PREFACE

In the following pages I have endeavoured to give a plain account of the trials and adventures which befell me on two recent expeditions through the nyika, or wilderness, in British East Africa. On the first trip there were three of us, and all returned safely to civilisation, although dangers were not wholly absent. On the second and longer expedition there were also three Europeans, but, alas! only two got back, the nyika having claimed the third; nor was the god of the wilds content with this sacrifice, for, in addition, he claimed several of my native followers. He laid his deadly grip on me as well, but I was wrested from him by the care and attention of my companion, to whose skilful nursing I feel I owe my life.

In relating the events of the journey I have considered it incumbent on me, not only to tell the exciting adventures among the wild men and wild beasts of the regions traversed, but also to give some of the more tiresome detail connected with a safari in the nyika, as my object all through has been to describe everything exactly as it actually happened.

I trust that future travellers along the route taken by me will find my maps of some use. I made them as accurate as possible under somewhat trying circumstances, and they are reproduced in eight
convenient sections. I found that the Guaso Nyiro makes a much greater bend to the south than is shown in any of the existing maps.

I took a large number of photographs on these two expeditions, but unfortunately I found on my return to civilisation that over ten score films, which I fondly hoped held excellent and unique pictures, had been ruined by the excessive heat and damp experienced on the journey. Some, however, turned out fairly well, and these, I trust, will give a fair idea of the country, people, and animals. My very sincere thanks are due to Mrs. A. Sauderson and Mr. T. J. Spooner for permission to reproduce some photographs taken by them, which much enhance any interest that the book may possess. Mr. Spooner was one of the first to explore the regions about the Aberdare range of mountains, and it was he who discovered Lake El Bolosat, of which a beautiful photograph is reproduced on page 142.

The exploits of the Man-Eaters of Tsavo aroused so much interest that I have devoted the opening chapter to an account of one or two of their many unrecorded and unwelcome appearances in our midst at the time of the building of the Uganda Railway.

Practically the whole of this book was written while I was suffering from the illness which I contracted in the nyika, so I trust that its many shortcomings will be overlooked.

J. H. P.

London, August, 1909.