

peas in an empty pod; still more is it like the noise made by big longicorn beetles which rub their thorax against the elytra. This cry is apparently one of hunger or dissatisfaction.

The mother was in a euphorbia-tree; and when a native threw up some stones she escaped into another, leaving the young one, which clung the tighter to its branch. Seeing euphorbias are so rotten, my *toto* exhibited considerable pluck in swarming up some lianas and bringing the lemur down. I set off at once, as the spot was only 300 yards from my tent. I shot both male (head and body, 10 ins.; tail, 13 ins.; hind foot, $3\frac{1}{2}$ ins.; ear, $1\frac{3}{4}$ ins.) and female (head and body, 11 ins.; tail, 13 ins.; hind foot, $3\frac{1}{2}$ ins.; ear, $1\frac{3}{4}$ ins.), which were hiding in dense patches of parasitic vegetation on adjacent trees.

GAME-NETTING IN UZIGUA

BY D. K. S. GRANT

While at Handeni in German East Africa, in the capacity of Assistant Political Officer, I was frequently asked by Wazigua natives if the new *Serkali* had any objections to the revival of their *paa* drives—a practice which, they told me, the German Government had forbidden. *Paa* is the Swahili word for the Neotragus, or *dik-dik*.

The persistence of the people aroused my interest in the matter, and I accordingly told a neighbouring *jumbi* (a small chief) to arrange a drive for me to watch, in order that I might form an opinion as to the desirability, or the reverse, of granting the much-desired permission throughout the area under my charge.

Uzigua, the country round Handeni Station, is very poorly watered and almost entirely covered with dense bush, in which dwarf antelope of several species abound.

The following morning, I accompanied a crowd of old men and boys to the particular place of bush chosen for the day's operations.

The Wazigua are a decadent race, whose young men are too lazy to participate even in this popular form of hunting, which means for them a greatly desired addition of meat to their eternal *ugali* (mealie porridge).

The natives present had collected from nine villages, scattered over some twenty square miles of country round the *boma*, and from each village two or three old men had brought their nets. These nets are of a large mesh, about three inches, and very well made of a string twisted out of the fibrous bark of a small tree, which grows everywhere throughout this bush country. In length the nets vary from six to fifteen yards, and are about four feet high. To each net is hung several charms, in the form of small pieces of wood wrapped in goat-hide, and of course these possess power to draw the quarry to the net. It is common, also, to sprinkle blood of captured *paa* on the nets, as the net-owners maintain that it attracts the game.

Virgin bush is generally avoided, and operations confined to the *barati* or bush grown up on land cultivated four or five years ago and then abandoned. The *barati* is not so dense as untouched bush, and the *paa* certainly seem to prefer it.

Absolute silence is kept on approaching the ground to be driven over. The net-owners, carrying their nets coiled on the left arm, file out rapidly from a given point and hang the nets in a rough but continuous semicircle, using any twig or thorn for their support; when no suitable support presents itself, a quick cut with a knife into the bark of a stem at the desired height from the ground provides a niche for the string.

It is necessary to work as quickly and silently as possible, as the *paa* are most shy and wary, leaving the place immediately on hearing a noise. So skilfully and fast do the old men work, that I saw a semicircle of net over 150 yards in length laid out under four minutes.

While the net-owners are at work, the remainder of the party divides into two lots, which station themselves one at each end of the net line; then, joined by about half of the net-owners themselves, they extend at a run inwards in a semicircle and commence to drive.

A few men remain hidden in the bush, well to the rear of the nets. Usually one man watches about three nets. It is the watcher's business to catch and kill the *paa* when entangled in the net, and to record in whose net the captures take place.

The drive commences almost in silence but for the slashing of the beaters' sticks. When a *paa* is flushed, the beaters, by yelling and waving their arms, try to drive it towards the nets and prevent it breaking through their line, as it almost invariably attempts to do.

It is of great importance while beating to be the first to spot the *paa*, as this is taken into account in making the final division of the bag. The appearance of each animal is invariably followed by heated discussions between the rival claimants of first view, so that soon the beat goes forward amid a fearful din.

A drive lasts about a quarter of an hour, and seldom results in the capture of more than one *paa*, while very frequently it is an absolute failure.

The Wazigua say the *paa* is the most cunning of all the animals, and knows, on hearing the beaters, not only that he has to deal with a net, but also in which direction to expect it.

Certainly, I saw *paa* breaking back through the beaters without hesitation, when put up, in preference to running forward and away from the noise.

After watching two or three quite unsuccessful drives, I was told that the cunning of the *paa* was now to be out-matched, and in the following way.

The nets were lined out as before, at a place where several *paa*, that had already broken through the beaters, had hidden. This time the beaters lined up along the nets, and, stepping over, proceeded to drive in silence away from them. The idea being that the *paa*, encouraged by their earlier success, would again break through and then run into the nets behind.

Strangely enough this was successful, and in a few minutes two *paa*—an old female and young buck—were in the nets, and crying horribly as the watchers caught and dispatched them with blows on the neck.

The Wazigua will continue driving all day in the heat. On

inquiry, I learnt that the average bag is eight or ten ; and that very often only one or two, even none at all, would be caught.

Occasionally, a young bush-buck or Harvey's duiker is bagged, and is a great prize. *Dik-dik* are scarce here. Wart-hog and bush-pigs often rush through the nets, damaging them badly; without being held.

The final division of the meat is of interest, if only for its complication. The skin of each animal is stripped back from the limbs, which are then divided evenly among all the participants in the drive. The owner of a net in which a *paa* is caught, in addition to his share of the limbs, claims the whole trunk, head, and skin as his own, but without the stomach, liver, &c., which are the portion of the first man to see that particular animal. How the beater could prove that the actual *paa* he saw was caught in any one net remained a mystery to me, but to the natives seemed quite obvious.

If a *paa* is caught without anyone laying claim to having been the first to see it, the stomach goes to the man tending the net which held it.

The division is made by the oldest man present, whose decisions are accepted without a murmur ; but the miserable portion of meat falling to each man's share, other than that of the net-owners, &c., seemed a most inadequate reward for the strenuous work of the day.

It is in the desire to obtain some food-stuff to relieve the monotony of mealie-meal, which, unlike the case of most other tribes, forms the almost sole diet of the Wazigua, that the origin of this strenuous yet unproductive form of hunting is to be sought, rather than in any desire for sport, although the young boys derive much enjoyment from a drive.

The older men are expert in snaring various species of field-rats, which they eat. Another rather disgusting food is the larvae and pupae of *Anaphe infracta*, which are found in masses inside a common thick cocoon spun firmly on a branch. These fat yellow caterpillars, with crimson hairs, are cooked with the addition of a little salt, and eaten by the Wazigua children.

In consideration of the fact that so few *paa* and other

animals can be destroyed by the above-described method, I gave the people permission to drive, with the restriction that the same village should not do so more often than twice a month. But judging by the skill of the net-layers, the wildness of the *paa*, and the fact that these little buck appeared to know all the ropes in the game, I suspected that the natives had in fact not waited for permission either from the German or British Administrations, but had been driving all the time on the sly.

ON CROCODILES

By C. W. HOBLEY

Discussions are sometimes heard in B.E.A. as to the size attained by the crocodiles which abound in the various lakes and rivers.

The largest authenticated specimens which have come to my notice are the following:—

1. Crocodile shot by the Duke of Mecklenburg at Mwanza on Lake Victoria, in 1905. It was seen by a Uganda railway officer, and it measured 21 feet 6 inches.

2. Crocodile shot by Captain Riddick at Namasagali on Lake Chioga, in 1916, and stated to have measured 26 feet.

Some very large specimens are found in the pools on the Nile below the Murchison Falls.

The largest I have shot myself was 18 feet 6 inches long, and this specimen was killed in the Lower Sondo on Miriu River in Nyakach. The crocodiles in Lake Baringo rarely exceed 9 feet. They are believed to be harmless as regards man; and, judging by the way natives wade about in the lake fishing, it would appear to be correct.

The crocodiles in the Sabaki River, as far as my observations go, do not often exceed 12 feet in length.

The Tana River contains some large crocodiles; but I have never seen any whose length and bulk equalled those of the