

wash-out or anything to delay the train, such as a rhino charging it, you get no food at all. As likely as not you reach the dinner place at midnight and the breakfast place at 2 p.m. The moral of this is, always take a plentiful supply of both grub and drink with you. The country through which we passed is about the wierdest you could strike. Fifteen miles from the coast all the amazing luxuriance of that belt stops - just as if it had been sliced off with a knife - and the three hundred and odd miles of the rest of the journey you don't see a trace of fertility of any sort, except just along the banks of the few rivers. For some time there was nothing but coarse grass dotted with wierd looking flat-topped thorn trees - then gradually there was less grass and more thorn trees, till one suddenly found oneself in a tangled wilderness of distorted, leafless trees and bush. It looks as if neither man nor beast could possibly find a way through it, and yet very few years ago every single caravan that went up-country had to fight through the seventy odd miles of this waterless and evil looking wilderness. Poor devils, lots of them never arrived, but died a hideous death, eventually driven mad from thirst and dying by agonised inches. I am told that the old caravan road is strewed with the bleached bones of those who fell by the way. Once you fell sick or wandered from the ribbon like trail you were done for. Your companions were powerless to help you; of necessity it had to be each man for himself, - and the devil did indeed take the hindermost. The horrors and hardships of those pioneer days were rubbed into me as we puffed and groaned through this hideous tract of country. It lay in unbroken waves of colourless grey thorns, a brazen blue sky above it, and the burning brick-red earth -

every blade of grass burnt and gone - below it. After some hours, faint blue blurs showed up in the distance: these were the hills from whence came help in the old days. The water-holes lie high up on these hills, but these ~~even~~ <sup>were</sup> dried out during some dreadful seasons, and the caravan had to drag itself another twenty miles before the river was reached. If one realizes in any degree what all this meant it makes one feel pretty sick. The amazing thing is that numbers of quite ordinary men have been through without apparently thinking anything of it - or themselves. I suppose most humans have latent possibilities for achievement or failure that they know nothing of till they are put to the test.

It was <sup>a</sup> relief to wake up in the morning and find oneself in more natural surroundings. Green hills, green grass, green trees - not the green of the coast, and not anything particularly beautiful, but anyway it was fairly ordinary. Just after sunrise I saw my first big game - a herd of thirteen giraffe. They were close to the line, so I could stare my fill at them, and by Jove, I did! Such monsters and so ungainly, with their huge long necks and silly-looking little heads on top. They looked exactly as if they were waiting to be marched into the ark. By degrees the hills melted to the outside edge of the horizon, the trees grew fewer and fewer and finally disappeared altogether, the grass, close and green, filled up the whole space in every direction: just endless rolling plains, and on these plains a whole world of beasts - not hundreds, but thousands of them. Great herds of sleek, fat zebra, stamping, barking, and tossing their painted-looking heads; countless strings of uncouth Wildebeeste, gambolling along in single file, their heads down and their tails twirling

round and round like flails; hundreds of bright-red, ~~ungainly~~, long-headed harte-beeste; ~~( Gokes, Newmans, Jacksons, and the Senegal are found in other parts of the country )~~; numbers of the graceful Grants gazelle, and even greater numbers of Thompsons gazelle, their little white-lined tails wagging unceasingly. Occasionally a herd of water-buck stood out, almost black, and looking very like stags; or a group of lovely Impallah were motionless for a moment before breaking into a series of the most graceful leaps and bounds, a running line of red against the more sombre colouring of the other beasts. It is a sportsman's paradise, and to see these animals wandering about wild and happy, when till now one has only seen a few sad and mangy-looking specimens in Zoos or Museums, is the most wonderful thing in the world. These plains run right up to Kissembi - in fact part of Kissembi is built on them, and the beasts not infrequently wander into the town and into private gardens. I had the luck to see two rhino, but not near enough to get any impression other than of two moving black blots. I must get out for a shoot before I'm much older, but curiously enough no one I have met here so far seems very keen.

November 30th.      Kissembi.

I have shot my first beast - only an ugly lantern-jawed old harte-beeste, but I feel as pleased with myself as if I had downed half a dozen elephants, and a rhino or two. No one who hasn't shot big game knows anything about it - the complete pleasure of first using your brains in laying your plans for stalking your animal, the intense physical pleasure ( though

its damn<sup>d</sup> (uncomfortable really ) of the stalk, and the ecstatic triumph when, answering to the thud of your bullet, the animal drops dead. Well, mine was quite an ordinary affair, but all the same it was an era-making performance for me. I got Waller ( a soldier man ) to go with me, as he knows the ground well. Instead of making for the plains we cut back to a broken tract of country lying between Kissembi hill and a range of hills known to the natives as the " Five Fingers " ( the name explains itself ). These Five Fingers are visible at an incredible distance and, wherever they are seen from, they appear to hang over Kissembi like a hand uplifted in protest. Here there was a certain amount of cover, and after walking sharply for about half an hour we saw what looked like a herd of animals behind a thin screen of trees on a small open plain beyond. Waller silently motioned me to take my rifle, and to our gun bearers and the porters ( these latter were to carry back the meat ) to squat down and remain where they were. He and I proceeded warily to the edge of the trees, from behind which Waller examined the quietly grazing herd to see which was the best head. Having decided this knotty point, he showed me my line of stalk. ( For my own satisfaction I must say it was what I had decided on myself while he was watching the herd. ) I was to crawl about sixty yards to the cover of an ant-hill - the Almighty in making these otherwise coverless plains has fortunately strewn numbers of ant-hills over them, or shooting would be impossible - arrived there I was to lie quite still till I had recovered my wind, and felt as steady as a rock. I was then to raise myself silently and cautiously to a sitting position, fire with my 100 yards sight up, and aim at where the beast's foreleg joined its body. Waller

told me to be sure to keep my hat ( a wide-brimmed terai ) on, as the animals recognise the un-covered head of a human as such, since the natives seldom cover their heads. He told me he had often bagged a beast quite unexpectedly in this way, because it stopped and watched him, not recognising, owing to his hat, that he was a man. Well, I gripped my rifle tight, lay down and wriggled off for my ant-hill. Of course my heart was thumping like mad, and equally of course I wriggled much too fast, for after I had gone about twenty yards I was so blown that I had to lie still and recover a bit. I noticed during this interval that I was crawling with ticks - literally hundreds of ~~them~~, of all sorts and sizes. After I had got my wind I continued much slower, and in what seemed like at least two hours I found I'd fetched up all right at the ant-heap. I took a good long rest, then examined my rifle to see that it was O.K. and finally, when there was no further excuse for any delay, I raised myself very slowly to the desired sitting position. I very nearly bossed the whole thing because I found another beastly hartbeeste, a good bit nearer than my chap, staring hard at me, and I was almost flustered into biffing off at him. However, I pulled up in time, and having spotted my beast I obeyed Wallers orders, though I don't mind confessing I thought they were all wrong both as regards distance and the place to aim at. After holding on till I felt like the Rock of Ages I pulled the trigger. I made sure I had missed, but when I had collected myself a bit I saw a red mass struggling on the ground, and the rest of the herd loping away as hard as they could lick. Waller waved to the men, and directly I realized my beast was down I rushed madly at him. It may have been stupid to feel as delighted as I did - I felt as if I had accom-

plished one of the finest acts in the world. My gun-bearer was up and had cut the beast's throat ( Mahomadens won't touch meat unless the animal has had its' throat cut in the prescribed manner, so there's always a rush to arrive and do the cutting before the last kick is out of the animal.) Before I realized what he was about, and in an incredibly short time, the beast was skillfully skinned, cut up, and each porter had his load ready to carry back. For one horrid moment, as the gun-bearer rushed at the animal brandishing his knife and yelling with joy, I thought he was coming for me, why I can't think, and I went quite sick. I suppose it was the reaction of my own excitement. Anyway it was jolly beastly. It gave me such a start that I was within an ace of raising my rifle and firing at the man. Thank God I didn't do this. Anything more awful than killing a man in cold blood I can't imagine, - and an innocent man too. Not so long ago a fellow did shoot one of his own men much in this way - he had got jumpy with being alone too long, saw a native, as he thought, prowling round his house at dusk, and loosed off and killed his man stone dead. It proved to be one of his police who had been returning some tools to the store. The white man was so cut up he left the Service.

I learnt that your gun-bearer, and the man who does the throat cutting business have a special right to certain portions of the animal you have shot - these rights are dastur, or custom, and it never does to ignore them.

Waller was tepidly pleased with my performance, and as we made our way back to the Lines gave me some useful tips about shooting that will doubtless stand me in good stead when I am on my own. The hartebeeste's liver and brains, which we ate for breakfast, were the finest dish I've ever tasted. N.B. most

white men won't touch hartbeeste meat - I daresay I shan't in time.

December 5th.    Kissembe.

I find, in Africa at any rate, that if you don't give your impressions of a place pretty soon after you have first seen it, a description becomes increasingly difficult. I shoved my ideas of Kissembe on one side because the game was an obsession with me till I had drawn blood - now I feel more settled. This is rather a queer place - a man here described it as "the city of dreadful distances", and this it certainly is. It is enormously scattered - one has to travel dreary, muddy miles from the Sub-Commissioner's Office to the P.W.D. ditto, - in fact it's miles from anywhere to anywhere. I am told that in the dry season these so-called roads are ankle deep in red dust, and that Kissembe itself is seen as in a glass darkly through the thick veil of red dust which always hangs over it. The town, railway station, and offices of Kissembe are all built on the plain - at the moment this plain is a morass - and each building looks as if it had been dropped quite purposelessly where it stands, its only object being to get as far away from all the others as possible. There is no sort of structure in the laying out of the town, and as the buildings are mostly tin, it is hideous. The only redeeming features are the trees and the flowering shrubs, which an enterprising Sub-Commissioner planted at his own expense. It seems that everything decent in this country is done in this way. All the roads are lined with trees, and in time the dreary ugliness of the township will be almost hidden in greenery.

The residential part of Kissembi lies on a low undulating hill which skirts the west side of the town. Good bungalows in really top-hole gardens are scattered from one end of the hill to the other. At the South end are the military lines with a polo ground and gymkhana. The North end of the hill runs into the remains of the splendid forest which used to cover the whole place; on the other side of this strip one plunges right into native villages and cultivation. At the moment, when the rains are just about to finish, the hill is really lovely. Roses in such rank profusion I have never seen anywhere - they have taken the whole place by storm, and have flung themselves over the bungalows and gardens, the masses of blossoms quite hiding the leaves. All English flowers seem to do well here, violets, carnations, sweet-peas, holly-hocks - every mortal thing. They bloom beautifully, but Africa seems to have knocked their delicate home scents out of them - they have practically no perfume at all.

There is any amount to do here, - much more than at the Coast - games of every sort; footer, cricket, tennis, golf, and polo, and added to these the shooting. All the same it isn't a very sociable place - I suppose its too big and scattered. ~~Somehow one doesn't seem to count here,~~ No one bothers about you one way or another, and the friendly interest and help you got at Pembi, you don't get here. People just look at you and then leave you alone; and the women-kind, though they all expect you to call, take no manner of notice of you when you have done so. In the majority of cases their husbands don't even shed a card on you.

So far I don't know whether I am to stay on here or not - the opinion is not. There seems to have been trouble with the natives in



various remote districts, and it looks as if I should go to one of these. Out in the direction of the Zara river things have been pretty bad. The new station there, Umbi, still has a military Company, and Fort Eliot itself seems in rather a bad way. I only hope I shan't go there. Waller has just come back with his company from Umbi, and has told me some beastly yarns - says its all thick bush with just native paths through it, and that the natives hide in the bush and shoot poisoned arrows at you as you pass. Of course you can't catch them, they wriggle off like snakes before you realize what direction the arrow came from. They also have a pleasant habit of appearing to make friends with you, and bringing you in presents of flour and other dainties, all of them poisoned, and sort of standing by to see you die in agony after you have eaten them. Waller had twenty five of his men laid out in this way, and they only pulled through because there wasn't very much flour, and it had been divided amongst so many men, and mixed with other food before it was eaten. Even so, they remained unconscious for thirty six hours - it didn't matter what was done to them they neither felt nor moved. Waller says the natives hate us ( it looks as if they did ) and don't want us messing around. But of course as we are a Protectorate we must interfere. He says the only thing to do is to give the truculent natives a real hard hammering - once they recognise you as top-dog they resign themselves, and, more or less, make the best of what they consider a bad job. The reason there is such trouble at Umbi is that a couple of years ago they killed a white man there, and this has given them such swelled heads they almost think they're white themselves. Latterly their colour has been rubbed into them a bit, but they haven't quite realized it yet.

The Wakiki ( the people who live all over the Zara River country ) are agriculturists and seem to be rather good at it - they grow every mortal kind of native grain and vegetable<sup>s</sup>, and they appear to be hard working. The friendly ones come in here as porters, and also to work on the roads. They are nasty, morose-looking brutes - they wear their wool in a shaggy fringe, and it's almost the only thing they do wear. Here in the town they are given blankets to cover their nakedness, but chez eux they attire themselves in a sketchy sort of goat skin hanging from one shoulder.

December 9th.    Kissembi.

I am ordered to Fort Eliot and start in a couple of days. I sort of felt it in my bones that I should be sent there when Waller first began telling me about it all. Ellis, the District Commissioner at Fort Eliot, is quite alone since he sent all the military to Umbi, and owing to the fact that there is a good deal of unrest in the district, a white man ought to be travelling round all the time. On the other hand it is not desirable to leave the station with only a *Goanese* clerk and a few police. I am chiefly to look after the station while Ellis is on tour - a pretty mouldy billet, as it means I shall not be able to get out to shoot, and shall practically be alone all the time. I don't find myself extra good company, and though I have fortunately picked up a fair working knowledge of the lingo, I don't seem able to make companions of blacks. Some people are quite happy with only coloured people around, but I can't get used to them.

I am sure they are a decent lot, but in spite of this their silent, watchful ways make me feel uncomfortable and suspicious. I have noticed that - and I suppose it is owing to my feelings for, or rather against, them - they generally seem uneasy when they are with me: we act and re-act. Their uneasiness makes them all the more watchful, and I feel that they are not satisfied with me, or, to put it another way, they don't seem to have any confidence in me. We don't seem to understand one another. Well, perhaps when I am alone with them our mutual suspicions will die out. They certainly are wonderful at sizing people up, and their native names for the different white men are masterpieces of brevity and knowledge - they touch the spot like Hemocea, and sometimes touch it painfully. Such names as " The Father of Lies ", " The Heavy Fisted ", " The Destroyer of Women ", " The Unjust ", " The Waverer ", are, to say the least of it, uncomfortable appellations, though it is distinctly comforting to be known as " The Fearless ", " The Great-Hearted ", " The Defender of Natives ", " The Promise-Keeper ", or " The Seer ". Ellis is known as ~~the~~ "Ever-Ready", and Waller says it is him all over: he is so on the spot that it doesn't matter what happens he is ready for it. I wonder if I have a name yet - possibly there is nothing of a sufficiently distinctive nature about me for them to catch hold of. I expect I am probably called after my leggings or my hat, or some rotten thing like that.

December 13th.    In Camp.

I left Kissembi two days ago, and already feel completely cut off

from it and the type of life I have hitherto led. I am in a new world from every point of view. Travelling is known as "safari" in this country, and it has its rigid customs just as everything else has. It is a queer mode of getting about, and, until you know the ropes, not particularly pleasing. In the first place, all your possessions - tent, camp-outfit food, drink, furniture, clothes, every mortal thing - have to be made up in loads weighing not more than 60 lbs. This in itself is a damn<sup>ed</sup> nuisance, if you have never done it before, you are apt to make one box weigh 100 lbs and the next 40 lbs. I have no doubt it oughtn't to be, but it is difficult to remember that books weigh more than shirts, and I was sick of my packing long before it was finished. I had to lay in a supply of tinned foods, sugar, flour, lamp oil, washing soap, and all those wretched things one uses ~~uses~~ in a house and never realizes one uses them - and then I suddenly found I had neither table cloths, table napkins, nor sheets. As I have been staying in other people's houses all the time, I never thought of these things. Waller advised me as to drinks - whiskey and lime juice, and a few bottles of fizzy for if one's sick. At last, after a good deal of bad language on my part and hard work on the part of the boys, everything was joyfully ready - the loads laid out all in a row. Up till then my Wa-kiki porters had been squatting in a circle, with a police man and their own head man seeing they didn't do a guy. They looked absolutely indifferent and blind to what was going on, and most of them sat with their eyes shut. But don't you believe it - nothing had escaped them; they saw which were the lightest loads, which ( my tin bath for instance ) were the awkward loads to carry; not a detail had escaped them, and when, finally,

the word was given for them to shoulder the loads, they made one mad rush and fell upon my property and each other indiscriminately - yelling like maniacs. I was quite upset and thought there was going to be a real row, but the Corporal only smiled and shrugged his shoulders saying the Wa-hiki were savages, and though they looked ferocious nothing would happen - it was their "custom" ( this word covers all the personal and racial peculiarities of everybody ) to behave like this when carrying the loads of a tenderfoot, and I had best leave them to sort out themselves and their respective loads. After about twenty minutes of the most infernal din, a sudden lull occurred, and from what had been a seething, indistinguishable mass of savages and boxes each individual porter emerged with his load neatly tied on his back with a native ream, the loose end of the ream passed round his forehead and holding the load taut and in position. The Corporal saluted and said the caravan was ready, and I gave the word to start. At this moment my cook came up and announced that he had no frying pan, and wished to know how he could cook my breakfast. I could have murdered him - instead of this, however, I explained to him that he had had the buying of the cooking pots and a couple of days to do it in, and if he had forgotten the frying pan he must do without it. I added that if my breakfast was badly cooked he would live to regret it.

My caravan did the first march, about fifteen miles, by itself. Waller lent me one of his ponies, and I rode out after lunch to find my camp pitched and things more or less ship-shape. The porters were chattering and eating ( these people seem to eat all day long ) round their fires; the corporal and his men were regaling themselves in a place apart; my cook was *hocking* over various groups of stones, on which his cooking pots were *balancing*.

and, as I dismounted at my tent door, my boy tipped a bucket of piping hot water into my tub. Everything went well till I turned in, and then, for the life of me, I couldn't sleep. This worried me a good deal as I had arranged to start at five o'clock, and I was undoubtedly tired. Whether it was sleeping under canvas for the first time, or whether it was fatigue or excitement I can't say, but I kept starting up thinking someone was creeping into my tent. There was a particularly villanous-looking man among the porters I had spotted from the first, and as the night advanced and the camp noises gradually died down, I made certain I heard whispering under the fly of my tent. My mind jumped to the thought that it was this man bent on mischief of some sort. I lay quite still, and, except for the thumping of my own heart, and an occasional yawn from the guard as he replenished the fire, I heard nothing. Gradually I grew quieter, and I must have fallen asleep without knowing I had done so. Suddenly I woke with a start. It was pitch dark, and this time undoubtedly someone was entering my tent - I heard fumbling fingers against the canvas. I dashed out of bed, my revolver in my hand, and made for the door. My foot caught in the ground sheet, and I pitched forward against the door which gave under my weight. I fell heavily to the ground, another body under mine. As I fell my revolver went off and this acted as an alarm and brought the police rushing to my tent. I was dazed and incoherent with the fall and fright, and it was some seconds before I realized that the entire camp was standing in a wondering semi-circle round me and my fallen enemy. The Corporal held a lantern in his hand, and as I raised myself still gripping my victim, I saw by its light that it was my own boy, Hamis, I was half strangling. Imagine

my disgust and shame ! It was 4 a.m. - pitch dark of course, and poor Hamis was coming to call me. I had said I would start before the caravan. I was horridly upset, my behaviour seemed so ridiculous, and it was almost impossible to explain to the silent expectant crowd what it all meant. Hamis, seeing my difficulty, took the blame on his own shoulders - said I had called him, and he had not replied, or some such simple statement. Anyhow he made it all right, and after he had got rid of the audience I called him into my tent and gave him Rs.5 He seemed quite satisfied, but I was so ~~ashamed~~ <sup>disgusted with</sup> of myself I could hardly bear to look at him, and when he finally went off to the cook's tent and I heard talking and laughing I felt worse than ever. I cursed myself for a fool, I cursed my lack of sympathy with these people which made it impossible for me just in a few words to put the whole incident on the right level. For they can and do understand if one can talk to them in the right way. As it was I felt as if I had started my life in this new milieu with an irretrievable disaster.

I dressed hurriedly and before the camp was struck I started off with the gun-bearer Waller had lent me, and one porter carrying my second gun. The natives here are none of them black; their skins are a warm chocolate colour, and sometimes much lighter than this. In the sun, especially if their skins are wet, they look just like bronze statues. The gun-bearer, in marked contrast, was a coal black Nubian, a great big fellow called Kaid Ali. His face was thin and gaunt, and scarred with his tribal marks - transverse cuts over his cheek bones - which gave him a somewhat sinister appearance.

We set off at a fair pace along the caravan road, which twisted away

in ~~a~~ thin beaten curves across the undulating plains. I was still feeling jolly upset about the fiasco of an hour back, but Kaid Ali and the porter appeared quite apathetic. In this country, that is along the beaten tracts, ones camps are at fixed places, usually about fifteen miles apart. Where water is scarce, the camping grounds must depend upon the supplies and may be only ten or as much as five and twenty miles distant from one another. One does not however reckon one's march in miles, but in hours - a fifteen mile march is called a five hour march. Three miles an hour over fair ground is the average going of a caravan, though nearly always there are stragglers who do not reach camp till an hour or so after the arrival of the main body.

I had told Kaid Ali I wanted to shoot, and by starting before the caravan I had an excellent opportunity of getting what I wanted actually from the road. We had been going about an hour when I felt a gentle tug at my coat, and, on halting, Kaid Ali pointed silently to a few scattered thorn trees and murmured, " rhino ". It took me some time to verify this statement, but finally what I had thought were a couple of bushes began to move slowly towards the bare plain beyond the trees. I laid my plans at once - the porter was to remain where he was, but lying down. I would take my .303 and Kaid Ali my double .450. We would make for the line of trees, and trust to arrive there unseen - the wind was right, so that unless the fitful breeze shifted it was literally a question of seeing, and rhino are proverbially blind. I was delighted at the chance of a rhino, especially as one of the two had really good horns. We accomplished the crouching creep to the trees quite unobserved, and when we arrived the rhino were



grazing quietly at about 200 yards distance. Kaid Ali was all for crawling after them and not shooting till we had got to about 15 yards of them, but I didn't see the force of this. The bigger rhino was broadside on, so offered me a splendid shot

I explained to Kaid Ali I meant to fire with my .303 at this distance, and in the event of a charge I could finish matters with the .450. He was silently disapproving, but I disregarded this, and feeling as steady as a rock I took careful aim and pulled the trigger. The smaller rhino bolted with his tail in the air, but my beast, after staggering to the blow of the bullet, slewed straight round, and headed off at a hand-gallop in our direction. I was certain he couldn't see, but the devil was in it, for at this very moment the breeze shifted and the brute got our wind. On he lumbered, kicking up the dust and stumbling every now and then. Kaid Ali assured me he was badly hit and would fall directly, but still he kept his feet and his pace. Nearer and nearer he came until I could see the very wrinkles on his face and the blood running down his side. Suddenly he saw us, and with a furious and pig-like squeal he came full tilt at us. I dropped my .303 and was making for the nearest tree, but as I turned Kaid Ali's strong hand descended like a vice on my shoulder. He pushed the .450 into my unwilling hands, and commanded "shoot". I turned mechanically, raised my rifle and fired both barrels full at the rhino who was not <sup>more</sup> than fifteen yards distant. He lurched forward and fell on his knees at our very feet - his great weight seemed to shake the earth, but he didn't make a sound. Rhino frequently pretend to be dead when they're not, and as you approach the supposed corpse it rises up and does for you - this fellow however was dead all

right, and naturally I was most anxious to see where my bullets had hit him. Kaid Ali and I set to work to examine him, but what was our amazement to find the only bullet in the beast was the original .303 which was right through his heart - I had missed him with both barrels of the .450 and at fifteen yards ! I felt pretty sick with myself, for it proved I must have been hideously unsteady. I'll admit it was pretty nerve-shaking to see that great vicious-looking brute at such close quarters, and every bit of him meaning business - still I ought to have hit him, no matter where. It served to convince me of the truth of what I had previously thought were travellers' tales, about the toughness and staying power of rhino. Waller had told me that a rhino was good for a 300 yards charge after he was fatally wounded, and to all intents and purposes dead. The only two shots which are certain to drop a rhino in his tracks, are the neck and kidney shots - his heart, even when pierced, will hold out long enough for him to do for you before he drops.

Naturally I was distinctly pleased that I had bagged the first rhino I'd shot at, especially as his horns were good - the front one measured twenty three inches. We left the porter with the corpse and made our way back to the road. Here we waited for the caravan, and on its arrival told the men to load up with whatever meat they wanted, all I myself wanted being the horns and a strip of the hide to make whips. Kaid Ali had cut off the tail - his perquisite - before we left, and I promised him as much of the hide ( which is indeed a coveted article ) as he liked. He had prevented my doing a bunk, though, as it happened, my

staying didn't do much good.

This morning ( the 13th. ) before continuing our march Kaid Ali, a couple of porters and I made our way back to the fallen rhino. We started in the small hours of the morning in order to reach the carcass just before dawn, as I thought we should in this way very likely find lions still feeding. Our arrival was perfectly timed, but we had no luck with the lions - they had been there but unfortunately the moon was almost full, so they finished their meal early and had evidently been gone some time. We approached very cautiously, screening ourselves in the trees as much as possible; the hyaenas had gone, the jackals were moving off still licking their blood-flecked chops, and the carcass itself was invisible owing to hundreds of naked-headed vultures which covered it. It positively looked at a little distance as if the rhino were alive, clothed as his skeleton was in moving, quarrelling deep-hued birds, - his outline was defined by their bowed bodies and, added to these a <sup>great</sup> ~~small~~ circle clawed the blood-~~stained~~-sodden ground round the fallen monster, fighting and flapping their wings, and tearing at the morsels of meat and bones <sup>on</sup> which the lions and hyaenas had surfeited themselves. It was a gruesome sight, and it seemed an indignity that these dirty carrion birds should be in possession of so mighty a beast. We walked up to the spot, and only when we were a few yards distant did the birds reluctantly rise and flap off to the trees hard by, watching our every movement with sinister and greedy eyes. The skeleton of the rhino showed up white in the increasing light - his vast bones were cleanly picked, and little remained even for the vultures. As we moved off the vultures returned to their orgy, and in a few seconds the skeleton was again a clothed and moving mass.

We had no further adventures, the men had plenty of meat and were consequently garrulously happy, so all I did was to shoot a brace of guinea fowl for myself as we neared camp.

December 20th.      Fort Eliot.

I have actually been here five days - it feels like five years - and up till now I have not had a moment for writing. I have just managed to get off my home letters, but nothing else has been possible. Before I get too far away from my journey here I had better finish it off - not that there is anything much to say, as the remaining two days were quite uneventful. After crossing the biggest river, the Kipi, which is rather more than half-way house between Kissembi and Fort Eliot, the country changed entirely - the plains were done with and the game much scarcer. From here on it was hilly all the way, the hills being sparsely covered with trees and bush. The grass was a good three feet high, and made going very bad as one got soaked with the dew every morning. The dew is amazingly heavy - looking at the country one would think from the drenched condition of grass and foliage that there had been deluges of rain. We were in the country of many waters - another big difference from the Kissembi side of the Kipi - not an hour passed but we had a fair-sized stream or river to negotiate, and as, up to date, bridges have evidently come under the heading of unnecessary luxuries, some of them gave us a good deal of trouble. The Kipi itself is spanned by a cable way; normally this Blondin-looking arrangement is a good thirty five feet above the water, though during the big rains I am assured