

the rest. That ended the voyage of the *Port-au-Prince*; the adventurers had had their way, and had met their fate, but; another experience awaited Mariner.

His narrative of his residence in the Tonga Islands is a classic in its way, highly praised by all who know it. He was adopted as a son by one of the king's wives and became the king's favorite. After a captivity of four years he returned to England with a few survivors of the ship's company, and there he told the story which has taken its place along with Omoo and Typee.

The point of this short paper is to show how adventures lay at hand in the beginning of our own century. These are not the fortunes of war, but the adventures of freebooters; not the manners of our time but those of the middle ages.

We sit in our armchairs and plan a trip to India. We order our ammunition by telegraph, meet with real adventures and

return with a couple of good tiger skins. It is all very well; it is all real; it is manly and we do not wish to change it. But stop for one moment to consider the commission of the *Port-au-Prince*, private-armed vessel and whaler in one. Think of the English lad of fourteen, with an equipment of French and "a little Latin" going off to sea to rob Spanish towns and churches, to ransom and cheat Spanish traders, to plunder nunneries and churches, to do a little sealing and whaling the while, and finally to be a friend of cannibals in the South Seas. It is almost inconceivable that such feats were done less than a century ago. To understand how times have changed some sharp contrast of this sort must be cited. I have chosen the narrative of Mariner because it suits the purpose well, and because this paper may serve as an introduction to one of the most interesting books of adventure ever printed.

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## HARTEBEEST HUNTING ON TOYO PLAIN

By D. G. Elliot

ONE of the rare species of animals I desired to procure during my collecting expedition in East Africa was Swayne's hartebeest, a strange appearing antelope that is found in a few districts of Somaliland, on the great plains that are met with on the Haud, a waterless tract that extends for a hundred miles or more east and west, and several hundred north and south. These plains, such as Toyo, Silo, Mardleh, Marrar prairie and the like are the result of the ravages of the white ant. Formerly covered like the rest of the Haud with open forests of thorn trees of various kinds, this insect has literally cleared the ground of every tree for many miles in extent. Its method of destruction is peculiar but unailing. The ant is blind and consequently for its greater protection shuns daylight, working only under cover. It feeds on wood, and when a tree has been selected the insect emerges from the ground bearing a, small pellet of earth,

moistened with a secretion making a kind of mortar. This is attached to the trunk of the tree where it emerges from the ground, and then similar pellets are placed at the side of the first but not touching it, and then a third above them making a roof and forming the commencement of a tunnel. This process is continued by thousands of the insects working in unison with a well-conceived plan, never showing themselves to the light, and carrying their tunnels higher and higher, until the entire tree, sometimes to the very extremities of its branches is enclosed in an earthen pillar. I have seen some of these so-called "ant-hills" thirty to forty feet high, and in certain parts of Africa they are a characteristic feature of the landscape. The tree is consumed, and the insects seek another that in its turn is also destroyed. These hills remain sometimes for years, marking the spot where a tree once stood and flourished, until undermined by rains it is blown over by the wind.

Toyo plain is about thirty miles wide and over a hundred in length and lies between thirty and forty miles south of the Golis range of mountains. The Haud is a high plateau some five thousand feet above the sea, and this elevation was reached by my caravan by way of the Jerato Pass, coming from the valley of Mandera north of the Golis. On the edges of the Haud at a place known as Adadleh were the last of these so-called wells where water could be procured; for the entire country to the south, until the broad expanse of the Haud is passed, is entirely lacking in the life-giving fluid, and the only chance of finding water at all within its limits would be after some of the tropical showers, that occur during the rainy season, and leave stray pools in cavities of the rocks or in depressions of the hardened soil. The wells at Adadleh were simply holes dug in the dry bed of a stream into which water, often the color and consistency of pea soup, would slowly trickle. It was bad enough and would be scorned by any self-respecting animal in civilized lands, but as it was wet and would run down hill if required, in this desert-like region it was beyond price. My caravan was too large to take to Toyo, as it would require all the camels simply to carry water, so I decided to leave the greater part with most of the impedimenta at the Adadleh wells and travel light to the hunting grounds. With about thirty camels and as many men I left Adadleh in the afternoon hoping to reach the edge of Toyo the next evening, as twenty miles a day is about as much as a loaded camel can accomplish. The country we passed through was without undergrowth, the trees and bushes, all armed with thorns of all kinds, shapes and lengths, scattered about in clumps and groves, and had it not been for the sandy soil and total absence of green turf, the landscape would have resembled a well-kept park in civilized lands. A thunder storm was rising in the west, presenting a beautiful appearance, the clouds black with silver edges, the center mass carrying on its crest a glittering rainbow. It was a cheering sight in this thirsty land bearing the promise of fresh water.

On the third day after leaving Adadleh we reached the edge of Toyo and camped, and some natives coming to us, the first question asked was if there was any water near, and we were made happy by being told

that in one place there was a considerable pool, or, as my Somali interpreter described it, "awfully most sea." Hartebeest were said to be everywhere on the plain, but more numerous in some places than in others, but especially towards the center away from the forest-bordered edges. About a four hours' march from our camp out on the plain was a place called Gellalo, where a half dozen stunted thorn trees, sole survivors of the forest that once covered this plain, promised a partial shade, and I decided to camp there and so be in the midst of the hartebeest country. Immediately after starting we entered Toyo plain which stretched away in every direction, flat, bare and featureless, mostly covered with sand out of which a low stunted bush grew, in many places so thickly as to hide the soil. A mirage of blue waters allured us onward and from out of its liquid surface in the far distance rose the group of trees that marked our objective point. The sun was hot and we plodded wearily along with nothing in sight to enliven the dreary landscape; but as all roads have an ending we reached our destination after five hours' marching. Just before arriving at Gellalo large herds of Sœmmerring's gazelle and a few hartebeest were seen and a bull of the latter was shot at long range.

The hartebeest has not an attractive shape, the line of the back sloping rapidly from the withers to the root of the tail, and the animal looks as if he was always standing up hill. The "Sig" which is the Somalis' name for this antelope stands over four feet high at the withers, and both sexes carry curiously curved horns, these varying in size and extent and manner of curvature according to age and sex. Some horns of bulls measure over twenty-four inches from tip to tip, but those of the majority are much below this figure.

There are a number of different species of hartebeest found in various parts of the African continent, but the ones inhabiting Somaliland are the handsomest, being the most richly colored of the known forms. Swayne's hartebeest dwells on open plains, and is never found in forest lands, but keeps to the bare country where its vision is not interrupted by any intervening object, and it trusts to its great swiftness when danger approaches, to carry it beyond the reach of its enemies. It goes in troops and herds, from a half dozen to several hundred indi-

viduals. On the plains inhabited by these animals the bushes are rarely over two feet high, and very few of them in any place, so that stalking in the usual acceptation of the term is practically an impossibility, as the hartebeest sees the hunter much more quickly than they can themselves be observed. Generally they are first sighted along the horizon line of the plain, looking like black spots in the distance, but recognizable from their peculiar shape. It is an ungraceful creature both in appearance and in its action when in motion. But while it moves away in a kind of lumbering canter, it possesses the greatest staying power, and is really the swiftest of all the antelopes, always graduating its pace to that of its pursuer, and keeping the same distance between them, looking back occasionally as if to satisfy itself that its enemy had gained nothing in the chase. Single bulls are approached more easily, but the larger the herd the more difficult it is to get near them, as the courage of the entire number is only equal to that of the most timid, and as soon as one begins to run all are off at once. When sighted at a distance on the plain, the hunter walks toward them in a direct line if they are busy feeding or moving slowly away, but should they stop to look around the pursuer takes a slanting direction as if intending to pass at an angle, or had not seen them. Sometimes when almost near enough to risk a shot, they begin to run in their apparently rather slow clumsy-looking canter, but which is not usually kept up for any great distance before they stop and turn to look back; when this happens, and it usually does many times before the quarry is secured, or it runs away altogether, the hunter has his work to do over again. It is therefore only by the exercise of much patience and considerable staying powers that a sufficiently near approach is gained for a fairly certain shot anywhere between two and three hundred yards; nearer than two can seldom be obtained, and frequently three is exceeded. An animal not wounded in a vital part, or with one leg broken, will often run clear out of sight and escape, and it is practically useless to follow such a one as a favorable opportunity for a second shot is seldom obtained. On the plains where the hartebeest dwells there is no water save that which may occasionally fall in showers during the brief so-called rainy season, and this ante-

lope must go practically without drinking at all events for long periods. The dew, however, is at times very heavy, and the hartebeest may get sufficient moisture for their needs from this source. Those that were killed were in excellent condition, but like most African ruminants they possessed no fat whatever. The flesh is dry and from the absence of fat is only fairly palatable.

Over this plain the wind blew a gale continually, sending the sand flying in clouds, and everything in camp was covered, the fine particles even penetrating into our boxes. When hunting no thought was given to the direction of the wind, and it did not appear that the wild animals paid any attention to the scent of their pursuers, but always permitted the hunter to approach within a certain distance in order that their curiosity, which is very great, could be satisfied. After two or three days in camp the fever had left me and I was able to take the field after the wily game. My assistant, Mr. Akeley, and I went out, each however going in a different direction. The wind blew furiously and the air was filled with clouds of dust which did not add to the pleasures of the hunt. We were both mounted on our ponies with our shikaries trotting alongside of us. Akeley soon disappeared over a rise of the ground, for the surface of the plain is very much like our own rolling prairies, and I rode on alone. Small herds of Soemmerring's gazelle were in sight, but they paid little attention to us as we passed, merely lifting their heads and gazing at us for a few moments and then, resumed feeding. Soon on the sky line some dark spots appeared and my gun-bearer Elmi pointed to them uttering at the same time the word "Sig". The spots increased in number as we drew nearer and it was evident we were approaching a herd. The animals seemed uneasy and although I had dismounted, and was approaching them by the most approved method of Somali hunting tactics, some young animals or a cow became too nervous to remain quiet any longer and started off on a canter, taking the whole herd of perhaps a hundred individuals with them, before I had come within five hundred yards.

I knew it was useless to follow them so seeing another black spot a long distance away I went after that. I followed him for a long time, getting within three or four



CAMP AT GELLALO, TOYO PLAIN.

hundred yards, when he would canter off for a short distance and then begin to walk again. I persevered although the sun was getting very hot and my rifle increased in weight every moment. Occasionally the hartebeest would stop and half turning around would gaze at me, and at such times he appeared black as a coal and very large. He kept up his tactics, running, walking and stopping to look at me, and I never got any nearer to him than four hundred yards or thereabouts, but as he was going in the direction of the camp I still followed walking at a rapid pace. At length I was only a little over two hundred yards from him and he stopped again to look at me. I fired at him hitting him behind the shoulder, when he dropped, but struggled to his feet and dropped again and when I reached him he gave a loud bellow and died. I rode to camp and sent a camel for the hartebeest, and found Akeley already there and soon after three camels that he had sent out came in bringing his three animals, a bull and two cows. Our camp looked like a market when all four hartebeests were laid out in a row, and it presented a busy scene for the remainder of the day when the operation of skinning and preserving the hides was going on.

The bull I had killed was evidently very old as white hairs had appeared about the muzzle, and the horns had been worn nearly smooth from the strange habit these animals have of kneeling down and rubbing their horns upon the ground so that in time the ridges which are often quite deep are made to disappear entirely.

I was, at this time, in the territory of the

Habe Yunis tribe, one of the most powerful in this part of Africa, and which could place several thousand warriors in the field. Like all of the natives of Somaliland they are nomads, wandering from place to place in search of water and pasture for their flocks and herds. Great numbers were at this time temporarily settled just south of Toyo, the Sultan and his court having made an abode there.

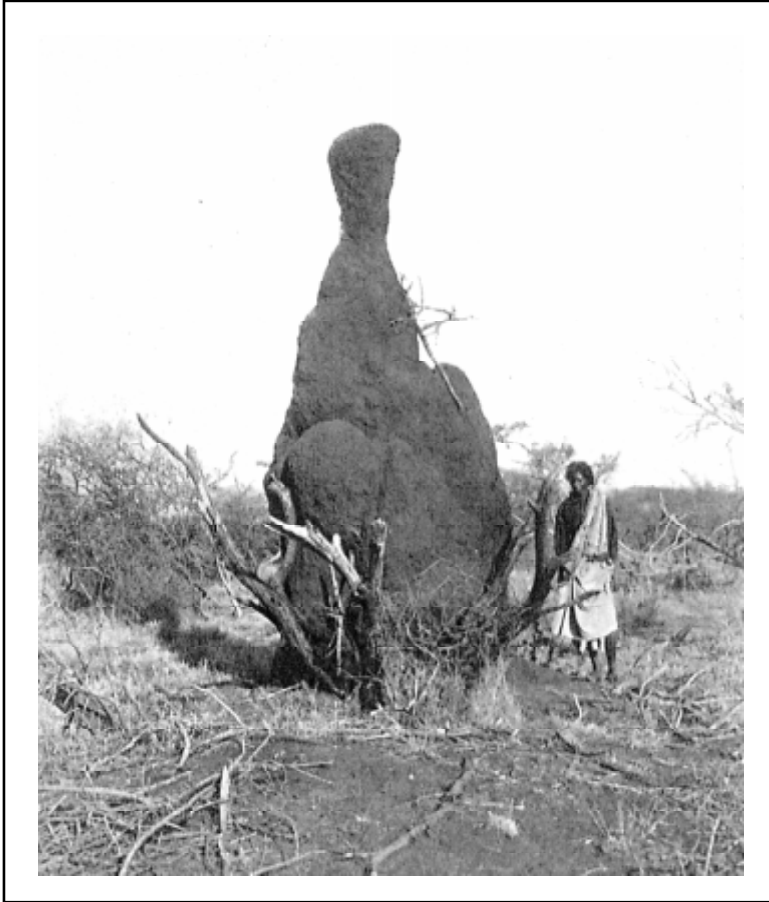
One morning when we were busy with our specimens beneath the trees, a man rode up and announced that Sultan Nur was then on his way with all the male members of the royal family to pay us a visit. Having announced my willingness to receive him, the messenger departed, and soon in the distance a body of horsemen were seen advancing slowly. When the herald reached them and delivered my reply they increased the speed of their horses to a rapid trot and came on, company front, to the spot where I was sitting. The horses were gaily decked with bright colored worsteds hanging from the bridles on either side of the head and also down the chest, while the high-backed saddles were covered with furs of various kinds. Each man was armed with two spears, and a shield to ward off any blows directed at them was hung upon the left arm, and the escort was arranged on either side of the Sultan who occupied the place of honor in the center. As they arrived where I was they stopped and one advancing before the rest commenced a chant of welcome, which after expressing the Sultan's pleasure at our presence in his country, consisted mainly of extravagant statements

## Hartebeest Hunting on Toyo Plain

of the power and might of the Europeans and Habo Yunis, especially of the latter. When this effusion was finished, and it took some time, the Sultan dismounted, and I rose from my chair and shook hands with him and expressed my pleasure in welcoming him to my camp, and sending for the one high-backed chair we possessed seated his "Majesty" in it. He was over six feet in height, of a pleasant countenance,

at topmost speed, tearing over the plain in all manner of evolutions, and then returning to our position and throwing their horses on to their haunches by a sudden jerk of the powerful bits, shouting at the same time "*mot, mot,*" their word for welcome.

After each individual had given an exhibition of his skill the entire troop rode off in two equal parties, and went through the evolutions of a sham fight,



AN ANT HILL.

dignified in bearing and with manners as easy and courtly as one is accustomed to witness in the higher circles of civilized people. The various members of the royal family arranged themselves behind his chair and were evidently deeply interested spectators of all that transpired. As soon as the Sultan had taken his seat, his followers commenced to give an exhibition of their horsemanship, riding away singly or in pairs

advancing to the attack, thrusting with the spear and guarding with the shield on which the point of the spear was received. They had fine ponies, much superior to our own, and in the best condition. The reception ceremonies over, the Sultan settled himself for a tall, and for what I imagined was the chief reason of his visit, to obtain medical assistance, for he was evidently in poor health. There had been a great battle in

the vicinity of my camp the previous year between two branches of the Habe Yunis tribe on the disputed point as to who should be sultan, in fact an insurrection against the throne, one section of the tribe rallying around a relative of the present ruler who claimed to be the rightful heir. This, of course, was disputed by the old man who was my temporary guest, and so a trial of arms was the result. It was a bloody conflict, and great numbers of both sexes and all ages were killed, for these people are true savages and wage war with all the horrors a savage can impart. Sultan Nur was victorious, the rebels were subdued, and the rival claimant was obliged to flee into a neighboring country.

He was much interested in the preparation of our specimens that was going on in camp, and expressed great astonishment when I told him the animals would all be mounted and appear again as they did in life. He evidently did not believe this, but was too polite to show his want of faith. He was an interesting figure in savage life, one who had ruled his people for many years and had been the hero of a hundred battles. After giving him some coffee, I terminated the interview, and he went away to enjoy a siesta under a tree.

Although there was no water on Toyo plain, we had been visited by numerous showers, and two large pools had been

formed near our camp, and these made us independent and enabled us to prolong our stay for ten days.

Hartebeest were almost always in sight, and occasionally a solitary bull would approach and have a good look at us, but the least movement of any one in his direction would cause him to take a rapid departure. We were out every day, following the tactics already described, and usually secured at least one animal to reward our efforts. No other game was hunted, for though gazelles were numerous they could be obtained in too many parts of the country for us to waste any time on them when the rarer species could be secured. No oryx were seen at any time which was singular as we afterwards found these very numerous south of Toyo; and they were generally to be met with on open plains, frequently in company with hartebeests as I afterwards found was the fact on Silo plain.

A few birds visited us occasionally, but we were too far from the tree country for many of them to come to our camp. One rather striking looking species with a black body and white head (*Heteropsar albicapillus*) was rather common, and stayed about the camp all the time we remained and was very tame and unsuspecting.

I secured a few specimens for identification and for the locality. I had no facilities for carrying bird skins and therefore much



DEAD BULL HARTEBEEST.

to my regret, I could not make a general collection, but had to be contented with representatives of as many genera as I could obtain. I all the more regret my

searching for seeds or insects, perhaps both, though probably insects were chiefly desired, and on being approached flew rapidly for a short distance and then alighted



HERALDS ANNOUNCING SULTAN NUR'S APPROACH.

inability to make a collection as in all my wanderings in strange lands I never was in a country so bountifully supplied with birds as was this part of the Dark Continent. Once when I was sitting under the trees two very curious starlings alighted near the pool of water, and were the first of the species I had seen, indeed I only met with it twice, on this occasion, and again a small flock on the southern edge of the Haud. The forehead is yellow with the back of the head and throat blue-black, an erect round wattle across the head in front, and a smaller one running lengthwise with the head, and two long and rather broad ones were pendant from the throat. The general color of the plumage was a slaty-gray, with a white rump, and black wings and tail with some white on the wings. The bill was white, foot flesh color and eyes black. The Latin name of this curious species is *Dilophus carunculatus*. The individuals that visited us were rather shy and came to the camp evidently to drink at the rain pools. In the small flock there was one female, recognized by the absence of wattles, but we were not able to secure her. They were very busy upon the ground apparently

on the ground, or in one of the thorn trees near the tents. The wattles were very conspicuous at all times, the two pendant from the throat flapping about as the birds moved their heads, while the two on the crown stood upright. Upon the plain a species of plover was constantly met with (*Stephanibyx coronatus*) and indeed it appeared to be generally distributed about the country. It always drew attention to its presence by an incessant screaming when on the wing, but on the ground it was silent, running a short distance before one and then standing motionless and regarding intently the intruder on its domains. The instant, however, it took wing it began to utter its shrill cry and never ceased to make all the noise it could until it alighted. The notion seemed to be automatic, that when the wings opened the bill did likewise, and the pent-up voice rushed out without any volition on the part of the bird. This shrill voice was heard not only during the day but also at all times of the night, the bird vociferating its displeasure at everything whether man or beast, that disturbed it in its avocations. This automatic arrangement of wings and vocal organs was

extremely annoying to us when hunting on the plain, for as the bird was not easily seen when on the ground, it remained so motionless, it always took wing unexpectedly, and its shrill cry was certain to alarm any animal in the vicinity and cause it to be more watchful of approaching danger, and therefore many an otherwise successful stalk would be brought to naught. It may be easily imagined then that this bird was not regarded favorably by hunters.

The hartebeest cows at this season had young with them, and the little creatures as they appeared at a distance did not seem much larger than rabbits, yet it was surprising to witness how swiftly they could run, easily keeping up with their mothers even when in full flight, and not infrequently going ahead and leaving them. A band of the Habe Yunis rode up to our camp one morning, and one of them carried on the horn of his saddle a young hartebeest which he had caught alive. I bought it for five rupees or the equivalent in cloth, and we kept the little animal about camp while I remained at Gellalo and it became very tame and much at home; but it had to be killed before the camp was moved as we could not possibly carry it with us, and to turn it loose would merely condemn it to a lingering death from starvation, or else to fall a prey to some hungry hyena, or wandering lion or leopard. At the expiration of ten days I had secured fifteen specimens of hartebeest of all ages and sizes from the old bull and cow to the baby of ten days old, and I marched south beyond Toyo into the country of the Dibetag

or Clark's gazelle, a still more rare animal than the one we had just been pursuing, and which was represented in only one or two collections in the world.

Perhaps it would not be out of place here to give a short account of the known species of hartebeests and a description of the several groups into which the sub-family is divided. Hartebeests are, or, in one instance at least more properly *were*, found all over the African continent, from Morocco, Algeria and Tunis in the north, to Cape Colony in the south, and over the whole breadth of the land from the east to the west coast. The genus is also represented in the peninsula of Arabia.

Nine species and sub-species are recognized at the present time and these may be divided into three groups whose members assimilate to each other in their coloring. The first group with a uniform brown or rufous color contains but two species, one properly a sub-species, the bubal (*B. buse-laphus*) of northern Africa and Arabia, and the West African bubal (*B. major*) of Gambia, Lower Niger district and interior of Cameroons. The second group, with a paler fulvous or fawn color, has four members, the Tora (*B. tora*) of Upper Nubia, northern Abyssinia and Kordofan; Coke's hartebeest (*B. cokei*) of eastern Africa, from Usagara northwards to Kilimanjaro and Masailand; Lichtenstein's hartebeest (*B. lichtenstein*) also of East Africa, north of the Sabi River, throughout Nyasaland and Mozambique to Usagara, opposite Zanzibar, and Neumann's hartebeest (*B. neumanni*) from

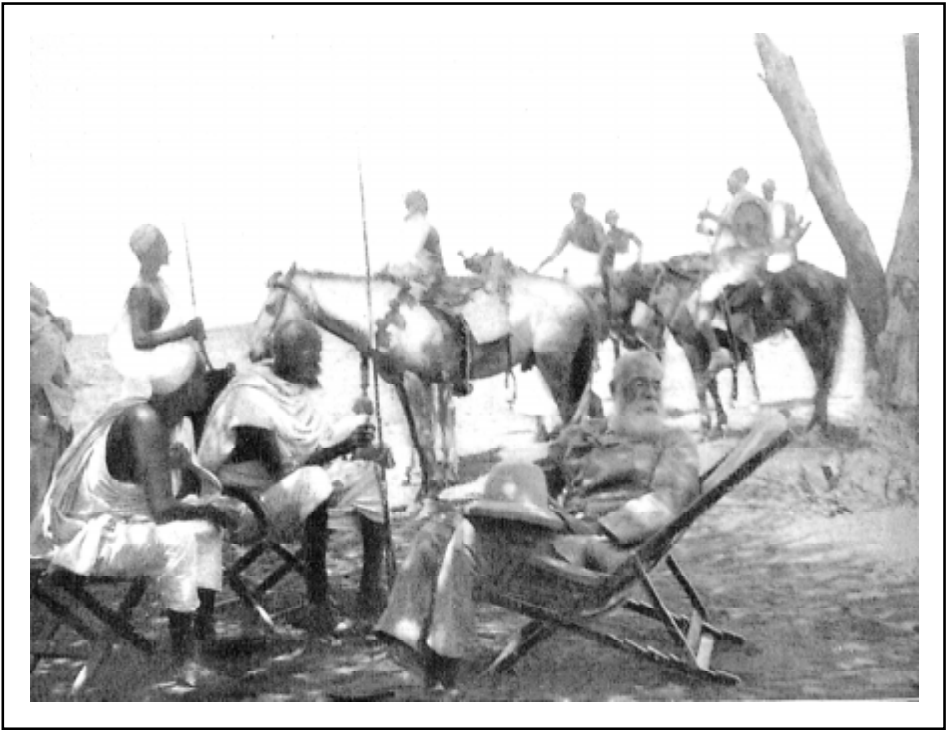


PREPARATIONS MAKING FOR THE SULTAN'S SIESTA.



the vicinity of Lake Rudolph, East Africa. The third group which contains by far the handsomest species of the sub-family remarkable for a rich chocolate brown or brownish fulvous coloring made more conspicuous by black patches and bands, dispersed over head, body, and legs, has three members; the oldest known of all, the Cape hartebeest (*B. caama*) of South Africa, south of the river Limpopo, but extending north along the margin of the Kalahari desert, and Jackson's hartebeest (*B. jacksoni*) from

lows: Horns forming a U when viewed in front, West African bubal; horns forming an inverted bracket  $\sim$ , the Tora, Neumann's, Swayne's and Coke's hartebeests; horns forming a V viewed in front, Cape and Jackson's hartebeests, and horns curved inward toward each other before the final backward turn, Lichtenstein's hartebeest. Of these five animals the Cape hartebeest has already become practically extinct in the Cape Colony, and since the Boer war it has probably also disappeared from the



THE SULTAN AT HIS EASE IN CAMP.

interior of British Central Africa, north of Lake Baringo, Uganda, probably extending to the White Nile westward into northeast Congoland, and Swayne's hartebeest of Somaliland and Shoa. Sometimes these animals are assembled in groups according to the shapes of their horns, and then the arrangement is slightly different and as fol-

Orange River Colony and the Transvaal.

Swayne's hartebeest, from its restricted distribution, will probably be one of the first to disappear from its native haunts, and as civilization penetrates the wilds of the Dark Continent, the usual fate of all wild creatures will overtake these splendid antelope, and they will vanish from the earth.