

# HUNTING AHEAD OF ROOSEVELT

## The Capture of Leopards and Smaller Game

By Captain Fitz Duquesne

Capt. Fritz Duquesne was born of Boer parents in South Africa, educated in Europe (where he won considerable distinction as a swordsman), and has been a professional hunter of big game most of his life. At the age of 17 he was a veteran of the Kaffir wars. He served in the Boer war and also in the Congo. In the recent events of South Africa's kaleidoscopic history Capt. Duquesne took a conspicuous part. He acted in many capacities during the hostilities between the Boers and the British, being in turn spy, military detective, engineer, censor, dispatch-carrier and propagandist. He was wounded twice in the fighting around Colenso. When the British succeeded in cutting cable communication between the Boer republic and the rest of the world, Duquesne carried the news of the Boer victories over the Mozambique border, and from there he wrote his dispatches to the Petit Bleu, the official European organ of the Boer government. He was once captured by the Portuguese and thrown into prison at Lorenzo Marques. Later he was taken as a prisoner to Europe at the request of the British government. When the ship that conveyed him and his guard touched at Naples he was suffering from a fever and in consequence was placed in an Italian hospital. On his recovery he was allowed to go free. He went to Brussels and was sent back to the front by Dr. Leyds, with plans for the seizure of Cape Town by the Boer commanders then mobilized in Cape Colony. Everything was ready for the taking of the city when, a traitor having revealed the plot, Duquesne and a number of others were captured in Cape Town inside the British defenses. This was the climax of what has come to be known as the "Cape Town Plot." Some of the prisoners were sentenced to death who later had their sentence changed to life imprisonment. Capt. Duquesne was among the latter. Ten months later he escaped from the Bermuda prisons, got aboard the American yacht Margaret of New York while she was coaling at the dock, and was conveyed to Baltimore. Back to Europe he went again, as war correspondent and military writer on the Petit Bleu; thence to Africa, where he took a commission on the Congo. In East Africa he hunted big game for sport and profit, and finally he came to New York to do newspaper and magazine work.

**J**UST as one can tell when a rhinoceros is near by observing the little rhinoceros birds that follow it to feed on its lice, so it is easy to tell the vicinity of large carnivora by the vultures that hover around waiting to pick the bones of its prey.

One day, just as the blue haze of morning was lifting from the forest, I saw a flock of vultures sailing in the air and swooping from time to time. I knew there was dead meat somewhere near. I started out in search. In a quarter of an hour, right under where the vultures were circling, I heard the crunching of bones in a clump of rocks half hidden in the high grass. There was that unmistakable sound of some large animal eating and tearing flesh. After maneuvering for some time I came across a wide trail of crushed, blood-stained grass, showing that some large animal must have been dragged. No animal but a lion could drag a body big enough to make such a large trail.

Cautiously approaching the rocks, I heard the animal's satisfied growls and saw the ravenous vultures, hooked beaks and hungry eyes, perched on the points of vantage, awaiting their chance to swoop down. I had to be careful, for, if the vultures gave the danger signal, all chance of getting the game would be lost. After crawling a few yards farther, I got a peep between the rocks. Lying down with two cubs suckling, was a beautiful lioness chewing at the rump of an impala antelope. It was a beautiful sight. I hated to shoot, but I was a hunter and there was nothing else to do. Although I could see the lioness in a general way, it was a particularly hard shot, as there were many thorn bushes and stones in my road.

The vultures were getting uneasy. I moved, and they all rose with a heavy flapping of wings. The lioness, startled, sprang to the top of the rocks, the cubs following. It was so sudden that I fired without taking aim and missed the mother, but wounded a cub. The other cub made off into the bush, the lioness following.

I was in a bad temper through disappointment and drew my knife to cut the throat of the wounded cub, which was whining in pain. As I put my hand down to make the thrust, it licked me with its little hot tongue and a pleading look filled its soft eyes. It was too much like killing a baby.

I slipped my knife back into its sheath. It was a harmless little, fluffy ball, a kitten, and I picked it up and patted it. I was carrying it back to the camp when I heard a noise behind me. I looked back and saw the mother slip into the undergrowth. I knew then that there was going to be trouble. Two or three times around the camp that day the yellow form of the lioness was seen flitting across partly exposed places in the bush.

I washed the cub's wound and put some healing preparation from my medicine chest on it. That night I gave the sentries warning of possible danger and took my little captive into my tent and tied it to my stretcher. I drowsed off to sleep watching the shadow of the sentry on the tent as he passed between it and the fire.

Suddenly a jerk at my stretcher woke me. Instinctively placing my hand on my Luger pistol, I opened my eyes expecting, if anything, to see the guard. My heart almost stopped. To move meant destruction, for there, on three legs, with an angry snarl and one paw raised to strike, was the lioness in the half light that the dying camp fire threw through the flaps of the tent.

My brains were of no use to me, for they ceased to work. In silent fear, almost paralyzed, I lay. The lioness grabbed its cub and gave a tug. The cord that held it snapped, overturning my stretcher. She turned and bounded through the door carrying her precious offspring. A shot shattered the silence of the night. I sprang to my feet and saw the guard standing over the quivering form of the

faithful lioness still holding her beloved cub in her mouth. She was dead.

It seemed a pity to kill this motherly beast, but it was too late to be sorry. How she ever passed the guard baffles me. A few days afterward, while one of the shikarees (native hunters) was stalking antelope for food, he came across a weak little cub that was evidently dying of starvation. He brought it to the camp. It was so like the one I had wounded that I have no doubt that it was the other cub of the lioness the guard shot. We raised the cubs "on the bottle." For a year they were the pets of the camp, playing and romping like kittens and following us in our marches across the country.

### The Cubs and "Forget."

But all good things come to an end, and so did the cubs. One day we were resting in the shade of a forest, avoiding the heat of noon and most of the natives were asleep. It

stood around and looked on, as we had often done at feeding time.

As soon as the lion's tail was tucked it turned on its tormentor with a roar and struck him down with its paw. "Forget" jumped up, drew his knife, and thrust it into the animal's side, killing it instantly. The poor native's foot was indeed badly chewed. "Forget!" I said, after his foot had been dressed, "you were a friend of the young lion's. Why did you kill it?"

"Baas," he answered, "it is too much to expect me to continue the friendship by feeding the lion with my own foot."

I found out later that "Forget," living up to his reputation, had forgotten to feed the cubs, and, one getting very hungry, and no doubt thinking it made no difference, started to eat its foster father's foot while he was asleep. The other cub got very quarrelsome after it lost its brother. I sold it to an agent of the Antwerp Zoolog-

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THE FIGHT COMMENCED IN EARNEST.

happened that the cubs were put in charge of the most useless native in the camp as his sole care. On account of this native's unhappy faculty of forgetting, I christened him "Forget."

Well, "Forget" had fed the cubs since the day they were captured and they followed him as though he were their mother. This day there was the silence of fatigue over the resting caravan.

Suddenly a howl of pain rent the stillness and we rushed with ready rifles to the spot whence it came. What a sight met our eyes! There was "Forget" holding on to a bush with both his hands while one of the young lions had hold of his foot pulling as hard as he could in the opposite direction. Although blood was streaming from the lion's jaws, all of us laughed. Things went from bad to worse, when a particular friend of "Forget's" got hold of the lion's tail and helped things by pulling it. Up to this time the young lion was only eating "Forget's" foot in a friendly way and seemed to enjoy the fact that we all

ter lizards as they leaped after the silver dragon flies. Big, heavy-winged, brilliant-hued butterflies flew erratically about, and a long-legged crane opposite us arranged its plumage as it admired its graceful lines in the reflecting pool.

### The Leopard, Craftiest Beast in the Jungle.

From the lion the thoughts of the hunter turn naturally to the most crafty of African animals, the leopard—the tiger of the Boers.

It is the least hunted animal in Africa, not because it is not sought, but because it is hard to get at, its home being in the woody, mountainous country. Then, too, it has as a protective feature its peculiarly marked skin, the spots of which resemble the light and shade in the leaves, making the beast very difficult to see. Many hunters would face anything sooner than a leopard, on account of its intelligent ferocity. Some men are of the opinion that it is the most dangerous of African game, and those who know say it is fiercer than the South American jaguar.

The leopard is the brainiest of the carnivora. The natives told by the natives and hunters of its cleverness

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### A Grand Sight at a Waterhole.

It was a long wait and I was almost asleep, half dreaming, when the gentle touch of the shikaree brought me back to business. He pointed across the vlei. There was a slight noise. A second or two later the broad horns of a buffalo bull showed through the leaves, and then came a cow with a calf. They came to the water and drank. I did not shoot, as I wanted one of the smaller antelopes. A little later, as though by signal, eland, waterbuck, koodoo, duiker, wildebeest, blue wildebeest, reedbuck, impala, blesbok, oribi, giraffe, and dozens of other animals too numerous to mention came down to the vlei.

It was a grand scene; all these graceful animals, as beautiful as

she fell and rolled over her aggressor, arising to her feet again in a flash. Before the leopard could spring she rushed at him with a bellow like a fog horn, struck him full on and tossed him into the water. In a moment the leopard was on the bank again. It sprang at the cow's throat but missed as she dodged aside. Again the leopard sprang. The cow fell back, lifted her head and caught it full underneath, her horn penetrating the leopard's body. The leopard roared with pain as it fell to the ground, bleeding freely from its double wound, and the cow was covered with gashes from its antagonist's claws.

The leopard sprang again on the back of the cow, but she easily shook him off. He stood for a moment and then tried to stagger away. The buffalo made a rush, and, hurling him to the ground, thrust her horns again into his helpless body. He offered no resistance, but rolled over on his side and died.

A young friend of mine, Jan van Reenan, was killed in German East

Africa under peculiar circumstances. As no one saw the happening it is hard to say how it exactly occurred.

We were hunting for specimens for a German museum. When we reached a suitable hunting grounds we camped and set out daily in different directions in small parties, a German scientist accompanying each. One morning a shikaree came in with the news that the veld a little way to the north was covered with game. The hunters with their rifles and the scientists with their notebooks and cameras, set out, making a wide detour. We divided into parties, a shikaree at the head of each, with the exception of those two which van Reenan and myself commanded. We soon reached the game. There seemed to be thousands of every variety on the veld. Huge eland, beautifully striped zebras, hartebeest, impala, koodoo, gemsbok, springbok, in fact there seemed to be a congress of all the antelope in Africa.

On the outskirts near a clump of trees a number of giraffe towered above the rest of the animals. Van Reenan set out in their direction and the rest of us waited till the other men started shooting on the opposite side of the veld, thus driving the herds in our direction.

After a long, tiring wait of four hours, the cracking of rifles in the distance brought us to attention and told us that the work of death had commenced. Every head on the veld was raised; every animal, for a second, was still and silent as a statue. Then, with one accord, they turned and came galloping toward us, the ground trembling under the thunder of their hoofs.

With the magazines of our rifles full we waited till the animals came into good range and then opened fire. The din was frightful, the thunder of the hoofs, the swirling dust, the rhythmic bang of the many rifles, and the whistling of stray bullets made a veritable battle scene. One after another we picked out our living targets and down they went, the stampeding mass of life behind falling over them in a struggling confusion.

At last the tail end of the herds galloped past, leaving a few wounded stragglers enveloped in the dust-buried air. We gave our burning rifles a rest, wiped the grime from our faces and surveyed the results of our bloody attack.

### The Cheetah and Van Reenan.

The veld was spotted with carcasses, and here and there an animal struggled in pain from a cruel, disabling wound. The hundreds of natives with the expedition poured over the veld and commenced skinning. The scientists took measurements and photographs, and by night the hides were all in camp.

When the bugle blew at meal time van Reenan was missing. I questioned the natives, but none had any news of him. We lit huge fires to guide him to the camp. There was no possibility of his being lost, for he was a Boer and knew the veld like a Kaffir. All night we expected him to turn up at the camp. The lions and leopards roared, the hyenas laughed, jackals snarled and a thousand dismal howls made night fiendish, as the animals fought over the carcasses left after our hunt.

Daylight broke on a disappointed camp and at once searching parties were formed to find the missing hunter. I made for the spot where I had seen the giraffe before the hunt, knowing that van Reenan had gone in that direction to get a shot at them. After getting to the place and searching a little I discovered the body of my friend with a dead cheetah across it. Of course, I can only guess what happened.

I examined his rifle and found only

one cartridge expended from the magazine. There was a wound in the cheetah's breast. The animal had been wounded at close quarters evidently, and had sprung on its aggressor before he could get in another shot.

Poor van Reenan was frightfully chewed. The cheetah had died in the act of killing him, one of the many double tragedies that illustrate the dangers of hunting on the Dark Continent.

### The Giraffe—Awkward and Harmless.

It is peculiar that such savage brutes as leopards and cheetahs are marked much like the giraffe, the most awkward and harmless animal in Africa. At one time the giraffe was common down as far as Cape Town, but now it is found no farther south than the Transvaal. Gradually it is being driven into the interior. The giraffe makes its home in the desert country, being able to go for long periods without drinking. There are large herds on the Kalahari desert, where they are practically safe from the hunter's rifle. Giraffes are also very common in the country to which Mr. Roosevelt is going. They are easy hunting. Before the passage of the game protection laws I have seen one party bring down 20 giraffes in a day.

It is easy to form an idea of the giraffe's awkwardness when you take into consideration that the animal is from 18 to 20 feet high, measuring from the ground to its head, and it is mostly legs and neck, the legs being longer than the neck. When a giraffe drinks it must spread its legs out at an angle of about 29 degrees to lower its body sufficiently to reach the water.

The favorite method of the Boers in hunting the giraffe is to ride it down on horseback. This affords great sport and a good horse will overtake one of these animals after a long chase. The giraffe presents a peculiar spectacle when it is running. The body seems to gain on the head, which waves to and fro and is jerked into position at every second step. Mr. Roosevelt will have to depend solely on shooting for his giraffe sport, as the country he will visit in is not favorable to horse hunting.

A source of amusement to the average European sportsman who visits East Africa is hunting the wart hog. Although the Afriander does not care about hunting this animal, the European seems to delight in it, perhaps on account of the animal's ferocious and ugly appearance. It is armed with a pair of formidable tusks which it can use with great effect on either horse or man when it is cornered. I have seen a native gored so badly by one that he died in an hour.

Each African colony has game laws based on the prevalence or scarcity of certain species of animals. Where Mr. Roosevelt is going to hunt it costs \$250 for a huntsman's license. This license under the British East African game laws gives the following privileges:

Each white man—fife hunter—that hunts in East Africa, is allowed to kill two of each of the following animals: Elephants (tusks weighing not less than 60 pounds), rhinoceri, hippopotami, zebra, oryx, callotis oryx bestia, koodoo, topi, Neumann's hartebeest, colobus and other fur monkeys, aardvarks, cheetahs, aardwolf, marabout and egret. One of each of the following: Buffalo, eland, sable, antelope, roan antelope and bongo. Ten of each of the following: Topi, Grant's gazelle, Thompson's gazelle, Jackson's hartebeest, impala, reedbuck, duiker, klipspringer, steinbuck, waterbuck, wildebeest, Coke's hartebeest, bushbuck, paa, lesser koodoo, and the gerenuk.

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With this story by Captain Fitz Duquesne we finish this interesting series of East African hunting stories. In the near future we shall publish another series which, though not of this character, will, we feel sure, prove fully as interesting to our readers.

