



Three Years' Sport in Mozambique (1909)

Guillaume Vasse

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For the three years 1904 to 1907, M. Guillaume Vasse with the authority and under the patronage of the French Government, engaged in making an examination of the territories of the Mozambique Company in Portuguese East Africa. The territories which the Mozambique Company administered under its charter from the Portuguese Government coincided with the ancient provinces of Manica and Sofala, and covered an area of, roughly, sixty thousand square miles. They were bounded on the north by the Zambezi, on the west by the territories of the British South Africa Company, on the south by other Portuguese territory directly administered by the Portuguese Government, and on the east by the Indian Ocean.

The author sent or brought back to Museum of Natural History and the Botanical Gardens of Marseilles and Havre more than twenty thousand specimens of either animals, plants, or minerals, many of which are entirely new, and prepared all the specimens of animals so that they might arrive in a good state of preservation. He kept a diary the whole time, and also furnished the Minister of Public Instruction with several official reports.

The author hunted and bagged 2,106 trophies, including 23 lions, as well as elephants and all species of big game in the area.

The author writes:

"ON the tenth of June, 1904, after a passage of thirtyfive days, the steamship Kanzler landed my wife and myself at Beira, the capital of the Portuguese territory, governed by the Mozambique Company. The object of this mission was to put in order and complete the geographical work of various French travellers, and to bring home collections and as many important documents as possible respecting the fauna, flora, and other natural sciences, including ethnology. This long journey had been in some measure prepared for by a former visit of seven months to Mozambique that we had made in 1900."

Regarding lion hunting, the author writes:

"One would think that the natives of the neighbouring villages would be delighted to see me for having rid them of such troublesome formidable neighbours as the lions of the tendos. Nothing of the kind, they were, on the contrary, much distressed, and, instead of helping me, did all they could to hinder my finding them. It is, therefore, entirely due to my own efforts that I have fired at twenty-five lions and accounted for twenty-three of them. I have at last, however, solved the mystery. A native, more loquacious than the rest, said to me one day when I was showing him the skins of my lions, which were drying near my camp: "Yes, you have killed a great many lions, but there are still plenty more, and as you will not always be here, when you have gone away they will return in multitudes, and, looking for their brothers and being unable to find them, they will see their skeletons on the plain, which will cry out to them: 'These are the men who have killed us,' and in revenge they will come and eat us in our villages."

Regarding the honey badger he writes:

"This curious animal is a carnivore, and is feared by the natives, who recognises in it a bad character. It is certain that it is not good-tempered; and eight years ago, during my previous journey, I killed one which charged my men."

To those who desire to follow the author in the same country, his account of his trip will be a most

trustworthy and practical guide, and his experience and advice will render them invaluable service.

Contents:

I . HUNTING IN THE MOUNTAINS

II. A RUSH TO THE BUSI

III. IN THE FOREST

IV. DURING THE RAINY SEASON

V. IN THE LION COUNTRY

VI. BETWEEN THE ZAMBEZI AND THE PUNGWE

Originally published in 1906; reformatted for the Kindle; may contain an occasional imperfection; original spellings have been kept in place.

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