fellow, and it may be that his better half, remembering the adage about idle hands—or wings or beaks—has with feminine guile filled his head with such an idea of his own powers in the architectural line that he can think of nothing else. So now, while domestic affairs prevent her from keeping an eye upon him for the time being, he spends his hours in nest-building on his own account,

and admiring his work—and keeps out of mischief! The moral is—well, it may not be the same for you as for me, that depends upon whether you are wife or husband or unattached. As a mere bachelor I draw my own; if there's one for you I am sure you'll find it.

Another old friend was my millionaire myna, still garbed in iridescent blue; not a bit offended at my criticisms, but very much at home at every camping-ground. He is as sociably disposed towards the human kind as though he habitually dwelt among the haunts of men, as does his Indian cousin.

One interesting little incident, *à propos* of the partridges I mentioned just now. It was the second afternoon in the Reserve. A bird got up and I dropped him close to another partridge on the ground. He was not quite dead and lay on his back kicking. The other bird, instead of vanishing at the shot, ran back to his fallen companion to ask what was the matter, and then, to my surprise, proceeded to peck at him viciously. Strange, this almost universal instinct of the lower animals to turn upon their own kind in distress. But is the practice entirely confined to the “lower animals”?

One evening I was struck by a strange chirping all around me, it was neither bird nor cricket, and I could not make it out until I discovered that I had intruded on a meeting of a bats' choral society. There were any number of them all about me, flying low and all making music.

I wonder if this Game Reserve, which covers a considerable area, is of any real use? I saw little

game in it—a few *dhero*, occasional *gerenúk*, once the track of a lesser kudu. We came across one big wart-hog, which Abdilleh wanted me to shoot. Of course he would not have laid finger on the unclean beast and I should have had to skin and remove the head unassisted. But it would bring luck with the lions! However, Piggy was on sacred ground and was permitted to go his way.

Seeing that the time before me was so much shorter than I had originally intended, I rather grudged these few days in the Reserve, while the heat was decidedly greater than it would be on the plateaux we were eventually bound for, and which might have been reached more quickly *viâ* the Jerato Pass. Otherwise it was perhaps no bad thing to be able to get more or less into training before the real work began. And those first hours of the march, tramping ahead of the caravan in the fresh morning air when the day had scarce begun, brushing the dew from grass and bush as we passed! It was good just to be alive and rejoice with the birds, whose presence, except on some occasional barren stretch, was rarely lacking.

On the 29th July we arrived at Hargeisa. This is the only permanent village that I came across in the interior. It is primarily a *tariga*, or settlement, of priests, the head of which was an influential Mullah named Sheikh Matar. It contains a village of mat huts with a population of about a thousand, and, there being a good water supply, possesses, what is rare in Somaliland, an area of perhaps two thousand acres under cultivation (*jowari*). It was at this time the headquarters of the Western District of the

Protectorate, and therefore the dwelling place of J., the Political Officer in charge of the district.

On arrival, of course, I at once went to call on J., who was most kind and hospitable, and said I must stay a few days. I could not afford more than a couple of days, but that time Abdilleh could spend in acquiring information as to the latest *khabar* of lions in the district.



Besides J. there was a cavalry subaltern named B., whom I had met before, at Hargeisa, just then engaged in buying ponies for Government.

He looked rather a wreck, only just recovering from a bad go of fever. It seemed doubtful whether this was a form of malaria or a local fever conveyed by the bite of a tick. These little beasts, in three sizes, were all over the place at that season, and were a dreadful plague, as nothing would altogether keep out the smaller ones; and when they bite they mean it, and often leave nasty sores.

As my expected permit to shoot in Abyssinian territory had not yet come to hand, I was the more interested in J.'s account of the Emperor Menelek. It was well known that the old man was in a bad way and had not been in full possession of his faculties for some time past; but the latest news from Harrar was that he was now entirely in the hands of the priests, who would not allow the doctors any access to him and were dieting him entirely upon "saerament rations," as the only hope for his life! One knew that

the Abyssinian was a very debased form of Christianity, but . . . !

It was interesting, too, to listen to J. and B. on the subject of a probable "bust-up" across the border in the event of Menelek's death, and the possible effect on the political situation in Somaliland *quâ* that eminently sane gentleman the "Mad Mullah": their points of view, the one that of a district official under the Colonial Office, the other of a soldier who had been some years in the country, were so different.

But this is not the occasion for a discussion of Somali politics. Room may perhaps be found, however, for one true story—even though somewhat irrelevant—of the last "show."

In connection with, I presume, water supply, a cable was sent to the Colonial Office asking for the despatch of two "Parson's pumps," whatever they are exactly. A short time afterwards, an official of the Protectorate, returning from furlough on a P. and O. liner, was surprised to find himself accosted by two reverend gentlemen eager for information as to Somaliland, to which country they had just been appointed by the Colonial Office for service with troops. I believe one was a Roman Catholic and the other a Presbyterian, while the only troops in the country were natives of either India or Africa, all, or nearly all, followers of the Prophet; the sprinkling of British officers sure to be nearly all Church of England. However, they were under a year's contract, and I believe both put in their full time at Sheikh, the military headquarters. Whether the parsons answered the

purpose of the Engineer officer who had indented for pumps is more than I can tell you !

That reminds me of another Colonial Office export, an account of which has, I think, appeared in print but may bear repetition. A Government Department found itself with a big traction engine on its hands. To some brilliant intellect occurred the happy idea, "Send it to Somaliland" ! So over the cables to the harassed Commissioner travelled an inquiry as to whether he could find any use for such an article. The answer came back an emphatic "No." But what did that matter ? Out went the engine to Berbera, and a joyous time they had landing it. And there it lay on the sandy shore a butt for every passing camel. It would be unkind to inquire as to the cost of despatching the unwieldy monster those thousands of miles by sea ; and of course it was natural that a clerk in London should know the requirements of Somaliland better than H.M.'s Commissioner and Consul-General on the spot. But in view of the latter fact, some one ought really to have asked a question in Parliament as to the reason of the unnecessary expenditure on a cable in the first instance !

J. showed me with pride a pen full of Buff Orpington fowls in splendid condition. You can imagine what a treat, in such a place, their eggs were ; one of them equal to three or four Somali eggs, and even the latter, except at a permanent settlement like Hargeisa, are rarely to be had. By those eggs hangs a tale. The story went that B. one day looted J.'s hen-roosts, asked the latter to breakfast, and served him up his own eggs, professing to have bought them from a

Somali. Somalis stealing the A. P. O.'s eggs! was ever such a crime! Result, the immediate issue of strict regulations requiring (a) the registration of all fowls in Hargeisa, and (b) the marking of all eggs with the District Office stamp, without which they might not be sold; any person not a registered owner of fowls, and found in possession of non-stamped eggs, becoming liable to be tried as a thief.

It is true that B. denied the correctness of the breakfast story, but there is no doubt that J. believed his eggs were being stolen and issued regulations to the above effect. Very sound regulations too, as I can vouch, having had the pleasure of breakfasting with the A. P. O., Western District, off those same eggs which might otherwise have attained a less worthy end. If irreverent persons who had not had that honour did make the egg regulations a target for their gibes, the cause can only have been jealousy.

But masters are responsible for their servants, so my anxiety can be imagined when I remembered that I had neglected to give Abdi a solemn warning as to the danger of buying unstamped eggs in Hargeisa!

J.'s other pets were a couple of lion cubs about a year old, the bigger one, a fine little beast, when introduced to me with a view to a photograph, embraced me round the legs with its powerful forearms in a manner decidedly more embarrassing than pleasant.

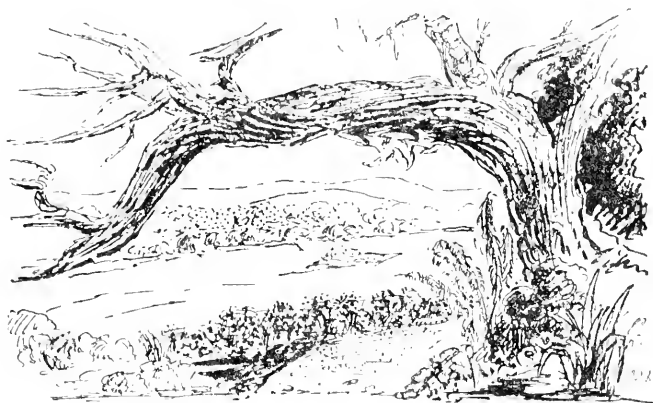
Hargeisa is not a bad place in some ways; on the bank of a river-bed, elevation about 4000 feet,

it was much greener than the country we had been marching through. The evening after arriving there I went out with J. to try the Sherwood on dik-dik, without success, for though I had several chances I had yet to learn the little rifle's ways and killed nothing but a partridge in a tree, of which the bullet cut a wing clean off. We were wending our way back about dusk when J. said, "Listen to the wind!" Elmi, who was with us, did not understand what he said, but caught the gesture and said, "Water." At the word, J. "threw a lep" like a young buck and—sprinted. Water it was sure enough, the river coming down, and we were on the opposite bank from camp! We just did it, beat the flood by about fifty yards; to be sure it would hardly have drowned us, but it was coming down at a good pace, perhaps two or three feet in depth, so we were at any rate dryer out of it. The rising moon shining over the trees on the hurrying waters made a picture that one wanted to preserve.

That night J. turned on a good gramophone after dinner with some excellent records. The effect on himself of anything approaching dance music was remarkable. It was like the piper of Hamelin: he had to dance! His energy was alarming—and disastrous to my whiskey and soda standing too near the table edge. Meanwhile it was raining for all it was worth, and we stayed up talking until 2 a.m., B. and I, hoping that we might yet get back dry to our own tents. Needless to say we did not succeed.

On the 31st July, the caravan marched again at

midday, this time to the S.E., and I followed after lunch. I did not realise then, as I said good-bye to my host, that I was going to make the base return for his hospitality of turning him and his eggs into copy, or I might have given him warning! But he won't mind.



CHAPTER VII

After Hargeisa—The roller and his colouring—Shooting lesser bustard with a rifle—A good *dhero*—Striped hyæna—The second of August: *Cressá dies notá*: a troop of lions: two lionesses shot—After the lions again: bag three more—Good tracking—Success of the Paradox.

THE day after leaving Hargeisa I had a fair amount of exercise after some *gerenúk* which were wild. By midday we had covered a good deal of ground and sat down to wait for Abdilleh with the caravan. But it did not come, so I ate a biscuit and presently lay down under a tree for a snooze while Elmi went off to look for them. At 2 p.m. he returned to say the caravan had halted four miles back, they had been delayed by the misbehaviour of two camels and we had overrun them. There was no point in going back, the caravan would be starting again directly, so I lit a pipe and waited, watching a pair of rollers (the so-called "blue jay") in a tree near by.

I think few colour effects in Nature are more striking on a small scale than that produced by the roller, when he starts to fly, and from beneath his unassuming cloak there flashes out a pair of wings whose bars of purest turquoise contrast with a beautiful deep blue that in some lights is almost violet. Why this sudden change and display? It may be suggested that the dullness of the roller's plumage when at rest is protective, but apart from the fact that theories of colour protection have been pushed to ridiculous

extremes, it is impossible to adopt this view of a bird which habitually perches in the most conspicuous position it can find, while its nesting-place is in a hole. Nor can we, to my mind, account for the brilliancy of the wings by Darwin's theory of sexual selection, where male and female are so much alike. Wallace's theory of "mutual recognition" is plausible in the case of migratory birds, but is quite unproven. There remains the possibility that this conspicuous colouration is a "warning pattern." This might be the case if the roller itself or some similarly coloured species were unpleasant to the taste, or for some other reason objectionable to the birds of prey who are the only enemies that could be affected. Presumably this is possible, but I know of no evidence that it is so. Otherwise this is merely one more of the many instances of natural phenomena where, in spite of all the researches of science; we must confess our absolute inability to answer with any certainty the question, "Why?"

We believe in the variations and development through the ages of the various forms of life by the immutable laws of evolution, and we are justified in seeking to discover what those laws are. Some little knowledge we have attained, but ever and again we realise, as here in the pigment of a bird's wing, how much remains hidden from our ken. If we believe—and how can we not believe?—in the Master-Mind and Hand, that conceived and wrote down those changeless laws which we are painfully trying to spell out, why not be content further to believe that, whatever the working of the laws that have produced the beauty we admire in the creature, the reason for the existence

of that beauty is simply the Creator's pleasure therein ? This is probably what the Hindu thought when he first called the roller the bird of Vishnu : for Vishnu, the Preserver, is but another manifestation of Brahma, the Creator.

The whole subject of animal colouration is a fascinating one, but there is no room for any discussion of it here. I shall, however, in a later chapter have occasion to touch upon one or two of its problems again.

I had just finished my smoke when I noticed the head of a lesser bustard popping up in the grass not far off and went after it with the Sherwood. Then I saw another. The grass was about eighteen inches high, so that as a rule the birds' bodies were not visible, they would not stand still and there was a stiff breeze blowing which interfered with a steady aim, consequently, though I could get to within about forty yards of them, I did not find it easy to hit. Then, when it became alarmed, the bustard would flatten its body down to the ground, head low, scuttle away in the grass, invisible, and vanish.

At first I fired three or four shots with no apparent result ; as it turned out I had not understood the rules of the game. At last I saw a head and neck, fired, and the head disappeared as usual ; in a second it was up again a couple of feet farther on. I fired again and this time a dying flutter showed I had got one. I ran up to find two birds lying dead close together, and as I reached them a third rose at my feet and flew away. I had not known there was more than one. Quite

possibly one or two of my first shots had found its billet unknown to me, a second head appearing in place of the fallen one, for there were several birds in this grass and subsequent experience showed that this species generally goes in twos and threes. This was not the rather larger black-breasted bustard, which is more of a runner. Both are excellent eating.



At length the caravan came up and we marched on, and presently I got a good *dhero* with a long shot, 240 paces. Soon after we came across a party of *gerenúk* with a good head among them, but I could not get a shot. I had just given them up when Elmi saw and pointed out an animal crouching under a bush fifty yards away; he thought it was a leopard. The beast started to move away on the other side and I fired a hurried shot and missed. Out came, not a leopard but a *didhar* (striped hyæna). I fired again as it made off, but I am not good at a running shot with a single-barrel (I was using the .318) and it got away untouched.

Readers of Hajji Baba will remember the prescription for "conciliating the affection of all" by wearing the dried skin of a female hyæna. This beast had quite a handsome skin, none of the mangy appearance one so often sees. Even so one's case would have to be very serious before one would care to wear it on one's person!

Fortunately we were close to our camping-ground,

as it was now 6 p.m. and I had had no breakfast ; however, the dinner I ate made up. This was a spot named Shabeleh ("the place of leopards"), on the borders of a district called Dudwein, where M. had shot one or two lions the previous year. There was no very definite *khobar* (news) of lions yet, but we heard of a sheep having been carried off near by three days before, so we decided to stay a day or two. We were now some thirty-eight miles S.E. of Hargeisa.

The next day, the 2nd of August, was a date to be blazoned on the scroll of fame, or at any rate on the register of my shikar experiences. Out early with my three shikaris, it was about 9 a.m. when we suddenly struck the fresh trail of a troop of six lions ! apparently three or four adult lionesses and two or three nearly full-grown youngsters. No time lost in discussion, but after them at once. The going was not good, in some places stony, and the tracking difficult in consequence : it was only the number of the beasts that made it possible to keep the trail at a fair pace. Where the ground was open we wasted no time, but whenever we approached thick grass or bush, Abdilleh was very careful, always posting me in a good position before investigating to see if the tracks had passed on.

I suppose we had followed the trail for about six or seven miles when at 11.30 a.m. we came to a patch of *durr* grass, about fifty yards long and twenty-five or thirty broad. This *durr* grass grows to a height of from four to six feet in thick clumps set close together, and affords the favourite daytime cover for most nocturnal creatures in this part of the country. I was considering this when Henduleh whistled and pointed

gesticulating into the grass. His manner left no doubt as to what he meant, so Abdilleh and I hurried quickly round to the far side. There he was making for a likely thorn-bush to stand behind when I stopped him, for just at the near edge of the cover where the grass was thin, stood a lioness, tail towards me, just the top of her back and neck clearly visible and only twenty-five yards away !

It was a chance not to be lost, and I fired ; down she went to the shot out of sight in the grass. Then I had no more time to think of her for the moment, for at the report came the sight of a lifetime : the five remaining lions breaking from the cover, from different spots, but all on the side nearest me, almost simultaneously, and all within twenty to thirty yards ; then, checked by the unexpected sight of two humans in their way, dashing hither and thither, one straight away to my right, the others in and out of the grass uncertain what to do ! You see, previous to the shot, their attention had been fixed on the two shikaris on the far side whom they had detected, and they were quite taken by surprise on seeing me. I had not started out that morning with any idea of seeing lions so had not my second lion rifle, the '400, with me. Abdilleh was beside me with the '318, powerful enough to kill any lion, but not, in my view, the sort of weapon for the close quarter game I had come in for now. Consequently I was determined not to have both barrels of the Paradox empty at once if it could be avoided, before attempting another shot. Then I had a snap-shot at about fifteen yards at a lioness bolting back into the grass, and she too disappeared. By the

time that cartridge was replaced, the rest had made up their minds it was time to go and were galloping off to the left. I might have fired at one of these, but did not think the shot, a galloping one at sixty or seventy yards, good enough under the circumstances and let them go. I had two lionesses down in the long grass, both I knew hard hit, but one at least I knew to be alive, and I had no certain knowledge of how far either of them was disabled. Without a second double-barrel I was not keen on having a possible third wounded beast on my hands and don't mind saying so.

Well! careful reconnoitring of the grass soon showed lioness No. 1 lying just outside round the corner, alive but done for; she made an effort to rise on seeing me but could not do it, and with a second bullet she died. Listening and watching, we found No. 2 was also alive and able to move. So we decided to fire the grass, first dragging the corpse of No. 1 out of danger from the flames. Then climbing into a convenient low tree, whence I could see over the grass to some extent, I waited while Elmi started a fire on the windward side. It blazed up quickly and in three minutes a gowl or two and the waving grass showed the second lioness was moving. She came out twenty-five yards from me, on her fore paws, her hindquarters dragging useless behind her. Catching sight of the body of her dead companion close by, she made for this and sitting down beside it, bit viciously at the poor corpse. Was this another case, like the partridge, of hitting a friend when he's down, or merely wrath that had to wreak its vengeance on something? Anyway, I only

wanted holes of my own making in my skins, so let her have it again.

Then for the camera and steel tape. There they lay, two adult lionesses, beautiful creatures, after an experience, which for a first encounter with lions, must be very nearly unique. During those few crowded moments, Abdilleh had stood by me splendidly, though he got a bit excited; he kept saying, "Don't be afraid, Sahib: shoot!" I didn't shoot quite as often as he wanted at the time, in which he afterwards admitted I was right: as for being afraid, there was no time to think of luxuries of that sort. These two lionesses measured 8 feet $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches and 8 feet $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches respectively as they lay. By the time tape and camera and skinning-knife had done their work, and we were on our way back to camp, it was 2 o'clock. Fortunately the lions had travelled in a circle, so that we were not very far away and were in camp in an hour and a half. As soon as we were within hearing, Henduleh began to announce our success in song which brought every one out to meet our triumphal procession. I was not sorry for a cup of tea, then came the pegging out of the skins, and after an early dinner I was in bed at 9 p.m. and slept the sleep of the just. I did not dream of lions, even after such a day, like "the proud Ides of Quintilis, marked evermore with white!"

Next morning we were out at daybreak, meaning to try and ascertain what direction the four lions, which had escaped the day before, had eventually taken; though not with much hope of seeing anything more of them. After stopping to shoot an *aoul*, as meat was wanted, we made for the scene of the previous

day's proceedings. There we found the usual concourse of vultures, etc., but both skeletons were already picked clean. We found, too, which was more important, that these had been visited and inspected during the night by the remainder of the troop, and the trail of the latter we now took up. After an hour's tracking, we reached a spot where they had killed a *gerenúk*, of which there was not a fragment left. Their return to look for the other two, the subsequent kill and feast, must have all taken time, which together with the fact that their hunger had been in some measure satisfied, tended to make our chances of coming up with them much more hopeful than they had seemed at first. But it took us quite another hour before we could get fairly going again, each beast having wandered off in a different direction with some special tit-bit to be discussed at leisure, and it took a lot of work before we hit off the line the troop had eventually taken. And from this on they had meandered about in an apparently aimless sort of way, difficult to follow. Once we thought we had them and beat some thick bush and grass: I felt my heart beat faster as I noticed a rustle in the grass, then out came a long-eared fox (*otocyon*), a handsome little beggar, but not just what I was expecting. At last, however, the tracks went into a long and rather thick patch of *durr* grass and, there was no mistake about it, did not emerge.

We decided that firing the grass was the best thing to do, and it was done accordingly, while Abdilleh and I took up our position behind a thorn tree, twenty yards from the other end. Behind us again, to the

left, was a small patch of high grass that the lions would probably make for in the first instance, and have to pass us in so doing. This time Abdilleh had the .400 ready beside me. The blazing up of the flames was followed by several growls ; then a cub broke and bolted away to the right, but he was only half grown so I let him go. Next moment, a head appeared to my right front, looking at us and snarling ; it disappeared and then appeared again on the other side, making a show of attacking. I did not wait to see if this was bluff but fired at his chest and he collapsed where he stood. At the report a lioness broke directly in front and, seeing me, swerved and dashed past on the left about ten yards away. As she did so I gave her the left barrel of the Paradox behind the shoulder ; she staggered but went on, vanishing behind the next clump, however I had seen the spot of blood over the heart and knew she was done for.

The next thing was to snatch the .400 from Abdilleh and push the Paradox into his hand to load. Then seeing that No. 1 lying in front was trying to raise his head I gave him a finisher. Handing the .400 back to Abdilleh, I took the Paradox, which he had reloaded, and aimed at a third lion which appeared and stood for a moment close to the body of No. 1. I pressed the trigger and nothing happened ! Now, I had had my Paradox built specially with a *non-automatic* safety mechanism, so that with the closing of the breech the gun is ready, cocked. Abdilleh, in his excitement and excess of zeal, had pushed back the safety bolt after loading. It might have been an extremely awkward mistake ! It only took a moment to rectify but my

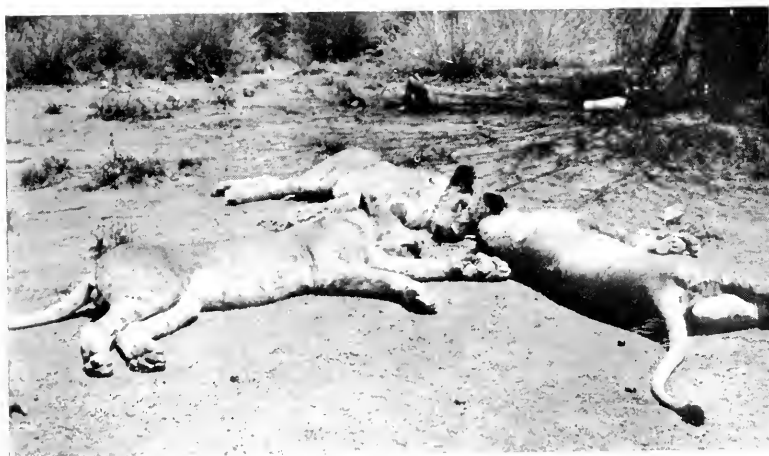
chance of a standing shot was gone, as the third lion, like No. 2, made past me on the left, going at a trot only, disdaining any show of haste. He fell to my shot at only five or six paces distant, but was up again at once and turned to charge; however, the heavy bullet in his lungs had taken all the fight out of him and he swung round again so unexpectedly that my second barrel missed him clean and he, too, disappeared behind the grass in rear. Just at this moment a big lioness broke on the right and dashed away across the open; before I could change rifles and get in a shot she was behind some bushes sixty yards away and gone.

All this had occupied a very short space of time, and the grass patch was only burnt half way through. The first thing was to drag the body of the first lion out of danger of being singed. Then behind us, where we found No. 2 lying dead forty yards away. No. 3 we found lying in the open, 100 yards distant, alive but unable to move. He was quickly finished by a Sherwood bullet in the brain and dragged with some difficulty up to the others. A group of three lions for the kodak this time. True, two of them were young males, not fully grown and with manes as yet undeveloped, but they measured well over seven feet and were imposing enough. But for Abdilleh's mistake over the safety bolt, the remaining lioness would probably not have escaped either.

Five lions in two days to a single gun, all fairly tracked and shot on foot at close quarters! Of course it was extraordinary luck, especially in the favourable ground I found them in and the easy shots I had. But



A BRACE OF BEAUTIES.



A NICE GROUP.

[To face p. 92.]

honour to whom honour is due: I could have done nothing but for the fine tracking of my three shikaris, backed up by Abdilleh's knowledge of the game. And the Paradox deserves its meed of praise; its handiness was perfect, and as to its effectiveness it need only be said that each of the five lions, if not dropped on the spot, was practically disabled by the first shot. My faith had been justified; and there was a peculiar satisfaction in having brought off a right-and-left at lions with the weapon with which I had done the same at partridges a few days before.

The animals skinned, we were back in camp about 4 o'clock, Shikari and Sahib well pleased with each other—quite a mutual admiration society! And that troop of lions had ceased to exist. The neighbouring *karias* ought to have been duly grateful, but the Somali is the last person in the world to show or feel gratitude, however much you may do for him. They look on things differently in Persia, where, I believe, the man who kills a wolf is given a sheep from each flock in the vicinity. But the two sheep I gave to my men in honour of this occasion had to be bought at a price.



CHAPTER VIII

Shooting on the march—*Gerewák*—*Parturiunt montes*—Bad water—My “milk-man”—*Halal*—The hyæna’s laugh—Additions to the bag—Greater bustard—*Aoul* fawn—Kotunwein—Shooting *aoul*: the effect of high wind—Night-watching: a bad let-off—Consolation in store—The reward of good tracking: death of a grand black-maned lion—Lions jumping into zaribas.

ON the 4th August we moved on eastwards. One sometimes sees the statement in works on African shooting that it is a mistake to shoot on the line of march. It may be so when there is a possibility of caravan or sportsman losing their respective ways; but my men knew this part of the country thoroughly and one would have lost a good deal by not doing it. Our practice was to decide on the next halting-place before starting, making sure that there was a clear understanding on the point between the caravan leader and the shikaris who accompanied me. I used then to go on ahead of the caravan and to one side, with occasionally a camel following if prospects of sport were good, but it was rarely that the pony and mule were unable to carry what game we might get. In the case of a big beast, like an oryx, a party would be sent out for it afterwards if necessary. The day I shot the three lions the two steeds carried their skins and heads, with an *aoul* head and some meat, and made nothing of it. Nor did they show the smallest repugnance to the smell of lion, as might have been expected.

On this morning we came across four *gerenük*, all bucks together, which is unusual. An attempt to stalk one was foiled by a second, and when I at length got a shot it was a standing one, rather unsteady in the prevailing high wind, and I only succeeded in breaking a fore-leg. A running shot as he passed between two bushes was a miss. After that I could not get near him and missed a third shot, underestimating the distance, at 300 yards. Next shot was a hit but too low. Then the buck lay up in thick bush and I took the Paradox and crept after him, bowling him over with a snap-shot as he jumped up thirty yards away. A very fair head.

While he was being skinned a messenger came up from Abdilleh, who was with the caravan, to say that a leopard had been marked down further on. I hurried off and we came up with the caravan, which had halted; they pointed out a bush on the hill-side, 200 yards away, into which one of the camel-men had seen the leopard go. Their attention had been attracted to him by the behaviour of some *aoul* which he had presumably been stalking. Pity there was none to mark my circumspect advance towards that bush, Paradox in hand, and backed up by two rifles! At length I distinguished in the shadow the outline of part of a round head and fired, on the *qui vive* for a possible charge. Not a move: the bullet had evidently found the marauder's brain. And so it proved—but it was the brain of a grey wild cat (*Felis ocreata*)! *Parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus*—if not a mouse in this instance it was at most a mouser!

Poor Abdilleh, he was very sick about it, he had

only caught a glimpse of the crouching feline in the grass, and the *aoul* had seemed to think it suspicious, while the camel-man who saw it first had sworn it was a leopard. Well, I had made exactly the same mistake on my own account once before in India, shooting in a beat a jungle cat which I took for a leopard.

Later on I stalked an *aoul*: had the setting sun behind me and could not see my platinum foresight a bit. Result, three misses before I got him, a handsome head with the tips of the horns curving downwards in a rather unusual fashion.

The water hercabouts was beastly, the colour of tea and the consistency of pea-soup; that one was used to and did not mind, thinned with a bit of alum and boiled it is usually quite harmless. But this had an unusual and most objectionable odour as well, which even the goats disapproved. Seeing, moreover, that my Berkefeld filter had struck work, I decided that the soundest policy for me was to drink nothing but milk. For that purpose, travelling as we did, goats were of little use, so I hired a couple of milch camels from a neighbouring *karia*. Europeans do not always appreciate camel milk; personally, I agree with the Somali, to whom it is the staff of life, in thinking it excellent.

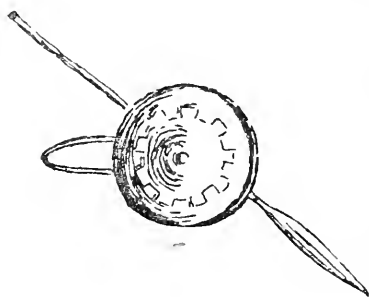
My new "milk-man," who accompanied his two camels, was a good-looking youth and quite a dandy. His *gashan* (oryx-hide shield) was always carried in a white cover, his hair was just the fashionable tint, his tobe was always white and clean, and the praying-carpet of tanned leather he carried over his shoulder was a swagger one. A bit of a mullah, he always led

the sunset devotions which Abdilleh never missed, but some of the men never remembered.

In some of the observances enjoined by the Korán, however, all were equally strict. None would touch a pig, none would taste alcohol, none would eat the flesh of an animal which had not been made *halál*.

In respect of the latter ceremony, however, the Somali is more accommodating than many Mahomedan shikaris elsewhere, who consider that the neck of the animal must be cut close under the throat: this is the general idea among uneducated Mussulmans but is not warranted by the Korán, which permits the severance of the jugular vein at any spot; the point of real importance being that the blood must be made to flow by a Mussulman hand before the breath of life has entirely departed, to the accompaniment of an invocation to the name of Allah.

The sportsman who means to have his trophy mounted naturally objects to an ugly gash spoiling an antelope's neck; which, by the way, should always be cut as long as possible, for nothing detracts more from the beauty of a head on a shield than an absence of neck. The Somali having been educated, in the first instance by Col. H. G. Swayne with the assistance of a complaisant Mullah, he always gets his meat provided he can satisfy his conscience that he is in time with the knife. In parts of India, on the other hand, your Mussulman shikari's share of stag or buck



depends perforce upon your intentions with regard to the head.

With some Somalis it is public opinion really that counts ; an oryx dropped at 200 yards with a bullet in the vertebrae of the neck is as dead as any mutton long before your shikari can reach him, though he has sprinted all the way ; but if you have not thought it necessary to sprint too and there are none of his brethren near, out comes the knife from his belt and with a muttered *Bismillah* he saws frantically through the tough hide. But many are really honest in this observance, unless perhaps when hunger is too compelling.

We were in a fairly good game district now, and what I wanted was to find a good place for a halt of some days while I worked the neighbourhood daily. So we sent off two or three men to find out and report on water supply, etc., in certain places of which Abdilleh knew. I also sent off a runner to Hargeisa with letters and to bring my mails, which I had arranged should be sent to J.'s care from Berbera.

That night a goat tied up outside for a possible leopard, was rushed and killed by a *war'aba* in an unusually determined manner. Then there was pandemonium. Two or three hyænas wanted their share, while I sat watching to take vengeance on any of the foul brood. But whenever one approached the kill, another would chase him away, to an accompaniment of weird screams and that demoniacal but horribly human laughter which, under such conditions, one could not fail to " appreciate."

This went on for about twenty minutes and then

something did come up to the kill and give a tug. It didn't look like a hyæna, but I gave it a dose of buck-shot and found I had killed a black-backed jackal. Though he was not responsible for that particular crime, there were sure to have been others at his door, for this particular species often kills lambs and kids and I have twice seen one attack a full-grown goat.

At daybreak next morning, a herd of oryx appeared in sight of camp. After following them for about a mile, I risked a shot through a slight bush: this may or may not have turned the bullet, but anyway I missed and could not get near them again. Later in the morning, on my homeward way, I came across another herd in more favourable country, and after a stalk, the last fifty yards on hands and knees, I reached a bush within 120 yards of them. They were getting restless and it was difficult to judge of the horns. However, the nearest was undoubtedly a bull, from his thick-set neck, and appeared to have a good head. I fired for the liver shot (a more effective one than is often realised) as he was walking obliquely away from me. He dashed away with the herd but after going two or three hundred yards, he dropped. He had one nice long horn, 31 inches, but the other was three inches shorter.

Out with the Sherwood that evening, after bagging a dik-dik, I had a shot at a jackal trotting away from me; I think the bullet must have gone between his legs, for you should have seen him jump! He went about four feet straight up in the air, twisting right round, his head coming down where his tail had been, then off as hard as he could go.

The following morning I got a *gerenúk* and an *aoul*, each with a single shot at 200 to 220 yards. In the afternoon we moved again eastwards, having heard of good water two marches distant. On the way I tried the Sherwood on an *aoul* doe with good horns (I wanted one doe's head). My shot was a little low, breaking a fore-leg: on following her up, a wretched Midgán dog appeared and gave chase, driving her into some thick cover, where after a long search we failed to find her. It was most annoying; I hate leaving a wounded animal, and wished I had shot that wretched dog on sight.

Next day we reached Kotunwein, our new camping-ground, rather a charming spot, a clump of trees shading several pools on the edge of an open plain two or three miles across. Crossing the plain I missed an *aoul* and a greater bustard, the wind being too much for me. The big bustard was a fine bird with a stately walk, but he saw that I kept my distance, evidently fully aware that under the Game Regulations he was no longer one of the Protected Tribes as he had been in 1907. Then, on the Tuyo Plain, he had allowed me to approach within thirty or forty yards, now it was over one hundred!

On the march, one of the men found a baby *aoul* only a few hours old under a bush and brought it along. It was a bonny wee thing, all legs and eyes and not a bit afraid, but already full of curiosity. One of the goats was told off as wet nurse and the mite took quite kindly to the new foster mother, who was bored, and showed it, but made no active objection.

On arrival at Kotunwein, we found an Aidagalla



POOL AT KOTUNWEIN.



THIRSTY ! SOMALI SHEEP AND GOATS WATERING.

[To face p. 101.]

karia there watering. Camels were provided with a trough, but the method with goats and sheep was to allow a whole herd to crowd into a pool at their own sweet will. From this it was obvious that if I wanted any moderately clean water or if any of the water was to last at all, I must reserve one pool for our use, so I annexed one alongside our *zariba* and had it fenced round. I intended to make this camp my base of operations for a week or so, according to circumstances.

That afternoon I wounded an *acul* high in the fore-leg, the bullet unfortunately carrying on and killing a youngster beyond him. The pony was laid up and resting so I could not ride him down, and he would not let me approach within 250 yards. At that distance I could not hit him: I found it hopeless trying to hold a rifle at all steady in the high wind blowing across that exposed plain, and the grass was just long enough to make a lying-down shot impossible. Eventually, after giving the buck an hour's rest he got a bit stiff, and I brought him down after an expenditure of five cartridges.

The effect of wind on the bullet from a high velocity rifle does not amount to much at sporting ranges. It is the force of the wind on one's arms and rifle which renders a standing shot almost impossible in the open, and steadiness even in a sitting position extremely difficult to attain. And at that season it was almost always blowing on those level uplands. In the bush, of course, or in a snap-shot at close range it is different.

I should like to have one or two of our Bisley marksmen, with their wind-gauges and all the rest of it, and see how many cartridges they would expend

per head of game killed (not wounded) on the Somaliland plateaux in August.

On the night of the 7th August, I did not sleep in our zariba but in a small thorn shelter beyond the pool which was furthest away and nearest to the bush, having a goat tied up outside. Henduleh was with me and we took it in turns to watch. At about 2 a.m. he roused me, as the goat was behaving somewhat suspiciously. Presently I saw a vague form rise from the ground to my right front and walk behind the shelter. I waited. After about five minutes the rush came, from the left, and there was a round head with teeth holding the goat by the back of the neck and pulling its head down. A leopard I said to myself, and a big one, though I should have expected him to go for the throat, and fired at once at the face, which was all I could see. It was foolish not to wait and make more sure of my elevation, for it was too dark to distinguish the card on my foresight. However, one always feels that the beast is bound to detect one so close, and be off, and previous experience had shown that this feeling was not without justification. The natural tendency in the dark is to shoot high, and in this case my bullet must have just passed over the enemy's head, and the visitor was gone.

Morning's light on the tracks showed the beast to have been no leopard, but a lioness. It had been a bad let-off though an extremely easy thing to do. But consolation was in store.

When I reached my tent I found an old man had turned up with news: a lion had invaded his zariba just after dark the previous night, knocked down

(without hurting her) a woman milking a goat who was in his way, and jumped the zariba fence taking a sheep with him. This promised to be more interesting than that unsatisfactory night-watching game. A hasty snack and a cup of cocoa and I was away with Elmi and our guide, Abdilleh and Henduleh having already gone ahead.

The *karia* was little more than a mile away, and by the time we had reached it and taken up the tracks, those of a single big lion, it was only 7 o'clock. It was plain sailing following the "drag" of the sheep's body to the spot, about a thousand yards away, where he had finished off his mutton; then the real work began. We knew that our quarry had dined well: he had demolished the whole sheep, and we hoped in consequence that he had not gone far. Great as is the weight of a big lion, he remains a cat, and his walking tread is marvellously light; this time, moreover, there was but a single animal, and the tracking was correspondingly difficult; a great deal of the ground, too, which we traversed was a clay soil with a sun-baked, wind-swept surface which rarely retained any impression at all. And the tracks went on as though our lion had eaten nothing for a week. So on we had to go too, with frequent checks when the spoor was temporarily lost, or to examine likely bits of cover. At length we came to more and more open country; trees but hardly any grass or bush at all. We began to be afraid that he was lying under a single tree and would detect us in the distance and be off, so I put Elmi up on the pony to ride and try to round him up if necessary. However, he was not required:

bush and high grass began to appear again, and at 2 p.m., after seven hours' tracking, we came to a patch of *durr* grass, growing round a couple of thorn trees, that looked really promising, though from its shape not a very easy one for a single gun to attack.

A careful silent circuit of this grass disclosed no sign of any out-going tracks, and though from the nature of the ground it was impossible to be quite certain, it looked as if His Majesty was probably at home. The cover was in the shape of a rough triangle with open ground at the base in rear where the lion had entered. On the opposite side, roughly parallel with the base, there was a line of bush and more grass which was almost met by the apex of the triangle, with thicker cover again beyond. Now, as a rule, a lion, when disturbed, prefers to return by the way he came, but as things were in the present case he was more likely to choose the opposite direction as offering much the least exposed line of retreat.

For this reason I took up my position behind a thorn bush, about four feet high, at the extreme apex of the triangle. Here I commanded its two front sides, myself more or less concealed. As this position was also down-wind, and I had only three men with me, the wisest plan seemed to be to fire the grass from the rear in two or three places. Abdilleh therefore placed the .400 ready cocked, leaning up against the bush beside me, and then went off to instruct Henduleh and Elmi, who had remained behind, where to fire the grass first, intending then to return to me.

We did not yet know for certain that the lion was there, so it was with a sudden thrill which I shall

never forget that, barely a minute after Abdilleh's departure, I saw the top of a great shaggy head and neck come silently into view through the grass, and stand, about twelve yards to my right front. We had to deal with an old hand this time ; he had evidently been wide awake, and had heard the shikaris on the other side. He had no notion of waiting to have his mane singed ; and having, on principle, a dislike to the presence of human beings, unless in the occasional



necessary *rôle* of commissariat suppliers, he was looking to see if the coast was clear before moving on. That did not suit me, and I fired, aiming for his partly exposed neck, none of the body being visible. He ought to have dropped on the spot, but, as it turned out, I had not made sufficient allowance for the thickness of his mane, and the bullet passed' through the muscles at the back of his neck, just missing the spinal column it should have found, and doing no real damage. At the shot he dashed back into cover with a rumbling growl ; then, changing his mind, swung round and

came out past me at a gallop at only four paces distance. He did not know where the shot had come from and, close as he was, did not see me at all. I let him get well past and then gave him the second barrel behind the shoulder at eight yards. He dropped in his tracks. I snatched up the .400 to "mak siccar," but there was no need. The Paradox had scored again and the King of Beasts lay at my feet.

Could life for a shikari hold a prouder moment? I remembered the day I shot my first panther, bigger than any I have shot since—but what was the biggest panther that ever lived compared to this? The glorious horns of my first kudu—but what was a kudu to-day? My first tiger, a notorious man-eater by the way—but I did not bag him single-handed, and it was from the safety of a *machán*, though there had followed some anxious moments: besides, the tiger himself still ranks below the King. Even in my first meeting with the Royal Family on that wonderful 2nd of August, there had been something lacking since Himself was not there.

A tiger might show the equal of those massive forearms, but that grand head set in a mass of beautiful black mane could have no rival. And the circumstances had a glamour that was all their own. When the big kudu died, for a moment—though it soon passed—it seemed a shame to have taken such a splendid life; but here, it may be an unworthy confession, I could find no room for regret. I stood and gazed my fill. I was utterly content.

He measured 9 feet $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches "straight" as he lay, good for the Somali lion, which is reckoned a small

race. My note-book, containing other measurements, was unfortunately lost.

I mentioned that this lion was stated to have jumped into a zariba and jumped out again taking a sheep with him. As this practice on the part of the lion has been questioned, it may be of interest to give it some consideration. Mr. F. Vaughan Kirby, an undoubted authority, but writing mainly with reference to South Africa, remarks: "It is a physical impossibility for so comparatively low-standing an animal as a lion to lift and carry an impala clear of the ground, much less an ox or even a calf, to say nothing of leaping a fence with such a burden. Lions, indeed, seldom leap any fence, but wriggle themselves under or force their way through."

It is unquestionably correct that a lion cannot carry any but a comparatively small animal clear of the ground; he cannot lift his head high enough from the ground while walking or running to do so. But I cannot agree with the conclusion that therefore (this seems to be implied) he cannot leap a fence with a calf in his mouth. Surely the latter feat presents quite a different problem?

Like all the *Felidæ*, the lion's leaping powers are considerable. I have seen a leopard in captivity repeatedly jump with the greatest of ease on to a ledge ten feet above its head, and there is an authenticated record of a tiger in Mysore clearing a net ten feet in height. Even for a heavy lion, then, the leaping of a five or six foot fence can be no great feat.

There remains the question of strength, but I hardly think Mr. Kirby will argue that the lion has not

the strength required to lift a good-sized calf with him as he leaps. The leopard, like the lion, always drags his prey along the ground, but in Somaliland the leopard (not on the average a large specimen of his kind) habitually jumps the zariba fences and jumps out again carrying a sheep or goat. It is surely impossible to deny to the lion the ability to treat a considerably heavier prey in similar fashion.

It may be urged that the animal hanging from the lion's jaws would be in the way and interfere with his leap. But the leopard is in the same quandary with his sheep: he gets out of the difficulty by seizing his prey by the back of the neck and holding it more or less over his shoulder to one side, out of the way of the fore-legs as these shoot forward. It may be awkward but he does it time and again. And the lion's method is precisely similar.

So much by way of argument as to the lion's powers. With regard to his actual practice, Colonel Swayne's statement is authoritative, that the outer fence of a Somali zariba is "often twelve feet high to keep out lions." If the height of an ordinary thorn fence of four or five feet is doubled, the labour involved is considerably more than doubled. No one who knows the Somali will credit him with doing a stroke more of manual labour than he believes to be actually called for. And it is not as if the Somalis went in mortal fear of the lion. As a race they do not lack courage, while familiarity, as elsewhere, breeds contempt. Hence their attitude to the lion is often one of casual indifference, and so long as the toll he takes from their flocks is a moderate one they don't worry.

I have never been in a district where there were many lions, so have never seen these exceptionally high zaribas. But I saw one at Aror with an outer fence of seven feet, on account of the lions, as the occupants (of the Samantar Abdullah section) told me. And they had reason, for while I was there three adjacent zaribas with lower fences were raided by lions while they escaped.

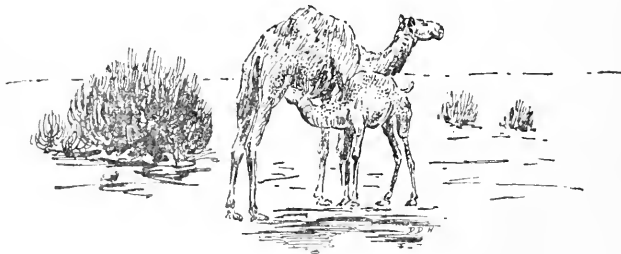
What Abdilleh told me was that the lion will often try to creep through a fence if he can do so quietly, but as a rule he cannot do this, so if he is sufficiently hungry he takes the jump. In this particular instance, I carefully examined the ground and fence, and ascertained beyond doubt that the lion could not possibly have got through the fence but must have jumped it both ways. And the marks of his landing outside were unmistakable; of course, from this spot the sheep was dragged in the usual way. Later, I was able to investigate another similar case, and I can see no reason for considering that these were exceptional instances. The fence over which the sheep was taken on the first occasion measured $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 feet and on the second $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet.

I must not be taken as disputing Mr. Kirby's statements as to the practice of lions in South Africa. But in Somaliland conditions are different. Game is wild and often far from plentiful. The nomad Somali's herds are numerous and tempting, and they consist largely of sheep which are easily carried off. The Somali's thorn zariba in lion country presents too substantial an obstacle for a lion to get through. His daring and frequent aggressiveness at night are well

known. It can hardly, therefore, call for surprise that, in a country where for centuries the lion has known the temporary zariba fence as the one obstacle between himself and the native's flocks, he should have so far adapted himself to circumstances as to make use of the strength and leaping powers he undoubtedly possesses.

In this he only follows the example of the leopard, of whom one does not hear very much as springing into kraals in other parts of Africa; but in Somaliland he does it on two or three nights of every week of his life.

Well, His Majesty had to be photographed and disrobed, and then back to camp. There I gave the old man who had brought the *khobar* in the morning, a new white *tobe* (length of cotton cloth for a robe). He promptly, Somali-like, asked for a *khaili* (a coloured one). I thought it might be politic "*pour encourager les autres,*" so gave him one.



CHAPTER IX

The Sahib a universal healer—Milch-camels lost—Baby *gerenúk*—Tame-ness of antelope in the dusk—Leopard's "kill" up a tree—Why it came there : the tale writ in the sandy soil : leopard and *warúba*—Horace in the wilds : sentiment and a eriminal—A fractious camel—A Somali zariba—Sitting up for a leopard : scored off !—Water and mud—A move southward.

FOR a day or two nothing much happened. A deputation of Aidagalla Somalis came in with a man whose leg they wanted me to mend. It was a size too large and had been so since his pony fell on it a couple of years before. I had to tell them that the case was beyond me, the only person who could do anything was a surgeon and that was very doubtful. But it was difficult to convince them ; every Sahib is credited with powers of healing.

Exploring the bush south of the "ban" (plain) I came across an oryx which I took to be a bull as I could not see another, and solitary oryx are invariably bulls. It dropped to my shot but three more dashed away, and I found I had bagged a cow : she had 30-inch horns.

Two days later I wounded a bull crossing my front, but he turned just as I fired and I was not sure where I had hit him. We followed a blood trail a short distance when unfortunately a thunder-storm came on and put an end to our tracking. This was the first animal hit with the .318 that I had lost. We

arrived in camp wet through, to find a mail had arrived by runner from Hargeisa, which was very welcome.

Less welcome was the news that my milch camels had gone, strayed away : sad both for me and for the mullah, but he had only himself to blame. The marvel to me is why the Somalis do not lose more camels, turning them out as they do, to graze at their own sweet will. Fortunately I was able to hire another couple.

Leaving some of the camels and kit at Kotunwein, I took the rest and spent three or four days working on a radius of ten or twelve miles from my base, but of lions we could find no fresh sign.

At one place we found a *geren'uk* fawn about four days old, in the hands of a Somali. I ransomed the little creature which was a dear wee thing, more dainty and elegant than the baby *aoul* ; but it did not take kindly to goat's milk and only lived two days. The Somalis said the only chance of rearing a *geren'uk* was to take it immediately it was born ; once it had tasted its mother's milk it would touch no other. This may or may not be true, but it was certainly a more nervous and sensitive little being than the *aoul* fawn, which, by the way, was thriving.

One evening I was out with the Sherwood only, close to camp, trying to shoot something for the pot, and had got a dik-dik and a small bustard, when I came across the finest *geren'uk* buck I have seen. He was accompanied by his ladies yet I was able to get up to within fifty yards in the fading light, although they undoubtedly saw me. It was like the contrariness of things that I

had used my last long cartridge and had only rook-rifle cartridges left. I was not going to shoot at him with one of these, unless absolutely certain of hitting him in the brain or heart ; it was too dark for that, so he was spared to his family.

It is an interesting question why antelope will, as I have often noticed, allow one to approach them much closer at dusk or at dawn than in full daylight. When



I asked Abdilleh's opinion, he said that it was because they are keenest on feeding at those times. But this explanation seems to me inadequate. *Gerenuk* browsing half an hour before sunset show no lack of their usual wariness.

In the present instance they did not seem to be feeding much, they saw me and kept looking at me as they moved leisurely on, yet appeared almost indifferent to my near approach. It may be suggested that it

is their curiosity and desire to identify the skulking creature that permits a nearer approach when the light is bad. And no doubt this is often the case. But on this occasion there was still ample light for me to identify them, and, one would think, *vice versa*; for I made no attempt to conceal myself, having once given up the idea of shooting. At the same time I was alone and it is quite possible that, not having winded me, the *gerenúk* did not associate my appearance with the type of human being from which they were accustomed to flee.

I have, however, noticed similar behaviour in a herd of *aoul* on the open plain, one of whom I had shot an hour before and in sight of whom I had remained, with two men, during that time. Our way back to camp lay past the herd when there could have been no question as to their not recognising our identity, yet I had no difficulty in the deepening twilight in walking up to within sixty yards or so of the same herd which an hour before had made me keep my distance at 250. But things look different in the dusk, and I expect the explanation is often partly curiosity and partly an instinctive feeling that it is wise to keep a suspicious creature well under observation.

Another day we found a leopard's kill, the remains of a goat, stuck up in a *guda* thorn tree fifteen feet from the ground. This is what had happened. The flock was returning leisurely to its zariba in the evening when the leopard, crouching ambushed in the long grass, successfully cut off and strangled the last straggler without attracting the attention of its

companions or of the small boy in charge. Fifty yards further away the goat was dragged and the leopard commenced her meal. But the feast, earned by an hour's patient watching, was not to be enjoyed in peace. Following, nosing on the trail, came the ugly mug of the hated *warába*, coming to a sudden standstill as turning a corner it sighted the leopard on its kill.

A low threatening growl! but the intruder stood his ground. Sterner measures were necessary, and reluctantly leaving its kill the leopard went for the foe. But fair fighting did not appeal to the latter, who promptly fled. Pursuit and punishment meant risking the dinner, so the leopard returned to its meal. But twice and again the *warába's* long-drawn hunting call rose upon the night air and presently three skulking forms might have been seen approaching. I was not there to see but I can well imagine the concentrated fury of the leopard's snarling growl. But now she dared not leave her kill, knowing that to chase one of the would-be robbers was to give another his opportunity. Fighting was all very well, but just then she wanted to dine; moreover, she was a small leopard and this was possibly an occasion where discretion would prove the better part. Which being so 'twere folly to await the attack. And gripping the remains of the goat firmly by the back of the neck she raced for the nearest tree.

I fancy that each of the *warábas*, with characteristic modesty, was urging the others forward, and was so busy saying "After you, old chap!" that they all forgot that their antagonist was a cat. Anyway, their

dash for the foot of the tree was too late—and the leopard dined.

Such was the tale writ in the sandy soil, as interpreted by Abdilleh ; and indeed much of it was to be read easily enough even by me when once it had been expounded, though my eye was too unpractised to do more by itself than spell out a word here and there.

There was a promising area of *durr* grass close by in which we thought the leopard might be spending the day, but it could not be beaten by three men, so I had it fired, taking up my post in the open beyond a sapling which afforded but a poor pretence of concealment. The grass burned on till there was but a small patch left : from this there emerged a spotted beast indeed, but no leopard ; it was one of the hyaenas that had had to go hungry last night. It stood and looked all round, then started straight towards me at a slouching trot. My first thought was not to shoot for fear of disturbing the leopard ; my second, that the leopard certainly was not there and the killing of a *warúba* was a plain duty. But a third thought followed in time to save him.

I was standing motionless against the little tree-trunk, my gun by my side in the shade ; proving once again, if proof were needed, that the only way to avoid notice in the jungle is to keep still ; for though I was entirely unconcealed it was not until he was within four yards of me that, as I tightened the grip of my rifle hand, the eyes of the beast met mine. He half threw himself back on his haunches, the short ears flattening, and for one long second we stared at each other, then with a peculiar little grunt of uneasiness

the gaunt devourer of babes turned and made off, the erstwhile trot become a shambling canter, and—I let him go.

Why? I think one of the most wonderful things about the working of the human brain is the way in which some subtle thought-connexion will suddenly recall memories that a second before would have seemed ridiculously irrelevant to the circumstances of the moment. Do you remember your Horace?

*Integer vitæ scelerisque purus
non eget Mauris jaculis neque arcu*

.
*Namque me silva lupus in Sabina
dum meam canto Lalagen et ultra
terminum curis vagor expeditis,
fugit inermem.*

I cannot plead guilty, I fear, to having been singing of Lalage just then, nor even that my thoughts were very far away; nor was I unarmed like the poet's man of blameless life; while I do not suppose there was much in common between the Somali landscape and the Sabine forest. But I dare say my *waràba* was as dangerous—or as harmless—as Horace's wolf of old.

Anyway, just as the beast saw me and stopped, those were the lines that came into my head, bringing with them memories of the days when I was a member of the oldest school in England and read Horace in the Fourth Form under a master whose iron-handed rule did not always effectually conceal the kindly soul behind.

Fate took me away to finish my school days elsewhere, and the Sandhurst examiners had no use for

quotations from Horace, so that a stray line here and there is all that my memory retains. If I remember something more of *Integer vitae*, it is because we used to sing it occasionally to a well-known hymn tune in the old school Choral Society. Well! I dare say this was not the first time that a criminal owed his life to a moment's sentiment. That this one lived to lead a better life is more than I will venture to affirm.

On the 13th August we returned to Kotunwein and thence despatched three camels to Berbera for the remainder of the men's rations, a portion having been left behind so as not to tax the camels too heavily at starting.

When shooting near camp I used sometimes to take out a camel to carry game. One day about this time the camel objected to carrying a nice *aoul* I had shot, and the gurgling brute proceeded to buck-jump in the most ridiculous fashion until he had the buck off. Of course such insubordination could not be tolerated, and after some trouble we managed to fasten it on again so securely that, although the fractious *oont* did his best, he could not get rid of it again.

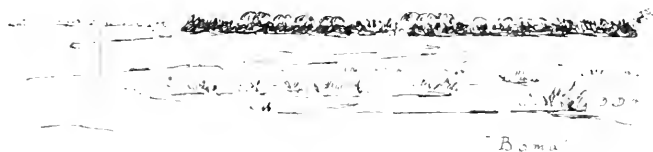
On the 14th I went to spend the night at a *karia* six miles away, the inhabitants having reported a leopard which was much too regular in his visits for their fancy. They told me here, also, that they had lost several lambs and one or two full-grown goats killed by a jackal.

The leopard failed to keep his appointment, so I gave the same *karia* another trial the following night, when I was treated to an interesting sample of the

combination of wariness and audacity that distinguishes the leopard above any beast I know.

As I walked into the zariba a small piccaninny standing by its mother, catching sight of me unexpectedly, burst into tears and fled in terror. I wonder if Somali mothers sometimes frighten their children into good behaviour with tales of a white bogey-man : But the Somali ladies were not shy ; when my bedding was put down beside my loop-hole a bevy of giggling dusky beauties inspected it with much interest ; it was quite embarrassing.

The loop-hole they had made for me was, as usual, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet from the ground, but was not, as it should



have been, flanked by a screen of sacking or camel mats on either side, so as to make it quite impossible for an animal to see through the fence. This omission proved unfortunate. The leopard turned up at about 12.30 a.m. and rushed the goat ; he failed to seize it however, and stood a couple of yards beyond, where I could not see him from the hole. I waited for him to return to the charge—and had to wait—for he did not come. He knew the zariba was occupied, and if he had merely heard the sounds of movements inside would probably have paid no attention beyond perhaps waiting until the sounds had ceased. But owing to the absence of a screen, he must, I think, have seen, through the fence, which might have been thicker,

that there was some one a little too close to be comfortable. The result being that a few minutes later a stampede of the animals at the far end of the zariba told me that he was prowling around on the other side. He did not come into my view at all, though twice, during the hour I waited, the behaviour of the sheep and goats inside showed that he was still about.

At length I lay down again, and was just dozing off when a shout and commotion inside the zariba made me sit up and look round. I was just in time to see, in the dim moonlight, a shadowy form race across the unoccupied portion of the zariba behind me, and clear the fence at a point some eight or ten yards from where I lay beside my loaded gun. It was the leopard, of course, and he had taken a sheep with him ! It looked as if he had, instead of jumping out where he came in, purposely crossed the zariba to my side to show his contempt for me, and I could almost believe I heard a mocking laugh as he vanished into the darkness ! The whole proceeding involved a nice calculation of risks worthy of all praise, demonstrating once more how the bolder is so often the safer course ; and once again I had been scored off by a Somali leopard.

What had struck me as much as anything in these proceedings was the pace at which the leopard crossed the zariba in spite of his burden. Inspection of the ground at daylight showed that he adopted the method I have already described, holding the fore part of the sheep in his mouth up in the air while the hindquarters trailed on the ground on his right side.

Outside we followed the trail for about half a mile to a stony hill where the head of the sheep and a



A GAME-CARRIER.



DIBATAG.

[To face p. 121.]

couple of feet, but nothing else, were found under a bush. The ground did not permit of any attempt to trace the leopard's subsequent peregrinations, so we had to wend our way back to camp empty-handed again.

I have mentioned that on arrival at Kotunwein we had appropriated a pool to our own use and fenced it round to keep out the Somali sheep, whose irruptions would soon have rendered the water undrinkable and then quickly wiped the pool out of existence. This was what happened before long to the rest of the water owing to the Somali's wasteful methods; a little care would have made the water last twice as long. So when a new *karia* came along and found only puddles of mud they wanted water from my pool. If I gave it to them I should have to give it to every succeeding *karia* and it would be gone in a day.

A deputation came to me and insolently demanded access to the water which was theirs, they had a right to it. I pointed out that I could not see it, as this was merely casual rain water on land which was not the property of this or any other wandering *karia*: moreover, the fact that there was any water at all remaining for any one was due to the precautions I had taken. As they did not choose to be civil I point-blank refused to give them a drop.

They were not exactly mollified when Henduleh remarked that as they were Aidagalla the mud puddles ought to suit them very well ("Aidagalla," the nickname by which an important section of the Habr Gerhajis tribe is known, signifying "one who rolls in the mud"!). They blustered and threatened to

complain to the District Officer ; but they knew they had no case, and presently climbed down, upon which I let them have as much water as we could spare.

It is an axiom in lion-shooting that *karias* attract lions, but the lion does not like the neighbourhood of too many human beings. Fresh *karias* kept coming up from the south and drove most of the game away, so we decided to move south a short way into the Haud. We ought really to have taken this course a week earlier, but I had been hoping for the arrival of my Abyssinian permit, intending as soon as it arrived to march straight across the Haud into Ogádén. However, a mail had arrived without it, and it looked as if I must perforce give up the Ogádén with the rhinoceros I had counted on getting there.

After hiring four additional water camels we started on the 16th August, leaving some stores at Kotunwein as before, and camped on the following day at Billeil Tobani, within the Haud, a few miles short of the Abyssinian border.



CHAPTER X

The Haud again—Difficulty of shooting *dibatag*—Mysterious circles—Butterflies: the "Painted Lady"—Birds at Libah Ale: nightjar: grey shrike: hoopoe—How the hoopoe gained his crest—A wily jackal—A good *dibatag*—Chitas: no luck—North again—A leopard's escape—The *bateleur* eagle—*Gerenuk*: two bad shots and a good one—Back at Kotunwein—An exasperating incident: *somajesti* the aard-wolf—Somali animal nomenclature—Bustard and secretary bird—Characteristics of the aard-wolf—*Kharindi* killed by lion—Tuyo Plain: an exceptional *aoul* head—A stormy sunset.

FROM Billeil Tobani we moved on to Libah Ale just across the border. I had hoped for another lion in the Haud, but luck was out, the pasture had dried up, and the *karias* all gone North, and we were just too late. However, it was worth while coming here to get one or two *dibatag*.

I have not found the *dibatag* as difficult an animal to shoot as it is stated to be. Shy it certainly is, but inquisitive, and will often stand to gaze at closer range than the *gerenuk*. It is fond of country where patches of the high *durr* grass are frequent, and these are a decided aid to stalking. Though often difficult to see, its grey colouring sometimes shows up a shining white in the sunlight.

I have not seen it remarked that there are two varieties of *dibatag* distinguishable by the length of their tails, but Abdilleh assured me that this is so; and certainly out of six specimens obtained by me on these two trips, two had tails of seven to eight inches

only, while in the others the length was eleven to fourteen inches—a marked difference.

While looking for tracks on the ground in the Haud, one's eye was frequently caught by marks which seemed to require explanation. These consisted of circles or parts of circles, sometimes three or four concentric, and perfectly regular, scraped on the ground. They puzzled me until investigation showed they were caused by stalks of grass trailing on the ground, pressed down by the force of the wind, and then blown in a circle round the central root, the regular indentations being caused by knots in the stalk! The comparatively deep marks made by the fragile looking grass stalk was remarkable. I have never seen anything of the kind elsewhere, and imagine it only occurs with this particular trailing grass.

Ever since I was first able to walk I have been more or less of a "bug-hunter." Here in the Haud my dormant entomological instincts were roused by the sight of a pink butterfly. Real pink for some unexplained reason is an extremely rare colour in butterflies, though not uncommon among moths, and a butterfly in which the prevailing hue was pink was, to me at any rate, unique. This species, of which I saw several specimens, was a bright pink all over (the pink of our common English cinnabar moth), with black markings somewhat after the style of that ubiquitous butterfly, *Danaïs chrysippus*, which it also resembled in flight, but was a smaller size. If any entomologist wants a more accurate description, he must go and catch one, which I failed to do.

Most of the butterflies I saw, they were not a great

many, belonged to familiar Indian types, which I suppose was not remarkable as Somaliland is part of the Indo-Ethiopian region. And of course that cosmopolitan insect the Painted Lady was there—where is she not to be found, gladdening the eye with her sprightliness and beauty? One day shy and distant or tantalising in her coquetry, showing the next a confiding familiarity, that is all her own. For me recalling distant memories of a little country rectory garden in the dear Green Isle, with which are associated my earliest recollections of this entirely charming daughter of the sunlight.

To turn from butterflies to birds. Nightjars of two or three species were common. One cannot wonder that, East and West, they are objects of superstition. They are weird uncanny birds, so unlike any others of the feathered tribes in their silent, swerving, moth-like flight; their indifference to one's presence, and habit of dropping to the ground in perfect silence, squatting as if they had no legs within a few feet of one in the dusk; the peculiar character of their notes, in harmony with the mysteries of night, all tend to invest the nightjar with a fascination that to me, wherever I may meet it, is always of the jungle.

And in the daytime its scheme of colouration is always so wonderfully in harmony with its surroundings. More than once a pair of bright eyes alone has warned me that I had all but set foot upon a living bird, which even then has made no attempt to move until I put my hand down to touch it.

Another bird that was often in evidence was a grey shrike, a beautiful bird like all his race, with a

fine air of breeding; but handsome is as handsome does, and there is a sinister quality in his black-browed beauty that well accords with his murderous tendencies.

Making geological researches in the neighbourhood of my tent at Libah Ale was a hoopoe, who fully agreed with the latest dictum of the medical profession that nothing is so good for the health as digging, only he uses a pick-axe instead of a spade. There is not a stain upon *his* character, though we may deprecate a taste for the odoriferous in his domiciliary arrangements as hardly befitting a bird who once wore a golden crown.

Did you know that? My authority as to the hoopoe's claims to royal insignia is Mr. Lockwood Kipling, and he would not have said it if it were not true. It seems that King Solomon was having a ride on his magic carpet, and Apollo, getting jealous, tried to give him sun-stroke. But the hoopoes came to the rescue, and spreading their wings to form a sunshade over the fainting monarch earned his lively gratitude.

Asked to name their reward, they prayed for golden crowns like his own, and their request was granted. But alas for the cupidity of human nature! the hoopoes too soon found that the coveted adornment marked them out for slaughter, so they hastened to petition for a removal of the fatal gift. Solomon listened to their entreaties and changed the crown of gold to one of feathers. And to this day the hoopoe wears a feathered crown "to witness if I lie."

One night here I was scored off again. A little

brute of a jackal had the audacity to attack my goat. I lay in wait to punish him with a dose of No. 2 shot. Presently I heard a crunching of bones a little to my left outside the zariba, which I put down to the jack or a hyæna having picked up some scraps, and hoped he would come in sight when he had done. It was only next morning that I knew what the "scraps" were, and found that Master Jack had contrived to squeeze through the fence opposite Abdi's cooking place, with the result, as the latter now informed me, that unless master shot some fresh meat for dinner he would have to go without! However, that evening, the little Sherwood exacted a full revenge.

That morning just as we were skinning a good *dibatag* shot in time to replace my stolen dinner, a messenger turned up to say that Elmi, who had been out prospecting in another direction, had seen three leopards together. Now the leopard, though sometimes found in pairs, is not ordinarily given to company, so I remarked to Abdilleh, on hearing the news, that they were probably chitas, especially as the latter frequently hunt by day.

It took us an hour and a half to come up with Elmi, who pointed out where he had last seen the beasts go into some long grass. We inspected the tracks—chitas sure enough. But they had not stayed in that patch of grass, and though we searched for an hour we could not find them. The spaces between the grass patches were so wind-swept that all tracks in the surface layer of the sand were obliterated as soon as made. It was a disappointment.

Soon after I missed, badly, the finest *dibatag* I had

seen, but in the two following days got two more on the Abyssinian side of the border. I was quite pleased at having made out the second of these as he stood looking at us through the grass 300 yards away, for even Henduleh said he was a tree-stump. On the way



back to camp I wanted the camera badly just when it was not there, as I succeeded in creeping up to within thirty yards of a *dibatag* doe standing on its hind legs, as it browsed in characteristic fashion off the young shoots of a mimosa tree.

Except for twice crossing the tracks, a day or two old, of a big lion, there were no signs of royalty about, so after adding an oryx and a *gerenúk* to the bag, we re-crossed the border and marched north again on the 22nd August.

The following night at Tur, not far from where I had killed the big lion, I missed a leopard that I ought to have had. He killed at about 2 a.m. and lay behind the goat, only the top of his head and ears visible. Mindful of the lioness I had let off at Kotunwein and determined not to make the same mistake again, as the night was dark, I waited until he should rise. Henduleh, who had been watching, unfortunately

imagined from my delay in shooting that I could not distinguish the leopard, and would not understand me when I tried to stop his pointing and gesticulating ; with the result that he attracted the notice of the leopard, which pricked up its ears and growled and then slipped away.

After explaining to Henduleh what sort of a shikari I thought him, I sat down to wait. After about an hour the leopard rose from behind a bush to the left, where he had evidently been lying on the watch for some time, and walked across my front about ten yards away. As he appeared to be departing and I could just see his outline I thought I had better shoot. Unfortunately I had no time to try and aim properly before he should disappear round the corner, and in my anxiety not to make the usual mistake of firing too high I did the other thing, and, as we found in the morning, my bullet must have passed just underneath him. It would have been rather a fluke if I had hit him, but I was disgusted at having had my excellent opportunity when he was on the kill spoiled by Henduleh's stupidity or excess of zeal.

We took up the leopard's tracks in the morning and succeeded in following him for about three miles, but then had to give up. Overhead, sailing in great curves on all but motionless pinions was the handsome bateleur eagle, his crimson leggings conspicuous in spite of his height above me ; and I wished that Mowgli had been there to teach me the eagle's Master-word ; for the passing-by of the spotted prowler could never have escaped that piercing eye.

That afternoon I met three buck *gerenúk* in the

bush. The setting sun on my foresight was my excuse when I missed my shot, but the sun obligingly went, and presently I had another shot, to miss again at 150 yards; I am not brazen enough to try and find another excuse or I might say it was the dull light this time! I followed the buck I had fired at, thinking his companions were with him, when suddenly from behind some bushes only fifty yards away broke the other two; close though they were and obviously frightened, instead of going straight away they circled round to my right in full view, at the usual *gerenúk* trot, long necks stretched out in front.

My snap-shot at sixty yards at the bigger buck in rear brought him down, to my satisfaction, for, as I have said, I do not like a single as well as a double-barrel for a running shot. The buck was not dead, and as we reached him struggled to his feet; Henduleh caught him by the horns and called to me to photograph them! As it was already dusk I could not oblige him, and the merciful knife quickly made an end.



We were back at Kotunwein on the 24th August. I had intended moving west at once, but there were reports of lions in two directions, so decided to stay a few days longer.

The following afternoon I had an experience which would probably have afforded some amusement to an onlooker, but which I found most exasperating. I was out on the Kotunwein Plain at about 5 p.m. when, putting the glasses on to a Greater Bustard in

the distance, I saw prowling about in the grass an animal that looked very like my old friend *somajesti*, and a nearer approach showed that it was. He was scratching at something in the ground (if an aard-wolf he would be fond of ants), then when I was about one hundred yards away sat up and looked at me, with ears pricked like a fox. From my previous limited experience of his kind, I believed him to be very shy, so though the visible part of him was a small mark in the grass, I thought I had better fire, using a solid bullet as I did not want to risk spoiling his skin. At the shot he sprang three feet into the air, lay still for a few moments and then began to move towards me with apparently a fore-leg broken. With frequent stoppages he came nearer and nearer, though a bit to one side, then when he had sat down only fifty yards away I committed an unfortunate error of judgment. I had no more .318 solid bullets with me and took the little Sherwood. It was quite powerful enough, but I should have used a capped bullet. However, looking upon *Somajesti* as disabled, and over-anxious to avoid a big hole in the skin of the new beast, such as the expanding bullet might have made, I used a solid lead bullet. It did not seem too light for its purpose, for he dropped to the shot, and I walked towards him. When, however, I was still thirty yards away he came to life again, picked himself up and bolted away to our right at a pretty useful pace for a cripple—and disappeared. Then I realised the explanation of his coming towards us when first hit; we had unwittingly cut off his retreat to his hole which he had now reached in safety.

The next thing was to see if we could dig out our quarry: fortunately one of the boys had come out with us, and he carried a short spear, with which somewhat inadequate tool we set to work. First we sank a shaft about four feet from the entrance; the depth here was three feet. From this spot the tunnel turned sharp at right angles; probing with a stick in the new direction, I unquestionably felt a soft yielding body. We then sank another shaft four feet further on and at a depth of three and a half to four feet, I at length got hold of a somewhat bushy striped tail! more excavating and then a hind-leg with a distinct feeling of life in it, but no more movement than that. However, to make sure, I put a .32 pistol bullet into the leg high up, aiming so that the bullet might, I hoped, rake forward, though of course I could not tell the exact position of the rest of the body; a quiver in the limb and movement ceased. Then after enlarging the hole a little more, I got a good hold of both hind legs, and lying on my face gave a great tug and out he came. But the moment I swung him clear, a vision of open eyes and open jaws turning in the air as if to try and snap at my bare arm, was a trifle more than I was quite prepared for from a "dead" beast, and I dropped him like the proverbial hot potato! The moment he touched the ground he was up and away—except for a more foxy head just like a smaller and more tawny edition of a striped hyæna. My Somalis were as much taken by surprise as I was, but recovering themselves, dashed in pursuit. I snatched up a rifle, but could get no chance of a practicable shot. However, I still believed the beggar was moribund

and only making a dying effort, and expected the Somalis to catch him up and knock him on the head directly. But if he was dying he was in no immediate hurry about it, and increased his lead until, after a chase of about a mile, by which time it was getting dark, he got clear away. Looking back, there was a distinct comic element in the affair, but it was an awful sell! I was so certain that he was done for; though I might have taken warning from the episode of my first black-buck in India years before, which escaped me after I had spanned the length of his horns with my fingers as he lay temporarily stunned by a bullet that had grazed the spinal cord. At any rate the question of *Somajesti's* identity was solved, he was undoubtedly an aard-wolf, to whose insignificant teeth I need not have given a thought, but I did not remember that in time.

Of course the aard-wolf is not a wolf at all, nor any relation, its name (signifying earth-wolf from its habit of living in burrows) being one of a number of misnomers that we have adopted from the Boers. The most notable of these is "eland," which is simply Dutch for "elk," a very different animal from the great antelope to which we now apply the title. But the early Dutch Colonists were not naturalists, and the misnomer is no more flagrant than the title too often given to the Indian gazelle of ravine "deer."

More than one writer gives the Somali name of the aard-wolf as *shambel* instead of *somajesti*, the only name I heard for this animal. When I questioned Abdilleh on this point he said *shambel* was a synonym

for *gududonné*, the African lynx or caracal, but I fancy he was mistaken.

Another instance in Somali nomenclature which I found differing from that usually given, was in the case of the great bustard, of which I saw two species, if not three, and which my men called *chugli*. The usual name as given by Swayne and Hornby is *salalmadli*, which I found applied to the secretary bird. The explanation is probably to be found in the Somali's lack of interest in birds generally. The secretary bird stalking about on the plains like a bustard might in the distance be taken for one, but at close quarters its appearance is very different. With its crest of loose feathers, its aquiline beak and its well-feathered thighs it reminded me of pictures one has seen of American Indians in their brodered pantaloons. I found a big nest of sticks at Kotunwein in the fork of a tree a few feet from the ground which I am inclined to think belonged to this bird. Henduleh said it was the nest of a vulture (*gurh-gurh*), but vultures as a rule prefer to build at the top of a tree.

To return to the aard-wolf. It is placed in a distinct genus (*proteles*) from the hyænas by reason of the five toes instead of four on its fore-feet, another great point of difference being its comparatively rudimentary teeth, due no doubt to its diet of insects, though it will sometimes feed on carrion. I cannot believe that, in Somaliland at any rate, it is so essentially nocturnal of habit as has been stated. Though a comparatively scarce animal I met with it four times on the plains of Tuyu and Kotunwein between the



GAZELLE WITH 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ -INCH HORNS.



CROSSING A RIVER-BED NEAR DAGA HAYER. [To face p. 135.]

hours of 2 and 5 p.m. I fancy that it sometimes escapes notice through being taken for a jackal.

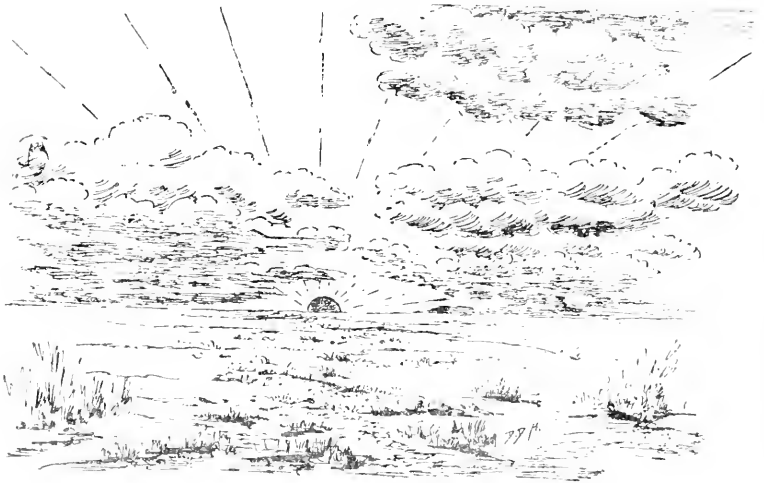
On the 27th August I made an excursion eastwards towards Tuyo, but was disappointed in not being able to find a very big lion, whose tracks of the evening before we came across amongst the high grass on the western edge of the ban. He had killed a burrowing animal called by the Somalis *kharindi*, which I afterwards ascertained to be that little known ant-eating creature the aard-vark.

Crossing a corner of Tuyo I shot an *aoul* with 20½-inch horns, quite symmetrical, a very fine head, and the best I have seen at all. Here, too, I saw a big tortoise, which Abdilleh promptly stood upon, as a Somali always does, to harden the soles of the feet! The tortoise does not mind.

The following evening I was pottering about with the Sherwood after dik-dik, when Elmi started a *gerenik* buck which, taken by surprise at close quarters, all but ran into me whom it did not see; I could have touched it with a stick as it passed. Realising what I was at the last moment, it was for once in its life scared out of its trot into a gallop, but the rifle that instinctively went up to my shoulder came down again as I saw its horns were but moderate.

A black storm was brewing, and we hurried back to camp just in time to escape a drenching. That sunset was one of the most impressive I have ever seen. Two huge banks of thunder-cloud working up from the west, but the setting sun between them unobscured. Result, a wonderful purple light on the threatening cloud masses. Purple, the colour of Emperors, the colour

of mourning. And on the moving canvas of the heavens as the clouds rolled on there seemed a mystic blending of the two ideas, a picture funereal yet of a majesty imperial. Then the sun disappeared in a marvellous radiance of green and gold serenity—a glorious calm, which, swiftly though it was blotted out by the advancing storm, left an indelible impression of light behind the darkness; a certain promise that, however black the moment, once again and always shall the light prevail.



CHAPTER XI

A westward move—Jennie—Death of a marauder—Oryx on the Seila Plain—A drowned camp—Aror—Lesser kudu bull: an opportunity missed—Lioness with cubs: Abdilleh's lucky shot: all's well that ends well—Iddu Khan: out of the eater came forth meat—Uses of a dead lion—Baby caracal—Camel killed by big lion: a fruitless vigil: the lion's roar—The lesser kudu bull again: elusive as usual—Capture of one of the lion cubs—An exciting night—Tracking the enemy—A pretty shot and another lioness—Colour of Somali lions—Genet—My Abyssinian permit: too late—Sonny and his foster-mother—Tracks of a big lion: lose them—A good *aoul*—A long day on the Aror *ban*—My best oryx: sad loss of a horn—Swayne's hartebeest—Another good oryx—A second hartebeest—Jackals at dinner—The *aoul* as an animal of the plains: Mr. Elliot's opinion—Speed of the *aoul*.

ON the 30th August we bade farewell to Kotunwein and marched west for Aror, starting with a single long march from 10.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. Of course, but for the cool winds of the high plateaux, such a march under the tropical sun would have been something cruel. Jennie, the little *aoul* fawn, was beginning to get skittish. She was by no means content to trot soberly along with the goats and sheep, but was continually making excursions of her own, until she had to be caught and carried on Arraleh's shoulder.

That night a *warába* tried to annex a goat and died the death. What an extremely unprepossessing beast a hyæna is, of whatever kind! One is puzzled, considering the similarity of their habits, to account for the short ears of the spotted hyæna in comparison with the long ones of his striped brother.

The next morning crossing a corner of the Seila Plain the glasses showed me a pair of oryx horns sticking up in the distance. Approaching I found there was a herd of a dozen, all lying down in the open. Between 150 and 200 yards from them was one solitary bush, which I succeeded in reaching after half an hour's crawl. By this time, however, they were on their legs and looking in my direction with suspicion, and before I could get in a shot they began to move.

However, I hit one, a little behind the lungs I think, and he galloped off away from the rest. He stood at about 350 yards and under the circumstances, as the pony had a sore back and was with the caravan, I certainly ought to have fired then. Unfortunately, thinking he would not have stopped unless he was badly hit, I let the chance go, hoping to get nearer. But he went off again and doubled the distance. I waited for him to lie down but he would not, then followed in vain for some time, and eventually, when he joined the herd again, I realised that he was not vitally wounded and had to give up; for the caravan was miles ahead and we had far to go that day.

That evening our camp was "drowned." We had only just halted and got the tent up, no time to make a trench or embankment, when the most tremendous rain came down. In fifteen minutes, the whole zariba, inside the tent and out, was under water; fifteen minutes more at the same rate and the rain had stopped. And then we had a great time draining the zariba. The floor of the tent, after the water had been got rid of, had to be all dug up and we were hard at

work until 10 p.m. It was very good fun as soon as we were sure that nothing important had been damaged; at the first indication that it was going to be heavy rain all the camel mats had been piled on top of the precious skins and ammunition, etc. And the Somali sets too high a value on the rain that keeps his flocks alive, to mind a wetting, so no one could have had more cheery companions than were mine. Next morning we had to wait until about 10 a.m. to let things dry a bit before we could march again.

Another long march took us across a corner of the Aror *Ban*, a great open plain. Before reaching it a concourse of vultures led me aside to discover the reason why, which proved to be the skeleton of a camel that had probably died a natural death as there was no sign of lions about.

Further on, crossing the brow of a low hill, I suddenly came upon an ostrich only fifty yards away. I was down on the ground like a shot and the rifle came up, to be stopped just in time by Elmi as he pointed to a *karia* on the left. The bird was a tame one!



Crossing this part of the *ban*, whether walking or riding, it was rather trying, on account of the extraordinary number of holes concealed by the grass, even the old mule ("mayule" as Abdilleh pronounces it) came down three times.

We halted for the night on the far edge of the plain, and next morning marched three or four miles into the bush and made a zariba in which to spend

two or three days. We were now in Abyssinian territory again and hoped to do some good work. The district has a reputation for lions, though it is nasty bush to tackle them in. There were also said to be a few lesser kudu about, and right out on the *ban* to the west there was a chance of finding a few hartebeest.

That afternoon I found there was plenty of typical lesser kudu ground, fairly thick jungle with the *hig* aloe, which this antelope loves, in abundance. The aloe blossoms, sometimes red and sometimes yellow, added a colour contrast to the green of its fleshy sharply pointed leaves—if leaves is the correct term. Tracks of the kudu themselves also were not lacking.

Next morning, exploring the edge of the bush, my eye was suddenly caught by the striking black and white pattern on the face of an oryx looking at me through some bushes not forty yards away. He dashed away with a snort, my bullet as he fled being intercepted by a convenient branch which it cut through, but was thereby turned from its path.

Later we tracked a lesser kudu bull for some time, then lost the tracks but found the kudu, who suddenly dashed away from behind a tree a hundred yards in front, showing a fine pair of horns. For an hour more we tracked him, but he knew too much for us. At length, however, Henduleh suddenly stopped and pointed to some *durr* grass a hundred yards to the right. I looked and presently made out the indistinct outline of head and two large ears looking at us; the big ears held forward causing a striking resemblance to a sambar under similar conditions.

No other part of the animal was visible, and

unfortunately I hesitated to shoot with the Paradox, which I was carrying, at so small a mark at that distance, and turned to Henduleh for the .318. As I raised the latter to my shoulder, the spiral horns whisked round into view and he was gone. The miss my hasty shot achieved was a foregone conclusion. My own fault: I should have learnt the lesson on my first trip that the only thing to do with a lesser kudu, unless perhaps you see him first and know you are undetected, is to shoot on sight at the first approach to a reasonable chance he gives you.

That afternoon the cook's boy turned up to be doctored, with a hole in his head. They said a branch had fallen on him as he lay asleep. The hole was above the right eye, nearly half an inch deep. I syringed and washed it with an antiseptic solution and dressed it according to my lights, and eventually made a satisfactory cure.

When we arrived at Aror we heard of various recent depredations by lions, but our fame seemed to have preceded us, as for two or three days we heard of none. Then fortune gave another shake of the dice and there were happenings.

First came in news on the morning of the 5th September of a sheep taken during the night from a *karia* four miles away. We made our way there and took up the track—a single lioness. After about two hours following her trail with considerable difficulty we struck a likely patch of high grass beyond which the tracks did not seem to go. The grass and bush were rather too continuous to make it a nice spot; however, I took my stand in a position that seemed

to afford the best command of the situation, but was entirely exposed.

Abdilleh remained with me, sending Elmi with four other trackers we had brought from the *karia* to throw stones and sticks into the grass from the other side. The lioness would not move for some minutes, but at last sprang out from the thickest part, and stood where the grass was thinner, looking to see what was disturbing her. She was twenty yards from me, but I could only see the back of her neck and one ear. I fired and saw the head and neck go down out of sight in the grass, then after a moment reappear in almost the same place. I had no more to aim at than before, and having emptied one chamber would ordinarily have reloaded it or waited for her to show more of herself before firing again. But I saw that one of the beaters on the other side had foolishly come much too close, and, ignorant of her whereabouts, was actually within ten yards of the lioness: I realised too from the fixed position of her head so far as I could see it, and from a glimpse of a switching tail, that she had detected and was watching him. Fearing that she was on the point of going for him, I fired again at once and rather hurriedly.

At the shot she turned and dashed out into the open to my left, then, catching sight of us, instead of continuing her flight, checked with startling suddenness, and stood for a second only fifteen yards away. She was the picture of rage; her eyes flashing yellow fire, very different from the brown sleepiness sometimes seen in a lion in captivity; her muscles tense and ready for action; her tail switching once to the

side and then stiffening like a pointer's, infallible indication of a coming charge ; and this in a silence more ominous than any growl.

I turned to Abdilleh for the '400, but instead of handing it to me, he fired both barrels rapidly. She shrank at the first shot in a way that showed she was badly hit, and then bounded into an adjoining clump of grass. There might be trouble to come, but for the moment I felt I was well out of an awkward situation. For it had been awkward : an empty gun in my hand, and a wounded lioness only fifteen yards away ! Of course, at the moment I was mad with Abdilleh for firing instead of handing me the rifle ; but, as he said, the distance was so small and she so obviously meant mischief that he was doubtful whether I should have had time to get rid of the Paradox, take the rifle and get in my shot, if she had charged the next moment, as was practically certain she would have done. I might have done it, but it would have been a very close thing, and under the circumstances he was quite justified in acting as he did, seeing that for the moment she offered him an easy shot. At the same time, though he could use a rifle, Abdilleh was far from being a practised shot, and if his first bullet had not been fortunately placed (his second was a miss) the result might, almost certainly would, have been disastrous. For as it turned out—a fact of which we were not at first aware—this lioness was the most dangerous of foes, a mother with young cubs in the grass before us, while my bad shooting had merely hurt her enough to enrage.

However, to go on with the story. The new patch

of grass was not a large one and I sent two men up trees with orders to fire into it, which they did, but without success; at length, however, one man from a tree said he could see her. I climbed with the glasses to his point of vantage and made her out lying on her side in an open space in the middle of the grass, apparently dead. Another bullet to make sure, and we dragged her out, and examined her with interest. We found that one of my shots had been a clean miss, while the other had been unlucky in striking the neck just to the right of the spinal cord and had passed out through the side of the throat without causing any serious injury. This affords another illustration of the danger of the neck-shot even at close quarters, unless nearly the whole of the neck is visible, and more or less broad-side on: though no shot can be more effective if correctly placed. Abdilleh's first shot had found the heart, luckily for us both. His second had been a miss.

I at first supposed that of my two shots it was the hurried second one which missed, but on consideration do not think this can have been so; I now believe that my first bullet must have been too high, and whizzing over made the lioness duck her head instinctively, while it was the second that hit and moved her. For the miss with my first barrel there was no excuse, though I should have been wiser perhaps to wait for a clearer shot in the first instance. In the outcome the credit for the death of my seventh lion was all Abdilleh's: *palmam qui meruit ferat*. All the same, the skin was mine, for I did at least, if in bungling fashion, draw first blood!

The lioness was dead and we proceeded to look for the cubs, but without success. As it happened we were quite close to camp, so I at once sent off a man to bring Iddu Khan, my Indian orderly, as hitherto he had seen only the skins of lions, and it was not right that he should go back to Aden without having seen something more to spin yarns about. Meanwhile I sat down to have a smoke. When Iddu arrived I photographed him sitting on the lioness, to his great delight. When she was skinned he insisted on carrying off a hind leg! He said he was going to dry the meat and take it to Aden, the Subadar Major of the Indian Infantry Regiment there attributed great properties to it. Both in India and Somaliland, great store is set by the fat of a lion, tiger, or leopard, for various medicinal purposes, among others the cure of rheumatism, and it is always carefully preserved; but this was the only time I have ever heard of any such value attaching to the lean meat. Somalis also preserve the liquid oily secretion found in the liver of a lion for use as a wash for sore eyes. Western physicians have evidently still a lot to learn!

Later, when back in camp at breakfast, a Somali turned up with an offering—for a consideration—in the form of a baby caracal (the African lynx, Somali *gududonné*), a quaint little reddish-brown kitten with thick soft fur and black tufted ears. It was three or four weeks old with very sharp teeth already, but quite friendly, and I was pleased to have it. The caracal is not common in Somaliland, and being very quick and active as well as extremely stealthy and nocturnal in its habits, is very rarely met with.

About one o'clock news came in that a young camel had been killed the evening before about five miles away in the opposite direction, so presently we were off again. On arrival at the spot, we found the fore part of the camel remaining, concealed in the long grass, while his pugs showed the lion to be a big male. He had been seen near the kill as late as 7 a.m. that morning, and as there was a considerable area of high grass and thick bush all around, he was probably somewhere not far off. But the cover was such as to render tracking very slow and difficult, and the chances of a shot if we found him small. So we decided it would be wiser not to look for him so late in the day, but to take advantage of the kill and sit up for his return. Accordingly a thorn shelter was made some thirty yards away and the kill dragged in front of this from its hiding-place, a goat at the same time being tied up outside the shelter, in which I took my place at about 5 p.m. Such a procedure, especially the moving of the kill, would, with the tiger, be simply throwing one's chances away; but I believe a similar plan frequently proves successful with a lion, who has the reputation of being far less cautious when returning to a kill. And if any man knows the ways of lions it should be Abdilleh.

However, our vigil was doomed to disappointment, though we stayed in the shelter until daybreak next morning. What had happened was simply what, judging from tiger experiences, was to be expected. The lion came and found his kill gone; prowling round, he detected us in our shelter, did not think it good enough, and decamped. Tying up a bait outside

an ordinary zariba is another matter ; the lion knows the zariba to be a human habitation and visits it in that knowledge. But the human presence in a newly constructed shelter where was no such thing before, with a live bait just alongside of the spot whence his own kill had been removed, savours too strongly of a trap to a beast of a wary disposition, as this undoubtedly was, and moreover not particularly hungry. But I have no doubt that with many lions we should have been successful.

Daylight showed that he had been within a few feet of us, but we never heard a sound, except between 9 and 10 p.m., when he roared three or four times a defiant farewell as he was moving away. Lions in Northern Somaliland are comparatively silent beasts ; this was the only occasion that I heard a genuine roar. It has become the fashion in some quarters to belittle the lion, and his roar among other attributes is stated to be nothing of account. I am not going to describe it, that has been done often enough by men who know and whom no one can accuse of exaggeration. For me, having heard it, the long fruitless night vigil after a tiring day yet seemed to have been worth while.

On our way back to camp in the morning I again came across the lesser kudu bull who had escaped me before, and again was the result the same ; though on this occasion, while we were able to track him for two hours, he never gave me a chance of a shot at all.

That afternoon we moved camp about five miles westward. On the way we visited the spot where the last lioness had died and found tracks of two cubs. Firing the grass, one cub apparently contrived to sneak

away unobserved, but the other was soon dislodged and captured without much difficulty. He was a fine little fellow, not more than three weeks old, the Somalis said, with quite a long coat spotted like a pard.

That night was an exciting one. There were three Somali zaribas near at distances varying from 400 yards to a mile. From each in succession, between 7.30 and 9 p.m., came the noise of a sudden uproar, indicating the attack of a lion. From the nearest shouts we gathered that at one zariba at least the attempt had been successful and a sheep been borne off by a triumphant marauder. It would be hard if our zariba alone was to be ignored! We had a donkey and a goat tied up on opposite sides. At about 10 o'clock I had just laid down when a sudden agonized bray from the unhappy donkey was followed by the sound of a scuffle and fall, to the accompaniment of deep menacing growls. I was up in a moment and at the loop-hole. Unfortunately the donkey had been tied too close to a small tree, with the result that the lions (there were two) had contrived to drag the body partially round the tree, and lying down to feed on the hindquarters, were, in the darkness, concealed behind the carcass and the tree trunk; sufficiently so, at any rate, to make it impossible to distinguish anything definite at which to shoot, even when a lantern was held up above the zariba fence.

Meanwhile the lions were feasting at a furious rate, the sounds of the tearing of flesh and cracking of bones, with a continuous deep growling, testifying to a horrible orgie. The sight of the lantern merely provoked increased growls. I thought of turning on my

little electric hand-lamp, but could not manipulate it and use my gun at the same time, and was afraid that in the unaccustomed hand of a Somali it would not be pointed accurately enough to allow me a fair shot before its bright light scared them away. However, at length I resolved to try it, but just then a shadowy figure moved away to the left, and the other departed unseen. Of course we supposed they had only gone temporarily, and now was our opportunity to improve matters; we sallied forth and moved the dead donkey (a fifth part of him already devoured) clear of the tree, and fastened it down, then retired to the zariba again.

I have mentioned that there were two lions, the Somalis said probably a pair, and that from his voice one was a big male. Now, in such cases it is invariably the female who returns first to the kill, so I determined to hold my hand and wait for her less impetuous lord and master. I had not been watching for more than ten minutes when a low purring growl announced the return of the lioness, and presently she appeared sniffing at the spot where the donkey had lain, then stood looking at the present position of the kill, never ceasing from the utterance of that low but intimidating growl; for perhaps half a minute she stood, offering a perfect broadside shot at about four yards distance, then walked away to the left out of sight. For an hour I waited in vain, then turned in. At about 2 a.m. Abdilleh roused me, saying there was something about. I sat down to watch, and in a couple of minutes it appeared on the kill, a wretched jackal! The moon had now risen and I saw him clearly as he took hurried

snatches at the body, after each bite looking all around him with a furtive uneasy air. It was too obvious that there were no lions anywhere near, so I went back to bed disgusted, reflecting that the lions of Aror at any rate did object to their kills being moved. However, the morning furnished another explanation, when we learned that two sheep had been taken from two adjacent *karias* by the same pair of lions, so that my donkey was their third meal in the course of two or three hours. With waistbelts tight as theirs must have been, why indeed should they return ?

At about 7 a.m. we started on their tracks, from which we found to my disappointment that the male was a youngster, probably, if anything, a trifle smaller than the lioness. After a time we got into country consisting entirely of *durr* grass in more or less continuous patches ; unfortunately we had to travel with the wind, which was blowing steadily, with the result that we put them up eighty yards away. Once they were on the alert it was hard work to come up with them, and we should never have done so had they not been full-fed. But at length about midday we surrounded a patch of grass and thorn scrub that they had entered and not left. We fired the grass and the lioness came out just in front of me, and immediately put on the pace, going past me at about twenty-five yards distance in great bounds. At my shot, heels over head she went like a rabbit ! It was the prettiest shot possible. I had held a trifle too far forward, but the heavy bullet had smashed both shoulders. She picked herself up and struggled gamely on, taking a raking

stern shot from the second barrel with hardly a sign of feeling it ; but another thirty yards and she was down, dead as the proverbial mutton ; the second bullet (a solid one) entering at the flank, had carried forward through the liver and lungs into the throat. She was in excellent condition, measured 8 feet $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches in length, and contained four embryos an inch long. All of my adult lionesses were of much the same size, but these last two in the Aror bush were decidedly tawny in colour and not the typical Somali grey tint of the Dudwein specimens. All harboured a number of peculiar flat parasitic flies.

At the sound of my first shot the second lion had broken away to one side, and we now followed him up. The tracking became more and more difficult, and as we did not think he was a big one we eventually gave him up and were back in camp about 3 p.m., rather done up : the wind had dropped, and it had been very hot after midday.

I should mention that just before the lioness broke a small grey spotted animal rushed out past me, to which under different circumstances I should like to have paid more attention. I had, however, no difficulty in recognising it as a genet.

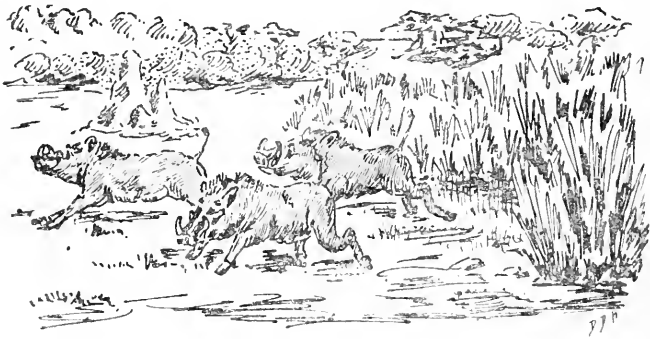
On arrival in camp we learned that the third alarm which we heard on the previous night had been caused by a single big lion that had taken a sheep from the furthest zariba, but it was too late to think of taking up his tracks then.

The mail had just arrived and with it my Abyssinian permit. Imagine my exasperation at finding that it had actually reached Aden a few days before

I did, and in spite of instructions to the contrary, had been forwarded by the post office to England. Now, owing to the time I had lost, it was too late to think of the Ogádén, so the rhino that ought to have been mine still continues with his brethren to provide the twentieth century with an example of life from the world before the flood.

With some difficulty the little lion cub was persuaded to adopt a goat as foster-mother—much to the latter's objection, for in taking his meal he used both teeth and claw with some strenuousness. Poor little beggar, he was not very happy, and cried most of the first night until I put him to sleep, petting and soothing him just like a baby.

The next morning I went after the big lion who



had been prowling around in the night, but the tracks at length took us right out on the open plain, where rain had fallen and we lost them. I saw a sounder of pig where they would have afforded a grand ride if I had had horse and spear at hand. On the way back I shot a fine *aoul* with horns that touched twenty inches.

That afternoon, after an unsuccessful search for

kudu, I got caught in a heavy downpour while shooting plover with the Sherwood for the pot. These were the big goggle-eyed stone-plover, but a noisy lapwing like the Indian "did-he-do-it?" used also now and then to afford a bird course for dinner, as did the grey ring-dove at times. Tramping back to camp while the sun dried my outside, I caught a glimpse of an animal in the grass which I took to be a caracal, but could not be sure.

On the 9th September I had a long day out on the great *ban* where I hoped to find hartebeest. I started at 6.30 a.m. and saw a belated hyæna on the plain. Further on the *ban* was dotted with herds of *aoul*, and feeding among them here and there an occasional bull oryx. An apparently very fine head carried by one of these latter attracted my attention and I proceeded to stalk him. I had no difficulty in approaching within two hundred yards or so, but the wind was high and steady shooting difficult, so that I hit him too far back. A second shot when he stopped presently and looked back at me was most unfortunate, cutting off one of his horns near the base. After that I followed him for a mile before I could get another shot and bagged him, to find he possessed much the finest head I had seen, the uninjured horn measuring just 34 inches; but there were only six inches left of the other, the remaining portion lying somewhere in the grass a mile away! However, it did not prove difficult to trace his spoor back to the spot where the horn had been lost and I quite hoped to find it. But in this my luck was out; I suppose the great velocity of the .318 bullet may have carried the horn fifty yards away,

and the grass was long enough to make it impossible to search more than a very small area of ground with any thoroughness.

An hour later I was examining with the glasses another oryx among some *aoul* when a dark object to the right rose from the ground and revealed itself as the bull hartebeest that was the main object of our quest; the oryx no longer counted. I had not the least difficulty in walking up to within one hundred yards of him, and dropped him with a single bullet, disabled



but not dead; the hartebeests like the oryx family are singularly tenacious of life. The horns were a nice massive pair and a very fair length. The *síg*, as Somalis call Swayne's hartebeest, has a peculiarly long bovine face, with a soft dark red-brown coat, and stands over four feet at the shoulder, but the back slopes considerably, the hindquarters being a good deal lower. Further west on the Marar Prairie this species is to be found in thousands. I was very pleased at getting one now instead of having to go there, a good deal out of my way, to find one.

An hour or two after skinning him we came across another good bull beisa, which dropped to a single bullet at 250 yards, not equal to the last, but a good head, $31\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The camel we had brought with us being sufficiently loaded, we borrowed another from a herd grazing on the plain, giving the owner a haunch of oryx meat for the loan.

We then turned our faces homewards, and presently I bagged a second hartebeest, feeding with an oryx among a big herd of *aoul*. The *síg* has been described as shy and difficult to shoot; possibly they are so when in herds, but the two bulls I shot (I saw no other) were as tame as any antelope I have ever seen, in marked contrast to the oryx and even the *aoul* in the same place.

Continuing our way we passed a *karia* which produced a long draught of milk that, if a trifle smoky, was yet most comforting. Presently we passed the remains of the first beisa, providing a contentious repast for four or five jackals and a number of vultures. The antics of one of the former were peculiar, every now and then he would ruffle up his fur and arch his back into a buck-jumping attitude and, with a sort of dancing gait, go for the nearest vulture or another jackal, the latter invariably giving way.

Further on I shot a bustard, intermediate in size between the *chugli* and the *gelo* and at length reached camp at seven o'clock, having been out for twelve hours. A good day. The two camel-loads of meat were received with acclamation by my band of hungry retainers.

Of *aoul* I must have seen over two thousand on

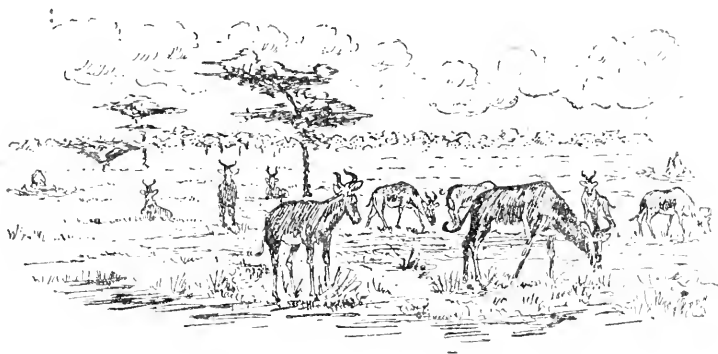
the *ban* during the day, and if I had not been after bigger game, could have picked out some fine heads, but *aoul* stick together so that it is often very difficult to select and shoot the best head in a herd.

Though often found in more or less open bush country the *aoul* is essentially an animal of the plains. In making this statement I find I am at variance with Mr. G. D. Elliott, who is quoted in *The Game Animals of Africa* as saying, "This species cannot be deemed a denizen of the plains in the same sense as oryx and hartebeest." In respect of hartebeest this is no doubt correct, but the comparison with the oryx is by no means in accord with my experience.

At no time of the year are large herds of *aoul* to be found anywhere but on the open plains, while nowhere have I seen any *aoul* at all in thick bush, though small herds are often seen where the bush is scattered. In February (beginning of the dry season) I did not see an oryx on the plain at all, while both then and at the end of the rains I found them frequently in thick bush alike in the *khansa* jungle of Ogo, in the Haud and at Aror. The only two occasions on which I came across a herd of thirty to forty oryx they were in the bush, once in the Haud and once in Ogo-Guban, in places where one would expect to see and did see *gerenúk*, but never *aoul*. I have noticed also that *aoul* feeding within the edge of the bush during the day make for the open plain as evening comes on, presumably for greater safety. The oryx, too, of course is often to be seen on the open *ban*, but on the whole it is decidedly less a "denizen of the plains" than the *aoul*.

I think, too, that Mr. Elliott over-estimates the

speed of the *aoul*; for an antelope I should certainly not call it "very fleet." In my opinion the *dhero* would leave it standing, and I doubt if it is any faster than the Indian nilghai, or as fast. In this view I am supported by Drake-Brockman, who says that on horseback the *aoul* can be very easily run down, as indeed I have proved for myself.



CHAPTER XII

Northward to Ogo-Guban—Ostriches: a stratagem from Shakespeare—Birds out of place—Grey jackal—Dik-dik—The cattle country—"Spurfowl"—Gebili—Absence of game—A big tortoise—Ticks—Sonny and the other babies—Balls of fluff—*Khabar* of two big lions: on their tracks: not this time—Thinking for himself—Asa hills: "conies"—Tracks of elephants—Barka Hagar—Loss of lynx kitten—A night to be remembered: an audacious visitor: lioness or leopard?—No. 2: a beautiful leopard—An ominous sound: *warābas* waiting for the end—Daylight: No. 1: all that was left of a big leopard—The day's resources: The sound of the trumpet—*Marodi*—An audience of Royalty: elephants at close quarters—Greater kudu—A would-be robber.

THE following morning we broke up camp and marched northwards, Sonny, the lion-cub, travelling on camel-back in a basket one of the men made for him. He was beginning to feel much more cheerful, and had nearly forgotten his mother.

Crossing a corner of the *ban*, we saw a pair of ostriches in the distance which I endeavoured to stalk on the principle of Birnam Wood and Dunsinane, crawling behind Henduleh, who carried a bush in front to shield us both, stopping every time one of the birds raised its head. But in spite of our guile we were still some 400 yards distant when they took alarm and were off, flapping wings helping them along, dodging continually to one side or the other as if fully aware of the nature of the leaden pursuer they had to fear. I fired a couple of shots at the cock, but, of course, it was hopeless.

With the exception, perhaps, of one or two forest

animals like the okapi or the bongo, I doubt if there is any creature much more difficult to shoot on foot than the ostrich, unless you find a nest and lie in ambush.

At the midday halt I was surprised to see a little sandpiper running about on a hartebeest skin spread out to dry, picking here and there, presumably at insects. It did not seem at all the place for one of his kind, there could have been no water within a considerable distance. We had had no trouble about water owing to frequent rain, which we could collect, but an hour or two after the sun came out all moisture had always vanished from the surface.

Even more out of place for the same reason was a kingfisher that I saw in the Haud. Probably he was a kindred spirit to the Indian white-breasted kingfisher which is frequently to be seen away from water, preferring to shikar grasshoppers and their like with the king-crow and myna to angling for the silver *chilwa*. After all, the laughing jaekass of antipodean fame is nothing but a kingfisher gone astray.

On the morning of the 12th September, while dressing, I shot a spotted hyæna prowling outside the zariba some eighty yards away, and soon after starting rolled over a grey jackal with the Sherwood, rather a pretty "flying" shot. I found this species (*C. variegatus*) much less common than the handsomer black-backed jackal (*C. mesomelas*). Just afterwards I heard three times repeated a peculiar single note, a clear musical "phew," which Abdilleh said was the call of the hunting-dog, but we did not come across the animal, which is rarely met with.

On this march the character of the country changed considerably, passing from open bush into the thick *khansa* jungle of Kaddu, with soft green grass underfoot, yet except for an occasional dik-dik, of game there was none. Of dik-dik, by the way, I never saw any but the one species, *Madoqua Phillipsi* (Somali *sakáro gol ass*), the habitat of *M. Swaynei* (*sakáro guyu*) not apparently extending so far north as its discoverer supposed—in this connection, *vide Mammals of Somaliland*.

In the afternoon we reached more hilly country, with dry river-beds and a greater variety of vegetation, and obviously better watered than any we had been through. We met, too, the first herds of cattle we had seen, small humped animals like the miscalled “zebu” of India, but mainly of a red colouring which was quite home-like.

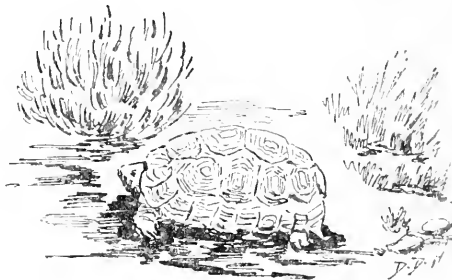
On these river-banks I found the African “spur-



fowl” plentiful, and shot several. They are not spur-fowl at all, but a large species of francolin with a bare throat (*Pternistes*). The Somali calls these and the smaller partridge, in common with the guinea-fowl, *digirin*, a name which properly belongs to the latter alone. There were reports of lions hereabouts, but nothing definite.

On the 14th we reached Gebili, a pleasant camping-ground on the banks of a winding stony river-bed. We heard of lion and leopard, and there were signs of lesser kudu, but no other game. Indeed, through all this cattle country game was very scarce; it is comparatively near to Hargeisa, and has been much shot over in consequence. Most of it is beautiful country, and in the eighties used to teem with game from elephant downwards. Now in four days all I had seen was a single specimen each of oryx and *gerenúk*, and one little party of *dhero*.

A big tortoise I came across measured twenty-five inches in length, thirteen and a half in height, and sixty-nine in circumference. I wonder where the tortoise finds his enjoyment in life? Flies were



very troublesome, presumably on account of the cattle, and a large tick with a tortoise-shell back was far too much in evidence. All the cattle carried scores of these obnoxious little pests, but did not seem to be much worried by them.

Sonny was quite at home by this time. He used to have great games with the little lynx, which loved to bite his ears, and he was fond of stalking Jennie, who would put her head down and knock him over, producing such a quaint puzzled expression on the cub's face. He delighted in chewing a boot or a bare ankle! and was always strolling about in camp

investigating things, but showed no inclination to wander away. He took a great interest in the camels, though rather nervous of such big creatures.

He was altogether a most charming and gentlemanly little beast; the lynx baby, too, was as tame as possible—until feeding time, when it became an absolute little fury. Sonny had been promoted to scraps of meat too, over which he was apt to get impatient, but on the whole his table manners were good. But I have never seen anything like such concentrated rage in a tiny creature as in the other little spitfire if it thought you were going to interfere with its dinner.

On the night of the 15th we heard a leopard several times, but he did not come near the zariba. Next morning I went to search for lesser kudu. Just after starting I nearly trod on a partridge with three chicks a few days old, wee mottled brown balls of fluff; I tried to catch one for closer inspection, but they reached some cover and vanished immediately.

We went on to the river-bed, which looked promising for kudu. There were no signs of any for a long time, but at length we struck the fresh tracks of a solitary bull; following these for some distance we had just lost them in thick jungle when our attention was attracted by a distant coo-ee from the direction of camp. Elmi went to investigate, and presently came back with one of the camel-men to say that fresh *khobar* of lions had just come in. The elusive kudu was promptly left to his own devices as we hurried back to camp.

It turned out that one of the men who had been to Hargeisa with a letter, had just arrived and reported



"JENNIE"



TWO BABIES—LION AND LYNX.

[To face p. 162.]

crossing the fresh tracks of a pair of lions some five miles away and going north. That was our direction, so it was decided to move camp at once to a spot ten miles north, orders were issued accordingly, and we started off after the lions, striking their trail at about midday. The tracks were those of two full-grown males, one of exceptional size, judging from his pug.

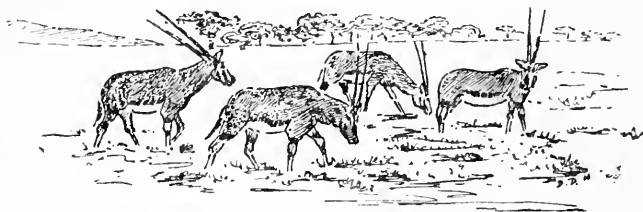
This time, however, luck was out. We tracked the lions for four hours over varying types of country, now bare clayey soil with nullahs in every direction, a bank in one spot honeycombed with nesting holes of an orange-throated bee-eater; then thick *sansevieria* jungle interspersed with thorn trees; and again grassy country dotted with clumps of thorn. In some places we had to go very slow owing to the awkward character of the bush.

At length we reached a zariba which the lions had prowled around, and the karia-folk told us it was about midnight that they had received the visit. That put an end to our hopes; when the lions left this spot, unfed, they must have had half a dozen hours of the night before them, while we had only two hours of daylight left. So when we found that the trail turned away to the west we realised it would only be waste of time to follow. It was a great disappointment, as I felt that it was probably my last chance.

At 5.30 p.m. we reached the spot where our camp should have been by that time, but no sign of it. I climbed into a tree on the crest of a small hill, which afforded a good view all round, and squatted in the branches to have a smoke and study the face of the

country with my binoculars. But one could not see much at a distance in that thorn scrub, and when 6 o'clock came with no sign of the caravan, we fired a few signal shots, and as these evoked no reply started back to look for dinner and dry clothes—it was now raining hard. It was long after dark when we found the camp, four miles back. It appeared that the local guide had committed the fatal error of thinking for himself, and had somehow arrived at the conclusion that it was his duty to encamp at quite a different place from that to which he had been instructed to lead the caravan. I was not in the best of tempers with trudging those extra four miles in heavy rain after a long day, the more tiring for having been unsuccessful, so I turned over the offender to Abdilleh's tender mercies, with an admonition to deal with him faithfully. I have reason to believe that he did so.

The following day's marches, though unproductive



of *shikar*, were interesting. At the start a herd of thirty or forty oryx crossed our front, taking to their heels as we saw them. Most of them were sure to be cows, and I did not want to stop at the beginning of a march to shoot a cow unless with unusually fine horns, while the bush was too thick to allow me to distinguish the bulls or the good heads. So I did not follow.

Then we climbed up and down the Asa hills, which the caravan made a *détour* to avoid. Two of these hills were covered with huge boulders, among which dodged in and out the quaint little "rock-rabbits"—a feeble but a wise folk who make their houses in the rocks, and thereby attracted the notice of the wise man of old, for these are the African representatives of the "coney" of Scripture. An anomalous little creature is the hyrax (*Procavia*), called in South Africa the dassie. Superficially resembling a marmot more than anything else, it nevertheless, far from being a rodent, is a member of the *ungulata*, its nearest rela-



tions structurally being the elephant and rhinoceros! But when Moses placed upon the hyrax the stigma of "uncleanness," he did so under a misapprehension, including it with the camel and hare in the list of animals that chew the cud, but do not divide the hoof. As a matter of fact, it does not chew the cud at all, the idea having arisen from a habit it has of champing its teeth, the hare, though no relation, being in the same predicament.

I had hoped to find klipspringer among these hills, and did indeed see one, but it was apparently a doe, and kept its distance. From the summit of one hill I had a magnificent view of a wide green valley

traversed by a winding river-bed like a great white serpent, with another hilly system beyond. We were here some thirty miles north-west of Hargeisa in Ogo-Guban ; we had been moving due north, but now turned in an easterly direction during the afternoon march, encamping at a place called Barka Hagar.

Half an hour before halting I was thrilled by an unexpected sight in recent traces of a herd of elephants that had been there a couple of days before ; droppings and huge foot-prints, aloe plants and a bush or two torn from their places, here and there a broken branch, marked their path of destruction.

This was a charming camp, in the higher end of an extensive valley between two converging hills. A large part of the valley was more or less thick jungle on the banks of a river-bed, with a good deal of *sansevieria*, where I thought there should be lesser kudu, while it was on the lower slopes of one of these hills that M. had bagged his grand greater kudu the previous year.

On halting I found to my sorrow that the little lynx kitten was gone ; he had somehow contrived to squeeze out of his basket, and then fallen or jumped from the camel's back unnoticed on the march. Poor little beggar, I am afraid he starved, unless something bigger put an end to him first. The jungle has but a cold welcome for her children who have once forsaken her if ever they seek to return.

I had not had any particular excitement for some little time, but my experience that night was to compensate in unique fashion. The valley contained excellent cover for leopards, and, as I remarked to Abdilleh, if there they should be hungry, for there

were no *karias* in the immediate neighbourhood, and little game.

So just after dark Elmi went out and tied up a goat four or five feet from the usual loop-hole. Half a minute after he had left it, and before he was back inside the zariba, there was a rush and a scuffle, followed by loud angry growling roars in front of the loop-hole. I had just sat down to dinner, but ran out at once, leaving the soup to get cold. The noise the beast or beasts made was so loud, and such behaviour so unlike a leopard, that I thought it must be a lion, and Abdilleh at once assured me that he believed it was so, and that there were two if not more. By the time I had got down to the loop-hole the growling had ceased ; it was a starlight night, no moon ; I could make out that there was something on the kill, but nothing definite at first. I peered at the dim object in front of me trying to distinguish its outlines, when suddenly with an angry roar, it hurled itself at the loop-hole, a round head with two blazing eyes appearing in the aperture, the while an impatient paw seized the muzzle of my gun, and dragged it violently to one side ! My finger was on the trigger at the time, so the result naturally was an explosion, the bullet probably passing just over the audacious visitor's shoulder. Of course he vanished.

Abdilleh came up and rebuked me for shooting in such a hurry. I said, " Please, I didn't ; he tried to shoot himself ! " It then came out that when the goat was first charged, Henduleh, who was on guard at the loop-hole, mistook the enemy for a hyæna, and gave him a jab with a spear, hence the appalling language !

Subsequently, no doubt the lioness or leopard, whichever it was, noticed my gun-barrel, and took it for the spear about to be used again. The visiting-card that I had fixed to the muzzle as a night-sight had been torn off. I replaced this and sat down to wait. Not more than three or four minutes had elapsed when a crouching figure came into view and came straight up to the kill. The next moment I let drive with the charge of S.S.G. in the right barrel, and the thing sprang out of sight. We heard it struggling and growling on the ground twenty or thirty yards away, evidently very badly hit. Presently I caught a shadowy glimpse of something else moving towards the sound, and then began a duet, the moans of the wounded animal mingling with the sympathetic growls of, presumably, its mate, and every now and then a different scratching sound; No. 2 apparently stroking and soothing its unhappy partner with affectionate caresses!

This was going on a short distance to my left front and I was straining my vision to see something in that direction, when out of the corner of my eye I caught sight of another shadow creeping up to the kill from more to the right: I glanced round, and the left barrel blazed out. The newcomer sprang high into the air, and fell the other side of the kill, lying without a move; but after a few moments a raised head showed it was not quite dead, so I fired again and then all was still. I did not think either of the animals, as I fired at it, seemed large enough for a lioness, though in the crouching position assumed by both one could not be certain in the very dim light. I now turned on my

little electric lamp, which showed a beautiful leopard lying by the kill: the most cleanly spotted I have ever seen. I then turned the lamp in the direction where the first wounded animal had been lying, but could see nothing, and all sounds from there had ceased. Cautiously reconnoitring the open ground, which extended some forty yards or so from the zariba, we soon made certain there was nothing there, and were forced to the conclusion that, impelled by the sound of the shots at No. 2, the first wounded beast had contrived to drag itself a few yards further into the bush, where, of course, there was no choice but to leave him until daylight.

Presently came an ominous sound, the call of a spotted hyæna, from the same direction. It was repeated again and again, all too effectively, for in a short time it was easy to judge that there must be half a dozen of the foul brutes assembled round their dying foe, waiting with ghoulisn patience, or impatience, for the end, which none were found as yet with the courage to go in and strike the first blow to hasten; ever and anon a low growl, feeble and feebler yet, bidding them keep their distance. The scene, vivid enough to one's mind's eye, recalled some one's picture of "the dying King." By this time I had no doubt that we had had to deal with leopards all along, and that there had been no lions about at all. But Abdilleh was not convinced and still maintained that the goat had originally been killed by a lioness. Well! the leopard with his wonderful caution and his no less wonderful audacity is a beast of infinite variety, and my own experience warns me to be chary of

disbelieving anything with which he may be credited. But I find it difficult to believe in any leopard trying to take a lion's kill from under his very nose, however hungry he might be. Anyhow, lion or leopard, he was clearly still alive, and able, for the moment at least, to keep the *warábas* at bay; so however anxious I might be as to the fate of his skin, it was out of the question to think of going to look for him in the dark in that bush. All we could do, and did, was to fire a number of shots in the direction of those weird crescendo-diminuendo engine whistles, for that is what the *warába's* gathering cry resembles. His hideous laugh is a very different note, much less frequently uttered, but once heard never to be forgotten.

At daybreak we were out, and found the spot



where the wounded animal had lain down, thence followed the blood-tracks into the bush. It took another half-hour's search before we found, in different places, first just the tip of the tail, then the head (part of the skin eaten off), and finally one fore-paw, all that was left of what must have been an exceptionally large leopard. Disgusting, wasn't it? The only thing left to be done was to photograph the other, a very handsome but not very large male. He had evidently gone hungry for several days at least, and

this was, of course, the explanation of the audacity of both. Though whether the big leopard first wounded was the animal that had previously killed the goat and charged my loop-hole, must remain undetermined. Personally I believe he was.

So much for the night ; the day's resources were yet to discover. I went out and spent the morning looking for kudu, of which there were traces, but without success. At length we had turned campwards when suddenly a strange sound crossed the breeze, once, twice repeated, a sort of attenuated imitation of a man-of-war's syren whistle ; and both shikaris gave a spring to attention. Somehow I knew instinctively before Elmi spoke the word, that I had heard, for the first time, the trumpet of the wild elephant. All thoughts of kudu were thrown to the winds. I might not shoot at *Marodi*, who was under protection of the law, but I must see him. Apparently the sound of the trumpet came from not more than a mile away, and fortunately the wind was right. In ten minutes we were on the fresh trail ; a little farther and we could hear the elephants ahead moving slowly upwind through a fairly thick jungle of mimosas and euphorbia.

A little way to the right was a small hill, for this we made, and climbing looked down upon the valley. There they were, 300 yards away, seven or eight of them, moving leisurely more or less in file. Not a bit like Jumbo, at first sight, for their colour was red, the hue of their last mud-bath. I did not stop to study them from there, but having located them exactly, descended the hill, and into the jungle again, taking

Henduleh alone with me. We were soon close up, and presently, the bush here not being very thick, spotted three of them, fifty yards ahead. Then out came the camera and great was my disgust to find it only contained a single film unexposed. Then a puff of wind from the left (it had hitherto been straight from the front) alarmed me lest I should not get my photo. The elephants, too, were moving on and the bush seemed thicker ahead, so creeping hurriedly forward I got in a snap at forty yards or so. Further off than I had intended and not at a favourable moment, but I was over-anxious. Then, of course, as soon as the deed was done, they stopped again, and I crept forward to a tree from behind which for five long minutes I was able to watch at my leisure a fine old tusker, as he stood only twenty-five yards away munching some *sansevieria* plants torn up by his trunk. Waving trunk and great flapping ears, they were never still, while his ridiculous little eye, all the time, apparently, was fixed on me. But his expression was one of placid content, very different to what it would have been had he realised the dangerous proximity of mankind, his deadliest, his only foe.

To be so close and yet unable to shoot! My fingers were itching for the trigger; but though the rifle remained handy in case of accident, the feeling passed away, and I was content to stand and watch. For my privilege was no small one. The lion is a royal beast, say his detractors what they may; but were the elephant to put forward his claim, who could deny his title to be the real King of the African jungle? My thoughts wandered back to happy hours spent



PUZZLE—FIND THE ELEPHANTS!



“THE LITTLE ELECTRIC LAMP SHOWED A BEAUTIFUL LEOPARD . . . THE MOST CLEANLY SPOTTED I HAVE EVER SEEN.”

[To face p. 172.]

deep in the pages of the mighty hunters of the last century, from Gordon Cumming and Cotton Oswell to Baker and Selous. And now to me too had been permitted a private audience of the Master of the Jungle. But even Royalty so primeval as this must not be too lavish of its favours, and five minutes' audience is ample for any mere human: or it may be the Monarch was a trifle bored. Anyway, suddenly up went the mighty trunk, and round he swung away from me. And then one after another, in Indian file, "the great earth-shaking beasts" passed silently from my sight.

On the way back to camp a lesser kudu bull suddenly bounded away from behind a bush whence he had been watching us, clearing with easiest grace another bush, about seven feet high, that stood in his way: I threw up the Paradox and fired hastily just before he reached some thicker cover one hundred yards away. He stumbled forward on to his nose, picked himself up again and went on, out of sight. Rather to my own surprise I had hit him, apparently about the shoulder too high up. I did not expect any difficulty in getting him then, but after a few yards tracking proved impossible, and none of our casts proved successful. I was glad to think that the wound was probably not a severe one.

On the 19th I explored the far side of the Barka Hagar valley, and at a pool in the river bed found greater kudu tracks of the day before. I stopped to examine these and have a pull at the water-bottle, when Elmi whistled and beckoned excitedly from across the stream. It was a greater kudu bull, the

first I had seen this trip. He was about 150 yards off, trotting obliquely away, when I fired and missed; a second miss as he broke into great bounds was very excusable, but I ought to have hit him the first time. However, I then had a better view of his horns than I had done at first, and they seemed to be only moderate, so it was just as well that he escaped untouched.

On the way back to camp we noticed a pair of birds rather like, except for the beak, a small hornbill; they were making what seemed a quite unnecessary fuss in and round a tree. A nearer view explained the trouble: a greenish snake five or six feet long, worming its way along a large branch that supported an untidy nest, in the latter two pale-blue eggs. A warning stone from Henduleh's hand changed the marauder's mind for him, and he slithered from the branch into an adjoining bush, and thence away amongst the undergrowth; no doubt promising himself to return another day.



CHAPTER XIII

Death of Jennie—Daga Hayer—A grand lesser kudu and another lost opportunity—My last oryx—A too early duck—Hed Godir—Klipspringer—Perfect ugliness : a wart-hog—*Otocyon* hunting in a pack—Dabur—The dainty little *baira* : a chance missed and a cruel disappointment—Some compensation : a greater kudu shot—The Maritime hills—A giant fig-tree—Baboons—The last day's march : riding the low moon out of the sky—Pelzeln's gazelle : two good heads—The last incident : Elmi bitten by a snake : no evil results : Berbera once more—Selling off : an auction that ended suddenly—Paying off : Somali gratitude—A word for my shikaris—Abdilleh : his pluck—Luck, good and bad—The last of Somaliland—And of Sonny—The Call of the Wild.

ON the afternoon of the 19th September we left Barka Hagar, my last proceeding there being to bury the body of poor little Jennie so that the hyænas might not find it. Three days before she had become suddenly lame, one hind leg much swollen. We could find no sign of any injury, and the Somalis said it was a sort of rheumatism due to chill after a drenching she had had in heavy rain. I do not know. However, we applied fomentations, but it was of no use, she went off her feed and died. It was hard lines, for six weeks with me she had been as well as possible, and a charming pet. Sonny alone was left ; he was full of life.

We moved north again, crossing a stony pass that it took the camels all their time to negotiate. It took just half an hour to get one nervous—or obstinate—old *oont* over a descent of thirty-five to forty yards ! At the foot of the pass I got a fairly good *gerenûk*, only the second I had seen since leaving Aror.

Another long march next morning brought us, at about 2 p.m., to a nicely wooded spot near Daga Hayer. It was close to the bank of a wide river-bed, with here a pool and there a trickling stream, after the fashion of rivers in these parts, waiting on the next heavy rainfall to become for an hour or two a swirling torrent.

As the camels were being unloaded I strolled into a clump of trees close by, when there came a rush and just a glimpse of the white tips of a pair of spiral horns as a lesser kudu bull vanished in the long grass by the river-side. For half an hour he did not go far, but kept out of sight except for a similar occasional glimpse, defying all attempts either to stalk or drive him. At length he crossed the river, and for a moment I caught sight of his head looking at me between two bushes on the far side. But as the rifle reached my shoulder he turned and plunged behind one of the bushes, into which a speculative bullet followed him without effect. Tracking him from there, he left the belt of cover by the river, and took to the stony hilly ground; and after a mile and a half we came in sight of him again. He dashed off and halted on the hill-side two hundred yards away. It was no use trying for a nearer approach; I fired and missed, again and another miss, and then he was off, his horns showing for a moment against the sky-line almost like those of his brother the greater kudu. Certainly the finest lesser kudu I had seen at all.

The next moment I discovered that the Lyman aperture sight with which I was shooting had somehow got screwed up to the four hundred yards mark.

Could anything be more exasperating? He was gone for good and with him my last chance of a lesser kudu. It was the greatest disappointment I had had. It was now 4 p.m., I had been out since daybreak; hot, tired, and down on my luck I turned slowly back. The only thing I wanted, a bath, the bigger the better. In ten minutes the bath came—a shower bath, and we tramped the two miles into camp in as heavy a down-pour as I ever want to be out in. But it cleared the air, mental and otherwise.

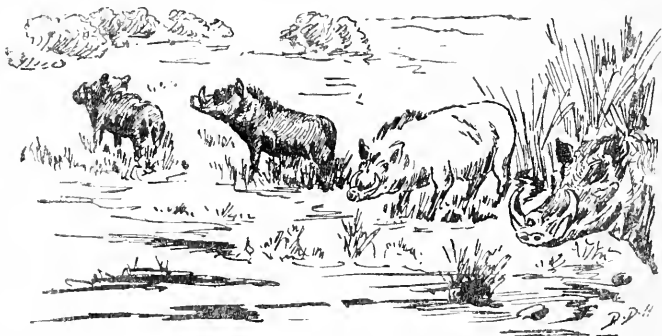
After shooting an oryx next morning early, I spent the rest of the day with Abdilleh exploring a succession of hills and wooded valleys, looking for kudu, but finding nothing beyond occasional tracks of both species. Crossing the river-bed near home again, I saw to my surprise a duck of sorts, an early arrival, in a pool. Slipping a couple of No. 5 cartridges into the Paradox, I proceeded to stalk him. Just as I got within range I began to go down, a regular quicksand! At the same moment the duck rose, and with a struggle I got the gun pointing somewhere in its direction, and fired. Down it came, a great fluke, and then I had to wait for Abdilleh to come and pull me out. The bird proved to be a garganey, a very acceptable addition to my dinner that night.

Moving eastward again we tried any spot which might hold a lesser kudu, but only saw a single doe. Even at Hed Godir (the "kudu forest") a single stale track alone was in evidence; though two or three



days before I had picked up a skull with a nice pair of horns whose owner had apparently been dead a month or so.

Working round the N.W. corner of the Reserve, I saw three klipspringers on a steep hill where their grey-green coats were difficult to define against a background of bushes of the same colour amongst the rocks. They were wild, and after a lot of warm climbing I could only get in a long shot which failed. The klipspringer is a marvellously agile little antelope. His surefootedness and the pace at which he can travel on a rocky hill-side have to be seen to be realised.



The following evening I bagged a wart-hog boar with a nice set of tushes. A marvellously ugly beast; unfortunately his photograph proved a failure, his physiognomy was more than a self-respecting camera could stand! I should have liked to preserve his whole head, but it was late, and we were still some miles from camp, so there was not time for me to tackle the job single-handed, as, of course, none of the Somalis would touch him. The toughness of his hide was extraordinary; it took me, with a none too sharp knife, nearly an hour to skin the lower part of the

head and detach the jaws with the tusks. Apart from his monstrous head and huge "warts," the main peculiarity of the wart-hog is that his upper tusks are longer than the lower ones. I had no opportunity of testing his character, but though he is not credited with the fiery courage of the Indian boar, Colonel Melliss has recorded excellent sport spearing the wart-hog on the Zeila plain.

On our way to camp I saw a pack of no less than ten foxes (*otocyon*) hunting in the dusk with peculiar little yapping calls. There was a leopard about that night, but he showed his wisdom in taking a sheep from an adjoining *karia* instead of coming to sample my mutton.

We were now very near the end of the trip. On the 23rd September we encamped at Dubur on the northern bank of the Dara Dowanle river-bed. Here there was a last chance of a greater kudu, and just a possibility of *baira*, the latter a prize that I had had no expectation of getting, but both species were said to have been seen here.

The *khobar*, of which I was doubtful, turned out genuine. The following afternoon I was exploring some rocky hills, and had just reached the top of a steep ascent, when there came a clatter of stones from a ravine in front, and out bounded a pair of graceful little antelopes and stood for a moment on the farther side, looking back at us. I had never seen them before, but there was no mistaking them in their dainty coats of French grey: they were *baira*, buck and doe, and only sixty yards away. But, alas! after that last climb I had no breath left; the rifle went up to my

shoulder, but the muzzle wavered horribly ; and I could not sit down as a rock came in the way. The *baira* doe started off up the hill, the buck gave a little toss of his head preliminary to following his lady ; I had to press the trigger, with the most perfect confidence that I was going to miss, and miss I did. It was the hardest of luck that the chance should have come just at that moment, when five minutes in which to recover my breath would have been worth so much. I had trophies of all the other Somali antelopes, but this dainty little *baira* was, with the possible exception of the *dibatag*, in point of rarity worth the pick of them all. And I had missed a standing shot at sixty yards ! Is there any humiliation more poignant ? Or any memory so salutary when a run of luck and a good rifle have once again fostered the delusion that one can shoot ?

Next morning I had another long climb on the tracks of a pair of greater kudu, but failed to find them. Then came across a single *baira* doe standing in a characteristic attitude on the top of a rock 150 yards away. I wished afterwards I had taken the shot for the sake of her skin, but hoped her mate might be somewhere near. However, she vanished in a mysterious manner, and not a sign of her or another could we see again. Tramping home at about midday, we were in sight of camp, when a whistle came from Henduleh on the left, with a frantic beckoning that surely betokened something of account. The next moment I too saw, standing on the slope up to the hill where I had missed the *baira* the day before, first a greater kudu cow, and then, no mistaking that darker coat and those spiral horns, a fine bull. They were

250 yards distant, and looking at us. There was no cover and no hope of getting nearer; while with foresight all blurred in the noon-day glare the shot was a trying one. For the time being too, after yesterday's exhibition, I had lost confidence; so, of course, I missed. Away went the kudu. Pulling myself together, I tried again, a long "flying" shot, and rather a forlorn hope. Oh! the joy as the sound came of the bullet's answering thud. The bull went



on, I had hardly expected a stern shot like that to bring him down, but the glasses showed that one leg was broken high up, and I knew he was mine. He could never climb the hill, and a wounded kudu has not the stamina of hartebeest or oryx. They disappeared into a nullah, but on the farther side the cow reappeared climbing the hill alone. When I reached the nullah the bull dashed out in a last gallant effort to escape, but a quick shot at seventy yards paralysed the spinal column behind and brought him down. A good head, though not the equal of my first in 1907;

and of a different type, the horns being remarkably upright with unusually small spread, but more than usually curved.

Marching again next day, I saw some *alakút*, but they contrived to efface themselves without giving me a chance. The formation of some of these Maritime hills was remarkable: steep slopes with an absolutely flat top strewn with rough black stones of various sizes, but nearly all more or less rounded, conveying the impression of a fall of giant black hail-stones.

At the midday halt there was an unusual growth of small palms in long grass about a huge fig-tree (Somali *sík*), of which I measured the circumference three feet from the ground, and found it to be $43\frac{1}{2}$ feet.

Next morning, crossing a stony plateau south of Eil Anod, we heard the hoarse barking of baboons, and presently met a troop, about thirty of all sizes. Two huge males passed within fifty yards, stopping every now and then to pluck the young shoots off the bushes, or to make faces at us; their substantial manes rendering it quite possible to believe that, as I was told, they are sometimes mistaken for lions at a distance; while with their powerful arms and teeth it is not difficult to imagine them, in combination, proving formidable adversaries to any assailant.

A thick growth of the *armo* creeper further on made quite a fascinating arbour in which to put in a *siesta* in the heat of the day; here nearing the coast it was decidedly hot. Some Habr Awal kiddies peeped in to investigate: shy at first, they soon made friends; mother watching from a short distance hoping it was quite safe.

The following, our last day, we made an extra long march, starting in bright moonlight at 3.30 a.m. Do you remember Kipling's "Ballad of East and West" ?

*They have ridden the low moon out of the sky
Their hoofs drum up the dawn.*

There was a strange charm in doing the like, and in one place the surroundings were much the same as in the wild borderland of the ballad, with "rock to the left and rock to the right, and low lean thorn between."

It was just at sunrise that I met the first herd of lowland *dhero* (Pelzeln's gazelle), headed by a good buck. They were not shy in the early morning light, and I had an easy shot; but the buck moved just as I pressed the trigger, and I only broke his shoulder. As I followed to give him the *coup-de-grâce*, a second buck with even longer horns appeared from somewhere, and, ignoring me, went for the wounded one and drove him away for two or three hundred yards; then returned in the most jaunty fashion to assume the lordship of the little herd of does who, meanwhile, had not shown the least sign of interest in the proceedings. I hardened my heart, and the new-comer's triumph was short-lived. Then I went after No. 1, who gave me quite a long chase before I secured him. A nice pair of heads.

In the afternoon we saw more *dhero*, but they were decidedly wild as we neared the coast. However, I got one more good head. I never before noticed in the same way as that evening the remarkable light effect produced by the fading of the sunset glow into the light of the newly risen moon. It made everything seem unreal, and one felt like walking in a dream.

The last incident of our wanderings came soon after sunset. We were stepping out along the main caravan road to Berbera, a wide sandy track, when suddenly Elmi, two or three yards behind me, gave a cry, and I looked round to see him hopping on one leg, nursing his foot, and then making a vicious cut at the ground with the stick he carried. He said he had been bitten by a snake in the toe, that he had caught a glimpse of it just after it struck him, and that it was a small one. We could not find the reptile in spite of the bright moonlight, although there was no cover quite near.

There was no use trying to do anything then, but to get the victim into camp as quickly as possible; he was not sure of the exact spot where he was bitten, and the light was not good enough for investigation. I put him on the pony, Henduleh leading it, and hastened on ahead. Of course, as I wanted to get into camp in a hurry, it turned out that Abdilleh, so as to have a short march for the morning, had taken the caravan a good deal farther than I had expected, so that it was after eight o'clock before I got in and routed out my medicine case.

After a quarter of an hour Elmi turned up, and on examination I discovered a small discoloured patch on the under side of his second toe. I could not make out any puncture, but there seemed to be a local extravasation like that produced on my own thumb by the bite of an English viper years before. As the only thing to do, though somewhat late, I cut across the spot until it bled freely, and then rubbed in permanganate of potash, at the same time applying a makeshift ligature to the leg.

Elmi said the foot had begun to pain a good deal, and there was some swelling, but I assured him it was all right. This was apparently the bite of a small viperine snake, and so far as I know there is no dangerous viper in this part of the country (though I believe *echis carinata* has been recorded from Eastern Somaliland); and this seemed to be Abdilleh's opinion. Besides, it was my birthday! as well as being the very last day of our journeyings; I could not anticipate a tragic finale.

And it proved all right; in the morning Elmi was nearly himself again, and an early start brought me into Berbera in time to breakfast with the hospitable P.

So ended the expedition. There remained a couple of fairly strenuous days in Berbera, selling my animals, paying off my following, and packing up. After I had arranged for an auction a Somali turned up who offered to buy my twelve camels at Rs.25 a head. I jeered at the idea, and eventually he went up to Rs.30 but no more. It was not a tall offer, I had paid an average price of Rs.55 a head, but I might do worse. So I determined to see what sort of bids the auction would produce, putting on reserve prices, but making a conditional arrangement with my friend in case of need.

In the afternoon the whole of Berbera assembled for the auction. But do you think the beggars would bid? They knew that I must sell, and thought they had me up a gum-tree. The first camel put up was the pick of the bunch, and had kept its condition well, so even now at the end of a two months' trip ought to have fetched at least Rs.50. By slow degrees the price climbed up—the old Arab auctioneer doing his

part in true professional style—until the bid reached Rs.27, but not a rupee more. So I upset their calculations by stopping the auction, and let the lot go to the gentleman of the morning at Rs.30 a head, at which price P. said I had done well under the circumstances. The mule fetched Rs.62 and the pony, which had never been of much use, and was now quite a crock, Rs.25.

The following morning I paid off, the liberal *bakshish*



which I gave all round, in addition to arrears of pay due, being received with the air of the taxi-cab driver who is given his exact legal fare. That was only what I had learned to expect of the Somali character, but we had all been good friends for two months, and I had treated them well, so that I could not help being somewhat disgusted.

However, when the camel-men had departed I gave expression to my feelings, with the result that when it came to the shikaris' turn, they did try to make a show of being more or less satisfied. Besides a

pecuniary bonus I distributed a few sheep and goats that had returned alive, with sundry articles of clothing, saddlery, knives, etc.

And certainly they deserved well of me. A good tracker, intelligent, plucky, and enduring, among shikaris the Somali takes a high place; provided, of course, you get the genuine article, for there are plenty of worthless scamps ready to masquerade as shikaris. Perhaps his weakest point is his excitability at critical moments, while until he is taught better a young Somali sometimes will not realise that when it comes to the actual shooting his advice is not wanted, and that he must not hustle or distract the attention of the man behind the gun.

Both Elmi Hirsi and Abdilleh Ashur were quite in the front rank, but the latter was considerably older and therefore less active; towards the end of this trip he was decidedly seedy, so that he rarely came out with me, confining his attention to running the caravan; that did not matter when there were no lions about. But his intuition was wonderfully quick, and his experience was much greater than Elmi's, such, in fact, as almost to place him in a class by himself. He had, indeed, the reputation of being, for lion, the best man in the country.

He was, by the way, the man who, in all probability, saved Lord Delamere's life, when that well-known sportsman was shooting in Somaliland a good many years ago. The latter failed to stop the charge of a lion which he had wounded, and the beast knocked him down and proceeded to chew his foot. Abdilleh emptied his rifle into the lion, which took no notice.

He then tackled the enemy with his bare hands, trying to force its jaw open, until it turned on him and bit him badly on arm and leg. However, the lion, which was very severely wounded, was weakening, and he managed to get away from it, he and his master both crawling away a short distance to sit down faint and bleeding, the lion lying in the same condition not far off. I don't vouch for the details of the story, but I believe, in substance, the account I have given is correct.

Abdilleh told me that as a youngster he was present on another occasion when a Sahib was killed by an elephant, which knocked him down and ran its tusk into him. I fancy this must have been Count Ruspoli.

In Berbera they seemed to think I had had remarkable luck, and I should be the last to deny it, especially in respect of that first troop of lions. But I had my share of bad luck too, beginning with the loss of three weeks, and the going astray of my Abyssinian permit, with such items in the field as losing that grand lesser kudu through a Somali having meddled with my backsight.

One hears far too much of luck, good and bad, in big-game shooting. A tiger is shot and some one at once remarks, "That lucky beggar X. has got another tiger!" As a matter of fact, X.'s "luck" is due, four times out of five, to his having laid himself out to shoot that tiger, and having gone the right way about it, to say nothing of straight powder when the time came.

On the other hand, one meets men who have returned from a shooting trip, and who do nothing but prate of their bad luck, while as often as not their

want of success is due to bad *bandobast*, ignorance, or carelessness, if not to losing their heads at the critical moment or to poor shooting.

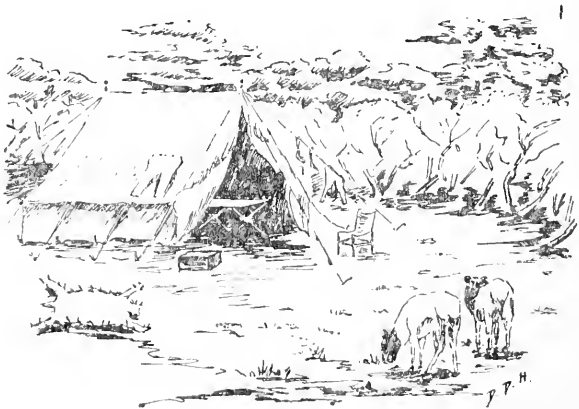
Certainly I had luck, but the foundation of my success lay in the fact that I made a point of getting hold of Abdilleh Ashur, the best man available. I am quite certain that I should never have done so well if I had been content to take instead the two Midgán shikaris who first presented themselves. And there were other factors with which luck had little to do. On the other hand, if, for instance, I did have some bad luck with leopard and lesser kudu, the main reason why I did not bag a couple more of the former, and a good head of the latter, is that for one reason or another I failed to make the most of my opportunities ; when the chance was given me did the wrong thing. That is not " bad luck."

Dame Fortune is as fickle in the bestowal of her favours upon the hunter as upon other men, and surely it is its uncertainty that makes half the fascination of his sport. But if Fortune is to have all the credit or all the blame, what is there to induce a man to do his best ? If his wall needs a shikar trophy for its adornment it were easier—and cheaper—to write a cheque for one, and stay at home. I have an idea that some of this has been said before, but it seemed worth while to say it again.

A word of my personal followers. Abdi, apart from his cooking, which improved vastly, turned out a reliable servant, and one of the best Somalis I have known ; I gave him a camel, with which he was immensely pleased. Iddu Khan, too, deserves his

meed of praise. A stranger in a strange land, his dignity at times was sorely tried, but he did me well, and felt he had been through great experiences !

On the 1st October, Abdilleh and Elmi the younger came to see me on board my steamer, and Berbera, with the crest of Golis in the background, gradually faded into a memory. Sonny must not be forgotten. He accompanied me to Aden and Bombay, and was a personage of importance on board the steamer. He was a dear little beast, and I had become very fond of him, but I knew it would not be possible for me to keep him long, so allowed circumstances to part us in Bombay ; much to my subsequent regret, for he died very soon afterwards. With him went my last living link with the land of the lion—for this time at any rate. Africa has a way of putting upon a man the spell of her desert and jungle, and he who has once felt it will be rash indeed if he asserts that he will never yield again to that mysterious insistent Call of the Wild.



CHAPTER XIV

General notes—List of animals shot and encountered—The leopard in Somaliland: some points in night-watching—"Leopard" or "panther"?—The lesser kudu: its elusiveness—Effectiveness of the .318 rifle: the capped bullet: the aperture rear-sight—The Sherwood rifle: its powers and limitations—Necessity for insisting on these limitations—Reasons why 150 yards should be considered the maximum range for this and similar rifles—Long ranges: trajectory and eye-sight—Importance of the first shot—Wounded animals—Averages—Do animals feel pain?—Cruelty in Nature—Views of Dr. Wallace and Mr. Long: criticisms—"Brilliant" journalism—Diminution of game in Somaliland?—Independence of a fountain pen.

THE actual narrative of my two visits to Somaliland is finished, but a few further general notes may be of interest; and there are one or two more or less relevant subjects upon which I want to air my views! I may as well first give a complete list of the various species of animals that went to comprise my bag on the two trips, with a few measurements of some of the best specimens.

LIST OF SPECIES OF GAME SHOT.

- Lion (*Felis leo*). Somali *libah*. Length, 9 feet $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches.
" (lioness) 8 feet $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches.
Leopard (*F. pardus*). Somali *shabél*.
African Wild Cat (*F. ocreata*). Somali *dinad*.
Chita (*Cynælurus jubatus*). Somali *harimát*.
Spotted Hyæna (*Hyæna crocuta*). Somali *warába*.
Black-backed Jackal (*Canis mesomelas*). Somali *dowa'o*.
Grey Jackal (*C. variegatus*). Somali *dowa'o*.
Long-eared Fox (*Otocyon megalotis*). Somali *goleh warába*.
Wart-hog (*Phacochoerus æthiopicus*). Somali *dofar* (length of upper tushes, $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches).

ANTELOPES.

Greater Kudu (*Strepsiceros kudu*). Somali *godir*, *ghorialeh*. Length of horn on curve, $50\frac{1}{8}$ inches; length of horn straight, $36\frac{1}{4}$ inches; round base of horn, $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Lesser Kudu * (*S. imberbis*). Somali *arreh godir*. Length of horn on curve, $27\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Oryx (*Oryx beisa*). Somali *bé'id*. Length of horn, $33\frac{3}{4}$ inches. †

Swayne's Hartbeest (*Bubalis Swaynei*). Somali *sig*. Length of horn, $17\frac{3}{4}$ inches.

Speke's Gazelle (*Gazella Spekei*). Somali *dhero*. Length of horn, $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Pelzeln's Gazelle (*G. Pelzelni*). Somali *dhero*. Length of horn, 12 inches.

Sömmering's Gazelle (*G. Sömmeringi*). Somali *aoul*. Length of horn, $20\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Waller's Gazelle (*Lithocranius Walleri*). Somali *gerenák*. Length of horn, 14 inches.

Clarke's Gazelle (*Ammodorcas Clarkei*). Somali *dibatag*. Length of horn, $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches.

Klipspringer (*Oreotragus saltator somalicus*). Somali *alakút*. Length of horn, $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

Phillips' Dik-dik (*Madoqua Phillipsi*). Somali *sakáro*. Length of horn, $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches.

The only antelope of Northern Somaliland that I failed to shoot was the *baira* (*Dorcotragus*). Other animals of interest seen but not shot were elephant, striped hyæna, ostrich, genet, hyrax, mongoose (two species), and baboon; while small game shot included a hare, three species of bustard, and two of francolin (if the small partridge of Ogo-Guban is a francolin). Guinea-fowl, common in parts, I only saw once. Another unexpected sort of creature that I came across three or four times was a daylight bat with a yellow breast. I have seen it actually hawking insects in the sunlight.

* The head of this species, of which measurements are given, was not shot but picked up.

† Wherever not otherwise stated, all length of horn measurements have been taken along the curve.

One beast with which I had little success was the leopard. Apparently the only way, under ordinary circumstances, to shoot a leopard in Somaliland is from a zariba at night. If I had known more about it at first I might have done better. For it is quite a different game, this zariba work, from sitting over a goat in a tree in India.

The leopard habitually prowls round zaribas, which he knows to be occupied by mankind, and the idea is that from familiarity he pays no attention to human beings inside the zariba fence; therefore the Somali shikari, if you let him, will tie the bait two or three feet only away from the loop-hole so as to make as sure of the shot as may be; for it is usually on the darkest nights that one's opportunity arrives, when aiming is difficult or impossible. Another reason for tying the goat so close is to make it easier for the watching shikari to defeat a sudden attack by a hyæna, which is moreover less likely to make an attempt if the goat is very close up to the fence.

But why should not this last reasoning apply also to the leopard—a more audacious but equally a more cunning animal? In my opinion it does. True, the leopard knows there are men in the zariba and takes little notice of them, but he does not know at first that there is a man close up to the fence at the very spot where the bait is and almost able to touch it. And if he suddenly discovers the fact it is apt to be too much for his nerves, unless he is absolutely starving, like my friend at Barka Hagar.

I believe that I lost two or three leopards by having the bait too close. At Barka Hagar I had it

tied a little further off, about five feet. At that distance it is still possible to reach a hyæna with a spear, while further away you are likely to miss or only wound. It must be remembered that the leopard invariably lies down on killing, so that close as he is, and even when you have some device on your rifle for making the sights visible, it is extraordinary how easy it is to miss in the dark.

However, though the uncertainty and the darkness lend it a measure of fascination, this is not a method of shooting in which one would care to indulge very often, except from the point of view that leopards are vermin. Exterminated they will never be, and they do an immense amount of mischief, while a leopard's skin is always one of the most beautiful of trophies. And if you chance to meet him by day, he is likely to yield you sport second to none.

In Rome do as the Romans do. That is why I have used throughout the name of "leopard," being the one commonly used for this beast in Africa. It is undoubtedly more correct to call him the "panther" as we do in India, the original *leopardus* having been the animal now known as the hunting-leopard or chita. But it is too late in the day for any endeavour to give the latter his due to have a chance of success, the modern use of the term leopard being far too general. So that while I sympathise, I fear I cannot quite agree with a recent writer and mighty hunter, who considers that to call a panther a leopard is a sign of hopeless ignorance, and even savours of the immoral!

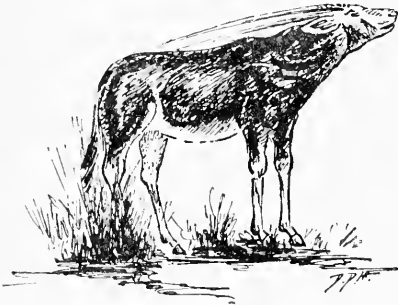
Another animal that effectually defeated me was the lesser kudu. Opinions as to the difficulty of

shooting this species vary; personally I consider it decidedly the hardest to bring to bag of all the Somali antelopes—leaving out of consideration the *baira*, of which I do not know enough. I can quite understand that in places where it has not been hunted and is not very shy, it may be easy enough to shoot. I did not meet it often; where I did, *e.g.* at Mandera, in the *khansa* jungle north of Tuyu, at Aror, and in Ogo-Gudan, I found it decidedly wary. It is always in cover, where, with its protective colouration and its habit of standing perfectly still in concealment when approached, it is most difficult to detect. And its big ears give it ample warning of the hunter's proximity; hence, though it will often let him approach fairly near, the first intimation he receives of its presence is usually a sudden stampede from the far side of a bush, when a quick snap-shot may sometimes be obtained. I am not a quick shot and hate firing at an animal of which I cannot see enough to make some attempt to place my shot, and for this reason lost one or two possible chances.

As a matter of fact, I only saw two good heads, both of which I ought to have bagged. I lost the first through hesitation; the second, once through not seeing him in time, and once by what really was bad luck.

When my pony turned out not to have a real gallop in him I was afraid that his deficiency would prove unfortunate when it came to following up a wounded buck; that, except on a single occasion, I never felt the want of him for this purpose was due to the remarkable effectiveness of the .318 rifle. The

only antelope wounded with the .318 that I lost were two oryx, one in the open that might have been ridden down, and one in bush. The oryx is extremely tenacious of life; out of six oryx bagged, three fell to a single shot, the remaining three had to be hit again. Out of thirty-three other animals (various antelope,



warába, and wart-hog) killed with this rifle, there were three or four cases of broken legs, which, of course, had to be finished off, but I can only recollect two (an *aoul* and a *dhero*) hit in the body that

required a second bullet. I think this speaks volumes for the .318 cartridge with copper-capped bullet which I almost invariably used; for I cannot pretend to have hit every animal through the heart! The .355 of my first trip was ineffective in comparison.

I found the capped bullet, which I had never tried before, to have ample penetration and to expand well without a tendency to break up; while the entrance-hole, owing to the habit of the hollow cap of the bullet to "cup in," at the first moment of impact, was sometimes considerably larger than that made by any other bullet of like diameter—a decided advantage, owing to the increased flow of blood, especially in a case where the bullet has not emerged and when with another type of small-bore projectile the blood-trail of a wounded animal would often be *nil*.

This killing-power combined with its accuracy and

low trajectory make the .318 a perfect weapon for general shooting in Somaliland. I should not hesitate to use it on lion or rhino, if need be, the latter sooner than the former, but should not ordinarily choose it for such a purpose, preferring a double-barrel and a heavier bullet. The vexed question of the best weapon for dangerous game is, however, one of such importance that I shall leave it to be dealt with in a separate chapter.

Latterly I have always used an aperture rear-sight on the stock of the .318, and found it a decided improvement, especially because it reduces to a great extent the possibility of errors of elevation in aiming. This is of not less importance than the increased distance between back and fore sight and the lessened strain on the focussing powers of the eye, which are usually considered the main advantage of this form of sight.

For small animals like dik-dik and jackals, I always used the little .300 Sherwood with axite cartridge, while the less powerful rook-rifle cartridge which it can also shoot was very useful for bustard, etc. The Sherwood, taking a cartridge with a capped bullet of 140 grains and driven by 7 grains of cordite or axite, is quite good enough in the hands of a fair shot for the smaller antelopes up to a range of 150 yards or so. But its limitations and those of one or two similar rifles in this direction are too often lost sight of, with the inevitable result of a painful proportion of wounded animals escaping to suffer.

As a mere expression of opinion is not likely to convince some who have proved for themselves the

undoubted killing powers of these little rifles, I will endeavour to show that the results of using them at long ranges must be as I have stated. There is no doubt that the light Sherwood bullet, with its comparatively low muzzle velocity of some 1450 feet per second, is yet, owing to its expansive qualities, good enough *when correctly placed* to kill a blackbuck or a fallow deer at even 300 yards. But one cannot expect that its remaining energy at that range will be sufficient to produce an adequate shock or to cause disablement if it fails to hit a vital part. Nor can it be expected to have sufficient power to smash a shoulder bone, for instance, with any certainty. And my experience fully bears out these theoretical expectations, though 200 yards is the longest range at which I have ever fired the Sherwood at an animal.

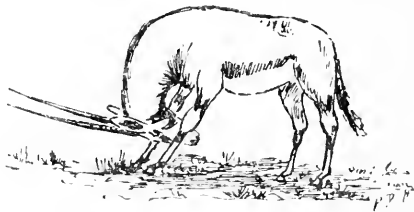
With a high-velocity small-bore rifle one may sometimes be justified in shooting at comparatively long ranges, by reason both of the much lower trajectory and the far greater smashing power of the bullet. But with a weapon like the Sherwood there can be no justification for firing at an unwounded buck unless one has a reasonable expectation of hitting a vital spot.

Up to what range can a fair shot have such a reasonable expectation? It is mainly a question of trajectory. To take some figures from Mr. Henry Sharp's interesting tables in *Modern Sporting Gunnery*: the .256 Mannlicher rifle shoots a 160 grain bullet and 31 grains of cordite, *e.g.* a bullet only 20 grains heavier than the Sherwood but a powder charge $4\frac{1}{2}$ times as great. The height of the trajectory curve at 300 yards

range of a bullet fired from this rifle is 11 inches. It is further found that shot at 200 yards with 300 yards sighting bullets go 10 inches high, or at 300 yards with 200 yards sighting they go 15 inches low. Or in other words if you under-estimate the range at 300 yards by 100 yards your bullet will be 15 inches low.

If your error amounts to 50 yards only, your bullet will be about 6 inches low. In the case of the Sherwood we find the height of the trajectory at 300 yards to be over 33 inches instead of 11. This would involve, at a rough estimate and to be quite on the safe side, an error of about 15 or 16 inches in a bullet fired at 300 yards with 250 yards sighting.

Now a 12-inch bull's-eye would more than cover the area, including both heart and lungs, within which one should place one's bullet in a broadside shot at the body of a blackbuck or *aoul*. It will not be denied that it takes a good shot to hit a "bull" of this size at 300 yards *known* range twice out of three shots. And how many sportsmen can judge that distance to within fifty yards under varying conditions in the field with any degree of certainty? Not many that I have met; while an error of judgment of only fifty yards will, though you be steady as a rock, result in your bullet passing at least six or seven inches clear below your buck. Is that good enough? Even when your elevation is correct, do your bullets at 300 yards never stray to right or left of that 12-inch "bull," though the target, unlike the buck, is



always standing quietly broadside on? While the buck, too, has generally forgotten to have its bull's-eye painted on.

What the respective chances are of killing, wounding, or missing a buck with the Sherwood rifle at 300 yards I leave my reader to determine. If, after considering the *data* I have given, all of which he can verify for himself, he is honestly able to justify such a shot, then he must possess powers beyond any rifleman I have met or hope to meet. For myself, I consider 150 yards, as I have said, to be the Sherwood's limit; inside that range it will kill where a Mannlicher would occasionally fail, for if the energy of the Sherwood capped bullet is small, none of it is wasted. And its high trajectory renders it an extremely safe weapon in inhabited country where the use of a high velocity rifle would be dangerous.

That it is necessary to insist upon the limitations of these miniature rifles is proved by the published accounts of what has been done with them at long ranges. The Sherwood is credited, for instance, with a red deer stag at 355 yards; I can only say that the exploit is not one I should be proud of. Another excellent little rifle of the same type, but rather less powerful than the Sherwood, is Greener's .310. An advertisement in a sporting paper not long ago quoted a letter from South Africa which stated that five springbok had been shot with this rifle at average distances of 400 to 500 yards! As at this distance an error of fifty yards either way would mean a miss by feet not inches, the hitting at all of a comparatively small animal like a springbok would be little better than a



LIONESS OF 5TH SEPTEMBER.



THE HOME OF THE KUDU—BARKA HAGAR. [To face p. 201

pure fluke, while the energy of the little bullet would be so far diminished as to render its killing power extremely uncertain, even if well placed. And the springbok, mind you, as Mr. J. G. Millais writes, "for their size are probably the toughest animals in the world, and are said to have been known to carry away as many as four Martini bullets when not absolutely placed in a vital spot"—the Martini bullet weighing exactly four times as much as that of the .310, besides having a slightly higher velocity! How many animals were wounded in addition to the five killed with the .310 we are not told. In some cases, the "sportsman" could not have known whether he had hit or not. To performances of this kind there is only one word to be applied—criminal.

But even with high-power rifles there is far too much indiscriminate long-range shooting. In these cases, men seem to think it is purely a matter of trajectory, and that if they can judge the distance with sufficient accuracy to obtain, with the low trajectory of their rifles, a fairly correct elevation, they are justified in shooting. The matter of eyesight is not considered. To go back to our bull's-eye target; when the rifleman on the range increases his distance from the target he increases the size of his bull's-eye so that at 500 yards we find the normal bull's-eye is no less than two feet in diameter. Why? Surely the smaller "bull" would afford a greater test of marksmanship? So it would, but the test would be too severe, for the simple reason that the 12-inch bull at this distance affords far too small and indistinct a mark to admit of accurate aim being taken by the

human eye. And, in the second place, the longer the range the greater the deviation of the bullet from the right path on account of the slightest error in aim or unsteadiness in the rifle. But I am not aware that as a buck increases his distance he increases his size : and what an indistinct mark he presents under almost any conditions as compared with a bull's-eye target !

No doubt this difficulty can in part be remedied under suitable conditions by the use of a telescopic sight. But the odds in my opinion are already so far on the side of the hunter, that personally I would deprecate the use of any such adventitious aids, unless in the case of failing eyesight.

If one's rifle is a really powerful one, such that a hit on almost any part of an animal's body is likely to kill or disable it ; if the light is of the best ; and if one has a horse or dogs with which to ride or run it down if wounded, it may, under exceptional circumstances, be permissible to take a shot at 400 or 500 yards. But, as a general rule, no shot ought to be considered justifiable unless there is a reasonable chance of scoring a kill. Such reasonable chance does not ordinarily exist at over 300 yards range, especially with a running shot, whatever the rifle ; and when possible, 250 yards should be the limit : this in the open plain. One should usually be able to get closer where there is cover, and if one can get closer without disturbing the game, one should make a point of doing it. A further reason for doing so lies in the comparative unsteadiness that is at times produced by hard work under a tropical sun.

Anyway that is my opinion, for what it may be

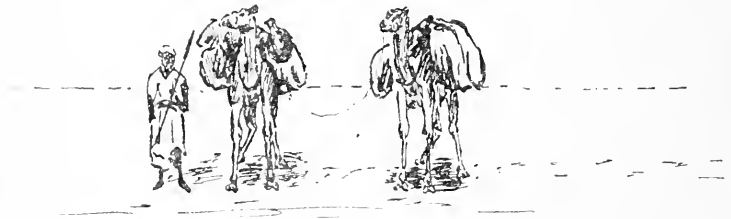
worth. It is shared by good and experienced shots ; for instance, Captain Stigand and Mr. Lyell, joint authors of *Central African Game and its Spoor*, a book which contains more sound and practical advice on the subject, from all aspects, of big game shooting in Africa than any work I know. (Though, as a later chapter will show, I venture to disagree in some measure with its authors' views on the choice of rifles for dangerous game.)

It is a different matter once the quarry is wounded. Then one should be prepared to take any shot that offers a chance of success. What many men forget, or do not appreciate, is the immense importance of the first shot that hits an animal. Subsequent wounds do not seem to cause anything like the same shock to the system, and often appear for the time being to bestow renewed vitality. One frequently finds that a well-placed bullet, which would infallibly have dropped an unwounded beast, has little or no immediate effect on one that has been previously wounded. If this fact were more generally realised, I believe many would be more careful than they sometimes are in placing their first shot, whether in dealing with dangerous game or in long shots at antelopes.

One may occasionally come across a man who does not at heart care two straws how many animals he may leave wounded, but he is rare. It is inexperience, thoughtlessness, or lack of self-control under excitement, that are most to blame. I know it has been so in the past with myself, and when tired and disappointed one may be tempted to slacken or cease one's efforts to recover a wounded beast. For these

reasons I think that if the young sportsman, who does not wish to cause unnecessary suffering, were to give a thought to his average of cartridges expended for each head of game killed (not hit) with the rifle, he might realise that perhaps he is, after all, in the habit of firing too many shots at animals which ought to be considered out of range.

But he must beware of making a fetish of his average, or of looking upon it as in itself a criterion of his shooting abilities. If he once begins to hesitate about taking a shot for fear of spoiling his average, he may attain his object—in figures—but he will not get the best heads, and he will never be a shikari.



There is another man one may occasionally meet who will excuse his indifference as to the fate of a wounded animal by expressing his belief that animals do not feel pain. Of course it is a silly sort of lie; he has never given the subject a thought. Though there can be no doubt that the lower one descends in the scale of creation the less do creatures feel pain as we understand it.

But there is a very different type of man—of thinking man—who makes a somewhat similar statement but a more general one, and he puts it in a different way by saying that there is no cruelty in

Nature. It is a belief with which one can readily sympathise: for besides having a foundation in fact it originates in some cases in the impossibility its holder finds in reconciling cruelty in Nature with the existence of a beneficent Power controlling the universe; while the limitations of the finite human mind render it difficult to adopt the wiser plan of being content not to understand—yet—though, after all, is the necessity for the pain and suffering that exist among mankind more easy to understand than a similar necessity for a measure of what seems to us cruelty in the scheme of life of creatures less sensitive than ourselves?

The contrary view is common enough, which looks upon Nature as harsh and ruthless to a superlative degree. But surely the truth, as is so often the case, lies between the two extremes.

Dr. Wallace writes*: “There is much evidence that violent deaths, if not too prolonged, are painless and easy,” and (after giving examples), “we have a right to conclude, that when death follows soon after any great shock, it is as easy and painless a death as possible; and this is certainly what happens when an animal is seized by a beast of prey. For the enemy is one which hunts for food, not for pleasure or excitement; and it is doubtful whether any animal in a state of nature begins to seek after prey until driven to do so by hunger.” As a general proposition, this is undoubtedly true, but it is misleading if the conclusion is drawn therefrom, as has been done, that as an invariable rule “the rush and spring of a savage

* *Darwinism*, Chapter II.

animal brings a kind of merciful numbness that kills pain perfectly and seems also to take away all feeling and volition.”

Consider the methods of the spotted hyæna, which takes huge bites of flesh out of a pony, and tears the udders out of a cow; of the wild dogs which pull down an animal by repeated snatches at the hinder parts; of the Himalayan black bear which drags its victim down^{*} and proceeds to tear it to pieces and devour it without any attempt to kill it first. In one instance^{*} a cow was found “lying on its side, struggling and bellowing, the bear gnawing away at its hind leg.” Does the animal feel no pain under such conditions, and is its death always speedy and painless? In the case of the cow mentioned, it is further recorded that “she had one leg broken and two huge pieces of flesh taken from her flank, while her stomach and quarters were lacerated and pouring with blood,” yet she was alive and bellowing when help came. Does this indicate a “merciful numbness that kills pain”?

As to the wild beast of prey never killing except for food, there are authenticated instances of leopards getting into the midst of a flock of sheep or goats and killing a number in sheer wantonness. And I have mentioned the occasional similar habit of the Somali striped hyæna, who is certainly not, as is the leopard, a master of the “happy dispatch.”

When young lions or tigers are being taught how to kill, their victims are apt to be terribly mauled, even before being pulled down, and must suffer in the process. But it is almost certainly true that the

^{*} *Bombay Natural History Society's Journal*, Vol. XVII., p. 833.

Felidae, as a general rule, kill their prey swiftly and with little pain.

Cruelty does exist in Nature : it would be easy to give further instances of it. On the other hand, the great majority of violent deaths are really, I believe, swift and in great measure painless ; from the buck killed by the leopard to the fly taken by the swallow.

And I think, with Mr. W. J. Long, that deaths from cold and hunger are usually merciful, though no doubt there is some preliminary suffering. It is the anticipation of death that makes the human being dread starvation, while, as Wallace points out, the animal has no such anticipation. For the same reason, the continual state of fear of a lurking foe that some would ascribe to wild animals simply does not exist, as any one who has studied Nature with eyes to see must realise.

The works of Mr. Long, whom I mentioned just now, have suffered a good deal of adverse criticism ; but though at times I think his imagination and sympathy with animal life carry him too far, he is, in my opinion, one of the most charming and truest observers of Nature that ever wrote on his favourite subject. I think he is, in the main, entirely right when he says in *School of the Woods* : " There can be no greater mistake than to imagine an animal's life to be full of frightful alarms and haunting terrors. There is no terror in extreme watchfulness. To the animal it is simply the use of his unusual powers, with the joy and confidence that the use of unusual powers always brings, to animals as well as men. . . . Neither is there any terror, usually, but rather an exultant sense

of power and victory in running away. . . . Hoof and wing seem to laugh at danger behind and to rejoice in this splendid power and training." This, remember, is the view of an outdoor naturalist who is not a hunter and who need not be suspected of a wish to father the thought.

So the oft-derided view that the fox enjoys being hunted, at any rate until he is at the last gasp, may have something in it after all! I have little doubt of it. Have you ever ridden after a blackbuck and seen others come and deliberately join you in the race? making, too, no attempt to increase their short distance ahead of you, though if they chose they could travel three yards to your pony's two? I have. And watch a tame gazelle suddenly startled, for a moment the life almost frightened out of it; another moment and it has forgotten all about it and is nibbling unconcernedly at your newspaper or putting its fore-feet on the tea-table; thus an old friend of mine, an Arabian gazelle. And you may see much the same thing in the wild creatures.

As Wallace remarks again, "The normal state of happiness (among animals) is not alloyed, as it is with us, by long periods—whole lives often—of poverty or ill health, and of the unsatisfied longing for pleasures which others enjoy but to which we cannot attain. Illness, and what answers to poverty in animals—continued hunger—are quickly followed by unanticipated and almost painless extinction."

Lingering suffering rarely occurs except in the case of animals which, injured by man or beast, escape with festering wounds. In most instances, fortunately,

these must quickly fall a prey to other foes. I have more than once remarked the quickness of a jackal to scent blood and take up the trail of a wounded buck, and have seen a pair pull down a gazelle with a broken leg within a few minutes of its being hit.

It is a great mistake to ignore, with some, the pain and suffering that undoubtedly does occur, but in far the great majority of cases Nature is cruel only to be kind ; the cruelty indeed is, in the main, only seeming, and the life of the woods and prairies is a happy life. It is a humiliating reflection that in order to see pain and unhappiness among the beasts it is to the oft ill-treated and down-trodden section leading the artificial life of "domestic" animals among mankind that we must direct our gaze !

This dissertation has carried me a considerable distance from the man who started it by saying animals do not feel pain. It may also be considered irrelevant by the reader, who expected this little book to be a mere record of slaughter, besides being liable to criticism as in parts no more than a *rechauffé* of other men's views.

But I have no apologies to make. No man can be a genuine shikari without becoming, if he was not before, something of a naturalist ; so that occasional speculations on natural history subjects are far from being foreign to the scheme of this book. Indeed, it is only because I venture to hope that it may not be looked upon as altogether "a mere record of slaughter" that it has been written at all.

For the rest, if anything I have said induces my

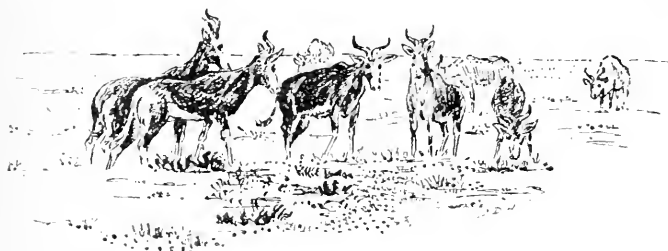
reader to make the acquaintance of *School of the Woods* for the first time, he will owe me a debt of gratitude. Anyhow, skipping is not an offence under the law. And if any one objects to my quoting Dr. Wallace, I recommend him to skip the next chapter too!

I spoke of a "record of slaughter" just now: that is the light in which the doings of the big game hunter are regarded in certain quarters. I am not concerned to defend myself or others—there is no need—there are black sheep and thoughtless individuals in every community, but shikaris as a class are as humane as any other body of men. And the great diminution of large game in various parts of the world has been due, not to the men who have shot for sport, but to those who have killed for profit, as well as to the introduction of fire-arms among native races. This is not a matter of personal opinion, but a demonstrable fact, which there is no occasion to go into now.

I have referred to the subject because of a remark made in the course of reviewing a book by a writer in a well-known Indian paper some time ago. Not that it is deserving of a second thought, but writings of the kind are liable to leave such a totally false impression on the minds of the many readers who have no knowledge of the subject, that I feel bound not to leave it unnoticed. The reviewer in question, after pointing out with some justification how comparatively easy the way of the modern shikari has been made for him in many respects, writes: "When he finds his game, either in carefully preserved areas in East Africa or the ear-marked nullahs of the Himalayas, he brings it

down with a battery of magazine rifles which does not give the brute a chance. Squirting death through a hose in an exaggerated park, or killing hundreds of heads of game from behind a wall, may be a pastime ; but it needs a stronger effort of the imagination than we can conceive to regard it as a sport " !

East Africa may be an exaggerated park, and modern rifles certainly give the hunter an advantage, but a perusal of the writings of any East African sportsman will satisfy an unbiassed mind that the man who wants to make a good bag of good heads has to work for it. Imagine the " battery of magazine rifles "



that would operate with the effect of a hose ! And the " killing of hundreds of heads from behind a wall " is a lovely picture of the difficulties of getting within shot of an old ibex or markhor in the Himalayas, where a man may be well content if a couple of months' strenuous toil produces two or three really good trophies. One does not know whether to admire most the sublimity of this gentleman's ignorance or (in spite of his disclaimer) the superlative quality of his imagination. Such talents are wasted in India ; their proper sphere is the Yankee " Yellow Press." Really it is not the usual practice for a big game hunter, even if he be a gunner, to take artillery on to the veldt and

rake the herds of hartebeest with shrapnel ! Or can it be that our eritic has perchance confused a magazine rifle with a maxim gun ?

I have referred to the diminution of big game in different countries. In Northern Somaliland, lions, which have always been much sought for, have certainly been reduced in numbers. Elephants, too, are now rare, not having been killed off so much as driven away into Abyssinia. Otherwise, so far as I have been able to gather, there has not been any very appreciable reduction in the game generally, except near the coast where the herds of *aoul* have been driven inland, and in Ogo-Guban round Hargeisa. And there are, perhaps, fewer kudu than there used to be. But that Somaliland has been, as sometimes stated, "shot out," is absolutely not a fact.

Considerable numbers of animals are, however, killed by the Somalis and their hides and horns exported. This export has been forbidden from the British ports, but I have frequently, in Aden, seen bales of hides and horns that had come from the Italian ports, while with the increase in the number of rifles in the country the effect on the game is bound in time to be considerable. I remember a French merchant in Aden telling me of a consignment of "rabbit" skins he had received from Somaliland. I asked him to let me see one. It was a dik-dik's !

If this has been a rambling chapter you must blame my pen. A fountain-pen, tied to no ink-pot, acquires independence of character, and when it is,

like mine, the trusted friend of years, is apt to take liberties at times. Now and again, consequently, I find it advisable to give it a loose rein, so to speak, and let it carry me where it will. In the next chapter it will have again to follow a straight course.



CHAPTER XV.

Protective colouration in animals—Theory carried to extremes—A reaction which goes too far—Mr. Selous' views—Fallacious basis of his deductions from observations correct in themselves—Alternatives to the protective colouration theory—Darwin and sexual selection—Dr. Wallace: recognition marks—No theory adequate to take the place of protective colouration—What do Selous' observations really prove?—The kudu's stripes—The zebra at the present day—The quagga: explanation of its uniform colouration—A first clue to the problem's solution: the zebra probably originally an inhabitant of thick jungle—Habits of carnivora—Do the *Felidae* hunt by scent?—Evidence to the contrary—Nocturnal habits of the lion—Probability that the lion originally hunted by day—Evolutionary development in both lion and zebra—Deduction that colouration was originally evolved under different conditions when protection by concealment was of value—Colour at night—Smaller animals—Why the buffalo is not protectively coloured—Conclusion that objections to the theory of protective colouration in the larger animals are only objections in seeming—The harmony of Nature.

IN speaking of the protective colouration of the lesser kudu in the previous chapter, I deliberately touched upon what is at the present day a somewhat controversial subject. The great truths underlying Darwin's theories of evolution were not accepted in a day, but once naturalists in general had taken to their bosom the wonderful principle of natural selection, it was only in human nature that some of them should proceed after a time to carry their theories, especially in respect of animal colouration, to extremes.

More recently there has been a reaction, which has been strengthened in some measure by the writings of "hunter-naturalists" like Selous and Roosevelt,

men whose opinions, based on much experience and observation of Nature, often in her most secret places, are of the highest value. Mr. Selous in particular, in the opening chapters of *African Nature Notes and Reminiscences*, has done much to demolish ideas that have by many for years been deemed almost incontrovertible; on the subject especially of the supposed utility, either for protection or for purposes of recognition, of the colouration of antelopes and others of the larger mammals in Africa.

It is because this reaction in its turn seems to me to go too far and to destroy too much without producing any satisfactory alternative theory, that I venture to join issue with so great an authority as Mr. Selous (supported as he is by Ex-President Roosevelt), as to the correctness, not of his observations, but of his deductions therefrom.

Mr. Selous discusses the cases of a number of animals whose colouring from personal observation he maintains does not serve to conceal them from their enemies, nor in the case of carnivorous animals to enable them to approach their prey unperceived; urging further that the colouring, as in the case of the zebra for instance, is under most conditions decidedly conspicuous rather than the reverse, as has been believed. I do not propose to consider at present the details he has given, for in most instances he certainly appears to prove his case up to a certain point; though it may be noted that such competent observers as Mr. J. G. Millais and Herr Schillings have expressed somewhat contrary opinions regarding the zebra.

But let us consider the conclusion which he draws.

It is this : " That in addition to the influence exerted in the evolution of colour in living organisms by the action of sexual selection, and the necessity for protection against enemies, a third factor has been at work which I will call the influence of environment." In explanation of this last influence he expresses the belief that there is " a law which, working through the ages, tends to bring the colours of all organic beings into harmony with their surroundings, irrespective of any special benefit they may receive in the way of protection from enemies by such harmonious colouration."

If, as seems to be implied throughout his argument, colouration in harmony with its surroundings means, or at least involves, a measure of inconspicuousness, how are we to explain the conspicuous colouring which he asserts to be characteristic of the zebra and other animals ? But we may let that pass. The vital objection to this environment theory as presented by Mr. Selous lies in the fact that it is based on a misconception of the nature of the theory of protective colouration produced by natural selection. For when he speaks of the necessity for protection and the influence of environment as separate factors in the evolution of colouring, he can only mean that they work independently. Whereas (assuming the influence of environment on colour to be a fact) these two factors are really complementary to each other.

The existence of a necessity for protection can of itself achieve nothing. But when by the influence of environment or any other cause, a colour variation appears which has some protective effect and is

therefore beneficial to the species, the new protective colouring tends to be preserved and rendered permanent by the agency of natural selection.

In this connection I cannot do better than quote from an interesting paper on the subject by Mr. C. E. C. Fischer, which appeared not long ago in the *Journal* of the Bombay Natural History Society, vol. xix. : "It is quite possible that environment has some influence on the colouration of animals (though that has to be proved as well as the exact agency through which it acts); but this in no way affects the theory of protective colouration, rather the contrary. Every one will admit that if it is environment that influences colouration, it must do so in a great variety of shades to account for the great differences in the colour of animals inhabiting the same locality, *e.g.* tiger, sambar, sloth bear, bison, etc., in India; and the divergence is still more striking in South Africa.

"This being so, then either all animals (in similar surroundings) under this influence should eventually assume the same coats, or else external specific features must tend to disappear, as there is nothing to fix the colour, which may at any time be gradually changed to any of the other colours brought about by the particular environment.

"We here come to the *clou* : there must be some force or influence to fix a particular colour, and we have that agency in natural selection."

Now I think Mr. Selous makes it clear that he has no idea of rejecting Darwin's general principle of the survival of the fittest by means of natural selection. It is of the essence of Darwinism that all variations in

colouring, as in other characters, which prove harmful to the race must eventually disappear, only those surviving which are beneficial or at least harmless; and further, in view of the severity of the struggle for existence, a definitely beneficial colouring of any part must eventually become permanent rather than a different colouring which is merely harmless.

It inevitably follows that while the influence of environment may, shall we say, have *suggested* existing colourations, it is natural selection which has *adopted* the most suitable of the suggestions made. The necessity for protection by means of concealment is believed by many naturalists to provide one of the reasons for the particular selection made in any individual case. Hence the theory of protective colouration.

We see, then, that Mr. Selous' theory of the influence of environment on colouration may be perfectly true without affecting in the least the theory of protective colouration, while it can in no sense be accepted—as Mr. Selous has offered it—as a substitute for the latter. So that, although he does not appear to realise it, his criticisms of existing theories are purely destructive, since he has nothing substantial to put in their place.

The consequence is that if we accept the results of Mr. Selous' observations as proving that their colouration in the case of many animals has no protective value, we are driven to seek—not another “cause” for the production of a certain colour or pattern, but another “reason” for the selection and preservation of the variations which led up to that colouring.

The only two other “reasons” that seem of

sufficiently general application to be worth considering in this connection are to be found in the theories of sexual selection and of recognition marks (warning colouration and mimicry being included under protective colouration).

Darwin ascribes to the influence of sexual selection many instances of striking colours or markings that Wallace and others have considered to be protective or useful for mutual recognition. He believed that brilliant colourings or other ornamental characteristics, originally acquired or developed by the male through sexual selection, were often transmitted to both sexes, and he thus accounts for the colouring in many cases where the sexes are alike; the zebra's beautiful coat, for instance, although in none of the *Equidæ* do the sexes differ in colour. The difficulty that in many cases the male does not share his ornamentations with his mate, he is unable to solve, but puts aside as one of the unexplained peculiarities of the unquestionably complex laws of heredity. Though not perhaps insurmountable, it remains a difficulty.

There is another and more important difficulty which Darwin himself realises and finds it difficult to answer. In his own words, "If we admit that coloured spots and stripes were first acquired as ornaments, how comes it that so many existing deer, the descendants of an aboriginally spotted animal, and all the species of pigs and tapirs, the descendants of an aboriginally striped animal, have lost in their adult state their former ornaments?" The only answer he has to give is that with an increase in size and number of the carnivora during the Tertiary period,

and increased necessity for protection, the removal of the spots and stripes made for concealment—which is most interesting in view of the opinions of others that the existence of stripes makes for concealment.

But he goes on, “This may be the true explanation, but it is rather strange that the young” (which need it most) “should not have been thus protected, and still more so that the adults of some species should have retained their spots.” Exactly. But if these markings were themselves *protective*, instead of being due to sexual selection, there is no difficulty in supposing that if for any reason the need for protection disappeared the markings might disappear, remaining in the young by the known law that the young of the individual resembles the adult type of the race in its youth. Of that more presently. It is, moreover, impossible to explain on the sexual selection theory the undoubted fact that striped and spotted animals are almost invariably inhabitants of the jungle or bush and rarely if ever of the open plain,—admitting for the moment the zebra to be a striking exception.

Dr. Wallace has on other and weighty grounds attacked the foundations of the whole theory of sexual selection operating through female preferences for ornamental colours, etc. (while admitting the existence and importance of sexual selection through the female’s choice of the stronger and more vigorous males); and even if we follow Darwin as to the general principle, it seems to me impossible on the whole to account in this manner for the colouring of the majority of those animals in which there is little or no difference between the sexes.

There remains the belief that many conspicuous markings and some other characteristics of animals are due to a necessity for mutual recognition by members of the same species. I find it impossible not to agree with Mr. Selous that this idea has been pushed to extremes. One of the most far-fetched suggestions, to my mind, is that of Dr. Wallace, regarding the horns of some antelopes, when he writes, "The sable-antelope, the gemsbok, the oryx, the hartebeest and the addax are characterised by horns so remarkably different in each species and so conspicuous, that it seems probable that the peculiarities in length, twist and curvature have been differentiated for the purpose of recognition rather than for any speciality of defence in species whose general habits are so similar."

Which of these animals could, apart from its horns, be mistaken for any of the others, except the oryx and gemsbok? In the two latter the average difference in length of horns would not distinguish them at a distance, while the difference in face-markings when near enough to be noticeable should, according to Dr. Wallace himself, sufficiently serve the purpose. And surely few things in Nature are more certain than that it is by scent as much as if not more than by sight that most animals recognise their friends?

And in the majority of cases it is difficult to see that elaborate recognition marks can possess anything like the value attributed to them. It is by no means generally a fact, as Dr. Wallace appears to believe, that "animals of this kind will not usually receive a stranger into their midst." On the contrary, a most notable feature in animal life in Africa is the manner

in which different species of the *ungulata* do associate together on the most friendly terms.

Again, the necessity of recognition marks to obviate the danger of crossing between allied species is, as Mr. Selous points out, largely illusory, at any rate among the larger animals, for the simple reason that the ranges of nearly allied species very seldom overlap, and where such overlapping takes place, interbreeding undoubtedly does at times occur.

The black and white face marks of the oryx are an instance of colouration that, like Mr. Selous, I have



found certainly not inconspicuous, in the bush or out of it. They might doubtless be put down as aids to recognition, *if* the oryx has any occasion for such—that is what I doubt.

There are, however, two occasions on which it is easy to agree with Dr. Wallace that some means of rapid recognition at a moderate distance would seem likely to be of undoubted value. I mean in the case of birds on migration, and in the case of a young creature for whom it is a necessity to keep in close touch with its parent or with the flock. Many of the markings on the wings of birds are no doubt correctly

explained on the former supposition. While the white patch on the rump of the *aoul* is probably an instance of the latter. The absurd idea that such a patch could be oblitative and have a concealing effect has been convincingly disposed of by Colonel Roosevelt. The oryx face markings may possibly come in here as an aid to the young.

But admitting the existence of recognition marks in certain cases, there is no doubt that the theory has been carried to extremes, and that it cannot apply to many colour markings for which it has been held accountable. Moreover, a great number of animals do not possess these so-called recognition marks; while their existence in some cases seems to be in direct conflict with the idea of concealing colouration as applied to the identical animal.

It seems to me, then, clear that neither sexual selection nor the need for mutual recognition can be of sufficiently general application to take the place of the necessity for protection as the main factor in fixing animal colouration. So far, that is, as our knowledge extends, and admitting that every detail of its colouring may not always be of direct utility to an animal.

Are we then to revise our ideas of the severity of the struggle for existence and reject natural selection as the main factor in evolution, at any rate as regards colour? Did Darwin build no better than that?

I propose nothing so drastic. What we have to do is to go back and see, firstly, whether Mr. Selous' observations really go as far as appears at first sight towards proving the non-existence of protective colouration in many animals; and secondly, in so far

as they do, whether there is not some explanation of the fact.

I have said that on the whole Mr. Selous appears to prove his case. By this I mean that he has shown that under existing conditions at the present day many animals, hitherto believed to be protectively coloured, in point of fact derive little, if any, material benefit from their colouration.

But in certain cases his observations are open to criticism. For instance, with regard to the supposed protective effect in the bush of the stripes on the body of the kudu, he states that the greater kudu, though never found on the open plains, is, on the other hand, seldom met with in really dense jungle. But so long as the animal is frequently found in bush, the protective effect would still have some value even when the bush was not very dense. Besides, Mr. Selous himself is quoted elsewhere (*Game Animals of Africa*) as saying of this species: "Two conditions are necessary to its existence, water and bush;" and again, "kudu are essentially bush-loving animals, and during the greater part of the year seldom met with except in thick covert." This is confirmed by Kirby.

Moreover, it is instructive to note that this species in Abyssinia and Somaliland has only five stripes on each side of its body, as compared with nine or ten borne by the southern variety, which frequents less mountainous and more thickly wooded country. To carry the comparison further, the lesser kudu, with a taste for really thick jungle, and rarely found out of it, is still more heavily striped. The habitat of each variety is thus, as Dr. Lydekker points out, exactly

what the theory of protective colouration would lead us to expect.

And I can vouch for the fact that the lesser kudu, instead of endeavouring to seek safety in flight, prefers rather to elude observation, as an animal whose colouring is mainly protective might be expected to do. Though their average haunts are different, I have seen both oryx and lesser kudu in the same type of bush, and the striped kudu is certainly more difficult to detect than the uniformly coloured body of the oryx.

Mr. Selous lays great stress on the undoubted fact that an animal must move to live, while it is only in a state of quiescence that inconspicuous colouration can be of any value. Quite true, but it has never been pretended that a protectively coloured animal is invisible always or under all conditions; that would mean that no lion would ever obtain a meal! There is no doubt that the animals which most need protection are those which, living in bush, can be most easily approached under cover by an unseen carnivore, and these are the animals which in fact are found to have acquired in greatest degree the habit of keeping still on hearing or scenting an enemy.

But let us take an example where Mr. Selous has, as I said, in some measure proved his case—the zebra. Here we have an animal which is in the main a denizen of the plains, but is often found in more or less open jungle. Probably while sometimes frequenting jungle in the neighbourhood of the plain by day, it seeks open country by night, as I have found the *aoul* to do. Its principal foe is the lion, an almost entirely nocturnal animal. Its colouring moreover is, *in the open*,

decidedly conspicuous. Obviously then, by far the majority of zebras killed by lions must be killed in the open and by night. At dusk, or when the night is very dark, a zebra may be more invisible than some animals ; but on the whole, it is probable that the zebra under existing conditions can obtain no very appreciable benefit from its colouration, in the matter of exemption from attack.

It by no means follows, however, that this colouration was not originally protective. Mr. Selous believes the colour of animals to be due to a tendency to become in harmony with their environment. Is this the case with the zebra, looking upon it as an animal of the open plain ? To me it seems the reverse. Mr. Selous, however, indicates a way out of the difficulty when he explains the dull and nearly uniform colouring of the now extinct quagga. The latter was, he says, a striped zebra which, having taken to living on the semi-desert plains of Cape Colony, gradually lost the ancestral stripes, which the zebra, living on the plains of East Africa surrounded by well-wooded hills that give some colour to the landscape, has retained.

Assuming this view to be correct, I consider it tends to show that it is to the influence of wooded country rather than of the open plain that the zebra's colouring is probably due. And this should be in accordance with Mr. Selous' ideas, for a striped coat is unquestionably more in harmony with its surroundings in the jungle than in the open. It is also in accordance with the undoubted fact that a striped coat is ordinarily only found in jungle animals.

Leaving out of consideration for the moment the

nocturnal habits of the carnivora, it seems more than possible that we have here the first clue to a solution of the problem, in the fact that the zebra may have been originally an inhabitant of the jungle to a far greater extent than at present, and therefore in need of a protective coat. Many observers have stated, and Mr. Selous himself admits, that among trees or in bush the zebra is by no means easy to see. As in course of generations it took more and more to the plains, as well as for another reason that will presently appear, the necessity for this form of protection disappeared, hence the ability of the quagga to dispense with its stripes in surroundings with which they were not in keeping.

There remains a difficulty of which it is necessary to dispose, in the habits of the carnivora. And this is to my mind the crux of Mr. Selous' argument. He considers that the whole theory of protective colouration in the case of an animal like the zebra is put out of court by two facts, (a) that the great carnivora hunt by scent and not by sight; (b) that they hunt by night.

The first of these objections undoubtedly holds good at the present day of the *Canidæ*, but the great enemy of the zebra is the lion, and with all deference to Mr. Selous' great authority I maintain that it is by no means certainly the case as regards the cat tribe. In India, at any rate, I have no hesitation in making the positive statement that both tiger and panther hunt mainly by sight and hearing. My belief is based on my own experience so far as it goes, but I should not venture to urge it with such confidence

were I not supported by undoubted authorities, of whom I will quote two.

Colonel R. G. Burton, an observant sportsman of great Indian experience, writes: "In my experience neither the tiger nor the panther hunts by scent, but depends almost entirely on sight and perhaps hearing. This has been proved time and again by these beasts of prey passing close to buffaloes or goats tied up as bait, without seeing them, owing to the bait having made neither sound nor movement. I have known many occasions on which a tiger has passed close to an animal thus tied up, and has killed another a few yards farther on. For this reason, that they hunt by sight and not by scent, one ties up the bait on or near a path or watercourse, or near a pool of water, so that



the prowling tiger may come upon it in the course of his nightly wanderings. . . . I have certainly always been under the impression, from general observation of its habits, that the Indian leopard or panther hunts by sight and sound. It is fond of prowling round villages to pick up stray goats or dogs, or of following in the wake of herds of goats, and carrying off stragglers. I shot one once which was well known as being in the habit of hunting monkeys of the lungoor species. It would be very unlikely to hunt monkeys by scent."

Another sportsman with unrivalled experience of the Indian jungles—he has shot two hundred tigers and then lost count!—is Mr. F. C. Hicks, late of the Indian Forest Service. In his recently published book, *Forty Years among the Wild Animals of India*, he

expresses an opinion similar to that of Colonel Burton. He indeed considers the tiger's power of scent to be inferior to that of any other wild animal. He says, "The tiger is not a scent-hunting animal, for his other powers are so great that he can in his hunts, generally pick and choose his dinner where he pleases," while unlike other animals, he has no need to rely for his safety upon the keenness of his scent. This writer gives an interesting instance of a tiger cub whose dinners used to be dragged along the ground into some grass out of sight, but the tiger would never put his nose to the trail, but knowing his dinner to be somewhere about "would go bounding round in circles with his head high—looking for it with his eye and not with his nose—so that we frequently saw him actually pass right over his dinner without smelling or seeing it." * Again, he states that he cannot recall a single instance of ever having seen a tiger scenting up the drag of its kill when it had been removed—and this not from superior caution, for he says, "I have frequently seen them wander round more or less aimlessly in circles looking for their removed kill."

On the other hand, he adduces evidence that panthers can and do scent a drag. But this does not necessarily prove that they make a practice of hunting live game in this way, and all the evidence seems to be against their doing so. And the manner in which a panther can be shot at close quarters from a shelter on the ground, which it would never approach if it suspected human occupation, seems to me in itself

* For a precisely similar case see the *Bombay Natural History Society's Journal*, Vol. XVII., p. 531.

proof that its powers of detecting a taint in the air are far inferior to those of the deer or antelope tribes. The circumstances are quite different when a Somali leopard deliberately attacks an inhabited zariba.

Now, Mr. Selous produces no evidence in support of his belief that the lion hunts by scent. At the same time it is not improbable that this animal's powers of scent have been developed to a greater degree than those of the tiger. This for the reason that the lion in Africa, unlike the tiger, as a rule, has no scruples about having his prey killed for him, and habitually feeds upon carcasses which he may happen to come across. This habit alone would tend to bring the powers of scent into more frequent use. Moreover, the existence of the habit in an animal obviously intended by Nature to kill its own prey, points to the probability of the struggle for existence being, or having been, in some respects, greater for the lion under African conditions of life than for the tiger in Asia. If this be so an increase in power of scent would be a natural development.

But that the lion habitually hunts his prey by scent must, in the absence of stronger evidence than has appeared, be held not proven. Though even were the contrary the case the difficulty, as I hope to show, is not insuperable.

The final stumbling-block in the way of theories of concealing colouration lies in the nocturnal habits of the carnivora. Mr. Selous argues that this important consideration is ignored by armchair naturalists, and no doubt this is in some measure the case. But it seems to me, on the other hand, that Mr. Selous fails to

take into consideration the great length of time during which evolution has been going on, and that he assumes, without sufficient justification, that the protective colouration of the zebra was brought into being by conditions precisely similar to those obtaining at the present day.

I have endeavoured to show that in respect of the nature of the country in which it ordinarily dwells the zebra's habits may have changed. A moment's consideration will show that the lion's habits have also changed ; partially perhaps in the same direction as the zebra's, which might account for the disappearance of the spots it once possessed ; but more certainly in another direction. For it hardly needs demonstration that the lion was not always a nocturnal animal. For one thing, the eye of the lion is not inferior to that of animals of diurnal habit and, light being necessary to its perfection as an organ of vision, could never have attained its present perfection if its owner had always avoided the light of day. And it must be remembered that at the present time the lion does, on rare occasions, hunt by day.

When this was his habitual practice it must have been an advantage to his prey to be inconspicuous. It is not difficult to imagine the processes of evolution that took place ; the zebra and the lion, to begin with, both becoming less easy to see. It is not easy to be sure of the order in which changes occurred, but we may perhaps assume that to counteract the difficulty of seeing their enemy with his increasing stealthiness, the zebra took to the plains while the kudu, instead, developed increased powers of scent.

As time went on the lion, finding it more and more difficult to capture his prey, would often find that it was only in the dusk, after going hungry all day, that he achieved success. A crepuscular habit once acquired and accompanied by a gradually increasing power of vision in a dim light, would develop almost inevitably into a nocturnal one. The antelope or zebra meanwhile would develop still more its powers of scent and perhaps hearing, and, in the case of the latter, become more and more wholly a denizen of the plains.

Similarly the wolves and wild dogs acquired nocturnal habits, though perhaps in a less degree; they did not, however, attain to the superlative stealthiness of the cat tribe, but in compensation developed their power of hunting by scent.

And so we are brought down to the conditions of to-day, where the colouring of many species is such that, whether in the present or in somewhat different surroundings in the past, it would have an undoubtedly protective effect against an enemy hunting by sight in the daytime. Where there has been a later change of colour, the need for colour-protection having passed away, we may with a measure of confidence put it down to the influence of a change of environment.

Much as its importance has diminished, as a factor in the struggle for existence, I do not believe that protective colouration has ceased to be of value in the case of all the larger mammals. The lesser kudu, for instance, living in thick jungle, is probably subject, not infrequently, to the attacks of the leopard in the daytime; while the chita is known often to hunt by day. And at night it is beyond question that some

colours are more noticeable than others, an animal with a dark or very light coat being more conspicuous both on a starlight or moderately dark night, and in the moonlight, than one of intermediate shades.

I can state from personal experience that a leopard at night under most conditions is far more difficult to see than a white goat or a dark-brown sambar, and Colonel Burton tells us that a tiger's striped form blends remarkably with moonlight or dusk. And by daylight no one can realise without personal experience how difficult these animals are to see under frequently occurring conditions in their usual surroundings. The same may be said of the lion.

When we turn to the smaller animals and birds, to say nothing of insects, we find instances innumerable of undoubted protective colouration in various forms ; this for the simple reason that the smaller creatures have a great number of foes, a large proportion of which have not found it necessary or possible to take to night-walking for a living. This being so it were the height of rashness to deny the existence of protective colouration at all among the larger mammals, which is practically what we are called upon to do.

Mr. Selous quotes the buffalo as a conspicuously coloured animal that has suffered greatly from the depredations of lions in South Africa. But he remarks elsewhere upon the fact that in spite of the favourable conditions lions never seem to have increased up to the limit of their food supply, or to such an extent as to reduce the numbers of buffaloes. May not this fact supply the explanation, that since to the buffaloes, existing in great numbers, there was never any danger

of diminution of the species, there was no influence strong enough to produce a protective colouring in an animal not given to colour variations? And it may be that the lion and buffalo did not meet until the former had taken to hunting by night.

It is instructive to note that the most conspicuously coloured of the larger jungle animals are usually, though not invariably, those who stand in least need of protection. Take for instance some of the bears. There is no animal so conspicuous in the Indian jungle as the sloth bear, who is a vegetarian, and has no enemies but man; there are cases on record of this bear being killed by a tiger, but they are exceptional. The Himalayan bear certainly has a taste for meat, but he, too, is primarily a vegetarian.

The numbers, again, of the Indian gaur that are killed by tigers would probably be insufficient to affect its colour in any great degree, even under daylight conditions.

There are other points of interest in Mr. Selous' writings on this question, but it is time this chapter came to an end. And I have attained my object if I have shown, as I have tried to do, that while perhaps the majority of the larger mammals, at the present day and under existing conditions, can no longer be considered to benefit from the concealing effect of their colouration; yet that fact is not in itself any reason for rejecting the theory that the necessity for concealment has been in all probability the most important factor in establishing the existing schemes of colouration amongst animals. That, on the contrary, all the main objections which have been based on the unquestionably

valuable observations of men like Mr. Selous, are in fact only objections in seeming, and that the ascertained facts are quite consistent with the general theory of protective colouration.

If we were forced to a contrary conclusion it would seem to me almost a misfortune, as conflicting with the harmony of Nature as a whole. For, while there have unquestionably been other agencies, some of which we recognise and others of which so far we know nothing; yet the protective principle in one form or another is certainly, or so it seems to me, the principal agency in the colouration of insects and the smaller animals. Were it not so in the case of the greater beasts the fact would be out of harmony with Nature's wonderful consistency in applying, though with infinite variety, the same great laws to all things that have life, be they great or small.



CHAPTER XVI

Bandobast—Shooting licences—Kit and equipment—Stores, etc.—Transport: camels—Rations—Mounts—Presents—*Personnel* of caravan: rates of pay—Head man—Details of actual expenses—Shikaris: importance of having a good man—Staunchness—Danger in big game shooting: the lion—*Seventeen Trips in Somaliland*—Present conditions in Somaliland: unsettled state of Interior—Government distribution of rifles—The policy of concentration on the coast: two sides to the question—The arms traffic and the Mullah—Reasons for change of policy—A mistaken idea—Broken pledges?—Position of the European community in Berbera—As things are—The future.

It may be of use to a few of my readers and of interest to some others if I set down here some notes on the cost and *bandobast** of a shooting trip in Somaliland. The first thing for the would-be hunter to do is to obtain a shooting-licence from H.M.'s Commissioner in Somaliland, which is usually to be had for the asking on payment of Rs.500 (£33 6s. 8d.), as compared with £50 in East Africa. The number of animals that may be shot under this licence (available for one year) is of course limited, varying at the present time from one specimen in the case of greater or lesser kudu, to ten of a common antelope like the *aoul* or Speke's gazelle, or fifteen dik-dik. The shooting of elephants is for the time being entirely prohibited, while the numbers of destructive animals, lions, leopards, etc., that may be killed is unlimited.

* *Anglice*: "general arrangements, etc." I should apologise for making use of an Indian term, but there is no English word half as comprehensive.

If it is desired to shoot beyond the limits of the Protectorate, a permit must be obtained from the Negus through H.M.'s Minister in Abyssinia. At present this is granted free, with the exception of elephants, for permission to shoot two of which a fee of £50 is exacted. Regulations on the subject are liable to alteration in both spheres, and particulars should be asked for from Berbera or Adis Abeba in either case. For an Abyssinian permit it is advisable to apply several months in advance.

As to one's requirements, some articles can be obtained in Aden, but I advise everything in the way of kit and stores being brought out from Home. These should all be packed as far as possible in white wooden boxes of a convenient size for loading on camels, with lids made to fasten down with screws, and not weighing more than 60 to 70 lbs. Supplies of different articles of stores, etc., should be divided among several boxes, so that it will not be necessary to have several open at the same time.

Necessities are: tent (80 lb. double fly), folding camp bed with mosquito net (the latter not often needed in the Protectorate), folding chair, deck chair, folding table, lamps (I used folding candle lanterns so did not have to carry kerosene oil), cooking utensils (aluminium), metal tumblers, cups, plates, tea-pot, etc., knives, forks, etc., small filter, water bottles (aluminium), medicine case (including syringe, lint and antiseptics, etc.), sparklet bottle, haversacks, waterproof sheets, tool case, a supply of rope, taxidermine or other preservative and turpentine (for trophies), long nails for pegging out skins, a few axes and bill-hooks,

skinning knives, saddlery, binoculars (prismatic glasses of eight or ten magnification are best), rifle-oil.

As to clothing, I usually wore coat and breeches of khaki drill (gabardine is perhaps better), with canvas gaiters, and boots with cotton rope soles which are wonderfully noiseless. Latterly I discarded a coat, wearing only a khaki flannel shirt with spine-pad. A sun-hat (Indian pattern) covered khaki should be worn. I prefer to carry cartridges in my coat-pockets, but it is as well to have a few on one's belt, where a knife is always useful, and after lion or leopard there may be occasions when a pistol would come in handy. Cartridges should be in soldered-up tins containing not more than fifty in each, and see that you have a plentiful supply. It is worth remembering that some shipping companies make difficulties about taking ammunition on passenger steamers, so have the question settled in time or despatch yours to Aden in advance.

But there is no end to the advice that can be given—and has been given far better than I could do it—on shikar outfits generally. I will endeavour to confine myself to the special conditions that obtain in Somaliland.

Stores in the way of food and drink are a question of one's personal tastes. One needs little in the way of preserved meats, but plenty of fruit, etc. Tinned fruits are bulky, but dried fruits are a great stand-by. A good supply of rice should be taken, as the only substitute when potatoes go bad. A little liquor goes a long way, but brandy should on no account be omitted. Lime-juice helps to make up for lack of

vegetables. But if you can find a brand of dried vegetable that does not require elaborate cooking, some should be included. It is a great thing if your cook can make passable bread—Abdi could not, so I had to do with biscuits. The important thing is—without stinting oneself—to take nothing that is not really necessary, remembering that in the interior nothing in the way of food is obtainable except meat and, sometimes, milk. Potatoes and onions can be had in Berbera.

Arrived in the country, the most important questions are those of transport and the *personnel* of your



expedition. In respect of transport Somaliland has the advantage over East Africa, for though I have no personal experience of the human porter I think there is no doubt that the camel is far more satisfactory as a beast of burden. One's camels may be either hired or bought. I have tried both plans and, except for a short trip of a month or so, should advise any one to buy. Of course it is something of a gamble. The prices realised at the end of a trip will depend on the state of the market and the condition of your camels, on other factors too, as whether you are in a hurry and must sell at once. If you have a bad lot of camel

men, or you are otherwise unfortunate, you may lose several during the trip. But with a good head-man and average luck, you ought to be fairly certain of recovering from 50 to 65 per cent. of the original purchase money, provided you have a good lot of animals to start with—otherwise you cannot expect to bring them back in fairly decent condition.

If you do not care to trust your head-man, the local officials will put you in the way of obtaining assistance in making your purchases. The number of camels will depend upon the amount of your kit, the country you mean to visit, and the probable duration of your expedition; as well as on the size of your following. It is the rations for your men that take up so much room, and the extra water you must carry in a waterless country like the Haud. It will often be possible to hire extra camels in the interior for a short time if required.

The Somalis carry water in vessels of wood and plaited bark called *húns*, but they are leaky and apt to taint water; for one's personal use a couple of pairs of good casks would be advisable, unless light metal tanks of the military pattern are obtainable; I was able to borrow four of these.

The recognised ration (which is additional to their pay) of all followers consists of 1 lb. of rice, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of dates, and 2 oz. of ghee (clarified butter) *per diem* for each man. On this basis must be calculated the amount of rations you will need, with an extra ten per cent. for visitors and emergencies: these supplies will be obtained from a contractor in Berbera. A Somali camel will carry from 260 to 300 lbs. or more

according to the nature of his load, but it is best to take the former figure in deciding how many camels you want, and then add one extra animal for every ten. As the rations are consumed camels become available for the carriage of trophies.

For loading, the Somali baggage saddle or *herio* is required; it consists of a set of three grass and fibre mats which are tied on to the camel's back with rope to form a pad. These, again, one buys in Berbera.

For one's own riding one must have a couple of ponies or a pony and a riding-mule—a Somali pony for choice, as it will require less water than an imported animal, and can do without grain, which is a consideration. Given a little time one could always get hold of a decent beast in Somaliland, but as in my case, it may not be easy to pick one up in Berbera at short notice. I should not advise a riding-camel under ordinary conditions. The Somali camel is a beast of burden. A good Arab riding-camel is a delightful mount for covering distance and would often be most useful, but he requires grain and a substantial quantity of it, and is often finicky in his feeding; a Somali, unless he had been in Aden, would not understand him and he would probably be more trouble than he is worth. On the other hand, if you are prepared to go in for a fairly large caravan, by all means get a riding-camel or two from Aden, only make sure they are well chosen; don't have anything to say to the Arab stirrup-less saddle unless you have already learnt to use it, but get one of the Indian pattern. In any case you must have a pony too.

Of other animals a few sheep, for one's own eating

when game is scarce, must be taken, with a donkey or two, and perhaps a few goats, for bait : also, in my opinion, a couple of milch camels. Any special success should be celebrated by a present of a sheep or two to one's men. For presents in the interior some cloth for *tobes* should be taken with two or three korans or bead chaplets for mullahs. I did not find much need for these presents, usually paying for services in cash ; but as you go further afield you will need more, and would do well to take a small supply of knives, mirrors, and other articles to supplement the cloth, only remember that, as Swayne says, the Somali has no use for rubbish.

To come to the human element in the caravan. My following, with rates of pay, were as follows :—

Personal servant	at	20/-	per mensem
Cook	at	20/-	„
1st Shikari and head-man	at	60/-	„
2nd Shikari	at	35/-	„
3rd Shikari	at	25/-	„
Sycc	at	15/-	„
7 Camel-men	each	15/-	„
2 Boys (for odd jobs and care of sheep)	each	8/-	„

Many, indeed nearly all, sportsmen have a separate head-man. H. advised me to get a good head shikari, pay him well and make him do the head-man's work. I have done so twice and found it an excellent arrangement, and there was none of the clashing of views that must sometimes occur when the head of the caravan is not the shikar leader. On a long expedition it may be different, but for a trip of two or three months a separate head-man is likely to prove both a nuisance and an unnecessary luxury. There is one camel-man



A MIDDAY HALT—UNLOADING.



THE PERSONNEL OF THE EXPEDITION. [To face p. 242

to every two camels, and one over. One of these should be selected and made responsible for the daily distribution of rations and the care of trophies, for which he receives Rs.2 extra ; at least that was my arrangement.

A proportion of your men must be armed ; for a trip like mine it is sufficient to provide half a dozen of the camel-men with such cheap rifles as you may



be able to obtain, such as Sniders or Martinis, and carry a supply of ammunition for them. But if you mean to go further afield more of an escort will be necessary ; on the other hand, there may be difficulties about taking an armed party into Abyssinian territory, and you may have to accept the services of a small escort of Abyssinian soldiery. Upon these points early information should be sought from the authorities concerned.

I have covered most of the ground and cannot do

better now than put down my own actual expenses on the last trip of just over two months:—

	Rs.
Purchase in Berbera of 12 camels	660
" " 12 sets <i>herios</i> and loading ropes	75
" " 1 pony	75
" " 1 riding-mule	125
" " 1 donkey	12
" " 6 sheep	27
" " 2 milch goats	15
" " Rations for 15 men for 67 days	230
" " Stores and sundries (including onions, turpentine, native axes, blankets, etc.)	85
Purchase in Aden of cloth for <i>tobes</i> with 3 korans	25
Pay and <i>bakshish</i> of two private servants	130
Pay of three shikaris	282
<i>Bakshish</i> to 3 shikaris	125
Pay of 10 other Somalis (sycc, camel-men, and boys)	305
<i>Bakshish</i> to "	70
<i>Dak</i> bungalow expenses in Berbera	30
Freight and landing charges at Berbera	25
Customs charges and registration fee on rifles at Berbera	24
Passages from Aden to Berbera and back (self and 2 servants)	70
Cash in Interior (goats and sheep, hire of milch and water camels, local guide, presents, messengers, etc.)	180
Ammunition expended	60
Stores and kit brought from Home and Aden	200
Shooting licences (special to an officer of the Aden garrison)	100
	2730
Deduct—cash by sale of animals at end of trip	442
	2288

Call it £150, or practically Rs.1000 a month.

I should add that under the head of stores and kit brought from home I have mentioned only purchases made specially for this trip, such as provisions, medicine-case, spare saddlery, etc., but nothing that I already possessed, such as tent, camp furniture, cooking things, etc. Nor have I included cost of gun and rifles, or such articles as camera, binoculars, etc.

Similarly with cost of passage to Aden from England, which had to be incurred in any case on my way back from furlough.

On the whole, I do not consider the expedition to have been an expensive one. It certainly cost much less than would a shoot in East or Central Africa. On the other hand, there was no chance of elephant ivory from which to recoup expenses. I could perhaps have cut down expenditure a little in some respects, but I was out for a good shoot and meant to make the most of it. To do that the first and absolute *sine qua non* is health. If a man cannot rough it a bit he had best not try and shoot in Africa, but to make a fetish of "roughing it," as a few men do, to stint oneself of good food, and make oneself unnecessarily uncomfortable, is simply to court ill-health and consequent failure—the most disastrous form of economy.

I might no doubt have managed with two shikaris, but should then have had to have a separate head-man, which would have been less satisfactory. If they had not done me so well I should of course have given less *bakshish* at the end. I calculated this at the rate of an extra month's pay to the camel-men, etc. I think this plan is preferable to giving special presents, as is often done, whenever a good trophy is bagged.

A subsequent item of expenditure, dependent on the size of one's bag, and what one does with it, is the cost of mounting one's trophies, which may be considerable; while in Somaliland both skins and heads need constant attention and application of insect powder, or better, turpentine, to prevent the ravages of that obnoxious little pest, the *dermestes* beetle.

It is a good thing to treat horns inside and out with castor oil, which is cheap and obtainable in Berbera.

Another word or two on the subject of shikaris. It is not fair to spoil the market, but it is eminently worth while paying for a good man. There are men who expect all the work to be done for them except pulling the trigger; they get little and deserve less. Much depends upon oneself; but the majority of sportsmen who go to shoot in Africa can have little or no knowledge of the country, of the habits of the game, or in many cases of woodcraft. They may be keen, and good shots, but without the aid of an experienced shikari and good tracker, it will avail them little.

And in dealing with lion or other dangerous game, the man who carries your second rifle must be staunch. Apart from the helplessness of the sportsman who, in the moment of danger, turns to his gun-bearer and finds him gone, nothing counts for so much with a beast like a lion as a determined front. A lion that will charge a single man will often hesitate about attacking two. Wild animals have a wonderful instinct for detecting fear or nervousness in a human adversary. And it may add materially to one's own confidence to know that if support is needed it is at hand and to be depended on.

The amount of danger in big game shooting has been much exaggerated by those without personal experience of it. On the other hand, and more especially in regard to the lion, a good deal of nonsense has been written and said to the contrary effect. There is said to be no more danger in shooting a lion than an

antelope, and he is credited with having less courage than any beast you choose to name; while the improvement in modern fire-arms is supposed to render the sportsman invincible.

This is all very fine, and as an expression of opinion, based as a rule on no great experience, is in itself of little importance. Unfortunately it is likely to do harm by giving the novice a totally untrue impression both of the character of the lion and of the difficulties of shooting him, and may directly lead to disaster.

The truth is that the lion is not extremely tenacious of life, and is easily killed by a bullet placed well forward; that like all wild animals he has learnt to respect and fear the superior powers of man (this fear being due to education not to instinct); that individuals, among lions as among men, vary in character, some being less courageous or aggressive than others—a fact which many fail to recognise. But if the first bullet does not inflict a fatal wound, the situation changes; a wounded lion being less easy to kill and far more dangerous than an unwounded one: though it is a great mistake to suppose that an unwounded lion, if enraged or at bay, will never attack.

And apart from the surroundings and the tactics adopted by the lion, both of which may render accurate shooting difficult, to say nothing of possible unsteadiness after tramping all day, or after galloping or running in a blazing sun, the boasted improvement in the modern rifle is in itself a danger to some who, judging of a rifle by its ability to perforate a steel plate, proceed to tackle a lion, which happens to be made of very different material, with a weapon totally

unsuited for the purpose. But on that subject I have yet a whole separate chapter to inflict upon my long-suffering reader !

Opinions of the great African hunters vary as to which is the most dangerous species of African big game, but the weight of evidence goes to support Selous, who places the lion first. This view is confirmed by the unquestionable fact that among hunters in Africa killed or injured by wild beasts, far the greatest number of casualties is due to lions. Colonel Roosevelt, for instance, writing in 1910, mentions that during the previous three or four years in East Africa and Uganda, over fifty white men were killed or mauled by lions, buffaloes, elephants, and rhinos, and the lions had much the largest list of victims to their credit. And some of these victims are experienced sportsmen, witness the death of the late Mr. George Grey this year (1911).

These are facts. I quote them to prove to any possible reader who may think of going to shoot in Africa without previous experience, and who may have imbibed contrary ideas, that while there is usually little risk in shooting a lion on foot, provided the sportsman is suitably armed, keeps cool, and shoots straight, the possibility of danger is always present, and there is never any knowing when it may develop into actuality. That lioness of mine at Aror was a case in point, when but for Abdilleh I might not be writing to-day. On the other occasions I had no trouble, because I had a good weapon, was fortunate in obtaining easy shots, and was thus able in each instance to get in a fatal or disabling shot before the lion realised

the position ; with the result that I was in no case called upon to follow up a wounded but not disabled lion, or to meet a charge. The one animal which I wounded mortally, but which might then have charged—did make a momentary show of doing so—was not fully grown and not likely to have the determination of an adult. It would be egregious folly to conclude from these few experiences that things would always be so simple. But these are just the sort of cases from which some men are prone to generalise and fall into error.

To return to the shikari who led up to this warning, it will be seen that it is as important that he should be a man to be depended on at an awkward moment, as that he should be a good tracker, and this you can only feel sure of in a man who has made a reputation. Somalis, as a race, are not lacking in courage, but they are not all alike, and in some cases prove failures from sheer excitability. Wherefore, engage the best man available, treat him well, but don't spoil him.

If any reader wishes for further information as to requirements of an expedition in Somaliland, or on the country generally, its people, or its game, especially if he contemplates a trip himself, I recommend him to study Colonel H. G. Swayne's *Seventeen Trips in Somaliland*, a book which, though a little out of date on one or two points, deservedly remains the standard work on the subject.

Whether a shooting expedition in Somaliland will be permitted at any given moment can only be ascertained from the authorities at Berbera. Since the withdrawal of all British posts from the Interior, and

the concentration on the coast, conditions have changed. We have given up the idea of smashing the Mullah Mahomed Abdulla, and, apparently, of any longer exerting any measure of administrative control in the Interior. Instead we have provided, and continue to provide, the friendly tribes with rifles and ammunition to defend themselves against the Mullah. Apart from conflicts with this gentleman, it was only to be expected that the above measures would lead in some degree to a renewal of the inter-tribal raiding which had gone



out of fashion under our *régime*; and this is what has happened. It is probable, therefore, that for a time conditions in the Interior will be so far unsettled as to render shooting expeditions inadvisable; and that when allowed, stronger escorts will perhaps be insisted on. But what is of more importance to the hunter and naturalist is the probable effect upon the game of the recent wholesale distribution of fire-arms. The antelopes are bound to suffer.

This distribution was undoubtedly necessary, given the policy of concentration on the coast. I do not

presume to express a decided opinion upon that policy, but in view of the fact that in some quarters it has been unreservedly condemned, it may be as well to point out that there are two sides to the question.

The origin of all the troubles in Somaliland has been the arms traffic by means of which Abyssinia has become filled with rifles and ammunition from the French ports of Jibuti and Obok. It was the inability of the Southern Somali tribes to resist the raids and oppression of the well-armed Abyssinians, followed by the extension of the traffic by land into Southern Somaliland, that indirectly led to the rise of the "Mad Mullah." If, when we first undertook responsibilities in Somaliland, we had constructed a light railway into the Interior, or had even done so when Mahomed Abdulla first appeared on the horizon as a star of some magnitude, we might have been able to deal with him effectively. As things were we tried, and though we succeeded in teaching him that we were a power to be reckoned with, failed to crush him, while the eventual agreement by which he professed to recognise the suzerainty of the Italian Government was little more than a farce.

It is probable that, seeing we had no intention of actively administering the Protectorate, we made a mistake in ever advancing beyond the coast-line. Be this as it may, the maintenance of posts in the Interior, with a military force to hold the Mullah more or less in check, was an expensive and unprofitable business, and always likely to lead us into another contest with that personage when next he saw fit to become aggressive. While to crush him once for all

would, in the existing conditions, involve an expenditure immensely out of proportion to any possible gain. Nor did any attempt to develop the country promise an adequate return.

That these considerations proved weighty ones in the estimation of a Liberal Government is hardly surprising. There was, however, a considerable outcry at the "baseness of our desertion" of the friendly tribes whom we were supposed to have left to the mercies of the Mullah, who would either destroy them or compel them to join him, to our future sorrow.

I think this view is based on ignorance of the facts. There is no doubt that the Mullah's power and prestige have alike declined. One reason is that he has quarrelled, apparently irrevocably, with the Dolbahanta, the tribe to which his mother belonged, and who had all along been among the most powerful of his supporters. Another reason is his recent denunciation, as an impostor and unorthodox, by Sheikh Mahomed Saleh (I think that is his name), the spiritual head at Mecca of the Shafai sect to which the Somalis belong.*

There is, moreover, nothing illusory about our supply of rifles and ammunition to the friendly tribes. How far they would drop their inter-tribal quarrels, and combine, was very doubtful; but owing to the Mullah's exactions and his attempts to terrorise them

* In this connection it is interesting to recall that some years ago in Aden, an old Arab suggested to me that the most effective way of breaking the Somali Mullah's power would be to get hold of this Mecca gentleman and persuade him to come to Berbera and denounce Mahomed Abdulla, whose methods had already given ample cause for such a proceeding: this suggestion was forwarded to the proper authorities, but I do not suppose any action in the direction indicated was practicable at that time, and I am not aware whether any was ever taken.

by wholesale slaughter (the old-fashioned Somali raid having always been a comparatively bloodless affair), they hate him so thoroughly that it was believed that most of them would put aside their differences, and, once armed, they would be well able to hold their own. The progress of events so far has given little evidence of the combination hoped for, but the Mullah's forces certainly suffered a severe defeat in an incursion into the Warsangali country in 1910, and since then have done little. He may be lying low in the hope of making a big haul of arms and ammunition by some sudden stroke one of these days. But he is no longer young and active, besides being a chronic sufferer from serious disease, and the probabilities are that before long he will be a "back number." The accounts of raids which Reuter publishes from time to time emanate from the bazaars of Berbera and Aden, and are as a rule much exaggerated when not entirely untrue.

A very eminent member of the House of Lords stated at the time that we had broken our pledges to the friendly tribes. But what pledges? In our original agreements made with them in the eighties we certainly made them some more or less indefinite promises of protection. There was, however, fair ground for holding that we have fulfilled these by arming the tribes to protect themselves. This is evidently the view of Government in their present policy. That policy cannot yet be said to have proved a failure; if it should do so, as is undoubtedly possible, the friendly tribes would certainly have a right to expect us to adopt more adequate measures. The same gentleman further dilated on the loss of

prestige we would suffer throughout East Africa by reason of our withdrawal to the coast. Some loss of prestige we have suffered no doubt, but I do not believe to any very appreciable extent. It was urged that an unfortunate impression would be made on the Indian and East African troops who had served in Somaliland; but on the contrary, according to an officer who has served with them, their view was rather one of amazement that we should ever have expended so much trouble and money on such an unprofitable country.

The fact is—with all deference—the noble lord in question was making of their Somali policy a stick with which to belabour the Government. That cause for castigation may have existed on other grounds is not for me to deny, but I fear this particular stick was only part stick—part straw!

A good deal has been made of the defenceless position of the little band of Europeans left in the Protectorate, in the event of a “rising.” But the possibility of such an event is of the remotest, and now that wireless communication has been established with Aden, distant only a few hours by steam, assistance could be obtained in a very short time. The little community in Berbera, with their garrison of only two hundred men, sleep soundly enough, and I venture to think would still have done so even without the fifteen foot wall that has been built round the Shaab (the European quarter)!

On the other hand, it is impossible to view the situation with any satisfaction, when one considers that the nominal boundaries of the Protectorate remain

as they were, while our officials are forbidden to go more than three miles inland. We refuse to have anything more to do with administration in the Interior or to have anything to say to inter-tribal quarrels. The result is that the old feuds have all been revived, and owing to the number of fire-arms, are apt to be on a more serious scale than hitherto. The Somalis themselves would gladly see us reoccupy the inland posts and maintain order again ; but we have certainly broken no pledges and owe them little, except in so far as we may be considered to have ignored our moral obligations in withdrawing a measure of civilised administration once established. And it may be for the ultimate good of the Somalis if they are allowed time and opportunity to realise that they did not know when they were well off.

The weak point of the position is our continued responsibility for a large area over which we exert no control whatever. In view of the position of the Protectorate, its disturbed condition, and the by no means distant possibility of a big explosion in Abyssinia, it would be sanguine indeed to expect any permanence in the present state of affairs, or to hope that we shall not one day have to recognise that responsibilities involve obligations, and to make up our minds what we must do. That day may not be yet, and for the present probably the best thing we can do is to wait and see.

The real problem of the future in this part of the world will arise out of the arms question. The traffic from Jibuti to Abyssinia and thence into the adjacent countries, and in a lesser degree to the ports of Eastern (Italian) Somaliland, goes gaily on ; though the Press

seems to think only of Muscat and the N.W. Frontier of India. It calls for no great stretch of imagination to suppose that this steady increase of modern fire-arms may in the none too distant future give rise to a North-east African "question," which it will not be possible for us quietly to put on one side as we have done that of the "Mad Mullah." Till then, however, our motto will, I suppose, remain "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Since the above was written, in 1911, there appears to have been, until very recently, an improvement in the situation as manifested by a decrease in the amount of inter-tribal raiding among the friendly tribes, which has been mainly due to the successful semi-police work of the locally raised Somali Camel Corps. The undertaking of such police work in the attempt to restore a measure of quiet within the Protectorate was doubtless unavoidable, but it was manifestly inconsistent with what was understood to be the intentions of Government in adopting the policy of retirement on the coast towns. That the attempt was found to be unavoidable may fairly be taken as a measure of the failure of the policy in one direction.

Its failure in another direction—the self-protection of the friendly tribes against Dervish raids—has been made evident by the success of the recent big raid (August, 1913) by the Mullah's forces, to which public attention has been drawn by the disaster which it involved to the Camel Corps and the death of a British officer. It is easy to be wise after the event, but could anything else have been expected of an

attempt to control the interior of the Protectorate with a small local levy? I think that if what was going on had been common knowledge, there are few men who know Somaliland but would have predicted such a disaster as has taken place as the inevitable result of the half-hearted manner in which the policy of Government has been carried out. It is upon Government, who must have been aware of what was being done, and not upon the local authorities that the blame must rest.

That there has hitherto been any danger to Berbera I still do not believe; but with the loss to our prestige occasioned by this last disaster one can no longer feel so sure, unless the garrison of Berbera be adequately and permanently increased. The retirement policy has proved a failure, and the time seems to have come when the fact must be recognised. This is not the place, nor have I sufficient knowledge of the subject or of present conditions in Somaliland, to offer suggestions.



CHAPTER XVII

Rifles for dangerous game: importance of the subject—Brief summary of conclusions—A detailed examination of the question—Classes of game: and of rifles—Requirements in a rifle: to hit: to kill—Characteristics of the *Felidae* and conditions under which they are usually shot—Necessity of handiness and stopping-power—The rifle—Single, magazine, and double rifles: pros and cons: superiority of the double-barrel—The bullet—How affected by increased velocity—Changes in form and material—Penetration: expansion: stability—The perfect bullet—Effect on a bullet of variations in form, weight, and velocity—Size of bore a prime factor in efficiency—Shock effect of slow velocity bullets—Mr. Hicks' views—Three kinds of shock?—Velocity and resistance as affecting expansion—Form of bullet and liability to deflection—Summing up: the best type of bullet—Detailed list of modern rifles—Class I.: Express rifles—Class II.: small-bore H.V. rifles—Quotations: Glasfurd: Sharp: Stigand and Lyell: criticisms—First-class shots and small-bores—The average shot—Groups of small-bores: Group (a): (b): (c): the .318—The .280 Ross—Class III.: medium-bore H.V. rifles: the .400—The soft-nosed bullet: Sir A. Pease's theory—The capped bullet—Bores larger than .400—Class IV.: shot-and-ball guns—The Paradox: its characteristics—The Explora—The 12-bore spherical bullet: compared with the Paradox bullet and the medium H.V. bullet—The charge with spherical ball—Final choice of a weapon—Other factors in making a decision: expense: physique: the work the rifle has to do—The best all-round rifle?—For leopard—Bear—Pachyderms—Buffalo—"Sportsmanship"—Opinion of Sir A. Pease on the general question—Of Major Glasfurd—Conclusion.

THE question as to which types of rifle and ammunition are most suitable for use against dangerous game is one about which much has been written by men of far greater experience than I can claim. Some of my readers may consider it has been discussed *ad nauseam*. But in spite of the great advance that recent years have seen in the power and accuracy of

modern firearms, fatal accidents to hunters of big game are still far from uncommon. Many of these are the outcome of rashness or inexperience, or of neglect to take proper precautions in following up a wounded beast. But a considerable proportion are indisputably due to the failure of rifle or bullet to do the work required of it at the critical moment, when, humanly speaking, the fatality might probably have been avoided by the use of a more suitable weapon. The subject is therefore such an important one that I feel it unnecessary to apologise for devoting a chapter to it, in the hope that a consideration in some detail of the characteristics of the various types of big-game rifles and ammunition, and the principles upon which the choice of a rifle for dangerous game should be based, may be of use to those whose experience is still to gain, while not entirely without interest to the old hand.

As there may, however, be some among my readers who will be alarmed at the length of the disquisition that follows, I will commence by giving a brief summary of my views and general conclusions before entering into a detailed exposition of them.

(a) As to the form of the rifle itself: it is most important that it should be handy in use, and that it should have the power of firing a second shot at the shortest possible interval after the first discharge. In these qualities the double-barrelled weapon, provided it be not too heavy, excels the single or magazine form.

(b) As to its ammunition: for dangerous game "stopping-power" is of prime importance, and is best obtained by the large striking surface and substantial

weight of a large-bore bullet. The modern small-bore bullet is intended to attain the necessary shock-effect by a combination of high velocity and expansion; but, effective as it often is, it frequently fails on thin-skinned game, either by reason of excessive penetration, or by breaking up and thus failing to penetrate, and occasionally by deflection from its course owing to its elongated shape. It lacks, moreover, the knocking-down power of a slower bullet of larger bore. For these reasons its immediate effect is less to be depended upon in the case of a charging animal, especially if a vital part is not struck; while its extremely low trajectory is of no advantage at the short ranges at which dangerous game is usually shot. Applying these views in the light of experience I arrive at the following conclusions:—

(i.) In the older class of Express rifles the .500 Magnum is the least powerful that can be considered a safe weapon for tiger or lion.

(ii.) Of high-velocity rifles none smaller than .400 bore has a bullet of sufficient weight and striking surface.

(iii.) The ball-and-shot gun of the Paradox or Explora type, with its large but slow travelling bullet, excels in stopping-power.

Finally, as between these three classes, the light weight and handiness of the 12 bore ball-and-shot gun give it the preference for thin-skinned dangerous game over the .400 cordite rifle, which is in its turn to be preferred to the older Express rifles on account of its more general utility.

Further, with regard to pachydermatous game,

high-velocity rifles with nickel-case bullets must have the preference because of their great penetration. Among them the larger the bore the better, provided the sportsman can handle it.

Those of my readers who care to know the reasons, theoretical and practical, which have led me to the above conclusions, and who may be interested in seeing these conclusions elaborated, I will ask to follow me further.

Dangerous big game may be divided into two classes :—

(1) Thin-skinned game, comprising the great cats and some bears.

(2) Thick-skinned game, among which for my present purpose I include bison and buffalo with the great pachyderms.

The weapons for their destruction may likewise be divided into classes as follows :—

(i.) Black powder Express rifles, old type ($\cdot 450$ to $\cdot 577$).

(ii.) Small-bore high-velocity rifles ($\cdot 256$ to $\cdot 375$).

(iii.) Medium-bore high-velocity rifles ($\cdot 400$ to $\cdot 600$).

(iv.) Shot-and-ball guns (not less than 12 bore).

This classification does not include the large-bore elephant rifles, whose day is over.

Rifles must be further divided according to whether they are of the single, double-barrelled, or magazine type. Magazine rifles hitherto have been made with success in the smaller bores only.

Let us now examine the considerations involved in the choice of a suitable weapon—apart from reliability of construction and mechanism, which, in the production

of a good gun-maker, is assumed. In the first place, what exactly do we want our rifle to do? I think two things:—

(i.) *To hit.* In order to be able to hit our mark with sufficient certainty, we must have accuracy of flight on the part of the bullet. This involves, in a greater or less degree according to the range, lowness of trajectory, trajectory being largely dependent on velocity and form of bullet. But accuracy in the bullet is of no use unless the rifle is correctly aimed in the first instance. To ensure this being done, with a motionless target, correct sighting is the main thing wanted. But in shooting at a moving object, and especially in a snap-shot, additional qualities in one's rifle are desirable, which may be summed up in the general term "handiness." Handiness is mainly a matter of weight and balance, also to some extent of make (*e.g.* single, magazine, or double).

(ii.) *To kill.* Hitting one's game is, after all, only the necessary step towards killing it. Our second requirement, therefore, is killing-power in our bullet. Killing-power depends mainly upon the bullet's capacity for causing injury. This capacity is derived from its striking energy, the effect of which, however, is liable to considerable modification in accordance with the composition and form of the bullet itself. Striking energy is a product of two factors, velocity and weight of bullet.

What we principally need in a rifle then, whatever the quarry, are handiness, accuracy, and killing-power. But before trying to find what class of weapon is most likely to meet our requirements against lion or tiger

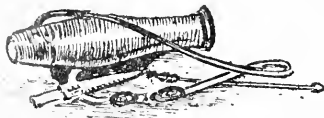
as typical of the first class of dangerous game, it will be advisable to consider how far the nature of these beasts or the conditions under which they are usually shot may tend to place limitations on our choice.

Lion, tiger, or leopard, all are cats ; naturally nocturnal and stealthy of habit ; addicted to cover by day. It follows that they are rarely to be met with in the open, and opportunities for shooting them at long ranges do not ordinarily occur. The proportion of tigers, and still more of leopards, shot at over one hundred yards range must be exceedingly small, and the distance is generally much less. In parts of Africa no doubt longer shots are sometimes fired at lions, but not commonly, and I think most sportsmen will agree with me that, for obvious reasons, such shots are as a rule to be deprecated. As many rifles of comparatively high trajectory are quite accurate enough up to one hundred yards, my first conclusion is that a very low trajectory is not, in view of the short ranges involved, a necessity.

Other distinguishing characteristics of the big cats are their agility and the rapidity of their attack, and their marvellous faculty of self-concealment in the scantiest of cover, so that a charge may come at the most unexpected moment. It is clear, then, that the man who has to follow up a wounded beast needs a weapon that will enable him to get in his shot with the greatest possible rapidity consistent with accuracy. It is sometimes argued that a charge is a rare occurrence, and that therefore it is unnecessary to consider it in the choice of a rifle. If the rifle is intended to be used on dangerous game, such reasoning is the height

of folly. Charges do occur, and the sportsman who has shot his dozen lions without an accident will find little comfort in the fact when the thirteenth charges and he fails to stop it! And, apart from the possibility of a charge, many shots in the jungle have to be taken at an animal during the very short interval occupied by it in crossing, sometimes at speed, a small open space in cover. From these reasons arises the absolute necessity for a measure of handiness, including a facility for taking rapid aim, that would not be essential if one's quarry were antelope in the open. This is my second point.

As to killing-power, it is a mistake to suppose that either lion or tiger is particularly difficult to kill:



several of the antelope tribe are decidedly more tenacious of life. But instantaneous death can only be counted on in the case of a beast hit in the brain or spine, neither shot being one that the hunter can often be sure of with this or indeed any class of game. So that many a mortally wounded animal has succeeded in avenging itself before succumbing to its injuries: wherefore arises the necessity for a bullet possessed of "stopping-power" as distinct from killing-power.

The main element in both is striking energy. But, as I have remarked, the effect of striking-energy varies with different bullets and under different conditions; so that it is sometimes in part wasted or expended in wrong directions, and varies considerably in the amount

of shock caused to the system, which is the most important factor in stopping-power. We shall deal later with the manner in which these varying results are produced by different types of bullet, and shall at the same time have to consider how they are affected by velocity.

For dealing with lion or tiger then we may lay down certain general conditions :—

(a) As regards the rifle :

Handiness, in its widest sense, is of the greatest importance.

(b) As regards the bullet :

(i.) *The extreme accuracy produced by a low trajectory is unnecessary under the conditions that exist in the shooting of the class of game in question.*

(ii.) *Shock-effect, as the main factor in giving stopping-power, is an absolute essential.*

To proceed from the general to the particular : with regard to the rifle, as apart from its ammunition, we have to compare the properties of the single-shot, double, and magazine types, particularly in respect of their handiness—employing that word in its widest sense.

The single rifle has undoubted advantages for general use, and is certainly the most suitable weapon for the novice against deer or antelope. But against dangerous game, it possesses the very serious disadvantage of having no reserve, the whole operation of re-loading having to be gone through before a second shot can be fired. Mr. Henry Sharp in his extremely interesting work, *Modern Sporting Gunnery*, remarks : “ I have heard African sportsmen say that they could

do all with a single loader that a man could do with a double, and do it better ; the reason given being that under the circumstances of an inaccurate aim through imperfect adjustment of the rifle, the sportsman cannot adjust his aim unless he moves the gun from his shoulder deliberately, and takes an entirely fresh aim. . . . During the time it takes a man to remove his single rifle from his shoulder, he has also the time to open the breech and insert another cartridge.”

The fallacy that underlies the first part of this argument is the assumption that the need for an immediate second shot would only occur by reason of an inaccurate aim in the first shot. The aim may be true enough, yet the bullet fail for one of various reasons to produce the effect required. It will consequently not always, nor even usually, be necessary to remove the weapon from the shoulder to ensure a correct aim in the second shot.

And the final statement in the quotation is simply not true if it means that the fresh aim can be taken as quickly with the reloaded rifle as with the other, on which various motions of reloading have not had to be performed. If it is meant that the difference in time is of no account, this must depend upon individual circumstances, and would not generally be the case : even for the man who has not seen the lightning charge of a panther it should not be difficult to realise that a fraction of a second's delay may cause disaster, especially as, with the necessity for loading in a hurry in the face of a charge, it is not unlikely to be a case of the more haste the less speed.

It is no argument to urge that in the hands of many

men the single loading rifle has been a success in the past. Our object is to find the best weapon for our purpose, and the lack of a reserve cartridge is disadvantage enough to put this type of fire-arm out of the running if a better is to be had.

There remain the magazine and double rifles. The former has a decided advantage in weight in rifles of the same power, also in the number of reserve cartridges. But there its advantages end. Mr. Sharp remarks, "Three shots can be fired quicker from a double rifle than three shots from existing magazine bolt rifles." I am inclined to agree, but I have heard the contrary view upheld, and would leave it an open question. But it is beyond dispute that *two* shots from a double rifle can be fired far more quickly than from any other, almost or quite simultaneously if desired ; and it is this immediate second shot that is of such value. In a large proportion of cases there would, in the case of a charge, be no time for a third shot if the first two were ineffective.

Again, the double rifle is superior in balance. And many sportsmen will agree with me that it is easier for the eye to pick up quickly the sights between two barrels than along a single barrel. Built too, as it is, more on the lines of a shot gun, it is easier to align correctly on a moving object, when there is no time for sighting, than is a single barrel ; provided, of course, that it is not too heavy.

One objection to the magazine rifle consists in the noisiness of its action when reloading. This would matter little in the open, but there is no doubt that in the jungle or in the hills this objection is a genuine one.

And there is always with a magazine action the possibility of jamming, owing to the ingress of grains of sand or other obstruction. The late Mr. A. H. Neumann had a very narrow escape from an elephant which knocked him down, owing to his magazine failing him. And more recently in East Africa, a case in which a sportsman died from the effects of mauling by a lion might not have had fatal results but for the jamming of a magazine rifle in the hands of a friend who went to his assistance. With a good rifle and proper care the chances of jamming are remote, but they exist.

The charge has been made that a magazine rifle is apt to engender unsportsmanlike habits. For this, unfortunately, there is some ground, mainly in the case of a certain type of pseudo-sportsman, and sometimes of a novice carried away by excitement. But it only applies, as a rule, in respect of such game as deer and antelope, and need not affect us here.

On the whole, by reason of its greater safety and handiness, especially with the perfect balance given by a good maker, superiority in my opinion rests unquestionably with the double rifle, provided always that the weight is not excessive. The question of weight we will consider further in dealing with individual rifles later on.

So much for the form of the rifle. Let us now consider the bullet. The older forms of bullet were constructed entirely of lead. As methods of rifling, improved and increased velocities were obtained, it was found that the soft lead stripped in the rifling, with the result of excessive fouling and loss of power.

To obviate this the lead was hardened with an alloy of tin or other hard metal. But with the advent of the Metford system of rifling and still higher velocities, even this proved inadequate to prevent stripping. The remedy sought was to encase the lead bullet in an outer shell of harder metal—nickel being usually chosen.

The combination of a harder surface with increased velocity naturally gave increased power of penetration, a decided advantage in dealing with pachydermatous animals for instance. But in shooting beasts of thinner skin and lighter build, it was found that the bullet drilled a small hole clean through the animal, usually emerging on the other side with sufficient remaining energy to carry it with but slightly diminished velocity far into space beyond. It is obvious that, in such a case, a large proportion of the bullet's striking energy was wasted so far as its effect on the animal was concerned. Moreover, the high velocity having been obtained in part by a reduction in the size of the bore—*i.e.* in the diameter of the bullet—and by elongation of its shape, the result was that the narrow clean-drilled hole made by the hardened bullet caused a minimum of actual injury in its passage through an animal's body. It therefore became necessary to design bullets which should not have these defects. And this has been done with, on the whole, a very great measure of success. The general principles of the various designs of bullets: soft-nosed, hollow-pointed, capped, etc., being that the point of the bullet "mushrooms" upon or after impact, the extent of striking surface being thus increased, with the double

effect that greater injury is caused by enlargement of the wound-channel while the passage of the bullet is retarded by increased resistance. On the other hand, certain types of expanding bullets have proved defective by reason of their tendency to break up to such an extent, especially on striking a bone, that they fail in penetration and consequently inflict a wound that is likely to enrage without causing material damage. And some even of the more successful patterns cannot be depended upon to expand consistently on every occasion without breaking up too much or ever giving excess of penetration. Of course absolute consistency cannot be expected with any bullet, considering how the resistance which the bullet is called upon to meet must vary with different shots, even at a single animal, and much more with animals of varying size and build.

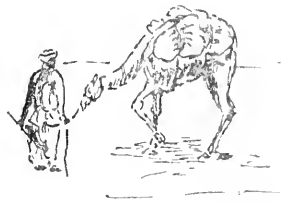
The perfect bullet under any given conditions is the one that, with sufficient power and stability of composition to penetrate to the further side of an animal without going beyond, and so wasting energy, will, at the same time, by reason of its large diameter or expansion, or both combined, make a wound-channel which will cause a sufficiently wide extent of injury to be most rapidly fatal, and also—what is specially important if no vital injury is inflicted—to produce the greatest immediate shock-effect.

Now, generally speaking, the requisite penetrative power is obtained from the energy of the bullet—the product of its combined weight and velocity. Other things being equal, the lighter bullet with the greater velocity has a lower trajectory, and is therefore

superior in accuracy and ranging-power ; it would therefore seem likely to be more generally useful.

It is necessary, however, to consider in more detail the manner in which the course of a bullet is affected by variations in its form, weight, and velocity, and to see how far such variations may produce effects which we have not yet taken into account, and which might militate against the value of the above conclusion in favour of a light bullet.

When we have found a sufficiently accurate bullet possessed of the requisite qualities of expansion, it would only seem necessary to decide upon an adequate standard of striking energy. But let it be assumed that we succeed in obtaining two bullets equally satisfactory as regards expansion, of which one has the advantage in weight and the other in velocity, but which possess an identical amount of striking energy as measured in foot-lbs. It might be supposed that the effect produced by either on any particular animal under given conditions would be substantially the same. But in practice this is far from being the case ; for it is found that the heavier bullet, apart from actual damage done, causes a greater immediate shock to the system, and is therefore more likely to knock down, turn, or otherwise check a charging beast ; and this is of far greater importance than the fact that, of the two, the wound made by the lighter bullet may in some instances be such as eventually to cause death within a shorter interval. Hence, it would seem that *an important element in producing*



shock-effect (which is almost synonymous with stopping-power), is bullet weight.

But the heavier bullet in such a case as I have mentioned, differs from the lighter one as a rule, not only in weight, but in form, being of greater diameter and fired from a rifle of larger bore. Therefore, irrespective of such expansion as may take place in its passage through the body of an animal, it makes a larger hole on impact, and a wider wound-channel, displacing a greater amount of tissue. So that the bullet's greater diameter is in itself a factor, not only in causing injury, but also in producing shock effect. This because, apart from the question of the actual injury done, *the small-bore bullet meets with less resistance*, and its passage is less felt in consequence, hence a less amount of shock.

It becomes, then, desirable to ascertain which of the two factors, weight or bore, is of most importance in this connection. Let it first be noted that in using up a definite amount of energy, *e.g.* in bringing a bullet of given momentum to a stop, a definite amount of resistance must be overcome. Let us, then, take as our first hypothesis two bullets, A and B, of identical bores, and a target of uniform resistance, leaving out of consideration the question of expansion or other effect of impact upon the bullet: weight and velocity of bullet being variable. Then—

- (a) Given equal momentum, but A bullet lighter than B, it follows that A has a greater velocity than B. Further, the amount of tissue or material actually opposed to the point of the bullet (that is, the amount of

resistance at any one point) is the same in each case, the two bullets being of equal diameters. They will therefore, being equal in momentum, overcome the same amount of resistance and penetrate to the same distance.

(b) Given equal velocity, but A bullet the lighter, it follows that B bullet has the greater momentum and will therefore penetrate further.

The average amount of resistance over a given portion of the resisting substance is the same in both cases, and unaffected by weight.

Now let us take weight and velocity as constant, and bore as variable. Then, if A bullet, with equal momentum, penetrates further than B, it must be because it meets with less resistance. And that in the circumstances can only be because it is smaller in bore.

The average amount of resistance over a given portion of the resisting substance is greater in the case of the bullet of larger bore.

It should be clear, then, that it is diameter of bore and not weight which, granted sufficient momentum to attain the requisite penetration, is the prime factor in the shock efficiency of the large bullet.

It is not only the size of the large bore bullet, however, but also, paradoxical though it may seem, its comparative slowness, which possesses under certain conditions direct advantage.

As exemplifying this and directing notice to a further point, I cannot do better than quote from Mr. Hicks' chapter on the subject in *Forty Years among the Wild Animals of India*. He asks "Which would

administer the greatest shock or knock-down blow to the system of a man: a thrust through his chest with a foil, or a blow on the chest with a sledge-hammer? Why does a ten-bore bullet, fired through a pane of glass, only make a small neat hole the size of itself, when if the same bullet is thrown at it by hand, it will shatter the whole structure?" His answer is: "The sharp point of the foil meets with" (comparatively) "no resistance, while the blunter-surfaced sledge-hammer meets with considerable resistance, hence the shock. The excessive velocity of the bullet when fired overcomes the resistance too quickly, while its slower velocity when thrown by hand meets with greater resistance, and so enables the shock or concussion to travel from the point of contact to every part of the system."

The first example is misleading; there are no means of comparison of the amount of energy expended in the case of the foil and sledge-hammer respectively, but it would undoubtedly be much greater in the case of the latter. The illustration of the bullet thrown through a window pane is, however, to the point, and from it we can see that, so far as shock is concerned, a high velocity bullet is likely to produce less effect than a slower travelling one—unless the body of the animal struck is able to oppose an adequate resistance. It is therefore necessary to take into account the size and structure of the animal to be shot, for a high velocity bullet might easily produce a greater shock-effect on an oryx than when similarly placed on the slight body of a gazelle. In this connection we need only note for the present that a lion or tiger is a large animal



A TYPICAL *TUG* (DRY WATERCOURSE).



HENDULEH WITH *AOUL*.

[To face p. 275.]

with considerable weight, and big bones forward, but thin-skinned, and posteriorly comparatively slight in build.

It has been suggested to me that the window pane example is fallacious, for the reason that only a small portion of the bullet's energy is expended upon the glass as compared with the whole of its energy expended when fired into and (if effective) remaining in the body of an animal. It is no doubt true that there is no real analogy between the two cases, thus considered. The illustration is nevertheless of value as showing the different character of the effects produced by bullets of low and high velocities respectively in overcoming the same amount of resistance as they pass through the pane.

I have tried to show that, within limits, a slow-travelling bullet causes greater immediate shock-effect than a more speedy one. I am unable to give the correct scientific explanation; but of two similar bullets the one with the lower velocity overcomes the resistance more slowly, and therefore, as it seems to me, its effect is less local and the system of the animal feels it more. Its shock-effect has, I think, some connection with the elasticity of the body struck, and the fact that the striking of any solid body sets up vibrations through its substance. The window pane example seems to confirm this idea. It is the outcome of the blow *on* the body, rather than of the subsequent wound made *in* the body, and may therefore for convenience' sake be styled "impact-shock." Illustrative examples could easily be multiplied to show, what experience with bullets confirms, that it is a fact.

One suggestion made to me is that the shock-effect of a large bullet is due to the fact that "the skin, bones, and outer portions of animals generally are plentifully provided with nerves to a much greater extent than the deep-seated organs," the consequence of which is "a greater effect of a large entrance wound on the nervous system." There may be something in this theory, but I cannot attach a great deal of importance to it: otherwise one would expect to find a large surface wound caused by a bullet exploding or breaking up immediately after impact producing the maximum of shock-effect, a result contrary to all experience.

I have no idea of denying power of causing shock to high velocity bullets. But the shock caused by them is, I think, due entirely, or almost entirely, to momentum, and appears to affect the animal somewhat differently, not having the same knocking-down effect. And it must be remembered that the increase in momentum given by a high velocity is lessened by the decrease in weight usually necessary to produce that velocity. For the same purpose the diameter of the bullet is made smaller, with the result of loss of shock-effect due to decrease in the resistance to, and displacement of tissue by, a smaller striking-surface. Consequently it is only in so far as it is accompanied by sufficient bullet weight to cause adequate momentum-shock, and large enough striking surface to produce what we may call "displacement-shock," that high velocity is of value as a factor in producing shock-effect. While, unless this is very great, the impact-shock of a slower but a sufficiently substantial bullet is likely to produce a greater immediate effect.

I shall probably be taken to task for asserting, as, in effect, I have done, that there are three distinct kinds of shock produced by a bullet. No doubt the idea is not scientifically stated, and it is of course impossible to separate from the sum-total the results produced by the individual effects of each kind of shock ; but it is only by looking at the problem in this way that we can arrive at a more or less definite appreciation of the " how " and " why " of the final result as affected by the various factors in a bullet's course.

The question of expansion needs separate consideration. If high velocity is not to be a disadvantage, the wound-channel made by the bullet must, as we have seen, be a wide one, or the shock-effect (as also the amount of damage inflicted) will be inadequate. It is necessary, then, for a small bore bullet to have great expansive qualities. To attain this end some bullets are made so fragile at the point, that, while effective on flesh and muscle, they frequently go to pieces on striking a bone, their energy is dissipated among fragments of lead that cause some local damage only, and there is no penetration to the vital parts.

There is a not uncommon idea that a good expansive bullet can be made to expand almost indefinitely, or up to the limit of its cubical content, so that, as it proceeds, the striking surface continues to increase until the whole bullet has become a flattened-out disc. If this were true it would (leaving considerations of weight out of reckoning for the moment) compensate for the exiguous diameter of a light bullet as compared with one of bigger bore which expanded less.

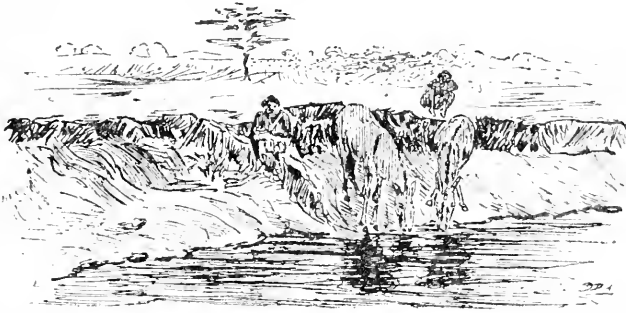
But it is a sad delusion. An expanding bullet is

said to "mushroom" because the resistance which it meets flattens out the point until it takes a shape like the head of a mushroom, whose diameter is greater than that of the unexpanded portion of the "body" of the bullet behind. It inevitably follows that as the size of the mushroom head increases, its outer edges of lead overlap, and, lacking support from the "body," which continues to press forward, give way to the resistance against them and break off in pieces. Consequently the bullet, as a whole, loses weight and substance with the repetition of this process as it advances, and cannot expand laterally—that is, increase its striking surface—beyond a certain limit.

Undoubtedly these broken fragments may of themselves cause much laceration of tissues and often increase the total of damage done, but their action is uncertain, and in many cases will fail to compensate for the loss of mass in the bullet as a whole, and consequent diminution, as it advances, in its power to do injury. It is obvious that a less elongated bullet of larger bore will, under similar conditions, lose a smaller proportion of its mass. In practice, the amount of lateral expansion possible is found to depend upon the material and composition of the bullet: one of solid lead, if not unduly hardened, giving better results than any composite bullet, except perhaps the capped form.

The expansion of a bullet depends upon the amount of resistance it meets; a high velocity bullet in passing through an animal overcomes the same amount of resistance as a slower one, but does it more quickly; it is only when it proceeds further than the slow bullet

that it has to do more work in overcoming additional resistance. It is clear then that in so far as the amount of resistance affects expansion, the velocity of a bullet is in itself of no importance. In any moment of time the expansion of a slow bullet will be less than that of a more speedy one, but, taking a longer time to reach its goal, it will, when it has eventually arrived there, have attained an equal amount of expansion. That the faster bullet may go farther and then expand more matters nothing, if the slow bullet has travelled as far as is necessary. Thus we see that high velocity is



not a necessity in the production of expansion, apart that is from momentum, which must, of course, be adequate to overcome the resistance met with.

There is another direction in which the effectiveness of a bullet may depend upon its form, weight, and velocity. Ordinarily when we speak of the accuracy of a bullet we refer to its flight through the air. But, though it may be less obvious, we also require accuracy in the course of the bullet after impact. It is of little use aiming correctly at an animal's heart, if the bullet, touching a bone on its way, be deflected from its course, and miss the heart. Such cases of deflection not infrequently occur, owing to the varying nature of the

resistance met with by a bullet in its course. Every projectile in motion has a tendency to take the line of least resistance, when opportunity offers; so that when a bullet strikes a bone obliquely, or in any other way meets with a greater resistance on one side, it tends to be deflected in the opposite direction where resistance is less.

The extent of liability to deflection depends partly on momentum, partly on the form of the bullet. As Mr. Hicks correctly points out, the spherical ball is least liable to deflection, while the longer the axis of a projectile in proportion to its diameter, the greater its liability to deflection. Hence the more elongated the form of a bullet the less its reliability in this respect. Increase in momentum (which is compounded of weight and velocity) decreases the liability to deflection.

The resistance to a bullet is always more or less uneven in character, and experience shows that the oblique resistance of not only bone, but even muscle will sometimes avail to turn the course of a bullet. The spherical bullet is least easily deflected, but it is a mistake to conclude that it cannot be deflected at all. I remember shooting a tiger (with a .577) which, after going some forty yards, fell among some high reeds, and was not at first visible. When discovered only a patch of striped skin six inches square (on what part of the body was uncertain) could be seen, and though I believed the beast to be dead, I was not sure. I fired at the visible patch from a distance of ten paces with a spherical ball from a twelve bore. Fortunately the tiger was already defunct, for this shot hit him on the hindquarter, and the bullet,

striking somewhat obliquely, only penetrated an inch or two, and was then deflected upwards (apparently by muscle alone) till it met the skin, under which it travelled along the back, without any further penetration, for a couple of feet. It is possible that the bullet did not fit the barrel tightly enough, and so lost velocity and power, but I had on two occasions just before, using the same cartridges, put a bullet clean through a panther; a fact which makes this explanation at least doubtful. In any case, the incident proves that the shape of the spherical ball is not of itself sufficient to prevent the possibility of deflection. However, the main fact is unaltered, that the lighter and more elongated a bullet, the more risk there is of deviation from the straight line. This is equally true of a bullet in the air which may, especially in the jungle, be turned from its course by touching a twig.

The above somewhat lengthy analysis of causes and effects may conveniently be summed up under headings of the four main factors in a bullet's behaviour on and after impact on a given body.

- (i.) *Velocity*.—Must be sufficient to give adequate penetration. This granted, any further increase in velocity will add to the momentum-shock only if it does not cause excess of penetration: it may also cause increased liability to break up. On the other hand, increased velocity is a very decided disadvantage where it is obtained at the expense of striking-surface, expansiveness, or freedom from deflection; while, within limits,

comparative deficiency of momentum-shock due to moderate velocity is more than compensated for by greater impact- and displacement-shock in a large bore bullet.

- (ii.) *Shape*.—The less elongated a bullet, the less is it liable to deflection and the more reliable in its course. The greater the diameter and consequent striking-surface the greater the wound-channel and displacement-shock.
- (iii.) *Weight*.—Increase in weight means increase in shock effect generally and greater stability, with again less liability to deflection.
- (iv.) *Composition* should be of sufficient stability to enable the bullet, with a given velocity, to reach the far side of the animal, smashing through bone, if necessary, without breaking up or losing too much of its mass. It should also be such as to expand to the greatest degree possible, laterally, in reaching its resting-place; while its surface must be hard enough to take the rifling with which it is used without stripping.

Seeing that, so far as the bullet is concerned, high velocity is only to be obtained by elongating it and by decreasing its weight and diameter, as well as by hardening its surface, and (to obtain expansion) in composition weakening its point, our final practical conclusion can only be that—

Superiority in every respect rests with the large bore bullet. Given a bullet suitable to the work in hand, increase of velocity may increase its effectiveness, but if the higher velocity is only attainable by a considerable

reduction in size of bore, it fails to compensate for the loss in shock-effect, amount of injury done, and general reliability. Whether that loss can be afforded must be a matter for our judgment to decide in the individual case.

It follows that the best bullet from the point of view of its effect upon an animal may be one of two types, either (1) a large-bore bullet deriving its effectiveness from its large striking surface, with sufficient velocity to penetrate bone and muscle to the far side of the animal ; or (2) one of smaller bore, whose value lies in the smashing-power and expansion given by high velocity, but of sufficiently large diameter and weight to ensure extensive shock-effect ; at the same time of sufficient stability not to be liable to break up on a big bone, while not likely to waste energy by reason of excessive penetration, or to be readily deflected from its course.

It must be clearly understood that all that I have written above has reference to the action of a bullet on a particular type of animal such as a lion. Even so, conditions of resistance, etc., must vary, and the best bullet would be the one most adaptable to varying conditions.

We may now turn to our first classification of weapons and examine the capabilities of the various bores and powers of sporting rifles of the present day ; both in the light of experience, and bearing in mind the conditions at which we have already arrived. For this purpose I subjoin a table of typical rifles of the different classes, with details of certain factors we have found to be of importance, *e.g.* velocity, bullet-

weight, and energy. As actual striking energy must vary with the distance of the target, I have taken the energy at the muzzle for convenience sake. For practical purposes striking energy may be taken as the measure of a bullet's momentum. The fact that it diminishes more rapidly in a slow heavy bullet than in one of the opposite type is, up to one hundred yards range, of little importance for purposes of comparison.

It must be remembered that under existing conditions the size of the bore affords of itself little indication of a rifle's power. Of two cordite rifles the one with the smaller bore may take the more powerful cartridge, both in respect of size of bullet and velocity. The rifle is made for the cartridge, not the cartridge for the rifle. I have therefore made the table sufficiently comprehensive to give an idea of the variety that exists, but it is by no means a complete list.

I have not included any of the Winchesters or other American rifles. And for convenience' sake I have confined the term "Express" to the black powder rifles to which it was originally applied, or to the same rifles when shooting light charges of cordite—not to the high velocity weapons which are sometimes called Nitro-Express rifles.

CLASS I.—EXPRESS RIFLES: BLACK POWDER (OR REDUCED CHARGE CORDITE).

Bore.	Weight of bullet (grains)	Muzzle velocity f. s.	Muzzle energy ft. lbs.	Weight of Double Rifle lbs.	Magazine Rifle, weight of lbs.
1. .450 . . .	270	1900	2160	8½ to 8¾	—
2. .450 Magnum.	325	1950	2700	9	—
3. .500 . . .	340	1925	2800	9 to 9½	—
4. .500 Magnum.	440	1880	3400	9½ to 10	—
5. .577 . . .	520	1775	3600	11	—
6. .577 No. 2 . .	565	1725	3800	11½ to 12	—

CLASS II.—HIGH VELOCITY SMALL-BORE RIFLES (CORDITE OR AXITE).

	Bore.	Weight of bullet (grains).	Muzzle velocity f. s.	Muzzle energy ft. lbs.	Weight of Double Rifle lbs.	Magazine Rifle, weight of lbs.
(a)	1. .303 . . .	215	2000	1920	8½ to 8¾	7½
	2. .275 (Mauser) . . .	172	2250	2000	—	7
	3. .256 (Mannlicher)	160	2400	2000	8½ to 9	7½
(b)	4. .355 (Mannlicher)	250	2050	2330	—	7½
	5. .375 . . .	270	2000	2400	8½ to 9	—
	6. .400/.360 . . .	314	1875	2450	—	—
	7. .350 (Rigby-Mauser)	310	2000	2700	—	—
	8. .375, No. 2 . . .	270	2200	2900	9	—
	9. .375/.303 . . .	215	2500	3000	8¾	7½
(c)	10. .360, No. 2 . . .	300	2250	3360	—	—
	11. .350 Magnum (Rigby) . . .	225	2600	3400	—	—
	12. .318 (Westley Richards) . . .	250	2500	3460	9½	7½
	13. .375 Magnum (Holland & Holland) . . .	270 or 320	2500	3750	9½ to 10	—
	14. .333 (Jefferey) . . .	250 or 300	2600	3800	—	—
	15. .280 (Ross) . . .	142 or 160	3000	2800	—	—

CLASS III.—H.V. MEDIUM AND LARGE BORE RIFLES (CORDITE OR AXITE).

1.	.450/.400 . . .	400	2150	4100	9¾ to 10½	—
2.	.404 . . .	400	2150	4100	—	8
3.	.450 . . .	480	2150	4900	11 to 11½	—
4.	.425 . . .	410	2350	5000	11¼	8½
5.	.465 } . . .	500	{	2200	11½	—
	.470 }			5360		
	.475 }			5150		
6.	.500 . . .	570	2100	5500	11½ to 12	—
7.	.577, No. 1 . . .	600	1950	5500	12½ to 13	—
8.	.577, No. 2 . . .	750	2050	6900	13½	—
9.	.600 . . .	900	1850	6800	16 to 16¾	—

CLASS IV.—SHOT AND BALL GUNS (NITRO POWDER).

1.	12-bore "Paradox" (Holland)	780 (solid)	1000	1700	7½	—
		or				
		735 (Hollow point)				
2.	12-bore "Paradox" Magnum	735	1150	2150	8	—
3.	12 bore "Explora" (Westley Richards)	730	1300	2700	7¼	—
4.	12-bore Super Magnum "Explora" . . .	730	1500	3600	7¾	—

The old black powder Express rifles have done great work in their time, but the day of black powder,* with its smoke and fouling, is past. But these rifles need not be discarded on that account alone, for many of them will shoot light cordite charges with satisfactory results, and for jungle work are still worthy of consideration.

I have personally used the .450, .500, and .577 (Nos. 1, 3, and 5 on the list) against tiger and leopard in India, and done good work with all three. My experience is perhaps hardly sufficient to generalise from, but I find that it agrees in the main with that of most writers or men I have met who had shot enough to make their opinions of value. It amounts to this, that the .450 has not, on the whole, sufficient power; that the .500 is often good enough, but sometimes fails in shock-effect; and that the .577 is as good a rifle as there is for the purpose—if you can handle it. The .500 Magnum I have never used, but it is a powerful weapon.

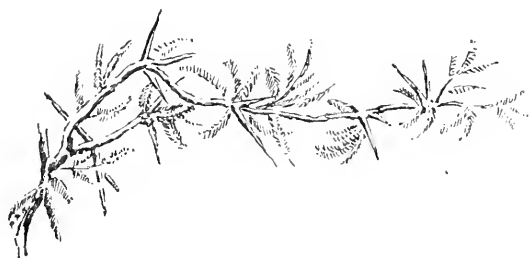
With all these I am assuming that the copper-tubed bullet with small hollow is used: there is a common pattern, with the hollow of considerable depth, which is very liable to break up, and therefore dangerous. The solid lead bullet, owing to the necessity for hardening the lead to prevent “leading” in the barrel, does not usually set up sufficiently, but is useful for a raking shot. We shall return to the question of weight later on, only noting for the present that no rifle of this

* A point in favour of black powder lies in the greater reliability, in hot climates, of cartridges that are not quite fresh. Old cordite cartridges cannot be trusted.

class less powerful than the .500 Magnum possesses the stopping-power that we require.

It is when we come to the modern small-bore rifles that we find great divergences of opinion, especially in respect of the earlier and best known types, the .303 and .256 Mannlicher.

Major Glasfurd, in his charming book, *Leaves from an Indian Jungle*, writes: "The new military small-bore rifles possessed wonderful powers, when used with a suitable bullet. As was natural, however, they were soon tried beyond their powers and out of their own particular sphere. In some cases they exceeded their



admirers' most sanguine hopes; in a good many others they led to very dire accidents on account of their general lack of knocking-down power."

The author of *Modern Sporting Gunnery*, again, remarks, "What has been proved after many years' experience of these high velocity small-bore rifles is, that on the whole their bullets are lacking in the necessary degree of expansion and shock-giving qualities."

With those views I am wholly in agreement. Even when the light bullet does expand satisfactorily, it does not impart a sufficient shock, so that unless striking an immediately vital spot, it fails to achieve the desired end.

The case for the small bore is well set forth in *Central African Game and its Spoor*, by Captain C. H. Stigand and D. D. Lyell. It is based mainly on the accuracy, comparative lack of recoil, lightness, and handiness of the small bore in magazine form—qualities of undoubtedly great value. But I take the liberty of making two quotations which will illustrate these authors' point of view.

They write: "We have dropped a charging elephant on his knees at ten yards with one shot from a Mannlicher, and with the same weapon failed to stop a charging lion at two yards. . . . In the first case, had we had a heavy bore, we think that we may not have been able to have got in such a deadly shot, whereas, in the second case, with a heavy bore, or even a shot-gun, the shock of impact would in all probability have turned the animal." The authors rightly deprecate the drawing of general inferences from isolated cases such as these. But the two examples are not on all fours, one turning on the qualities of the rifle, the other on those of the bullet. Others might find a medium bore double-barrel, if not too heavy, as handy for the elephant as a single small-bore. And I think the admission from advocates of the small-bore that a heavier weapon would probably have been effective where the Mannlicher failed, *e.g.* in stopping power, is worth while emphasising on my part.

Again, "The first shot is the all-important one, and if this only wounds, the animal must be stopped by sheer weight of lead and blow of impact. For the first shot we wish to use all the accuracy at our disposal, and something that we can always have in our hand

through a long and tiring day, hence we advocate a small-bore." The writers continue that after the first shot a big-bore in the hands of a gun-bearer might be useful to meet a possible charge, but a gun-bearer is only human and might not be on the spot.

The first statement is indubitably correct, but I cannot entirely agree with its application. For one thing, as I have already endeavoured to show, accuracy in placing one's bullet is, at comparatively short range, and at moving shots, largely dependent on the handiness in which, personally, I find the double barrel (if not too heavy) to be superior : of that more anon. Secondly, by reason of the all-importance of the first shot, upon which I have remarked in a previous chapter, it is most desirable that if it fails to reach a vital spot its shock-effect shall be as great as possible. And this is where the light bullet fails.

Much has been made of the success which well-known hunters of big game like Selous and Neumann have attained with the '303. But adequate importance is not attached to the fact that these were first-class shots, with great experience of their game under varied conditions. A bad shot has no business trying to shoot dangerous game. But the average shot, or even the good shot with but limited experience, cannot expect to place his bullet correctly under all circumstances.

Now both the authors of *Central African Game* are, I believe, undoubtedly good and experienced shots. But it is instructive to note that Captain Stigand has had more than his share of marvellous escapes—been mauled by a lion, tossed by a rhino, knocked down by

an elephant, and upset in a canoe by a hippo. And he always uses a .256 Mannlicher: *Post hoc ergo propter hoc* is not always true, but when we find his colleague of the pen, Mr. Lyell, writing in an article in *The Field*, that Captain Stigand's reliance on the .256 may account for some of his accidents, we can do no less than agree that there may be something in it.

The best of men are not infallible, and how many are there really in the front rank as compared with the crowd of average men? If you are one of the former you need no advice from me: otherwise, I say, eschew absolutely rifles like the .303 and .256 Mannlicher for dangerous game. If the light weight of a magazine rifle attracts you, you can have it in weapons far more powerful than either of these.

Where then is the dividing line to be drawn? I have for convenience' sake, if somewhat arbitrarily, divided the rifles in Class II., arranged according to energy, into three main groups. The second group (*b*) contains a number of rifles taking a great variety of cartridges; the only one of these of which I have any personal experience is the .355 Mannlicher, a good rifle for most antelope, but which certainly is not capable of dealing a sufficiently heavy blow to make it a safe weapon for lion. Others of this group are more powerful, but none of them can be considered likely to be more effective than the ordinary .500 black powder Express which we have decided does not quite come up to our standard.

In group (*c*) we have rifles shooting cartridges with energy approximating to that of the .500 Magnum and .577 Express. With suitable bullets any of these

ought to be good enough under most circumstances, but their bullets are all on the light side, and somewhat deficient in area of striking surface. Take the .318. Its capped bullet makes in proportion to its diameter a comparatively large entrance hole ; but if it were fired at a tiger broadside on, but too far back, and passed between two ribs (a likely enough supposition), without injuring a vital part, it would meet with comparatively little resistance, would expand but slightly, and would not improbably go clean through the animal without producing any great shock-effect. In meeting a charge again, this bullet, though less so than many small-bore projectiles, would still be more liable to deflection than a heavier and stouter bullet, while in shock-effect it would occasionally fail. In short, while rifles of this class may be used with a considerable measure of confidence, I do not consider they are to be recommended for dangerous game at close quarters.

The last rifle on the small-bore list, the .280 Ross, represents the latest development, shooting as it does a very light slender pointed bullet with a velocity much in excess of anything previously attained. It has a marvellously low trajectory and has undoubtedly proved effective on a variety of game from elephant downwards. So had its predecessor the original .256, but we have had to discard it as unsafe. And, for the present, I have no hesitation in treating the .280 likewise. To obtain expansive power the bullet is of necessity made decidedly fragile. The great velocity is supposed to give immense smashing power. Surely this will of necessity—though doubtless not always—recoil upon such a slight projectile, with the result

that, like the .256 split bullet, it will, sometimes, go to pieces upon the shoulder bone of a tiger? while great though the velocity, the light weight reduces the momentum shock of the bullet to less than that of the .500 Express.

But in view of the present boom in these rifles, an ounce of fact is worth a pound of theory. Many will recall the sad death of Mr. George Grey from the effects of mauling by a lion in East Africa during the current year (1911). According to the account given in an East African paper at the time, Mr. Grey had ridden down an unwounded lion, and it turned to charge; he dismounted and got in two shots, hitting the lion, at twenty yards, in the shoulder, and again, at five yards, in the jaw, but entirely failing to stop him. It is not so well known that the rifle which (or rather its bullets) thus failed in the hour of need was a .280 Ross. Would the result have been the same had the weapon been a .400 cordite or a 12-bore Paradox? We cannot know, but I trow not. And it is instructive to note that when two of the unfortunate sportsman's friends came up, each put a .256 bullet into the lion's body at twenty yards, but the beast was still able to turn and proceed to maul the fallen man further.

There is a characteristic of the .280 bullet which is supposed to increase its deadliness. This is the fact that if it strikes the object at all obliquely, its very slender shape tends to cause the bullet to turn over on impact and enter the body transversely, thus causing a very wide entrance wound. No doubt in some cases this would mean an increase in the damage done.

But it is absolutely certain that the angle at which the bullet strikes will be a variable one, and the course which it may take after impact will be as absolutely uncertain. *Verb sap.* The .280 is a wonderful weapon, but it should be a military, not a sporting rifle. If used for sport, it should be with a blunt-nosed bullet.

In Class III. we find a very considerable increase of power. The .400 possesses a decidedly higher degree of energy than the .577 Express, and the bore is sufficiently large to give us ground for expecting that with a good expanding bullet its shock-effect and stopping power would be adequate for our purpose. Experience proves this expectation to be justified. The soft-nosed bullet in the smaller bores has often somewhat excessive penetration, but there is ample evidence that with the greater striking surface of the .400 it does not usually err in this direction, and is extremely effective. The capped bullet should be equally so; it certainly should be superior to the soft nose in expansion; it has been suggested that it may fail in penetration, but seeing that the cap is, in this and larger bores, of nickel, I think it very unlikely. I regret that I did not use my .400 more in Somaliland and test this point. But Mr. H. A. Bryden in the new edition of the *Encyclopædia of Sport* gives the nickel cap bullet credit for great all-round qualities including penetrative power.

The soft nose bullet has been known to fail by breaking up too soon on bone. Sir Alfred Pease, in a letter to *The Field*,* expresses the opinion that when

* *The Field*, May 13, 1911.

one of these bullets has passed "with enormous friction at inconceivable pace through a rifle barrel, and issues from the muzzle at between 2000 to 3000 feet velocity," the exposed lead "must be reduced to fluid, and fluid in an open envelope." He goes on, "This is how I explain the fact that when a lion is hit in the face with one of these bullets at close range, if the bullet is not deflected, it often goes to pieces, and nothing is to be found of lead save faint splashes, and only a bit of light twisted metal envelope is discovered, not far in, and out of the line of the original



line of entry. I have twice seen charging lions hit in the face at five yards with such projectiles, and in both cases the lion might just as well have been missed."

The suggested explanation is interesting, if not entirely convincing. As I understand it, it applies only to very short ranges, the lead solidifying with extreme rapidity on exposure to the air (the case would be different where a bullet breaks up after impact owing to the resistance being too great for its stability). If the theory is correct, we have here a defect inherent in all soft-nosed H.V. bullets when used at extremely close quarters: a defect that does not exist in the capped bullet, which should under any

circumstances be less liable to go to pieces. Personally I am inclined to put down the capped bullet as the best under almost all conditions—save only where extreme penetration is required, which is not the case in our present inquiry. The larger entrance wound which it makes, and consequent greater blood trail, is alone an important argument in its favour.

So much for the .400. The .450 and .470 are almost unnecessarily powerful for any thin-skinned game, and the larger bores certainly so, besides the disadvantage of increasing weight. In magazine rifles the recent introduction, first of the .404 and then of the .425, marks a great advance of power, but they have the defects common to this class of weapon. In the preferable double-barrelled form, the .400 is, for me, a little too heavy to carry about all day, or to be really handy; so that effective though it usually is, we must search yet a little further for the ideal “tiger stopper.”

In the shot-and-ball guns (Class IV.) we come to an entirely different style of weapon, of which the Paradox is the type. It is essentially a shot gun, but constructed to shoot heavy conical bullets with the accuracy of a .577 Express up to at least one hundred yards. The antithesis of the small-bore H.V. rifle, the most important factor in composing the striking energy of its bullet is weight of lead rather than velocity. To compare two weapons that I have used, the 12-bore Magnum Paradox bullet has a velocity of less than two-thirds that of the .450 Express, but a bullet weighing nearly three times as much, while the muzzle energy is almost identical.

From what I have said before of the .450 Express this energy would appear to be decidedly insufficient; but in point of fact, practical experience has proved the Paradox bullet to afford a striking example of the value in stopping power of a large striking surface and sheer weight of lead. So that its effectiveness at ranges not exceeding one hundred yards is probably superior to the .500 Magnum Express, while at thirty yards or so it is not inferior to the .577 Express.

With this bullet effectiveness, it remains a shotgun; in weight and general handiness unquestionably superior to any rifle that exists. And herein lie advantages that in my opinion constitute it the ideal weapon for jungle work. Of course it has killed animals at ranges over one hundred yards, but these are outside its proper sphere.

This last remark was written more particularly of the Paradox which was for long *the* ball-and-shot gun. But there are others: notably Messrs. Westley Richards' "Explora" gun, the latest development of which, the 12-bore Super Magnum, is stated to have attained a muzzle velocity of 1500 f.s. without any practical reduction in weight of bullet. The result is that the energy obtained represents a 75 per cent. increase on that of the Magnum Paradox, combined with improved ranging power, but with no corresponding increase of weight or consequent loss of handiness in the gun.

Great qualities of expansion are claimed for the "Explora" bullet. If these claims are justified, and there is good reason to think they are, the Paradox must take second place. But that matters little, the

Paradox (12-bore Magnum) remains good enough, the somewhat greater power of the Explora at one hundred yards being a comparatively slight advantage. Otherwise the choice between the two would depend on choice of bullets. A fault occasionally found with the Paradox is that the bullet does not *always* expand with certainty, it having to be made of lead hardened to some degree to take the rifling without stripping. This is but to say that, as with any other bullet, conditions vary. The only question is whether the capped Explora bullet is more adaptable to varying conditions. I think that in all probability it is.

With the Paradox the hollow pointed bullet should almost invariably be used in preference to the somewhat heavier solid one, it being more accurate in flight and giving greater expansion. Messrs. Holland and Holland inform me that the weight of the hollow-pointed bullet could be increased by thirty to forty grains if that would be an advantage. If this were done and the additional metal added at the base of the bullet, the hollow in the point could be deepened somewhat to give increased expansion, without, I believe, any risk of over-doing it or of lessening the stability of the bullet.

Some reference to the 12-bore (rifle or smooth-bore) used with a spherical bullet seems desirable in view of the strong case made out for the latter form of projectile by Mr. Hicks in his work on big game in India, already referred to. This writer, as I have mentioned, is an advocate of the large bore ; also of the superiority of the spherical over the elongated form of bullet in respect of liability to deflection, both in the

air and after impact. He maintains, probably with justice, that insufficient credit is given to the powers of the spherical bullet, by reason of neglect of the necessity for seeing that it fits the bore tightly, so as to prevent loss of velocity by windage ; also by too loose loading of the bullet into the cartridge.

Now the weapon used in this case is either a rifle, in which case its weight in a 12-bore is excessive, or a smooth-bore which in handling has no advantage over a Paradox. The Paradox bullet in the same bore has an equal striking surface with a considerable increase of weight as compared with the spherical ball, while its shape is not such as to make it much more liable to deflection. Beyond fifty yards the Paradox bullet is the more accurate, while if its velocity is less at close quarters, it has thereby the more stopping-power by reason of giving greater " impact shock " and a more knock-down blow with its greater weight. The bullet from a smooth-bore has the advantage that it can be constructed at will of soft or hardened lead and the charge of powder varied as desired within limits. But the Paradox hollow-pointed bullet is a sufficiently consistent performer, so that this need not affect us much. On the whole, the balance of advantages is unquestionably with the ball-and-shot gun, a weapon which Mr. Hicks has left out of his calculations.

As between the spherical ball and the high velocity rifle bullet, it will have been seen that I have no doubts as to the importance of a large striking surface, shock effect and general reliability in the behaviour of a bullet after impact, and that I do not consider the modern H.V. small bore possesses these qualities to an

adequate degree. But when, as in the .400, the bore is sufficiently large to admit of a fair amount of weight and striking surface, high velocity will add to its efficiency, if an expanding bullet of sufficient stability is obtainable.

Mr. Hicks maintains the impossibility of constructing a bullet which, fired from a high velocity rifle, will expand satisfactorily and not go to pieces. But, as we have seen, *there are such bullets*. This writer appears to judge of the .450 H.V. rifle by the inadequacy on several occasions of a .450 black powder Express which he sometimes used. The futility of this will be seen at once by a comparison of the striking energy of the bullets in each case. He quotes, however, an instance in which a tiger was shot by Mr. C. Batten, through the brain, with a .450 H.V. bullet, "the brains being spattered on the ground, and yet this tigress travelled over a mile after receiving this wound, and was still alive when found twelve hours afterwards." I do not know what the make of bullet was, but in any case such an extraordinary instance of tenacity of life on the part of the tiger is of no value as an example of the typical effect of a H.V. bullet.

Unrivalled as is Mr. Hicks' experience of tiger shooting with the old style of weapon, this alone does not qualify him to condemn so absolutely as he would do the larger H.V. rifles of whose capabilities he has evidently had no experience, and the increased weight and stability of whose bullets he appears not to appreciate; while the value of his conclusions on the subject of velocity are somewhat discounted by the repeated clashing of the two opposite views which

he appears to hold as to high velocity increasing yet at the same time reducing resistance! Apparently he would recommend the old .500 Express as more effective than a .450 H.V. rifle with capped or velopex bullet—so would not I, nor any man who knows.

My opinion of the spherical ball in a 12-bore shot-gun is that it is not inadequate for tiger if driven by a nitro charge equivalent to *not less than 4 to 4½ drams* of black powder in order to obtain the necessary penetration with a bullet of *soft* lead: a gun strong enough for this purpose would weigh fully 7½ lbs., which is heavier than the usual “general purpose” 12-bore shot-gun. With the 13-bore ball generally used, Mr. Hicks’ plan of wrapping it round with cloth to make it fit the bore tightly should be followed, and, as he points out, it *must not* be loose in the cartridge. The limit of range should be 75 yards. But to the man who wants to choose a weapon a Paradox or Explora gun is decidedly superior, and always to be advised in preference.*

Finally, then, so far as stopping power and general bullet effectiveness are concerned, I would narrow down our choice absolutely to one of two types of weapon.

(1) A 12-bore magnum double ball-and-shot gun, Paradox or Explora.

(2) A H.V. double rifle of .400 to .476-bore.

If it be merely a question of selecting the best weapon for our purpose our final choice must always rest on No. (1) on account of its greater consistency of

* The patent “Lethal” bullet fits the bore tightly, and is, I believe, effective, but cannot compare with the Paradox bullet for accuracy.

stopping power at close quarters, and its marked superiority in lightness and handiness.

There are, however, other factors which may affect the final decision : (a) the length of your purse, which may place the more expensive type of weapon out of reach, and may make it necessary that one weapon should do the work of two ; (b) (in the latter event) the nature of the other work that may be required of your single arm ; (c) your physique in relation to the work to be done.

As to expense. Good double rifles are expensive, costing often more than double the price of the single or magazine type : this because of the amount of skilled labour that has to be expended in regulating both barrels to shoot exactly alike. A good second-hand rifle, however, can often be obtained from the London dealer at little more than half cost price. But don't buy a rifle by an unknown firm, and, if possible, take the one you do choose to the original maker to be overhauled. And do not be led away by the argument that it is not worth while paying 50 per cent. extra for the name on your rifle of a firm with a reputation to lose. Believe me, it *is* worth while in the long run.

As to the work your rifle is to do. Not long ago there was an interesting correspondence in *The Field* as to what is the best all round rifle. It demonstrated clearly, if that were necessary, that there is no such thing as an "all round" rifle. But the consensus of opinion veered between the .400 and .350 H.V. rifles as coming nearest to that ideal ; advocates of the former considering the .350 and its like not safe enough for dangerous game, while the opposite party

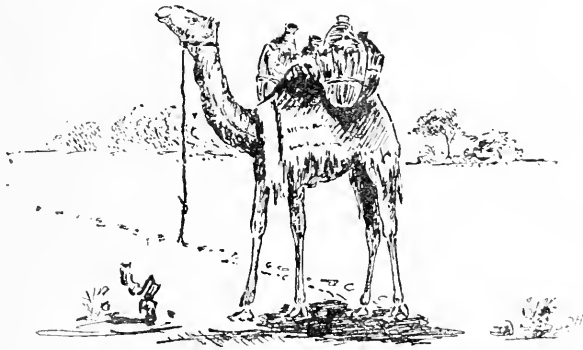
considered the .400 unduly powerful for the smaller antelopes, etc., of rather too high trajectory for hill and plains shooting, and too heavy (at least in the double form) for continual use as an all round rifle.

It is obvious that where the purse constrains something must be sacrificed. In a man of strong physique, limited to a single weapon, a double .400 should not be too heavy to become handy with constant use. Otherwise the choice would lie between a magazine rifle of largest bore (.404 or .425) and a powerful double rifle of not less than .360-bore * (except that the .318 might be admitted on account of its capped bullet). In the one case that valuable second barrel at close quarters has to be given up, along with the quickness of aim that goes with a double barrel to which one is accustomed, but an effective bullet is retained. In the second case you keep the advantages of a double-barrel but lose in the important element of stopping power. Physique may be the deciding factor. As to trajectory, that of the new .425 is an improvement on the .404. The man who depends upon a magazine rifle alone I should advise to give some attention to the practice of rapid magazine fire.

But the sportsman who can afford to go on a regular shooting expedition can usually afford more than one weapon, and it would be folly to depend on a single one with no provision for accidents. If two is his limit, my advice is that wherever there is a possibility of lion or tiger, the first should always be a

* Since the above was written, Messrs. Holland and Holland have produced a new .375 Magnum with a velocity of 2900 f.s., which is decidedly the most powerful weapon of its class.

double 12-bore ball-and-shot gun, be the other what he will. Remember that the former is a shot-gun which will shoot all your small game for you, and do it well. I have done a fair amount of shooting, duck, snipe, etc., during the last two years in India with my Paradox alone, and never felt the weight excessive, or wanted a better gun; while the advantage in a hasty snapshot, or in meeting a charge, of the gun with which one is accustomed to miss a snipe (as an old friend of mine used to put it) hardly needs elaboration. It is distinctly an objection, in comparison, to a heavy



rifle which is rarely required, that it does not become familiar in handling by use.

So much for the lion and tiger. I had no idea it would take me so many pages to decide the exact method of encompassing their decease! A small leopard is no doubt in a different category to a lion, but leopards or panthers vary much in size, and though the smallest can perhaps be killed by a strong man with his bare hands, as a recent writer has depreciatingly stated, yet he will leave his marks with fang and poisoned claw; while no ordinary man, if his rifle failed him, would have a ghost of a chance against

an Indian forest panther weighing 120 to 150 lbs. or more, as not a few have found to their cost. An average leopard can no doubt do with less weight of lead and penetration ; but at times he seems to possess greater tenacity of life than lion or tiger, and he is more cunning, more active, often more aggressive than either ; for him there is nothing like the Paradox, with perhaps one barrel loaded with S.S.S.G. shot for extra close quarters.

Bears are in comparison harmless, but if it does come to close grips, as it may, whether he be sloth bear or grizzly, you want to be able to knock him down. What's good enough for a tiger will not be too good for Bruin.

As for our second class—dangerous thick-skinned game. I have shot at a wild elephant with nothing more deadly than a Kodak ; advocates of the small-bore for the brain shot are not lacking either in number or authority ; yet out of the valour of my inexperience I venture to urge that the essential principles are unchanged. Stopping power is still for the average shot the great desideratum. True, this is no longer to be obtained by expanding bullets, penetrative power having become a prime necessity ; but without adequate striking surface and weight of lead the high velocity of a small bore bullet cannot produce the necessary shock-effect where the wound is not immediately fatal.

It is admittedly by no means easy to make sure of the brain shot at an elephant, especially in a big bull ; and in the case of a shot in the skull that fails to find the brain there can be no question but that the blow

from a heavy cordite rifle will have a far greater stunning or knocking down effect than that of a light bullet. Even where the brain is hit, the clean drilled hole made by a light bullet of great velocity is, according to a recent writer in *The Field*, not certain to produce any immediate effect. The somewhat slower heavier bullet is likely to cause much greater injury from the increased shock. And for a body shot the greater value of the bigger bore hardly needs affirmation.

My conclusion is the same as before: let the experienced shot use a small bore if he will, but the ordinary individual will be wise to take the most powerful rifle he can handle.

There is some authority for the statement that the .577 cordite is the most successful modern rifle against elephants. But its weight will be a disadvantage to many, and the .450 and .470 have been found efficient substitutes. The only rifle lighter than these that approaches their power is the new .425 Magazine. The shot-and-ball guns are lacking in velocity and therefore out of the running. At the same time, with a big pachyderm's great bulk, which usually ensures that there is no waste of a bullet's energy, it is probable that the difference in effectiveness between, say, a .360 No. 2 and a .450, is less than in the case of a smaller beast, so that the former rifle would be less often unsafe against an elephant than against a lion. It is also possible that the importance of an immediate second barrel is on the whole less than with the great cats. But these remarks are merely suggestive. It is with regard to the *Felidæ* that I should wish my conclusions to carry conviction.

Buffalo and gaur are heavy beasts and require to be treated as such. At close quarters, its handiness would make the new Explora with brass-capped bullet worth trying, and I fancy it would prove equal to the occasion. Otherwise I think nothing less powerful than the .400 cordite would be safe: preferably the .470.

In a discussion of this subject I have heard the remark—the speaker was distinctly young—that so long as one had a fairly serviceable weapon it was unsporting to give so much attention to the question of safety—as I, for instance, have done in this chapter.

It was a foolish remark and based on ignorance, but it illustrates the quaint ideas that are to be met with as to what constitutes “sportsmanship”—blessed word! One thing the youngster forgot was that when a man goes out to shoot big game, he could often achieve little but for the assistance of his followers, men who cheerfully risk their lives to provide his sport and whose safety may depend upon him. Another thing he did not think of, was that the qualities of a rifle which make for safety are likewise those which tend to prevent the escape of wounded beasts; while in the case of those that do temporarily escape, the greater hæmorrhage and the greater external bleeding caused by a large calibre bullet frequently help to bring them ultimately to bag. And the first object of the big game hunter who is a sportsman should be to kill and not to wound.

It may be remarked that the cult of the small bore magazine rifle obtains, naturally enough, in greatest degree in Africa, where there is more long range shooting than elsewhere. I will therefore take the liberty of

citing the opinions of an experienced East African sportsman in support of my views. Sir Alfred Pease writes in the letter to *The Field* previously mentioned : " I have never advocated rifles of this class ($\cdot 256$) for close quarters with lions, and, though I have killed many lions with the $\cdot 256$, I have killed most of them at long range, and generally with a 10-bore held in reserve. I consider that $\cdot 400$ is the smallest bore modern rifle suitable for dangerous game at close quarters." Again, " while few men shoot as well with a heavy rifle as a small one . . . the $\cdot 400$ is not too heavy a rifle to become handy with or for daily use." And, " the superiority of 10- and 12-bore weapons (shot-and-ball guns) is, in the case of lions, marked . . . where knock-out shots must be given within twenty-five yards range."

I must acknowledge my indebtedness to Major Glasfurd's book already mentioned, which some years ago strengthened the opinions I had already formed, and which subsequent experience has amply confirmed. Therefore I do not think that I can conclude better than by a further quotation from his book.

" No satisfactory truly all-round rifle yet exists . . . Allowing that a smokeless propellant is in all ways superior to black powder, the rest is a question of a man's build and physique. If he can handle it, the bigger the bore the better for close jungle work. For ponderous game the medium bore cordite rifle comes in first favourite. For dangerous soft-skinned game, at close ranges, the ball and shot gun of the Paradox type not smaller than 12-bore. . . . Except for use on ponderous game, with proper bullet, the high

velocity rifle appears to have almost too high a velocity for sporting purposes. Throughout a considerable experience it has been noted that, although actually conveying less damage to the animal struck, *the slower travelling ordinary Express bullet—and, in still greater degree the Paradox bullet—knocks down an animal*; whereas the cordite rifle appears rather to numb its victim with the extraordinary velocity of its projectile, which seems to lose knocking down power in an impact which is so sudden and penetrative.

“There seems to be less chance of an animal eventually getting away when hit by a high velocity rifle; but the slower travelling bullet rolls a beast over, at least temporarily, and enables one to put in more shooting before it can regain its legs. Dynamics appear to bear out our argument. It is the knock-down push or blow that is so useful in that short second of time when a man may be reached by a brute thirsty for his blood; and that this is best conveyed by a handy ball and shot gun seems incontestable.”

I have dealt with this subject at what may seem inordinate length. But though much has been written about it, I am not aware of the existence of a detailed and up-to-date analysis of the *pros* and *cons* of the question such as I have attempted here, and which I venture to hope may be found of some value to those interested, and especially to the inexperienced sportsman. Mr. Hicks has indeed made a valuable contribution to the subject, to which I am indebted, but his point of view is somewhat prejudiced, and he ignores entirely that most valuable weapon the ball-and-shot gun, while his final conclusion as to the absolute

superiority of the spherical ball is not one that is likely to meet with very general acceptance.

How far my treatment of the subject has attained a measure of success I must leave to the judgment of my reader. That the deficiencies of this chapter are not few I am fully conscious, in view of the pretensions it must seem to make. The rest of this book, which makes none, may perhaps hope for less critical judgment.





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