INCIDENTS OF FOREIGN SPORT AND TRAVEL

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BY

COLONEL POLLOK

AUTHOR OF "SPORT IN BRITISH BURMA," "REMINISCENCES OF AN INDIAN OFFICER," "A LADY'S CAPTIVITY AMONGST THE NAGAS," ETC., ETC.

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1894

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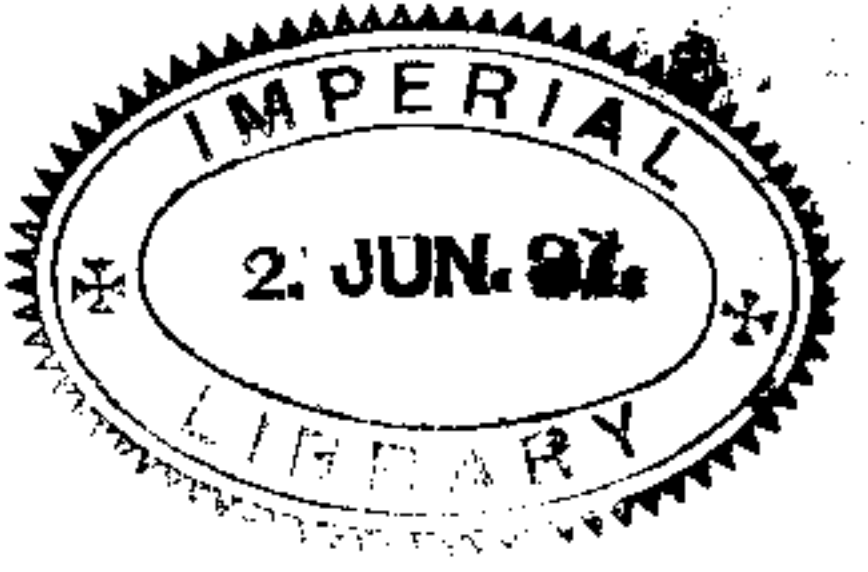
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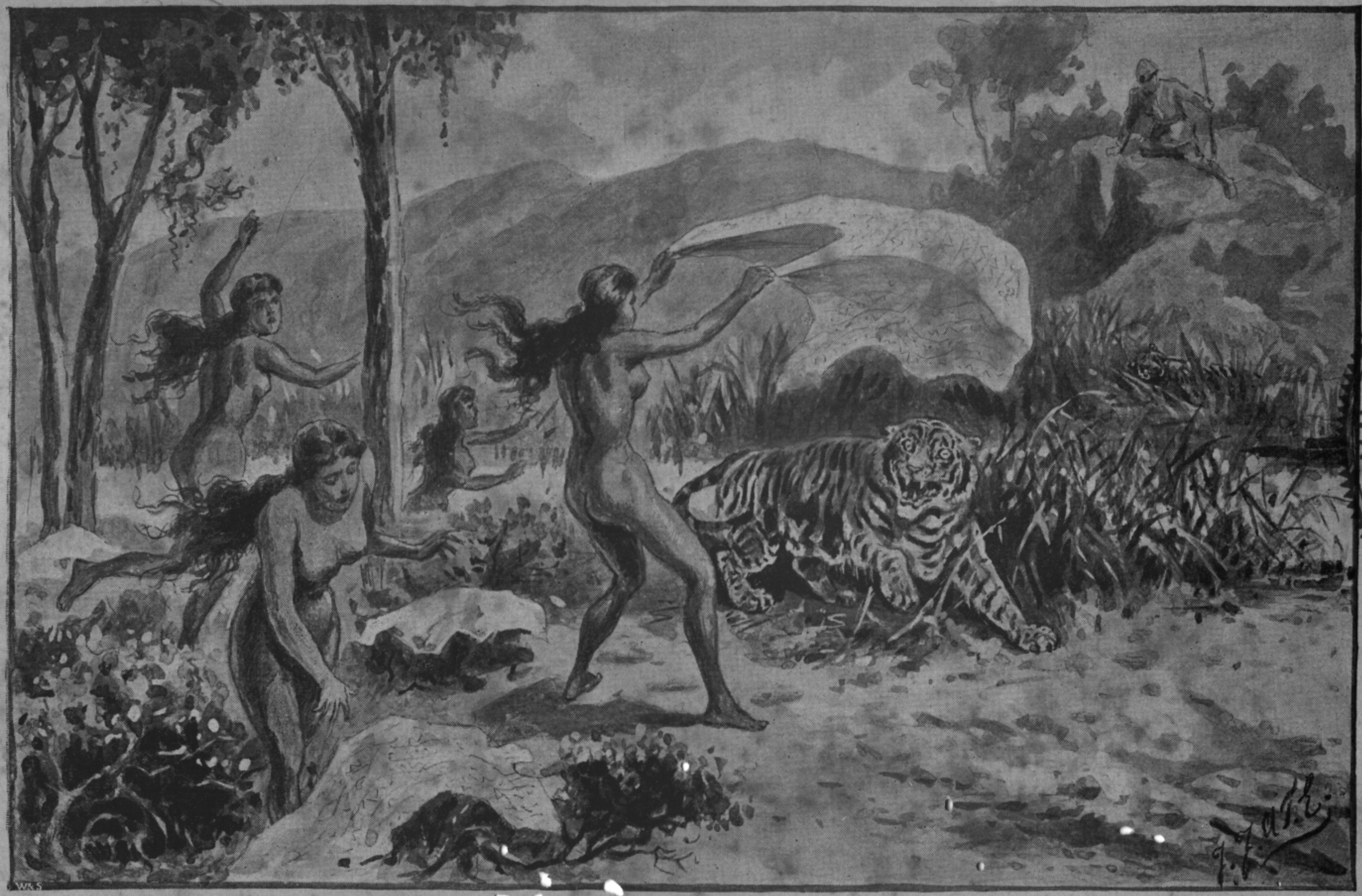
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OF

FOREIGN SPORT AND TRAVEL


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"ONE OF THEM THREW HER THAMIN OVER HIS HEAD . . . RETREATED BACKWARDS INTO THE RIVER."

Frontispiece.

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RICHARD CLAY AND SONS, LIMITED,
LONDON AND BUNGAY.

PREFACE

THE "Incidents" related in this work have been put together as a guide to the numerous class of sportsmen who, year by year, go abroad in search of game. Very many men lose their lives yearly, simply from a superabundance of pluck; and the want of training in wild sports, which is as necessary to a successful hunter as learning A B C is to a youth prior to reading and writing. There is no royal road to learning, nor can a man become a proficient as a hunter who has not acquired the knack by undergoing a great deal of toil; for experience is only learnt after years of practice.

The author may be said to have commenced his novitiate before he was six years old, as he was then allowed to sit in the back seat of his father's howdah in charge of an orderly, and as soon as he was capable of using a gun or a rifle, he graduated in sport under competent guidance, and learned how the *ferœ naturæ* should be followed up to the bitter end with safety to himself and attendants.

He was exceptionally lucky in being sent to a province teeming with game when barely twenty-one years of age, which had never been hunted over. He was for twenty-one years in the best sporting countries under our rule; he had under him vast districts; his work lay in surveying, and laying out roads, which enabled him to travel over virgin forests and jungles; he had numerous elephants; he was not only young, but had the constitution of a buffalo, ample means, and had shooting and hunting on the brain. He made the most of his opportunities to the best of his ability, and hopes, by relating his experiences, to not only instruct the young, but also to afford an hour or two's amusement to far better and more successful sportsmen than himself. A few of these "Incidents" have appeared in the pages of the *Field*, *Land and Water*, and *Shooting Times*, and are reproduced with the kind permission of the proprietors of those journals.

March, 1894.

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INCIDENTS OF FOREIGN SPORT AND TRAVEL

CHAPTER I.

TIGER SHOOTING.

TIGER shooting in India is carried out in various ways.

Off Machans (raised platforms).

Out of Marts (circular pits dug in the ground).

The former can be used either for day or night shooting, the latter for night work alone.

On Foot. Principally in Central, and parts of Southern, India.

Off Elephants. In Bengal, Assam, Burma and other parts of India where grassy plains abound.

Tigers are also killed, during inundations, out of boats and also by being surrounded by nets and then speared—but these two sports cannot be separated from such shooting or spearing as would represent general shooting for, for one tiger so killed, a dozen other animals will be accounted for.

I personally detest night shooting in any form, and care very little for shooting even by day off machans, but very often when no elephants are

to hunting on foot, posting guns and beating up to them is the only alternative.

There are men, who can boast of having killed it is asserted, five hundred tigers mostly off machans. But it is an expensive mode of warfare against the felines, for buffaloes have to be purchased and tied up, and an army of beaters is required to drive the game towards the guns, but having tried it pretty often, I have come to the conclusion that it is unsatisfactory and scarcely worth the cost. Very often when a man is posted on a tree, a tiger passes him within easy distance, yet so uncomfortable is his position that he cannot turn round to get the shot. But tastes differ. I do not care to pot a tiger from a coign of vantage some twenty feet high, and although I have done so several times, yet I always felt less pleasure in thus slaying the foe than when I have followed it up either on foot, or beat for it with elephants.

I will here briefly relate incidents of the various modes of slaying tigers, in which I have had a share.

In my boyhood, at sixteen, I entered the service, and at nineteen I commanded a detachment at Condapilly. In those happy days there were no railways, telegraphs were unknown and the posts came only every other day. I had a good "writer" and a good native commissioned officer—Peer Bukh. Muster over, I used to sign the returns for the month, frank the necessary official envelopes, direct the subadar to have three parades a week, and then disappear for a fortnight or more to hunt and shoot the neighbouring jungles which swarmed with game. I had fine sport—but I need not enumerate it here.

At Condapilly itself, leopards were numerous, and

tigers fairly plentiful. My bungalow was situated at the foot of a range of hills, some 600 feet high, once the stronghold of Mahratta chiefs, more noted as freebooters than as peaceable inhabitants. A broad, winding, well-paved road, laid out in steps, led to the top, where were then, and are still, the remains of a palace. The whole country was rudely fortified. Solid stone walls with flanking towers extended for miles around, being carried up hill and down dale, and must have been the work of ages. In ancient times, before ordnance was known, these defences were all but impregnable; in my day even, they would have given a great deal of trouble to any enemy to carry, if he were unprovided with artillery. The population had disappeared with the fall of the power of the chiefs, and the whole country was a wilderness, inhabited by a few deer, a few tigers, many leopards and thousands of lungoor and other varieties of monkey, and occasionally by a few bears. You might go fifteen, yea, twenty miles, without encountering an inhabitant. From Condapilly, a considerable village, amounting almost to a town, vast flocks of goats and sheep and herds of cattle were taken daily past my house for grazing purposes, and as in those good old times, when the country was ruled by the Honourable the East India Company, whose directors had passed the greater part of their lives in India and knew how to rule the natives, every village and every district had its *nerick*, or a fixed price for every article of food required either by Europeans or the people of the country, there was no bargaining. The price of a selected fat sheep was one rupee (two shillings); for one taken at haphazard out of the flock twelve

annas, or eighteenpence. Of course I was a constant purchaser and knew and was known well by every herdsman, and as I rewarded them liberally for "*kubber*," if an animal was killed, as happened almost daily, I was sure to hear of it. Thus whenever I was at Condapilly, during the moonlight nights I had full occupation.

Mogul Beg, the shikarie, and I had sat up no less than sixteen nights without getting a shot. It is one thing to sit up, and quite another to be successful in slaying the object of your quest. Tigers and leopards are wary creatures, and as they lie up not far from the animal they have slain so are often scared away from their prey by the shikarie's talking or cutting down branches in the vicinity of the "kill," when they are erecting a machan. Not only do the beasts of prey disappoint by not returning to their victim, but when one comes, shooting by moonlight is so uncertain, that oftener than not, an animal fired at, is missed, or gets away more or less severely wounded.

I had returned from hog-hunting with the Nūgied Rajah, and was reclining *en déshabillé*, in my long armed chair, when Mogul Beg appeared, and informed me, that a *gwala* reported that a leopard had killed a three-parts-grown heifer, and that if I would start at once, he thought we might get a shot, for, said he, 'The moon is nearly at the full, and no portion of the animal has been eaten."

"Well, Mogul Beg," said I, "how often have we sat up and never got a shot? It is a long trudge to the top of the range. I am very tired, for I have been riding since daybreak, and don't care to go so far for nothing."

"But *gurreeh purwah*," replied he, "it won't take us long to get there—the spot is a secluded one, and more than likely, if we get there early, and make no noise, the *borbutcha* (leopard) will come before dark. Our *nusseeb* (luck) has been so bad, it must change soon."

"Well," said I, "I am too lazy to change my clothes—I'll put on a pair of shoes and be with you directly. Take down two guns and the ammunition, and if we don't get a shot to-night, I'll be hanged if I go again." My night suit, in which I was robed, was a dark gray. I soon drew on a pair of socks, and a stout pair of shoes, and then the shikarie and I commenced the ascent of the hill—a fatiguing thing at the best of times, but particularly so then, as every bone in my body ached from my previous exertions. It took us half an hour to get to the ruins of the palace, and three-quarters of an hour more to reach the "kill," where we were met by a herdsman who had been left behind to act as our guide. He pointed out the heifer, and as there was no tree suitable for a machan, Mogul Beg, and the *gwala* collected brushwood and formed a circular enclosure within about four yards of the dead beast. By the time our *cache* was completed, the sun had set, and as there is little or no twilight in the East, the herdsman hurried off home, as the jungles were not over safe, for a lone man to wander in after dark.

The fence thrown up was about three feet high excepting opposite the dead heifer, where it was about four feet and loop-holed for us to fire through. Mogul Beg was a strongly made man, cool, plucky

and determined, in age about thirty years, and had killed several tigers and many leopards. Like most Mussulmans, he was a fatalist. His eyesight was remarkably keen, he was moreover a dead shot at close quarters, either by day or night, for his nerve never failed him.

By the time we had settled down, the moon rose, but unfortunately behind a conical, abrupt peak, so would be some time before its light would be shed upon where we were in hiding. We were thus in semi-darkness, and therefore I did not anticipate success—for hope deferred had made my heart sick.

Young as I was—I had had now nearly three years' experience of sport—so although not expecting to see anything, I sat perfectly quiet about a couple of feet to Mogul Beg's right. We had been watching barely an hour, the place we were in was still obscured in semi-gloom, when we heard the booming, if I may term it so, of the lungoor monkeys and chatterings of smaller species. "*Atta hi*" (He is coming), said Mogul Beg. Well, in about a quarter of an hour, without the slightest noise, an indistinct outline came between us and the "kill" and squatted down on its hams like a dog, and lo! it was not a leopard, but a right royal tiger! It sat so close to our fence, that by thrusting our guns out of the port-holes we could have touched it. My heart beat faster than it was wont to do—I felt a hand laid on my arm, and a voice muttered, "*Durro mut* (Don't be afraid), *Sahib.*" If every bit of pluck in my body had oozed out of my finger-ends, I would rather have been torn to pieces than expose any signs of funk before my sable comrade, so I whispered back as indignantly as my

trepidation would permit, "*Khoon durta,*" (Who is afraid)? "*Bahut acha, Sahib*" (Very good), replied Mogul Beg. "*Maro jelde*" (Fire quickly).

I thought it would be better if we waited until the tiger began his meal, as he would then be a yard further off, but seeing my comrade poke his gun through the loop-hole, I did the same, and, taking a careful aim, for the barrels of our guns were not a foot from the brute's body, we both fired at the same instant—Mogul Beg his two barrels, and I but one. For the next moment or two what occurred I could not tell—there was a deep roar, a huge body struggling about, scattering our fence right and left, a tail swishing madly to and fro, and two wretched mortals crouched in the smallest possible space in the furthest corner of the *câche*, anxious only to be clear of it and observers at a greater distance. It was too close work to be pleasant. In vain I tried to get a shot at the foe's head, but the body was gyrating like a teetotum; where the head was one moment the tail was the next, the whole body threatening every second to be on the top of us. Mogul Beg could not load, for his powder-flask had been sent flying by a whisk of the tail, and I was just thinking of jumping up and taking the further fence at a leap, when I felt an iron grip on my shoulder, and a voice said in my ear, "Don't move." It takes time to tell the tale, but the occurrence did not last a minute. In its struggles the beast, after coming within a yard of us, went further off, and whilst struggling to get on its feet, fell over the dead calf, and although almost at the last gasp, it gave it a grip, which we were thankful was not inflicted on us, for we could hear the crunching of bones

and the tearing of flesh. A moment after, the tiger rolled over, slid down a steep declivity and fell into the bed of a *nullah* (ravine) which was covered with a carpeting of long grass. In that we heard it struggle for some little time, then followed a few moans, a gasp or two succeeded, and all was still. "*Murgya*" (He is dead), said the shikarie, and stood up. I was not sorry to follow his example, for I was bent and doubled, and so cramped that I could scarcely straighten my limbs. We consulted together and decided that, though the tiger was more than probably dead, we had better not approach it until the morning, so we made our way homewards. Whilst Mogul Beg went to his domicile in the village, about a quarter of a mile from mine, I tumbled into bed. I am a light sleeper and am generally wide awake at daybreak, a habit which has stuck to me through life. But that night I was very tired; I had ridden out eighteen miles, had hunted the whole day, securing four first spears, and had returned home barely an hour when Mogul Beg had induced me to go up the hill. So, thoroughly wearied, I did not awake that morning till past six. By the time I had had my *chota hazarie* and had bathed and dressed, Mogul Beg, accompanied by eight coolies, presented himself. He was as pleased as Punch, for he thought the reward then given for a dead tiger, Rs.50, was as good as in his pocket. It must have been past seven before we set out, for there did not seem to be much need to be in a hurry. We climbed the hill, arrived at the scene of action, searched everywhere, but could find no tiger! Was it all a dream? Scarcely! for there lay the dead heifer, the *débris* of our *mart*,

quantities of blood, and the broad trail where the tiger had rolled down the bank into the bottom of the hollow. Moreover the undergrowth was trampled down, but no marks except of blood, were visible, for the ground was parched and as hard as if composed of granite. Like fools we spent a couple of hours searching far and near, but were no wiser at the end of that time, than we were at the commencement.

"I am afraid," said I, "it has got away." "Impossible, Sahib," said the shikarie, "I heard its death-rattle." "Then where can he be?" "That is what puzzles me," said the Mussulman. Then, turning round to the coolies, as if suddenly struck with an idea, he asked if any of them had heard any one leave the village early. "Well," said one of them, "I saw Peecheemootoo go out at five with some of our people to bring in, as he said, a sambur he had shot over night." "Why," said Mogul Beg, "the fellow was standing close to my house at ten last night and heard me tell my brother that the sahib and I had killed a tiger on the hill. He must have stolen it before daybreak, but we will soon find him, and the sahib will teach him not to play such pranks."

Now Peecheemootoo was a rival low caste Hindoo shikarie, very good for marking down small game, for which purpose I often employed him, and there was no love between him and Mogul Beg. We hurried back and lost another hour or two in searching for the suspect and his prey, but in vain; no one had seen him, since he went to fetch his sambur. Some one suggested that as the Tahsildar was holding

cutchery at Ebrampatam, eight miles off, perhaps he had gone there by bye paths, and taken the dead tiger to claim the reward. I was in a rage. "Why had the fool not told us cutchery was being held so near?" So bidding Mogul Beg get on a *tat* and gallop over as fast as he could, I hurried back to my bungalow, mounted my horse, and made the best of my way to Ebrampatam, and the first thing I saw when I got there was a fine tiger lying in front of the *cutchery.* I dismounted and had an interview with the Tahsildar (an Eurasian) and he informed me that Peecheemootoo had brought in the beast and claimed the reward, which had been paid him. He asked what proof I had that the tiger was the one Mogul Beg and I had killed, "for," said he, "tigers are plentiful, and I only yesterday, paid another man a similar reward." Proof I had none, for we had fired at such close quarters that our bullets had gone clean through the carcass. I pointed to the three holes and asked the official if he believed they were produced by a rusty old matchlock, such as native shikaries use, but he responded that he had no other course than to give the reward to the person who brought in the dead body. I then asked for the skin, but the Tahsildar had taken a fancy to it for himself, and declined to part with it. So Mogul Beg and I went back lamenting, but determined to thrash Peecheemootoo within an inch of his life; but the wily native was not at home for many a long day, and when he did appear I had left Condapilly on sick certificate, having miraculously escaped from death after a six weeks' bout of jungle fever. Thus I assisted to kill, yet lost my first tiger.

Somewhere about a month afterwards a large cow

had its back broken by a tiger, but it had been driven off by the *gwalas* before doing further damage. As the victim was not dead, I made sure the tiger would return, so went about five o'clock to sit up over it. *En route*, an unusual object on a ledge of rocks far up the hill caught my eyesight, and bringing my glass to bear upon it I saw that it was a tiger crouching down and noting our movements, so although I sat up all night, I need not say that the tiger did not put in an appearance.

On another occasion a large bullock was killed near a lot of detached rocks, and as but very little of it had been eaten, the *gwalas* covered it up to protect it from vultures, which (ever on the look out for carrion) soar about in the sky far beyond the vision of the keenest of human sight. In the afternoon we constructed a screen under the ledge of some rocks, with loopholes in front—the carcase being secured with strong ropes to pegs driven well into the ground. It must have been somewhere about ten, just as the moon was declining over some tall trees, when we heard a struggle and the body was jerked away, taken to our rear, and there the brute remained feeding the greater part of the night. That he knew we were there was evident, for if we moved there was a snarl, accompanied doubtless by a display of ivories. There was nothing to prevent the brute springing upon us. About three o'clock, after keeping us on tenter hooks for five mortal hours, he left off eating, and, we believed, went to a rivulet about a quarter of a mile off for a drink. That opportunity was taken to stretch our limbs, which were benumbed from the crouching position we had so long been in,

and to move a portion of the screen, so as to get a sight of the tiger when he should return. This he commenced to do about four A.M. We could hear his footsteps as he trod over fallen leaves, and we were prepared to give him a warm reception; but his quick eyesight must have shown him the alteration we had made, and to our great chagrin we heard him retreat, and the sound of his steps gradually die away. As soon as we could distinguish objects in the early dawn, we got out of our crib and took a stroll, more for exercise than anything else, and walked towards the rivulet where very often jungle fowl were to be seen. The shore on one side was clayey; that on the opposite was sandy and covered with pebbles and loose stones. The spoor of the tiger where he had crossed the river was distinct, and I was admiring the size of the *pugs* and regretting that he had not given us a chance of securing his pelt, when Mogul Beg touched me on the shoulder and with the other arm pointed at something across the river. I thought it was probably a jungle fowl and held out the rifle to exchange it for a smooth bore, when he thrust aside my arm abruptly, and pointed again. I still failed to see anything. I was evidently overlooking the object that he wished to attract my attention to, so looking intently in the direction indicated I noted amongst some low bushes a pair of ears, with the unmistakable white spots—they were a tiger's! He was not watching us —his back was towards us, his head away—something moving in the jungle beyond must have riveted his gaze. I had a very accurate rifle in hand.[1] With it I had practised a good deal, and I could break more

[1] Made by Westley Richards.

limes at a hundred yards than I missed, and here the object to be struck was not more than fifty yards off. As a rule I am a snap shot, but firing at a mark of course I align the sights. On this occasion I brought the fore sight to bear in the centre of the two white spots, but three or four inches lower. I was as steady as a rock, and gradually pressed the trigger, holding my breath the while. A bang—the smoke hung badly—and when it cleared, nothing was to be seen. I was afraid I had missed, but could scarcely credit it, as I never fired more steadily in my life, so I asked falteringly, "Has he run away?" "*Ne, Sahib*," said Mogul Beg, "*murgya*." He stepped into the rivulet, and I followed and found a fine tiger, measuring nine feet nine inches in length, and proportionately heavy, lying dead. That was one of the happiest moments of my early experiences; the ball had struck the junction of the head and neck and death must have been instantaneous.

On another occasion I had to keep tryst with some friends, with whom I was going on a shooting trip, into the Nizam's country that borders on the banks of the Godavery, the rendezvous being Ragapore. I was then temporarily with the headquarters of my regiment, at the time stationed at Samulcottah. A month's leave was granted me, and Tom Prendergast, the Collector, having kindly sent on a *purwannah* to the Deputy-Commissioner of Rajahmundry and given me a general order on all native officials within his province to aid me in all things, I "daked" out to Rajahmundry, crossed the river and got into a hackery, or native cart, which awaited my arrival. My guns and heavy baggage had been sent on some days before *viâ*

Ellore, only one boy remaining behind with food, &c., sufficient for a couple of days. These carts are not to be despised for travelling in. With a heap of straw at the bottom, a light mattress on the top, and a couple of pillows, one can be comfortable enough in them, especially if you travel over the Government roads; but I was going across country, my sole guide being a section of the map of the district compiled by the Topographical Department. These are wonderfully correct, and show all bye ways, villages, and even small sheets of water. I had examined my map carefully. The route I proposed taking was not only far shorter than that by Ellore, but it would be novel to me, as I had travelled the habitually used course several times. All went well until I had got half way, I then halted for a few hours at a considerable village, put up in the *choultry*, a place set apart principally for native travellers, intending to be again on the move directly the moon was well up, which would be at 2 A.M. About 1 A.M. I was awoke by a voice uttering. "*Sahib, Sahib, chota hazarie tyar hi*" (Sir, your early breakfast is ready). I was out of bed in a moment, swallowed my cup of coffee, poured half a dozen *chatties* (earthenware pots) of water over my head, and did not take long to adorn my person. "Are the bullocks put to?" I asked. "The peon has gone to get them," was the reply. I was getting very impatient at being kept waiting, when the peon, a fine soldierly-looking old Mussulman, said he had been to the Tahsildar (who had only just retired to rest, having had a *nautch* at his house) and that he had said that there were no bullocks procurable. "How is that?" said I, "Did not the Burra Sahib send *purwannahs* to have everything ready?" "*Ho, Sahib,*" replied the man,

saluting, "but the Tahsildar—may his mother and all his female relations be defiled !—is a banshoot[1] and thinks he can do as he likes." "He does, does he ?" said I. "Take some one with you and bring him here by the scruff of his neck, and if he is not before me in five minutes I'll fetch him myself in a way he won't like." "*Bhoot atcha*," replied the peon—who by the bye was a pensioned sepoy—saluting and spinning round on his heels in the most approved military style of that day, took his departure. In a few minutes I heard a good deal of hubbub, and much native *galee* or abuse ; just as I was on the point of going after the man myself, the peon entered, followed by a fat, greasy, half-naked native, and a posse of his followers. He barely salaamed, and I could see that he was not inclined to be civil, or to show that deference for a European in Government employment which, in those days, was our due from all, whatever their position. "How is this, Tahsildar ?" said I. "The Collector Sahib sent you orders to have relays of bullocks for me two days ago. Why are they not ready ?" "Sir," said the native in fair English, "no grass, no provender got. How can make 'biles' ? Bad season, all cattle sent away." "Why did you not send for them when you got the order ?" I asked. "I plenty business—forgot," said the native. He saw I was young, and doubtless thought he could be impertinent with impunity. I was on the point of teaching him a lesson, when the peon remarked, "*Sub jût bât* (All lies), Sahib. Tahsildar got fine pair of Mysore bullocks. If master give *hukkum*, I bring." "Oh, *Bapperee bap*," replied the greasy

[1] A common term of abuse—untranslatable.

Hindoo, "those not my 'biles' but my poor mother's, who arrived last night and leaves for Ellore to day." "Not true, Sir," said the Mussulman—there was evidently no love lost between them—"they have been here for more than a year and are the Tahsildar's own." "Bring them at once," said I, and ejected the official with a toe behind, which considerably detracted from his dignity in the sight of his compatriots—"and," I added, "if the bullocks are not here in five minutes, I'll have you punished." The swagger was taken out of the man, but he kept protesting the bullocks were not his, but his mother's. The peon and Ramasawmy, my boy, returned with as fine a pair of Mysore cattle as I ever wish to see. They had been pampered, and were somewhat fatter than they should have been for hard work, but, thought I, they'll be thinner before I am done with them. I had them harnessed to my cart, and amid the lamentations of the native official and his satellites, off we went.

The bullocks went along merrily for some time. They were an excellent pair and could not have cost less than Rs.150 each, which sum doubtless the native had accumulated by bribes and extortions. I may here say he never saw those bullocks again, for reasons to be presently related. He brought an action against me, putting his damages at Rs.500. Prendergast gave a decree in his favour for Rs.300, the original cost, but fined him a similar sum for disobedience to orders, and removed him far away from the locality where he had ruled the roost so long. Thus he did not gain much by his action.

been levelled—for boulders were cropping up here and there, amidst numerous ruts—while the water-courses were unbridged. The animals, unused to such travelling, soon tired. Twisting their tails and belabouring them had no effect, and at last they lay down and refused to budge; we were miles away from any village, it was not yet daylight, and if I did not get to Ragapore that afternoon, my comrades would have left. Urgent cases require drastic measures, thought my driver; so, collecting a lot of dry grass, the "ghariwan"—who cared little for the Tahsildar, as he belonged to another district—placed it under the bullocks and set it alight. The effect was magical. Up jumped the "biles," and off they went threatening to upset the hackerie over the numerous rocks, but presently there was another stoppage. "What is the matter now?" I asked. "Two bears are in front," said Ramasawmy, every tooth in his head rattling with fright. What a fool I was, thought I, not to have brought my gun with me; but between us and the brutes the track was covered with long but dry grass, for there had been a drought, and a lighted match thrown into it, soon caused a blaze. The bears scampered away, and we continued our course more sedately. The moon was now obscured. We came to a nullah which the cart was not driven down properly, so it went in with a flop, and the axletree broke! As everything was getting wet, Ramasawmy and I dragged my mattress, on which I had been lying, on to the bank, and the driver unyoked the cattle and tethered them to some creepers, a little way off. It was too dark and the jungle too

the purpose of cutting a fresh pole to act as an axletree, but the driver said he knew of a village a little way off, and would go there for fresh bullocks and for help. On his starting, Ramasawmy lit a fire, set a pot upon it, and prepared the ingredients for making an egg and sardine currie. Dawn, such as it is in the East, was approaching, jungle and pea cocks were crowing their matutinal greetings, and with that exception all was as still as death, when there was a rush and something sprang on to one of the bullocks. The other broke away and rushed into the jungle, where it too was felled. We could hear it struggling, so it was evident there were more foes than one.

My own position was not a comfortable one. I dared not move, for I was only three or four yards away from the tiger who was slaking his thirst, drinking the life-blood of one of the Tahsildar's pet cattle. Where Ramasawmy was I did not know; he had mysteriously disappeared. The tiger, after a good drink, dragged the bullock with the greatest ease into the jungle, and I could hear the tearing of flesh and the crunching of bones for some time, but directly the sun rose, the depredators departed. After looking about for some time, I espied my boy perched on the topmost branches of a tree close by, and it required some threats and considerable persuasion to induce him to descend. He trembled so he could scarcely stand, but I gave him a tot of brandy and after a while he resumed his functions as cook. About eight o'clock, a sowar rode up with a letter from my friends, saying they were all ready to start and only waited for my arrival. I wrote across the

letter my adventures and begged them to come to me at once, as I felt sure we could bag one, if not two, tigers. Instructing the sowar that the "chit" was of the greatest importance, he mounted and went off at full gallop. I then explored the locality and found the dead bullocks—one partially eaten and the other all but untouched—collected wood which would help to rig up a machan, and then sat down to an early breakfast, but whilst I was still eating, the "gharíwán" arrived with a fresh pole and a relay of cattle. The cart was soon after repaired, dragged across the watercourse, and sent off to a distance. This done, with the help of a villager or two I erected two machans about eight feet high, for the trees were not large, and besides I anticipated no danger. The carcases were then dragged into the open in front of my perches and covered over with long grass to hide them from the birds of prey which otherwise would not have long left a scrap of them remaining. About 4 P.M. I was glad to see several coolies arrive with *pittarahs* (leather-covered baskets, which they sling across their shoulders on a bamboo) containing things necessary for a dinner, as well as wines, beer, &c., the latter being immediately after their production submerged in the stream as an impromptu excellent substitute for icing. About 5 P.M., two of my friends arrived. I will denote them as A and B; the third had gone ahead to our future camp, where we were to join him. The adventures of the previous night we discussed over our early dinner, and mounted our machans just as the sun was setting. As Ramasawmy was afraid to go alone to the village where the other people had gone, B took him into his perch. The

boy was in a blue funk, but thought that of two evils, being with an armed sahib on an elevation was better than walking alone through the forest. We had a young moon about ten, and about eleven, or perhaps nearer twelve, we heard a tell-tale pit-a-pat, and a tiger appeared from one direction and another from the opposite. The two beauties commenced to snarl at each other, so we reserved our fire, wishing to see the upshot. The duo gradually approached each other with manes erect and lips drawn back, exposing formidable ivories, when a third, evidently a female, showed herself on the scene and commenced to make a meal of the untouched ox which was opposite B's machan. When the lady commenced to satisfy her appetite the males sprung at one another, and whilst struggling A and I fired four barrels. B also fired two at the tigress. The belligerents, however, would not separate, and whilst struggling got right under B's machan. At the same instant, the wounded tigress looked up, saw B, and with a roar sprang at him, lighting on the edge of his hiding-place. The next second there was a crash, a cloud of dust, and an awful cry. There was not much light, for the moon was then obscured behind a fleeting cloud, but we jumped off our machan and ran to the assistance of our comrade. Nothing could we see of him. In vain we called, begging for a reply. A heap of *débris* only lay under where his perch had been. All this did not take up more than a minute, when we heard a shot, and hurrying towards the report and falling over creepers and torn with thorns, we came upon the body of our comrade lying under that of the tigress. Dragging the beast off we found B insensible, but alive, with

one arm broken in two places. Taking him into an open space, we did what we could to resuscitate him, and when he came to, he told us that as they fell the tigress had seized him by the arm, and was dragging him off, when he remembered he had a double-barrelled pistol in his belt. Fortunately at that instant the brute paused for a moment; this enabled him to draw the weapon and, putting it to her ear, fired, and then became unconscious. We asked him, did he see anything of the two tigers? He said he fell almost on top of them, but that they were engaged in too deadly a conflict to notice him and that they were still struggling when the tigress dragged him away. He was very faint, but not seriously wounded; a glass of grog revived him, and as he was a plucky fellow and not despondent—as are too many who have been mauled by a tiger—we anticipated that he was in no immediate danger. Hearing the monotonous cry of a set of palanquin bearers, to intercept them did not take us long. Our delight may be imagined when in the occupant we recognised the superintending surgeon,[1] who was going his rounds of inspection, *en route* to Ragapore and Ellore. He was out of his conveyance in a moment and soon dressed B's arm and deposited him in the palanquin, saying he himself would walk; but just then two of the sowars, who had been sent some way off, hearing our shots, rode up. One was dismounted and the doctor got on his horse and altered his course from Ragapore to Ellore. As soon as we had seen them off we thought of Ramasawmy, and fruitlessly

killed more by the wounds inflicted on him by his antagonist than by the bullet one of us had given him. As we could find no trace of the servant, we thought the other tiger must have carried him off and so in all probability he was dead. At daybreak we moved off under the guidance of a native, and about two o'clock overtook C. We then went on to Buddrechellum, had rare sport with gaur and sambur, but got no more tigers. I had been probably a couple of months at headquarters, when one day a decrepit, half-naked old man, almost bent double, walked on to my verandah and clasped my feet, rubbing his head on them and blubbering violently. I thought some one had maltreated him. "Who are you?" I asked, I fear in no gentle tones. "Get out, or I'll set Bob" (an ugly bull terrier of mine) "at you." "Oh!" cried the poor wretch, "master not know me?" "Never saw you in my life, and hope never to see you again. Get out! Here, Bob, seize him!" The man, still on his knees cringing, showed no fear of the dog, and the beast, contrary to his custom—for he disliked strange natives and was apt to go for them—went up to the unknown and instead of seizing him, began to lick his face and otherwise to fawn upon him. "See, master," cried the fellow, "Bob know me. I Ramasawmy, master's maty boy." I burst out laughing. "Why you vile old impostor," said I, "Ramasawmy was about twenty-four, and has been dead these three months, whilst you are seventy, at least." "Sahib," said the mendicant, for he looked like one if ever a man did, "I Ramasawmy. Tiger done eat me up. I then come back to life. I live in jungle many days

and then I come to master and he say, 'You not Ramasawmy,' and not know me." By this time several of my other servants had come up, and I asked them, "Is that Ramasawmy!" "No, Sahib," they all replied, "maty boy young man; that," pointing to the mendicant, "an old thief." "If you don't know me," said the individual, "I know you," and he called each by his name. My old butler then appeared, and when appealed to, said, "Sahib, he knows us, but we don't know him. But stay," said he, "his wife is still here, I will call her, and if he is Ramasawmy surely she will know him." He was gone some little time, and then returned accompanied by a comely-looking wench, who, with the vanity of her sex, had kept him waiting to adorn her person before appearing before the Lord Sahib! She was dressed in spotless muslin, and displayed not only various jewels, but a good deal of her charms! I had often seen her. She was uncommonly well-made, not bad looking and young—probably not over fifteen—but supposing her to be the wife of one of my retainers, I had not given her a second thought. As she now appeared before me, with a mock modest air, I could not help thinking what a fine animal she was. "Well," said I, "is that Ramasawmy." "Oh, sir," she replied in fair English, and with as she thought many a killing look, "that old man!—old enough to be my grandfather!" Here the mendicant went off into torrents of abuse in Tamil. She responded, and for five minutes the two railed at and abused each other. "Hold your tongues," said I; "I don't want

woman—too much tongue got—she tell me Ramasawmy dead—eaten by a tiger—and I marry her, but she too much bobbery make, and now Ramasawmy come back, he may take her again." Here the woman was nearly flying at him; but the more she stormed and raved, the more the servants laughed, and at last I had to dismiss them all and tell them to settle amongst themselves whether the claimant was Ramasawmy or not. In the afternoon the butler told me that they had questioned the old man, that there was no doubt he was my former maty boy, but that fright had blanched his hair, want of food and exposure to the weather for several months had doubled him up with rheumatism, that he was now half-witted but harmless, and if I sent him away he would die of starvation, "for who would employ him, Sahib?" So I told him to let the poor fellow have a "godown." He did a little work now and then, but often he wandered away no one knew where, and would be absent for days at a time, for a week or more. Occasionally woodcutters would bring him in and say they had found him in the depths of the forest and were afraid he would be killed. But if this was said in his hearing he would rejoin that he was already dead, and had been eaten, and nothing could hurt him again—this went on for a year or two. The man was truly harmless, so was allowed to do as he liked, but one day he disappeared for good and was never heard of again; the forest and wild beasts he had so dreaded had a strange fascination for him, and whether he died, or was eventually killed and eaten, I cannot say. In the meantime his wife was the cause of so much dis-

turbance, that after tolerating her for some time I had eventually to order her off, and I believe she became an ayah, but whether she became reformed in character I doubt—for she was innately a bad woman.

One more instance of machan shooting and I have done on that subject. Years after these events I found myself once again at Rajahmundry in command of a wing of a regiment. We were cursed with a fussy commandant, and a fool for an adjutant. They were some way off it is true, but not a day passed without telegrams arriving about nothing, but to which an answer was expected; then there were idiotic returns, of no earthly use to anybody, to be prepared daily, weekly, and monthly, so one had not a moment's respite from work. After sending off a budget, which I thought would take the martinets at head-quarters a week to digest, I sent on a boat ahead, "daked" out thirty miles, and by next evening found myself on the top of Bison Hill, situated on the Godavery. I had good sport for two days, which will be related further on. On the third day, on a further hill, I killed a particularly large "gaur," and sent some low caste coolies to fetch in the head. They returned about noon saying that they could not approach the game as a family of tigers had taken possession of it, adding, that if I would start at once I should be sure of a shot and be back by night. Just as I was prepared to go a coolie arrived with two telegrams from headquarters, the first asking whether it was true Venketsawmy had cholera, and the second to know why the first had not been answered. "Con-

found the asses, why could they not apply to the doctor?" mentally I ejaculated. So scribbling a note to my wife, telling her to find out from the medico and embody the answer in a telegram, I bid the man hasten back and in reward for his expedition he would get a good *enam* (present). I then, accompanied by my shikarie carrying an extra rifle, and two coòlies, not in the best of tempers set out. About 3 P.M. we got to our destination. I could hear the big cats at work, but they had dragged the gaur into a patch of heavy grass and there was no getting at them on foot. A convenient tree, however, overlooked the spot where they were feasting, so I planted my light bamboo ladder, which I always carried about with me when I visit that locality. It was about four feet too short to reach the lowest branch, but I sent the shikarie up first and then with his assistance climbed up into my perch, the two coolies betaking themselves to a small tree a little way off. I always have a few cartridges in my pockets, but the greater number were in my waterproof bag, which it was the business of the shikarie to carry, but on this occasion, although I did not notice it at the time, he had given it to one of the coolies, so with the exception of those I had on my person, I was without ammunition. Fortunately both rifles were twelve bore. After climbing some way up the tree, I got a good view of a large and a medium sized tiger; the first had the whole of his broadside exposed, but the second was partially hidden by the long grass. Taking a careful aim I fired at the centre of the shoulder of the large one and took a snap shot at the other as it bolted, and broke its back, and there it lay roaring

most lustily. Instantaneously there were responding roars, and whether we were seen or not, a tiger rushed at our tree, apparently with a view of ascending it! However, the only result of this effort was, that the ladder was knocked down. Taking the second rifle I fired a hurried shot, and slightly wounded the beast, when it took up its quarters in a heavy patch of grass about ten yards from our perch. There I fired five shots at it, but the brute shifted its position each time, and continued to roar and snarl at us. This tiger at the same time kept guard not only on us but over the two coolies. Feeling in my pockets I found I had but two cartridges left, so held out my hand to the shikarie for more, but my disgust and rage may be imagined when I found him minus the bag. What to do I did not know. Only a monkey or a native could descend from our tree without the help of the ladder, and to do so under the circumstances would be madness, so there we were imprisoned for an indefinite period, and probably more insane commanding officer's telegrams waiting for immediate replies! The great red ants also soon found us out, and led us a most lively time. The brute whose back I had broken was only a youngster and he did roar, while his mother responded throughout the entire night. If I had had cartridges I should have kept up fire in the hopes of either killing her or driving her away, but I was obliged to retain the only two I had left for an emergency. Thus passed I think the most wretched period I ever experienced in my life. An hour before daybreak the tigers became silent, so telling the shikarie to break off a dead branch and fling it towards the patch of grass, he did so. An

immediate roar answered this salute, so we knew the sentry was still on guard, but as such a slight thing as a stick seemed to disturb her, I concluded to do what I should have thought of long before. I divested myself of my unmentionables, stuck a forked branch into them, hung my coat on that, stuffed both as full as I could of leaves, and thus made a guy which as much resembled the human figure divine as a scare-crow does a man. Bidding the shikarie take off his turban, I tore it into strips, then sent him as far out on to a lateral branch as was safe, and taking up a position to command the spot where the dummy would touch the ground, I, with rifle on full cock, waited events. "*Chordoa*," (let it go), I said. The man let it down and as it reached the ground the tigress sprang upon it and tore my habiliments to bits, but in so doing exposed the whole of her body. I fired steadily, and rolled her over with a ball through the neck and the other through her shoulder; she died without a groan. Calling out to the coolies to descend and re-erect the ladder—which they did after a little delay, for the brute of a cub was not yet dead, and they were afraid to touch *terra firma*—I eventually came down, and ultimately killed the youngster. The shikarie then got admonished for parting with the cartridge-bag in such a way as he was likely to remember. On examining my garments, the trousers were found to be torn to pieces, the coat a mere shred. So there I was, more undressed than a Scot in full parade costume, and with a good four-mile walk through thorny jungles before me ere I reached my tent. *En route* we came across two bears, and these charged viciously, a very unusual occurrence with these brutes when

unwounded, so I floored the first and sent the second off seriously wounded. Taking the second rifle I followed the retreating animal quickly up, with my shirt tails flying like a bunch of homeward-bound pennants. Nevertheless luck favoured me.

Then the secret of their pugnaciousness came out: they had two cubs with them, of the size of spaniels. These interesting "varmints" we secured after a severe struggle, for they bit and scratched like demons.

At my camp I found a "chit" from my wife begging me to return at once, as there were numerous official letters with "immediate" on them, waiting for me. On receipt of it I am afraid my language was more forcible than polite, but donning some fresh raiment, leaving the shikarie to collect the pelts, I walked down the hill, got into my boat, and was back at Rajahmundry by three. The "immediate" letters were of no account, so answering them briefly and not over-politely, I consigned all fussy commandants and their foolish adjutants to Hades and once more resigned myself to the humdrum existence of detachment life.

Some years before this occurrence I had been surveying in the Yomahs, Burmah, and having completed that season's work I was hurrying back so as to have a few days' shooting at Myetchin, before the rains set in. My servants and elephants went along cleared paths, but hearing jungle fowl crowing and my shikarie elephant being sick, Mong-Oo (Mr. Egg) and I walked down the long slope which stretched from the foot of the hills to the plain below. The country was wonderfully free from that curse of

Burma, the long *kine* grass, the surface of the ground being covered with a substitute which never exceeds three feet in height. In this cover we saw several *ghee* (barking deer), a few pheasants, and junglefowl. By the time we got in sight of a cluster of Karen huts, Mong-Oo was well laden, as he had a buck over his shoulders, and some six or seven birds attached to his belt. These Karens—for such was the race of my neighbours—are scattered about in the remoter parts of Burma; they and the Burmese do not agree, and their habits are totally dissimilar. Whilst the former wander about forming *townyahs*, or clearances reclaimed from the primæval forests, and abandoned after two years' cultivation, the latter congregate together, and grow different cereals, principally rice. The Karens are a sturdy race, bigger and stronger than the Burmese. This distinction is more marked even among the women, who when obtained young, and taught cleanliness, make capital ayahs. We were sufficiently near to distinguish groups of women hoeing a field, and others pounding paddy, when there was a skedaddle, the women made for the huts screaming, whilst the men rushed out of their houses and gardens, with such arms as they could lay hands upon. "What is up?" said I. "Surely they can't be frightened of us." "I think some one has been killed, and probably by a tiger," said the Shikarie. We hurried on and when near enough heard the death wail, and on reaching the village were told that a girl had been carried off by a tiger. The people were fearfully excited; they had lived there over a year, and had not before been molested. The parents of the girl and her affianced husband

were in great grief, sobbing and crying incessantly. It was some time before I could ascertain particulars, and then found that a tiger had rushed out of a nullah close by, had seized the nearest girl and retreated with her to his lair. I told them I would endeavour to kill the beast and recover the body, if they would assist me; in the meantime they must keep quiet, collect all the so-called musical instruments they could lay their hands upon, and then I would place myself ahead for them to beat towards me. While the people were obeying my behest Mong-Oo and I explored. The extremity of the nullah commenced within two hundred yards of the cultivation, and the body had been dragged into it. Skirting the bank, we looked for a clearance or a tree into which we could climb and thus obtain a better view of the bed of the ravine. The only spot we could find was where a trunk had fallen, or had been felled, and formed a frail bridge extending from bank to bank. It was very old and decayed but apparently able to bear our weight, and as the grass had been trampled down either by wild beasts or the few buffaloes belonging to the Karens immediately in its front, I thought it would answer our purpose, so walking along the stem we sat down about the centre, a few feet apart, and found, that we were about seven feet off the ground and could see some distance in advance, and that nothing could pass us without going under our perch. All being ready, Mong-Oo stood up, waved the 'kerchief he usually tied round his top-knot, and the beat commenced. First it was tried to set the grass alight, but the heavy dews had rendered it for the time fire-proof. After this

failure the natives advanced in a compact body. Man-eaters, indeed any tigers, are not to be dreaded when a lot of people act together and present an unbroken front, while the din the Karens made was enough to frighten the old gentleman himself. They were still only about half way between the starting point and us, when, without a rustle even, a brindled body bounded forward as if from a catapult, and lit between us, on the *débris* hanging over the trunk, which being more rotten than we thought, cracked in two, and fell with a great crash into the bed of the ravine. Over we all tumbled, luckily clear of the fallen mass, which was of no mean weight. I rolled over and over, until I was some way off—fortunately retaining hold of my rifle—then recovered my feet. Mong-Oo was on the opposite bank yelling to me to fire. What at? I could see nothing but a cloud of dust, but hearing sundry "aughs" and deep groans, I looked towards where we had been sitting, and under the fallen tree I could see a tail flourishing and a part of a brindled body struggling violently in its endeavours to extricate itself. Not if I know it, thought I, and stepping up quickly, I put a couple of balls in just behind the jaw, at the junction of the neck, for the animal, a tiger, was on its back, all four feet in the air, and the log resting across its body. While mechanically I reloaded my rifle—not that I thought it would be required, but out of sheer habit—Mong-Oo advanced to pick up the 'kerchief which had done duty for a turban, and had fallen off in the scrimmage. A very slight movement in the grass caught his eye. He hesitated—held up his hand as a warning. In a moment I was behind him, capped

my nipples, and had both barrels full cocked. Out sprang a tigress, down went Mong-Oo, my outstretched rifle exploded, and I was thrown to the ground, the beast falling just beyond me in a heap. Her chest had come into contact with the muzzle of my rifle, she left the marks of her fangs on the barrels, but the bullets had done their work, passing clean through the heart into the abdomen, and breaking the spine close to the loins. After this there was some hesitation on the part of Karens to advance through the long grass, and they began to scatter, but re-collecting them together, I placed myself at their head. With half-a-dozen tom-toms and four cholera horns beating and blowing, we made a din which, if it did not frighten a tiger into fits, would certainly render him deaf for some considerable time! Soon we came upon the poor girl, stone dead, but otherwise untouched. After the body was removed, the beat was continued on till within fifty yards of the fallen trunk, when cubs were found, which the Karens knocked on the head. I halted at their village that day, got the people to collect a quantity of brushwood and dry grass, and about 3 P.M., set the grass in the ravine again on fire. This time it burnt merrily and was not extinguished till midnight, when the dew put it out. Still the conflagration had cleared the nullah for several miles, and the villagers ran little or no risk of wild animals visiting them, until the cover had regrown. I fancy these tigers had wandered to where we found them by mistake. The female had been confined only a few days, and as they could find no game, they had taken to homicidal practices.

Shooting Tigers on Foot is exceedingly dangerous. A tiger can hide behind a bush and be invisible where you would think a hare could not conceal itself. Again they will lie *perdu* until their pursuer is within striking distance, when even if shot through the heart, will at times have enough vitality left to kill a dozen men. Only when the spine is severed, or the brain penetrated, can one reckon on a mortally-wounded tiger being harmless. Never approach a tiger, even when in *articulo mortis*. With one expiring effort he may deal a blow, which, if it does not kill, will seriously maim. This is a mode of sport which should be undertaken only by experienced and cool hunters, who can rely on unfailing nerves and accuracy of eyesight. They who follow up a wounded tiger in thick bush, carry their lives in their hands. I don't pretend that I made a practice of this mode of tiger slaying, but I have had to do it many times, and of the two I think I prefer running the risk attached to killing a tiger on foot, to potting him off a tree. I will here give a few experiences.

News of a tiger having killed a grasscutter's *tat* (pony) was brought in one day, and three of us sallied out accompanied by thirty Ghoorkhas, those well-known plucky little fellows who are amongst the best of our soldiery in the East. The pony lay in a slight depression in the hills (Cossyah) and it was easy to trace the line its destroyer had taken. We at first followed up in single file, Colonel H. leading, until we came to an extensive elevated plain, covered with grass from three to four feet high. We then formed line, H. in the centre, B. on the right, and I on

the left, with the sepoys equally divided between us. We moved along quickly, hoping to find the marauder lying out in the open, the only sound to be heard besides our footsteps being an occasional tap on the ground given by the men every now and then with the long *latties* or sticks with which they were armed. The dew had been very heavy, the grass was saturated, and so were we before long. It was easy to trace the trail of a large animal through this savannah. Within half a mile the track we had been following bifurcated; but the two led towards a nasty ravine, which had before now proved a stronghold of not only tigers, but also of leopards and bears. The plain we were on was almost treeless excepting a sapling here and there, intermixed with a few dwarf scattered pines. Seeing the ravine so close at hand we despaired of finding our game out of cover and were carelessly strolling along with our rifles on our shoulders, when one of the Ghoorkhas called out, "*Dekho, Sahib! bagh jata hi*" (Look, sirs, there is a tiger), and sure enough, between H. and me, a tiger was making the best of its way over the plain. We could only see him now and then as he cantered along, yet we both saluted him. He responded with a deep growl as much as to say "Curse you!" but continued his course. No sooner had we fired than a cry of "*Bagh! bagh!*" arose all along the line. Three other tigers were scampering along; two appeared full grown, the other a cub. We opened a fusillade, all three firing three or four shots, for the orderlies promptly handed us the spare rifles, reloading those we had discharged—they were breechloaders, of course. One a tigress, rolled over, but regaining her feet

pulled herself together with her head towards us, and no sooner did she spy us than she came at us with a will. She made straight for H., who reserved his fire, whilst B. and I blazed away, apparently without any result. H., who was a plucky, phlegmatic sort of fellow, cool and collected, waited until she was within ten paces of him; he then gave her the right barrel. This caused her to stumble, but recovering herself, growling and roaring most diabolically, she almost sprang upon him. B. and I had closed up; whilst she was in the air the three of us fired. H. sprang aside, turned round, and seizing a rifle from his orderly gave her both barrels; but she was dead, pierced by no less than nine bullets. The slain was a small hill tigress, measuring only eight feet five inches. We covered her over with grass, which the sepoys cut with their *kookries*, and placing a handkerchief on a stick in a bush, to indicate the spot, we followed the other tigers. There was blood only on one spoor, and the beasts were well in the ravine before we got to its edge. Now the ticklish part of the work commenced. It was about as nasty a place to go into after a wounded tiger as can be imagined. The ground was uneven, cut up into fissures; there were dense bushes in parts, rocks in others, just the spot for a tiger to hide in and charge when least expected. It was amusing to see the nonchalant manner in which the Ghoorkhas advanced, stooping to pick the ripe *tiparie*, or cape gooseberry, which grew in profusion perfectly wild. This fruit is delicious, even when made into preserve. Our advance was slow and cautious, and whenever we came to a boulder higher than its neighbours, a man quickly ascended it and spied around. We had de-

scended one side, reached the bed, which was some twenty yards broad, but densely jungly, then followed the trace of blood, as the bushes were liberally sprinkled with it. Evidently the fugitive was hard hit, so we all got as close together as the nature of the ground would admit, our rifles at full cock and our orderlies in close attendance. The sepoys knew this ground well, as here, only a short time before, they had by themselves traced up and shot a tigress, and they said, "The tigers will not lie up until they reach that ledge of rocks yonder," pointing to the hill side, some way off, where the action of water had worn the stone into crude caverns. It certainly was a nasty-looking place, and we feared that if the game took up their position among them our task was fruitless, but before we got half way, a roar from the left was answered by one on the right, and two tigers bore down upon us. We fired, but not before the beasts had penetrated our line. Over went a man close to me and another near to H., and before we could seize our extra weapons, turn round and fire, both assailants had disappeared. The men who had been floored were happily only slightly wounded—one lost a part of an ear, and the other had been clawed on the shoulder—but the beast had not got off scot free, as a Ghoorkha, the Havildar—one of our best cricketers and football players, who unhappily was afterwards killed in an attack on a Naga stronghold, where he greatly distinguished himself—had given the brute a blow with his *kookrie*, which we found afterwards had all but severed its foreleg. It was bleeding to death when we finally came upon it lying under a bush. Not fifty yards further had we proceeded

when there was another charge, this time of course by only one beast. It was well riddled but not killed. Fearing some casualty amongst our followers, deeming the beasts mortally wounded, we were for leaving them until the next day, but the blood of the plucky little hill-men was up and they begged us to continue the fight. H., their commandant, was against our going on. He and the brigadier were not on the best of terms, and he feared if a man was killed he would be blamed. But B. and I, seeing how determined the Ghoorkhas were—and it is not wise to thwart them when their blood is up—begged him to gratify them. We gave the Havildar and two of the best shots our spare rifles, telling them to use them if necessary, and then advanced. The sepoys had silently dropped their *latties* and drawn their *kookries* (a weapon without which no Ghoorkha will move), and we knew if the beasts were not killed by our bullets, the men would force a settlement with their knives. However, when the brute charged the next time, he was duly rolled over. As the trail went no further we came to the conclusion that one tiger had been left behind, so thus retraced our steps. A Ghoorkha on the extreme left soon spied the tigress wounded by the Havildar, rushed at her in the most insane manner, and gave her a crack which laid open her head. She, although all but dead and weak from loss of blood, made a grab at him with her sound paw which tore the sleeve off his arm and left deep marks of her claws in the flesh. It is a wonder that he fared no worse. Thankful that we had got off so well, and satisfied with the day's work, we told the men to collect the slain and bring them to the Mess

House, and while they went to get their *latties* we trudged home. We had forgotten all about the cub; not so the men. Directly our backs were turned, they searched for him, found him, and literally hacked him to pieces, receiving sundry wounds in the encounter —for he was fully as large as a big St. Bernard dog— but these men made nothing of the mauling they got, only treating their wounds with laughter and joke. Such are these plucky good-natured Ghoorkhas, with whom I have had many a hunt. On service they are inferior to no troops in the world. They do not fear death in the least, and would, if ordered, as soon march up to a loaded battery of guns as enter into a game of football. The only drawback, if it can be called one, is, that if they meet with a stubborn resistance they get wild with excitement; then there is no holding them in hand. In such emergencies they drop their rifles, and rush in with their *kookries*, when the strife becomes a case of slaughter: for either they are killed or slay all opposed to them. I wish we had a couple of hundred thousand of them in a European war. I think they would astonish the flower of Continental troops.

I have been at other hunts after tigers on foot, alone and in company, but space is limited for I have to give instances of other modes of killing the right royal beasts.

Shooting off Elephants out of Howdahs is very exciting. There is just enough danger in it to stir up one's blood. If every elephant used could be thoroughly depended upon at all times, there would be little risk, but an elephant that is perfectly staunch

one day will probably turn tail the next, and a powerful tiger is capable of pulling down a large elephant. When your mount gets really frightened, it becomes ungovernable, and is as likely to tumble into a pitfall, or to go over the steep side of a nullah or precipice, or what is far worse and far more frequent, if a forest be anywhere near, to run amuck through it, when your howdah will be smashed to pieces, you and your weapons tossed about, and if you are not killed, well, you are lucky! These leviathans, so sagacious at times, when in a panic are really idiotic, and rush for the very place they should avoid! I have killed more tigers off elephants than in any other way; but then for twenty-one years I had a number of elephants at my command, and the right of travelling over districts extending over 400 miles in length and some 200 in breadth, in which were extensive plains covered with grass of from three or four to twenty feet high, and swarming with game. Departmental elephants I took care should also be good for *shikar*, as I had the purchasing of them, not unfrequently adding Rs.500 to their price out of my own purse in addition to the Rs.2000 allowed by Government, that I might obtain really good beasts. The same animals I used incessantly for years and years, and never lost one. With good feeding, careful handling, and never overworking, when I made them over to my successor, they were in prime condition and as good of their kind as could be obtained in India. I regret to say, however, that within eighteen months not one out of six I left behind me was alive. Besides the Departmental elephants, I had one or two of my own, and the right of

indenting on the Commissariat for four, and as the head of that Department was an old brother officer and a great chum and his principal *gomastha* worked as a contractor (*sub rosa*) under me, I got the pick of the keddah and knew far more about the elephants than did any one in charge of the animals.

On one occasion Archie C., lately Deputy Commissioner of Kamroop, then in the charge of the Burpetta subdivision, and I were beating in the dooars for whatever we could get. Our luck had not been great; for we had only bagged a couple of hog-deer, when a *gwala* appeared on the scene and told us a family of tigers had killed no less than six of his cattle. Now an Assamese cow or bullock is a miserable little beast. One would scarcely suffice as a meal for a leopard, so is therefore little more than a flea-bite for his royal relation. On this account very often tigers will kill a lot of cattle—more than they can consume—drag them into densely-wooded nullahs or jungles, where they are safe from the ken of carrion birds, and there eat them at their leisure. The higher the meat the more tigers seem to like it, and woe betide any stray jackal that dares to encroach on their larder, for the proprietor is never far off. But to return to the *gwala's* story. The cattle killed were untouched—several were not even cold—so, forming line, we beat straight ahead towards a small bheel where there was sufficient water and cover to afford tigers good shelter. General D. Hamilton—no mean authority—has said that he has never seen a tiger take a bath; but then his experience was acquired

where the climate is cold; but in other parts of India, Assam and Burma, in the hot season, the tiger dearly loves a moist locality. In vast hot plains, if there be any *bheels* about, and you are in search of tigers, make for them, for if there is one anywhere in the vicinity, there he will be found. So in the full assurance that before long we should make the acquaintance of the royal family, we continued to advance, C. on the left and I on the right, with eight elephants closely jammed between us. Our mahouts were always very keen when out with us, for we divided all Government rewards between them. We had no shikaries, as none exist in Assam. A Cacharie mahout, who was afterwards for some years in my employment, a plucky fellow, knew every inch of the dooars and he was besides without exception the very best tracker I ever saw. The elephants moved along briskly enough till we got to the edge of the *bheel;* they then began to be unsteady, to give tongue, in other words to make dismal noises, and as there was no solid ground, they flickled the tips of their trunks against their own legs, and in other ways gave us plainly to understand that they advanced under compulsion. We had not fired a shot and had entered about fifteen yards into the marsh, when, as if by a preconcerted arrangement, several tigers, as far as we could judge, rushed roaring in our direction. We could see the water splash, but the tigers were themselves hidden by the vegetation. We opened fire a little ahead of the moving grass, but I don't think we touched one of them. The uproar now was more than our elephants could stand even packed as they were, so they broke

away from the mahouts, spun round on their own axis, and made a strategic movement to the rear! One tiger which followed my mount to the very edge of the cover I got a glimpse of, for I had turned round and stood in the howdah, looking back, expecting what had occurred. At it I took a snap shot and hit it somewhere, for it gave a roar; this was a bit of luck, of course, as no one can be sure of killing an object even the size of a tiger when carried along at racing speed. But "Lutchmee" was a very smooth goer, and so used was I to living, as it were, on an elephant's back, that I was tolerably at my ease whether it was standing still, walking, or at full gallop, which is by the way an amble, for elephants move both legs on one side at the same time. From constant practice I could shoot snipe off their backs nearly as well as I could on foot, and this knack has stood me in good stead when being chased either by a buffalo, rhinoceros or tiger, as I think the reader will acknowledge when he has read more of this volume. We could not stop the elephants until we had got as far as the "kills," which, by the bye, were being devoured by thousands of vultures who pounced down upon them from every quarter of the heavens. After pitching into the mahouts, we told them, if they did not keep their beasts together and in line, with their heads to the foe, they would get no backsheesh but instead a taste of the stick.

If the elephants were in a funk before, they were now doubly so, literally trembling with fear, and it was only by a free use of the "ankus," or driving hook, they could be induced to advance. Again the

tigers tried the same tricks, but with less success this time. One charged home (we found afterwards that it was the one I had fired at) and bit an elephant in the leg, near the foot, but C. who was the nearest, neatly bowled it over ; the others, finding our phalanx unbreakable, wheeled off to the right and left, and took refuge in a nasty boggy part of the *bheel*, into which the elephants could not penetrate. Fortunately C. had some rockets and other fireworks with him, and after discharging a few infernal machines, we started the game afresh. They did not attempt to leave the marsh, as the country on our right side was open, and on the other our elephants had trodden down the grass, so that there was no cover for them to hide in if out of the quagmire. C. now went to one side of the *bheel* and I to the other, where I was on pretty firm ground. Everywhere we beat about, but could not see a sign of a tiger, and there ought to have been one, if not two. Getting out of the swamp I halted close to a bush, to watch C. I saw him raise his gun and fire, over the side of his howdah, and the next moment a tiger sprang clean off the ground, and seized hold of the lower bar of it with both teeth and claws. There was a crash, the elephant fell on to its side, sending C. and the mahout flying, and then there was the devil's own hallabaloo where the mass of flesh was struggling. I was glad to see the bipeds pick themselves up as I started for the scene of the accident. On moving off, a sound made me turn round, and from the very bush by which I had been standing for five minutes or more, out rushed a tiger. I fired in such a hurry, that I

am ashamed to say I missed with both barrels. Before I could get to the fallen elephant, a huge "mucknah" (a tuskless male), he, after moving his legs up and down like a pendulum, recovered his feet, and immediately commenced to play football with the tiger, kicking it forward with a hind foot, and throwing it back with a fore; if the brute had not been dead, he could not have long survived such treatment. We had to take two female elephants, one on either side of him, before we could pacify him and get him away. The only wounds he had on him, were the claw marks of the tiger's hind legs, by which he had clung to the elephant's belly. The howdah was smashed to bits, one of C.'s guns had a broken stock, so, considering all things, the elephant, and the two men escaped wonderfully well. On examining the tiger we found almost every bone in his body broken; for he was literally kicked into a jelly. C.'s last shot had caught the foe fairly in the chest, passed through the lungs and stomach, and made its exit close to the rump. If the elephant, who was standing on a declivity which gave way, and caused him to fall, had not squashed him, the tiger must have died of his wounds. My comrade was terribly shaken, but no bones were broken. Leaving the mahouts to pad the slain, C. got on to a pad elephant, and we went back to camp, whence we sent in to Burpettah for a howdah. Next morning my comrade was too poorly to go out, so taking all the elephants, I went alone. We beat about all day, getting only a small deer or two, and then a cry of "*Bagh!*" arose, and from a detached clump of long grass out rushed a tigress,

making for the same *bheel* as witnessed the previous day's adventure. I was quickly after her, and, odd to say, the elephants behaved admirably. I suppose from carrying home the tigers the day before, they had become accustomed to the smell, so when we put the game up and she made the usual feints at charging, the elephants did not budge. At length we got her into a corner, where we lost sight of her, but presently she sprung from the stump of a tree clean on to the back of a small beating elephant, lighting on the pad as noiselessly as a cat might have done. As she was now only a few yards from me, I dropped her stone dead, and she remained on the pad as if she had been placed there for removal to camp. These were the only tigers we got that trip, but I believe that the family consisted of six in all, for we heard of several "kills" afterwards in that neighbourhood, but although we went after them time after time, they always managed to evade us.

I could multiply indefinitely instances of tiger shooting off elephants, but the following, I think, particularly deserves mention. I was once beating a *chur* below Doobree, and the Deputy Commissioner of the Garow Hills, a clever plucky fellow, a splendid shot, and the most rising man in the Assam Commission, joined me. We killed several tigers and speared numerous hog, which run big there and fight hard. One day we came across a huge tiger, which W. hit hard. It took up its position in a dense thicket which no elephant would go into. W. dismounted his mahout, took his place, drove the elephant in as far as he could, then stooping well over his beast's head got a glimpse of the tiger, and shot it

dead. It was as plucky and cool a thing as I ever saw in my life.

I once met with a curious adventure and may mention it here. It smacks of the marvellous, but it is nevertheless perfectly true. I had sent my wife and children for a change to Ootacamund. During the monsoon ; the works on the lighthouse, in the construction of which I was then engaged, were in abeyance, and therefore there was no difficulty in obtaining leave. I crossed over from Burma, spent a month or two at Ooty, and then tried for elephants and gaur in the Wynaud Forest, making Coimbatore my headquarters. A fortnight I had been shooting and had had fair sport, killing several gaur, sambur and one elephant, but it was hard work, and I was thinking of returning to Ooty, when some Corumbirs, who live in the dense jungles much as the Karens do in Burma, and have but an apology for clothing, appeared one day and reported that a wonderful tusker frequented the forest in their vicinity. Casually they mentioned too that a tiger had lately been killing a good many people. I had still a fortnight remaining of the month I had devoted to sport, so thought that I might just as well try and pick up a good pair of tusks and rid the country of a man-eater. Packing up my goods on bullocks I returned with them. I searched the jungles for five days. The marks of a large elephant were certainly visible, but the animal himself we could never come across. As for the man-eater, there were reports of a "kill" here and a "kill" there, but when I got to the place the replies were indefinite or nobody visible. On the sixth day a man rushed into my camp, and said his daughter had been killed that

morning at daybreak, and if I would come at once they would beat for the beast, and that people had surrounded it. I hurried there, but the corpse had been removed and was being cremated. Also the circle formed round the man-eater had been so defective that he or she had got away. I was very angry, and swore they might all be decimated before I trudged a mile to save them. These people are very superstitious, and believe that if the body of a person killed by a tiger is not recovered and burnt, the defunct will arise and destroy all its relatives who have failed to give it the rights of burial, which in most cases means being burnt. I then removed my camp further inland about ten miles, searching for the tusker daily without getting a sight of him. Hearing of a human being being killed here and there, notwithstanding what I had stated, I did go frequently to try and get a shot at the homicide, but it was all in vain; the people would not leave the victims, but drove the tiger off before I could get to the scene of the tragedies. On the eleventh day I came upon fresher marks than usual of the tusker, and was following them up, accompanied by my shikarie, a local man, and a *Karumba*. We were far from the haunts of man, and all was solitude, when there was heard a piercing cry, which was unmistakably the death shriek of some miserable creature struck down by a beast of prey. I rushed forward, followed most reluctantly by my two attendants, and found a poor wood-cutter. He was a small, wiry, man probably about forty years of age, all but naked, and the breath was scarcely out of his body. As I stooped over him to ascertain whether there was the least hope of his recovery, I found that

the back of his skull had been beaten in, as with a sledge-hammer. When I turned round the *Karumba* was making tracks, evidently with a view of giving notice of the misfortune to some villagers, and as I knew if he once got away we should have a posse of men with torches coming for the body, I caught him by the scruff of his neck and told him if he attempted to leave I would break every bone in his body. Now that I had a corpse I meant to utilise it, so I forcibly detained him and made him and the shikarie, collect wood and erect a "machan." The body lay with the face uppermost, and had fallen amid some brush-wood close to a stout sapling, while a fair-sized tree commanded the position from a distance of about fifteen yards. There was fortunately a good moon, so soon before dusk we climbed into our perch, the villager muttering that it was sacrilege we were guilty of, and that surely the corpse would arise and slay us. Finally I procured silence by telling the men, if they made the least noise, I would tie them up as living bait. It was a gruesome sight, watching that dead body as the moon shone on its face, exaggerating every feature. I must own, were it not that I considered it a duty to try and rid the country of that awful infliction, a man-eater, I would even at the last moment have gone back to camp.

The time went by but slowly. Eleven o'clock arrived; no appearance of the tiger. Some tall trees cast a shadow over the corpse, but I could not take my eyes off that poor, thin, ghastly upturned face, when, oh, horror! one eye opened, then the other; soon after an arm moved, succeeded by a shiver of the body.

It was too absurd. The sight was too much for my companions. They dropped forward in a swoon. Even I, too, felt as if icy cold water was being poured down the back of my neck. Demoralised I was certainly getting, I do not think that I could have borne the gruesome sight much longer, when there was a roar, and a brindled mass sprang at something which was invisible to me. Instantaneously a vast speckled body coiled itself round the brindled matter, there was a struggle, bones seemed to be crunched to bits, the tiger gave a feeble roar or two, and then all was still except an occasional convulsive upheaving. In that fearful effort, the corpse had been shifted so that its wide and sightless orbs no longer stared upwards. That alone was a relief. What had occurred I could not conjecture.[1] The men, when they recovered from their faint, still lay prone with their hands over their faces, muttering that we were now as good as dead. Giving one a slight kick, I asked him what he was afraid of. "The corpse will kill us," he muttered. "Why, you fools," said I, "the dead come not to life again. The woodcutter is dead, and something has killed his destroyer. We shall know all about it in the morning. I am going to sleep; you had better do so too."

I knew they were in too great a fright to descend from the machan and seek a village at that time of night, so making myself as comfortable as I could, I turned over on my side and dozed off, giving a convulsive start now and then as I dreamt that the woodcutter was threatening me. But everything has an end. That long, long night at length terminated.

and thankful I was to see the dawn of day and hear the jungle fowls proclaim that sunrise was at hand. Losing no time I descended to solve last night's mystery, the sight that met my eyes was marvellous. A huge rock snake, a python, just over twenty-one feet in length, lay coiled round the body of the tiger, whose fangs in turn were imbedded in the back of the snake's head, while the reptile's folds, after enveloping the tiger, had got a purchase by lashing its tail round the adjoining sapling, and so assisted the vast muscular power it possessed in crushing the tiger to death. On examining the corpse of the man, we found saliva or slime over the face and the upper part of the body, and so I have no doubt the snake had thus prepared the human prize for swallowing when the tiger sprang upon it, resulting in the two meeting their deaths as described. The movements of the man's body were doubtless caused by the snake's pressure and by its progress round and about the carcase. The python, though dead some hours, had still sufficient muscular power left to make it appear dangerous. These reptiles are properly called *boa constrictors*, for their power of contraction, when they have a purchase to aid them, is immense, and I have heard the natives tell wonderful tales about their strength, even to their making buffaloes their victims. Snakes may have the power, but as they could not make a meal off a buffalo, they would have no object in assaulting them, unless under similar circumstances to those related above.

Having procured coolies, with the united strength of twenty men, aided with coils of strong rope, we unwound the snake from its hold on the tree, when a

cart being procured, the two, lying dead in each other's embrace, were conveyed to the village.

Having secured a rough sketch of the extraordinary scene, I had the snake skinned, but the people failed to hang it out of the reach of prowling jackals, and five feet of it was torn away.

It was thus lost as a specimen. I thought it very large at the time, but subsequently I saw two snakes killed each over twenty-four feet in length. But one might live to the age of Methuselah, and wander in the forests for five hundred years and never see such a sight as that witnessed by me that night. The dead woodcutter was duly cremated. I remained a week longer, got the "tusker," but heard no more of anybody being killed. There is little doubt therefore, that it was the veritable man-eater that was destroyed by the snake. The tiger[1] was only eight feet one inch long, in perfect condition as to skin, but very emaciated, as if her food either did not agree with her or she did not get enough of it, and I strongly suspect the latter was the case, for so vigilant were these people that they never gave the depredator time to make a square meal off her numerous victims. But for the chance of my having witnessed the woodcutter's death, and so prevented the men removing the corpse, the probabilities are the man-eater would have lived many a day longer and continued its ravages upon the human family.

In the Yonzaleen, Burma, man-eating tigers are very numerous, in other parts of that country they are, comparatively speaking, unknown. But occasionally one hears of a person being killed here and

[1] It turned out to be a tigress.

there, although the remoter villages are protected by either a palisade or by a strong fence of thorny bushes..

I had a lime quarry about thirteen miles from Tongho. There I had built a good house, out-offices, etc., but a tiger one night killed a valuable pony of mine in the stable. I sat up for him, and hit him hard, but never got him. Then for about a year we heard nothing more of tigers, but news was brought to me by one of my workmen that several people had disappeared from an inland village, about fifteen miles from the limekiln station, so I determined to pay it a visit and arrange for a hunt. The country was very rough, being a series of low hills covered with dense bamboos with other jungle, nasty swamps occurring between them, so elephants as beaters were utterly useless. Moreover the interstices were seldom burnt, so undergrowth was excessive, making stalking and beating alike impracticable. Thus the only chance of a shot was to sit up over a "kill."

A day's journey from the "kilns" up the lovely Thouk-y-ghat, or drinking-water stream, the country was opener, and yit, (pheasants), jungle fowl and barking deer were to be found. So I had a hut built there close to a *townyah* or clearance, where three or four Karens lived, who looked after my effects during my absence. I was well known and friendly with all the people, and about once a year I used to send invitations to the different head men within a day's journey to attend a *pooay*, or native theatricals, which the Burmese dearly love. One April—it was if I mistake not the 21st—I left for my hut on

the Thouk-y-ghat, put up there that night, and the next morning, accompanied by my *lugalay*, or Burmese boy, I set out to visit the village of Shqaydeik, distant about twelve miles, intending to sleep there and make inquiries about a reported man-eater. A coolie also carried a few necessaries, especially a set of curtains for mosquitoes, for these wretches make life a burden to all in Burma unless protected by a muslin curtain which enwraps the whole of one's crib. When safely ensconced thus, I could sleep on anything, but without it, sleep even on the downiest couch would be impossible. My lad carried a short double-barrelled No. 12 rifle,[1] a splendid weapon, and my special favourite, smooth bore which threw ball and shot at short range equally well, and were the first breechloaders I ever possessed.

We had gone probably six or seven miles without seeing anything, but in crossing a well-wooded watercourse a sambur ran up the hillside, exposing the whole of his broadside at a distance of not more than fifty yards. A lucky shot with the left barrel, which was loaded with ball, broke his back. I cut its throat, and as the head was a particularly fine one for Burma I wanted to preserve it entire, and was proceeding to cut it off and hang it on a tree until our return, when the coolie said there was a small village about two miles off, and the people would be glad of some of the meat, and that we could send in the head and the rest of the flesh for the use of the workmen at the quarry. So I told him I would wait there until his return, but he said he was afraid to go

[1] They were made in 1863, by Westley Richards.

alone, and asked me to allow the lad to accompany him; so telling them to put their "packs" down on a knoll overlooking a clear, bright streamlet, and cutting branches and grass to cover over the sambur and protect the body from the vultures, which would otherwise have swept down upon it, I let them start, then, leaving the beaten path, about one hundred yards I sat down. I made myself as comfortable as I could, choosing for my perch a projecting rock, with another just a little below it on which I could rest my feet, my gun and rifle being close at hand. It was just the kind of jungle where one might expect to see "yit" and jungle fowl, who are very fond of scratching and pecking about for ants and larvæ near the banks of mountain streams, especially when they are shaded, as this one was, by a grass which much resembles young bamboos. At my back was a small "bear" bush,[1] against the stem of which I leant my back, and on either side of me the undergrowth was rather heavy, but down to my front I could see very distinctly. I did not think that even a hare could have gone by without being observed. To pass the time I ate some hard-boiled eggs, and drank some of Crabbie's ginger-wine, for the day was sultry, not a breath of air moving the atmosphere. Here I had been perched for nearly an hour and was getting drowsy, when I heard the musical laughter and voices of some approaching Burmese girls. I thought they probably belonged to the village my people had gone to, and that the men were following; yet they appeared

[1] This is a thorny, stunted tree and bears a fruit somewhat resembling a small crab apple which are not bad eating if thoroughly ripe.

to come from a different direction. I did not move, as if they followed the path they must pass close to me when I could question them.

Presently four lassies, the eldest not more than seventeen and the others between fifteen and that age, with trays on their heads and in gala costume, came in view on the opening at the further side of the river's bank. It did not take them a minute to deposit their burdens, take off their thin jackets, lay aside their "thamins," and throw themselves into the river, which nowhere was much above their knees. They amused themselves playing and romping with each other, totally unconscious that there was a man sitting down within thirty yards of them. I was absorbed in the spectacle, for the girls were pretty, in fact you might travel through the length and breadth of Europe and not meet with such perfect figures. But Asiatics, left to nature, strangers to corsets and tight-lacing, develop in a manner unknown to people of colder climes, who, though oftener prettier in the face, are sadly deficient in the contour of the body. The Elders who peeped at Susanna, would have gone raving mad could they have seen the abandon of these four damsels! I had been inwardly chuckling and conceived the idea of jumping up and overwhelming them with confusion, when a movement in the grass attracted my attention. As I said before, I did not think that a hare could have passed without being seen, but though I took my eyes off the fascinating spectacle in the stream, and bent them on the spot, I could see nothing, but once my attention had been called away from the nymphs, my instinct as a hunter predominated. So I seized my rifle, loaded the

gun with ball so as to be ready for any contingencies, and silently cocked both weapons. For the space of half a minute nothing moved and nothing was visible; and the girls continued splashing one another and enjoying their douche amidst fits of laughter. Then there was another slight rustle, yet I could see no living thing. I surmised it might be a snake, or a yit, so thought of replacing the shot cartridges, when another movement riveted my attention. I forgot the girls, my eyes protruding out of my head in a vain attempt to penetrate the mystery, but although the whole time was not more than a couple of minutes, it appeared an hour, before I obtained a view of a brindled mass which, crouching with belly touching the ground, was creeping slowly but surely towards its unconscious victims in the water! Why, thought I, it is a tiger, and probably the man-eater we have heard of. It is stalking the girls, but by G—d I'll spoil its little game. I could distinctly trace the murderous brute drawing its hind legs under its body preparatory to springing forward, so I thought it time for me to interfere. I could see the two white marks which are so conspicuous on the backs of a tiger's ears, and knew therefore that if I fired exactly between them, that I should hit the back of the head at its junction with the spine—a fatal spot if struck, no matter whether the animal be an elephant, a rhinoceros, a buffalo, or any other living thing. Moreover my position for that shot was most advantageous, for I was shooting downwards. The rifle[1] and I were old comrades. I had killed much game with it and won many a match, so provided my nerve did not

desert me and I held the weapon straight, the bullet would not fail me. I had a splendid support, for my feet resting on a rock a little below, enabled me to place my elbows on my knees, so taking a rapid but careful sight, I fired. What happened for the next second or two I cannot tell, for at the report of the rifle the girls screamed and made for the bank, luckily on the side they had entered the river. The smoke hung, but there was a roar and something flashed past me, and as the smoke cleared away I saw a tiger in the water bounding towards the girls, who, huddled ,together, appeared paralysed with fright and unable to move. Surely, thought I, I could not have missed. I never fired more coolly or steadily in my life and if struck the brute should be as dead as a door-nail. But the fact remains, there he is, and if I don't disable him within the next minute he'll kill some of those girls. Then I remembered the roar behind me and the flashing of something over me, and wondered whether there could be a second brute, but I had not much time for cogitation. Act I must, and that speedily. Fortunately I had not altered my position; my elbows were still on my knees, and aiming at the would-be destroyer's broad back, I fired. Luckily a gust of wind at that moment blew the smoke aside and I saw the tiger rear up, give a gasp, and then swim steadily forward. I dropped the rifle and seized the gun, but by that time the tiger was all but out of the water, and as he made for the girls I fired and broke a fore leg, but beyond stumbling and giving one snarling roar, he continued on his way. Again I

touching distance of the women, and as he struggled on the ground, one of them[1] threw her "thamin" over his head, and dragging her comrades with her, retreated backwards into the river, and made for my side of it, as fast as they could. Before the tiger could clear himself of the encumbrance over his head—for he had a foreleg broken and was otherwise hard hit—the girls were scrambling up the hill-side, while I again was ready for the would-be homicide. The tiger without a moment's hesitation plunged back into the river. I aimed at his head, the ball struck him just above the nose, but below the brain, and passed through both jaws, breaking them. But the enraged beast would not be denied, and he was dragging his dripping body out of the water, when I hit him in the chest, but the ball did no great harm as it passed downwards and did not penetrate a vital part, as it would have done had I been on the same level. However he now stood still, uttering roar on roar, swaying about so that I hesitated to fire for fear of missing him altogether. The girls in the meantime had rushed past me and I knew they would be up trees before the feline could overtake them in his crippled state, moreover now I was between him and them. I had therefore time to slip in another cartridge, and biding my time, as he turned his side to me, for he could not face the steep ascent of the bank, I struck him in the centre of the shield and knocked him over. As he was not dead, but still gasping and now and then uttering a low growl, I reloaded the rifle and going down put

[1] She married a noted worker in gold in Tongho and was christened, why I know not, "Orangie."

the brute out of pain. Whilst I was standing over my prize, I found that it was a very large tigress. I heard voices some way off, so crossed the river, seized the girls' clothes, ran up the hill, and found them as I anticipated perched upon so many branches. Laughing at them as they attempted to screen their nakedness from me, I told them not to be afraid as the tiger was dead, but as a lot of villagers were not far off they had better don their dresses. So not wishing to add to their confusion, I turned my back on them and walked off, and in a few minutes my boy and about a dozen men appeared, but from a direction quite different from that by which the girls had come, as the latter belonged to another village.

My boy said they had heard the shots and thought I was firing at a mark for practice and to pass away the time; but I took them up to the tigress and told what had occurred. Some of the men examined the carcase and exclaimed, "Why, it is one of the dreaded man-eaters. Look here, she has lost two toes off a hind foot. That was done by a man she seized about six weeks ago." "But where can the other be, for they are never far apart?" "Why," said I, "I think there must have been another, for I don't think this is the one I fired at first, but I fear I must have missed him." "Be ready then, *Tuckin*," (Sir), said one of the men, "now that the female is dead he will attack us to a certainty." So cocking my rifle, and bidding my boy to remain close behind me with the gun, I went towards where I thought the first tiger should be. The men all separated and went into the trees in a minute. The girls had

descended and clothed themselves, but seeing the men running, and climbing aloft, they did likewise. My lugalay (boy) was very reluctant to come with me, but I told him if he moved or attempted to loiter, I would tie him up as a bait, for I was determined to have that tiger. But there was no need for fear, or further precautions, for after a little search I found a tiger stone dead, lying on its back, hidden by a rock, and on which he must have been crouching preparatory to springing on the girls. Calling out that the other tiger was also dead, I told the people to come down and drag both to the river bank, but until the boy had assured them that it was really true that both the beasts were defunct, not one of them would move. Indeed the girls were the first to set this example, for they slipped off their perches and came to where I was standing, clasping my knees as they knelt down, and calling me their preserver and goodness knows what, whereas if the truth be told, the whole time the scrimmage lasted—and it was not of five minutes' duration—I had not given the women a thought, for my hunter's instinct had been so wrapped up in the death of the royal cats, that everything else had gone out of my head. But of course I was glad that I had been instrumental in having saved them from becoming food for such monsters, for the girls were far too fine specimens of the human race to have met with such a fate. I was then told that these two tigers always hunted in company, and that they had killed over twenty people in two months, a great mortality for a tract so sparsely populated.

But my own escape must have been a narrow one, for whilst the male was making for the girls, the female must have been stalking me, and I attribute her failure to my having fired just as she was about to take her spring. The report doubtless startled her, and as I was enveloped in the smoke, she probably lost sight of me and miscalculating the distance, sprang over instead of on to me, and so the impetus carried her down hill, where she probably saw the dead body of her mate, when she made for the girls determined on revenge. Her subsequent behaviour proved how utterly reckless she was of her own life provided she could avenge the death of her lord and master. There was no excuse for their homicidal propensities, for both were young and in the full vigour of their strength. The male measured nine feet eight inches, and the female nine feet one inch.

It took us some time to deprive them of their pelts, and by the time they were skinned it was too late for me to go on, so taking six men with me, carrying the heads and skins, and a goodly supply of sambur meat, I returned to my hut on the Thouk-y-ghat. The other villagers took the remainder of the venison and went home. The girls asked to be allowed to accompany us, as they were too terrified to travel alone, so giving up my cabin to them, I slept in my boat, and the next day took them down in it to the limekilns. I found that one of my head quarrymen was the father of the eldest lass, who had so pluckily and at so critical a moment thrown her "thamin" over the tiger's head. All the others had

relations in Tongho, most of them men in my employ. They often afterwards brought presents of flowers to my wife and children. They all married very well, and whenever I met any of them alone I used to make her blush and run away by asking her when she was going to the river to bathe again.

CHAPTER II.

RHINOCEROS SHOOTING (ASIATIC).

It is a current belief, that the skin of a rhinoceros will resist an ordinary bullet—that it is all but impervious. This is nonsense. A spherical ball out of a 12 smooth bore, driven by five drachms of black powder, if rightly placed, will kill a rhinoceros far easier than it would a buffalo; for though the skin is very thick, it is easily penetrated. I have seen a man of ordinary strength drive a "shikar" knife up to the hilt behind the shoulder of a prostrate rhinoceros. But still it is better to use heavy weapons, with large charges and hardened bullets; not on account of the denseness of the cuticle, but because the missile has to pass through an immense quantity of flesh, well covered with muscle, before it can reach a vital part. Jerdon (the naturalist) recommends steel-tipped bullets and shells. The former are of course very well adapted for slaying all pachyderms, but the latter are simply useless. I tried many kinds, notably Forsyth's, but I never succeeded in killing a rhinoceros with one, though I fired with them at over thirty. I found the belted bullets from my two grooved rifles hardened with a mixture of quicksilver, very deadly. Shooting

downwards, I once put a ball right through a charging beast; it entered near the spine and made its exit through the abdomen. I have shot two rhinoceros right and left—killing them with one ball each—but they were very close and inclined to fight, so gave easy shots. Most elephants dread these animals very much, and few will go close to them. If a ball be placed in the centre of the shield over the shoulder, rather low down, it penetrates the heart. If behind the shoulder, the lungs are perforated, and the animal subsides in a few moments. When thus shot it runs a little way, then falls down, and in its dying moments makes a peculiar noise which can be heard a long way off, and once heard can never be forgotten. In hostilities, Indian rhinoceros do not use the horn, but their tusks, with which they can inflict fearful gashes. In Burma, the most common rhinoceros is the double horned, but two other species exist, yet are seldom come across, as they inhabit morasses that may be termed quagmires, over which a loaded elephant cannot travel. In Assam, we have but two kinds of this genus, the larger and the lesser. They are exceedingly plentiful in the Terai, at the foot of the Bhootan and Himalaya ranges, and are also found in the swamps along the base of the Cossyah and Garrow Hills. Throughout the province there are favourite localities, as well as in many of the "churs" (islands) of the Brahmapootra river. The larger Asiatic rhinoceros has only one horn, seldom eighteen inches long, generally a good deal less. This horn is said to be but a conglomeration of hairs, and is liable to be detached through either injury or disease, when another grows in its place.

The skin, as stated, is very thick, with a deep fold at the setting on of the head, another being behind the shoulder, and a third in front of the thighs. Two large incisors are in each jaw, with two smaller intermediate ones below, and two still smaller outside the upper incisors, the last are not always present. The general colour is dusky black. The dimensions of one I bagged were as follows: extreme length of body, twelve and a half feet; tail, two feet; height, six feet two inches; horn, fourteen inches. These animals delight in swamps and mud holes, and even in running streams, and "lie up" in them during the heat of the day. The lesser rhinoceros is found in the Soonderbunds, near Calcutta, and in all suitable localities on the left bank of the Brahmapootra river. I never came across it on the right bank, but doubtless it exists there too, as all these beasts wander about a good deal in search of food. In appearance it somewhat resembles the larger, but the folds are not so pronounced, and the shields have often tubercles on them, and it is said it is attracted by fire. The Burmese assert it eats it! As a rule the rhinoceros is very inoffensive. It lives in such remote localities, that none but a hunter thinks of intruding upon its habitat, but if there be any grain grown within a few miles of their outlying haunts, it will march long distances during a night to feed upon it. To get these animals in fairly open ground, the sportsman must be in their preserves at daybreak, for the beasts soon retire into impenetrable forests where there are mudholes, and in them takes their siestas. It is naturally a timid animal, more anxious to escape than fight, is very

easily killed, but if pushed hard or driven into a corner it turns to bay and if it can close, it will leave its marks for time and a day. Although the horns are contemptible as trophies, the native Assamese and Mawarries prize them greatly, and will give as much as Rs.45 a seer (2 lbs.) for them. They are also greatly prized by the Chinese. Two officers, Cock (afterwards killed in the Naga campaign) and Bunbury, just before I arrived at Gowhatty, made a good bag of these beasts, and by the sale of the horns more than repaid all their expenses. They live in apparent harmony with wild elephants, and I have seen them lying down in the same mudhole with a Buffalo!

Many castes of Brahmins, Hindoos, and Mawarries will not touch flesh of any kind, living on grain and vegetables alone, but they make an exception in favour of the flesh of the pachyderm I am describing. They have often asked me to dry the tongue for them. This they pulverise, bottle it, and take a pinch or two when ill. The Assamese and bigoted Hindoos follow a sportsman about like vultures, and as soon as a rhinoceros is dead they rush upon it, fight for the tit-bits, and do not leave even a piece of the skin. This they cut into long strips, roast it over embers, and eat it as we do the "crackling" of a pig. Considering the habits of the beast, for it deposits its ordure always on the same spot until a considerable mound is formed, and the value put on the flesh and horns by the natives, I am surprised there are any left alive. If native shikaries dug a pit, and sat near one of these places of deposit, they could easily shoot the animal

bagged the only rhinoceros I ever killed in Burma. But in Assam I killed a great many off elephants and a few on foot.

Jerdon says the height of the lesser rhinoceros is only from three to three-and-a-half feet, but I have killed them at least a foot higher. He was a very clever naturalist, but most obstinate, and occasionally quite wrong as to facts. Now, I mentioned to him that the Tucktoo, a Gecko I had heard every day and night of my life in Burma for thirteen years, was in existence in Assam. He flatly contradicted me. So the very next time I went to Burneyhat, the first stage *en route* to Shillong, where I often heard them uttering their cries, I got the natives to catch one for me. This they did reluctantly, for they believe them to be poisonous—but what will not a wretched Assamese do for a rupee or even a few annas!—so I took it to Jerdon, who was staying with me in Gowhatty. Again I told him that amongst many bears I had killed in the province, one had been the ordiňary *Ursus labiatus*. He would have it that that was impossible, but as the beast had been killed only a short time before, and I had its skin, with the skull attached so took it to him. Now the *U. labiatus* has only four incisors in the upper jaw, whilst the *Ursus tibetanus* has six. How that individual beast found its way to the foot of the Himalayas, where I shot it, I don't know, for the ordinary bear of the country is *Ursus tibetanus*, though why so-called would be a puzzle to most sportsmen, as it is not found in Thibet at all!

General Sir Charles Reid, G.C.B., of Delhi fame, when shooting at Loqua Ghat with me, killed two

rhinoceros in one day with one ball each, and those bullets were twenty to the pound in calibre, yet the next day he lost a large rhinoceros after repeated discharges at close quarters! Truly there is great luck in shooting! One day a man will bag all he fires at; the next day, under equally favourable circumstances, he will not kill a single thing.

The two-horned rhinoceros's habitat extends from Chittagong southwards, and it is also found in Sumatra, Java and some of the other large islands. Its skin is as smooth as a buffalo's, but in habits and customs it much resembles the other species of its family. A curious variety of this rhinoceros was secured by Captain Hood, and is now, I believe, in the Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park. Its ears, if I remember right, were somewhat tesselated, and I believe there is another variety called the hairy rhinoceros. I waged war against these pachyderms, why, I don't know—for I was not fond enough of the ungrateful Assamese to provide them with such choice food—but I can answer for it, that of the forty-seven or forty-eight which I killed, not an ounce of flesh was thrown away. I, however, lost a number of wounded. Whenever I was out shooting in the "dooars," I was followed secretly by "shikaries," who retrieved my wounded beasts, sold the flesh to the natives and appropriated the horns. In this way I was robbed of a magnificent one (for Assam), fully eighteen inches long and weighing three seers or more. I should have known nothing of this larceny but that two men quarrelled about the plunder, and then one went post haste to Burpettah and reported that he and his partner had

found a rhinoceros I had shot, with the above horn, which from its length was a rarity. The Commissioner sent "peelers" to have the man apprehended, but he bolted across the frontier. The late Major Cock, finding the Assamese so eager to buy the mere stumps which most of the rhinoceros he had shot were adorned with, seeing in Calcutta a lot of African rhinoceros horns for sale, several nearly three feet in length, for a trifling sum, bought the whole lot, and sent them to a tea planter to dispose of, but the Assamese would not credit that they were genuine, so would have none of them. What became of them eventually I do not know, but I often saw them lying about in the tea house in Gowhatty. Sometimes a sportsman slays a cow rhinoceros with a calf. When such happens, by all means send for the nets which every village in Assam possesses for catching wild animals—including the immensely powerful wild buffalo—and you will have no great difficulty in securing the youngster. In my day Jamrach's agent would give from Rs.1000 to Rs.1200 apiece for them. I had two, and was offered Rs.2000 for the brace, delivered in Calcutta or Rs.1600, delivery in Gowhatty, so I chose the latter offer, but discovered afterwards that if I had stuck out, I should have got a good deal more.

My first experiences of rhinoceros in Assam were at Loqua Ghat, in 1866 or 1867, when shooting with General Sir Charles Reid. I was unlucky, and failed to bag. But in June, 1867, I determined to visit the dooars, though it was very late in the season, and bets were offered that if I went there, and remained a week or ten days, I should be a dead man, a month

afterwards from jungle fever. But I never listen to croakers. Having to go to Burpettah where I had works in progress, I thought that I might as well try for game. I reached Tara-barec Ghat about 8 A.M. on June 10th. Although I had sent on my elephants several days before, and they had had ample time to get there, I found none had arrived. Thinking the mahouts might have gone to Burpettah, I sent a note to the Assistant Commissioner, and he very kindly sent over a "palanquin" for me, but as it and the elephants arrived almost together, I sent it back, and halted for the night where I was. The next day, June 11th, I awoke the people at 4 A.M., and being independent of Assamese coolies, who seldom put in an appearance before 8 A.M., I got off at 5 o'clock. I sent my baggage elephants with servants, &c., to Burpettah by the beaten track, whilst I, with two elephants, went across country, being anxious to ascertain whether there were tigers about, as reported by the native officials.

At starting, the country was quite open, with paddy-fields, not in use, and overgrown with short grass. In these I noticed a broad trail. Whether made by buffaloes or other heavy beasts I could not tell, but as the animals, whatever they might be, were going our way, I followed them up. Leaving the open ground, we entered a grassy savanna, in which were a few marshes, surrounded by thick bushes. The track abruptly turned off to the right, and directed for a very heavy patch of long grass. On examining the spoor, I saw that we were following rhinoceros and not buffaloes. In addition to my old battery I had purchased a breechloading rifle, No. 10

bore,[1] with very short barrels, a wonderfully handy weapon, and with which I killed a lot of game. We had not advanced very far when we came upon the usual mound of ordure, with fresh droppings upon it, so we knew the animal could not be far off. Our two elephants now began to show decided symptoms of funk, but the mahouts kept them straight. At last, at the edge of the "jeel," partially covered by a bush, I distinguished the body of a rhinoceros. It was standing broadside on, but the head was turned in our direction with the ears cocked forward, listening to the noise our mounts made splashing through the grass and water. Neither the mahout nor the elephant saw it, so I touched the man on the head, which was always a signal for him to promptly pull up the "hathee." I could distinguish only a form; no vital part was visible, but about where I thought the shoulder should be, I let fly. On the smoke clearing away a very large animal rushed into the "jeel" and I fired the left barrel into its shoulder. On receiving this shot, which was well placed, the mammoth pulled up and faced me. I dropped the discharged weapon and had just time to seize one of the two-grooved rifles, when with a shriek the monster charged. I gave it the contents of both barrels at a distance not exceeding ten yards. This caused it to swerve, shrieking loudly, and rush away. All this time my elephant, apparently paralysed with fear, had not moved, but the noise the pachyderm made was irresistible, so my "hathee" broke away from the mahout and ran off in a direction the very opposite of that taken by our antagonist, and went fully a

quarter of a mile before it could be stopped. Whilst running away, I turned round and was under the impression that I saw a second rhinoceros retiring, and it must have been that one I afterwards followed, for I could not find it anywhere. An ominous noise from quite a contrary direction now struck my ear, so I hied back, and found a very large male, stone dead. It had a thick, massive horn, but only eight inches in length, weighing one and three quarter seers. We got men from a village not far off to help us to cut off the head and to put it on the spare elephant, and then rode triumphantly into Burpettah. In the "dooars," I met with great difficulties, owing to the monsoon having set in, and the nullahs and rivers being very full, but I hunted there for a week, wounded half a dozen, if not more, rhinoceros, but did not bag a single one. In returning, I got back to Gowhatty with the greatest difficulty, owing to the inundated state of the country. As a madman I was looked upon for having entered there at that season, and my death from jungle fever was avowed, but I disappointed the prophets, and I did not suffer from the exposure I had undergone in the slightest degree. With Jackson of the 43rd, I killed thirteen rhinoceros in fourteen days, and had some narrow escapes. Once, while following closely up a wounded bull, he came for me. "Lutchmee," my elephant, turned tail, and just managed to keep about a foot ahead of the assailant's snout, whose upper lip was curled up, disclosing his formidable tusks. I spun round, took a snap shot downwards, struck the junction of the head and spine, and the huge monster rolled almost heels over head. No rhinoceros has been so close to

an elephant I have been riding on, as this one. If I had had a man behind me, I feel sure my animal would have been cut, for I could not have fired as I did. In the "dooars," Colonel Cookson and I went out on foot one afternoon to pick up jungle fowl, florikan, black partridge, or in fact anything we could get. Our elephants were tired, as they had been worked from dawn to mid-day, during which time we had bagged three rhinoceros, one male and two females. A couple of attendants carrying rifles attended us, for one never knows what may be come across in that region. At the edge of the forest we hit a marsh deer with exceptionally fine horns, and in following it up, forgot time and distance, and found ourselves in a vast plain dotted here and there with bushes, which almost deserved the names of trees. Water-fowl we could see flying about, so we knew there must be marshy ground towards which our stag had retreated. So we followed and followed. At last we noticed that the sun was declining, so pulled up, but where we were, no one knew. We sent a man up a tree, but he could distinguish no land marks that were known to him, but he suddenly pointed to the north and said he saw three or four rhinoceros not far off. The grass was only about three to four feet high, so more favourable for tigers than for pachyderms, yet we thought we would just go a little way and try for a shot. We got to within one hundred yards of the game easily enough, then there was little or no cover, excepting a few conical white ant hills. My companion chose one, I another, and we crawled on hands and feet till we got about thirty

got a ball behind the ear—a chance shot I fear—and dropped, two others were wounded and charged straight at us. We were about fifteen yards apart. My ant nest was a good six or eight feet high. I was on its summit in a moment and gave each beast a shot as he passed. They ran all abroad. One fell an awful cropper into a mudhole, sending a deluge of water into the air, and falling almost on the top of a huge male buffalo, who, disturbed by our shots, was scrambling on to his legs and endeavouring to get out of his bath. The rhinoceros must have been mad with rage, for he gave the buffalo a gash across the thigh, and that beast resented it by giving its assailant a right and left with his horns on either side of the neck close to the jowl. A right royal fight then took place. The two were well matched and almost of a size. The thick-skinned animal endeavoured to close and rip, but the other used his horns as skilfully as a prizefighter would his fists, and showered blows upon the face, head, and neck of his adversary. Wherever he was attacked there were his long, powerful horns ready to interpose. We were hurrying to the scene, when the buffalo made a desperate attack, fell into the mudhole, and before he could recover himself the pachyderm ripped open the whole of his stomach as cleanly as if it had been done with a knife. The next moment we fired and the rhinoceros fell dead upon his foe, all but burying him in the slimy depths of the mudhole. A bullet through the head put the poor bovine out of misery. This was a grand exhibition and seldom witnessed, therefore I mark it with a red letter in the calendar of my memory. We reached home very late, and doubt if

we should have got to camp that night, had not our men lit fires, discharged guns and let off a rocket or two.

On April 20th, 1871, a companion and I took a hurried trip. I had to go to Baghdooar, where I had contractors who had been collecting limestone I had to take delivery of; to measure its cubical contents and to ascertain that amidst the stone material gathered, there was not any useless stuff for burning purposes. *En route* we got on to a rhinoceros trail, and on looking down into a shallow nullah there lay the brute fast asleep! He looked like a huge pig, the head being on the ground between its fore legs and feet. I was only about ten yards off, but could see no vital spot, but my mahout whistled, the sleeping beauty awoke, and I fired at its chest. Up it jumped, and came straight at us, champing its tusks, and making that peculiar cry—something between grunting and squealing—but before it could do any damage, or our elephants turn tail, our battery proved too strong and it fell dead. It possessed only a mere rudimentary horn. I was on a huge mucknah, attached to the 43rd Regiment N.I. He was very old, very deaf and half-blind, and it was probably owing to these infirmities that he was so staunch but, oh! so slow. No amount of prodding would induce him to go faster than a steady three-miles-an-hour pace, and that was exasperating when one was in chase of a stricken beast. But again, in the midst of dangers he was immovable. Of the two I think I prefer being on a beast that has speed, even if it does occasionally run away.

We were going along, on another occasion, about

a quarter of a mile from the Manass. Matagoorie, our destination, was in sight. About forty yards ahead of me was a huge rhinoceros, standing behind a very large tree. Its head and neck were invisible, but the shoulder was just exposed, and a shot from one of my two groove rifles knocked it down and it lay struggling on the ground. I fired three more barrels into it, but it got up and very slowly, went away only presenting to me its enormous stern. I told the mahout to urge his beast on, but no punishment would induce it to accelerate its pace by one inch. There I was, fifty yards behind, a dense forest a hundred yards ahead, and not a prospect of our heading the brute before it got into its stronghold, where I could not follow! But just then J., who had been loitering behind, came up on a fast elephant, ran alongside the rhinoceros, and killed it. It was an immense beast with a horn thirteen inches in length. I went on to camp, to superintend arrangements for a stay of a day or two, but J. went off to the right, came upon another rhinoceros, put seven balls into it, but lost it. When the mahouts went to bring us in the head of the slain, they came across a tiger eating a marsh deer, but as it was almost dark we could not attempt to shoot Mr. Stripes that evening. The next morning we went to look for J's. rhinoceros. His mahout, new to these jungles, failed to find the tangled brake into which the animal had taken refuge, so after wasting several hours in fruitlessly searching for it, we came upon fresh tracks and followed them up, but up to nine o'clock saw nothing. Shortly afterwards, when passing

rhinoceros and fired. It began to spin round and round, and to emit the sounds elephants dread so much, and to our astonishment, from a patch of long grass close at hand, fully a dozen more rhinoceros joined in chorus! I never heard such a pandemonium in my life! If the inmates of a lunatic asylum and a dozen menageries had been let loose, and intermingled the row could not have been more deafening! Not an elephant with us would stir a step forward, the grass was dense and high, and so full of the brutes in a state of frenzy that I did not like to force our mounts forward. After the row ceased, they were willing to enter the cover, but I was afraid of getting them cut. We tried to set the grass on fire, but the dew was still on it, and it would not burn.

When at breakfast under a tree close by, a mahout, who had been collecting brushwood, ran up, saying that there was a rhinoceros, as big as an elephant, feeding in the open close by. We left our meal unfinished, mounted our "koonkies" and went towards the spot indicated. There was a nullah close by, and had we gone on foot along its bed (which for a wonder was free of jungle), we could have come within a few paces of the brute; but instead of following this obvious course, thinking the animal would take no notice of us, we approached it on our elephants. When we were about sixty yards off, the foe saw us, turned round quickly, rushed down the nullah bank, and though we saluted it with a couple of barrels each, it got clean off. We then returned to our meal.

Finding afterwards that we could not fire the game's stronghold, we formed line, and pushed our way in very slowly and cautiously. We had not gone

fifty yards when a cow rhinoceros, followed by a young one, charged J., whose elephant swerved, but her rider fired two shots and turned his assailant towards me. I also gave her two shots; she then ran about fifty yards and fell dead. Going further in, I found myself in the midst of a whole herd of rhinoceros. There were probably a dozen or more in the grass, and five or six came at me open-mouthed, uttering their diabolical noises, but the old mucknah I was on never moved. I emptied my battery of five double guns and rifles, reloaded, firing first at one and then at another, always selecting the nearest. I knocked over two, but a third did not succumb until I caught her with the last barrel behind the ear. It was an exciting five minutes, and but for the steadiness of my "hathee" he must have come to grief.

My mahout, before I had reloaded, now wanted to push on after the wounded beasts and I had to threaten him with a broken head before he would desist. I have never seen, before or since, so many rhinoceros collected together, and so pugnacious. The survivors entered a tangled brake and got off till the next day, when the native shikaries picked up three dead and appropriated their flesh and horns, but none of the latter were large. Going back, a three-parts-grown rhinoceros charged and chased J's. elephant for some way and struck it twice, but failed to inflict any but superficial wounds. J. at last dropped it dead, but he himself was a sufferer, being much cut about and bruised from the tossing that he received in the howdah. The next day we crossed the Gatee Nullah, saw a rhinoceros, but it kept at a safe

entered a tope of trees. We rushed round and met it face to face and killed it at the first discharge; the beast was large and had a good horn, but the base had got injured, as under the root there were hundreds of maggots. The stench from it was awful.

The next day we first wounded and lost a rhinoceros. After that came upon one lying down in a running stream and had no difficulty in bagging it. I then knocked over another rhinoceros, but lost it. Our servants in moving camp also came across two rhinoceros and a wild mucknah elephant.

April 24th. To-day the heat was awful; there was not a cloud in the sky. About ten we hit off a trail and my mahout did a very clever bit of tracking. All these rhinoceros feed in circles, so the task of hunting them up to their lair is a tedious one. J. got disgusted and took refuge under the only tree near. I went on, and in about half an hour came upon one lying down in a patch of long grass, and as it jumped up I killed it easily. We then went on for a milĕ or two and came to a heavy belt of jungle, and out of this ran a cow with a calf. We were anxious to catch the little one, but J. unfortunately wounded it and it had to be killed. As the mother's udder was full of milk, our men filled two bottles with it, and said it was very good. I tasted it out of curiosity. It was very like, I should say, to a woman's nourishment in the first stage of suckling—watery and sweet. Going towards camp, I saw a rhinoceros lying down at the bottom of a nullah, partially covered over with long grass, and apparently with its feet raised in the air. I thought it was a dead one, and called out, "Here is one of our wounded rhinoceros, dead!" No sooner

had I spoken, than the apparently defunct animal jumped on to his legs and came at me open-mouthed. Fortunately the mucknah swerved and thus escaped being cut. The next instant the rhinoceros was knocked over. On the 27th we killed another. They are far easier to slay than buffaloes, but the elephants fear them more, and are far less steady than when after other game. This was a most successful trip. We killed thirteen rhinoceros, a tiger, a lot of buffalo, a bear, and many deer, besides wounding a gaur and over a dozen more rhinoceros, and other game of all sorts. I caught a young rhino, after slaying its mother, and it required fourteen villagers to bring it into camp. When I saw it the next morning it was mad with rage; so was securely tethered, yet the little vixen tried to get at everybody who went near. In the course of a few days it quieted down, ate plantains out of the hand of its attendant, and in a week followed the man about.

THE ASSAMESE.

Before concluding this chapter I may as well say a few words on the inhabitants of this vast province, which has been in our possession since 1826, but which, a few years ago, was the most backward and least cared-for of our satrapsies in the East.

The inhabitants consist of Hindoos, mongrel Bengalis, and Cacharies, who, I fancy, are descendants of the former conquerors and occupiers of the country, viz., the Burmese. The latter are a jolly drunken set, somewhat like the Burmese in

appearance, and who were not possessed of any caste till very lately. But they have been greatly oppressed by the Hindoo element. The Mozadars and other officials, all Hindoos, impress them as coolies—sparing their own people—and bully them in every way. The Hindoos (Assamese), bad as are the Bengalis, are but a poor specimen of them. They are bigoted in religion, have not a grain of pluck, and would sooner lie and perjure themselves, in a case before the courts than speak the truth. Their priesthood are debauched, and live most sensual lives, and think themselves beyond the pale of the law.

At Kamykiah—one of their temples near Gowhaty, —the number of dancing girls attached to the pagoda was over four hundred. They are professional prostitutes to a hundred priests and yet are supposed to be perpetual virgins ! The Assamese have no shame. The girls when young are not bad-looking nor badly made, but inferior in that respect to Indians, or to the Burmese. They may have heard of virtue aš an extinct quality—but only as such. During one of their feasts—and I witnessed one—every man, woman and child was drunk ; debauchery was openly carried on ; women and men as stark naked as at the moment they were born, danced and wrestled together, in fact behaving generally as wild beasts. As I said before, gangs of Assamese used to follow me about when I was shooting in the dooars. I gave them every scrap of meat from the rhinoceros I killed, yet if I required a drop of milk I could get none, unless by order of the omnipotent Mozadars, although such supplies as were brought were paid for by me in person—even when I wanted to move camp, not an Assamese would be

obtainable, but the poor Cacharies, often living twenty miles off, would be impressed by force and brought in. They pestered me so by following me about, that on one occasion, when I had wounded a tiger, they, thinking it was a rhinoceros, rushed in, only to be met with the signal of danger, whoof! whoof! I don't think I should have been sorry had one or two of them met with a warm reception. I stood by, ready for any emergency, but did not tell the people what the wounded beast was until he charged upon them when I killed him with a shot in the chest. I told them the next time they ran in, if it was a tiger, I would not interfere, and if a few of them were killed and probably eaten, the others would perhaps keep further off and not interfere with my sport! The Cacharies are far pluckier than the Assamese, and there was a grand old man at Burpettah who was credited with having killed over one hundred tigers during the annual inundations. A sacred temple exists, Hazoo by name, some twenty miles to the south of Gowhaty, on the opposite bank of the river, where Hindoos, Bhuddist and even Mussulmans congregate, the attraction being not the sanctity of the shrine, but the hordes of loose women who live there in villages by themselves—not a man being allowed to associate with them in their homes. They are the finest women in the Province, wear a distinct dress, very like that worn by the better class of females in Southern India. They are tall, well proportioned and are common to any native who chooses to pay them for their favours, but one has never been known to extend her complaisance to any European, official, or otherwise

although I have known endeavours made to induce them to break their resolution. This is so different from the usage in other parts of India, that it is a marvel. In company with an officer of the police, I pitched my camp near one of their villages. They allowed us to walk about amongst their houses, and converse with them, but here further intimacy terminated.

CHAPTER III.

ELEPHANT SHOOTING (ASIATIC).

This may be designated one of the extinct sports of India, for slaying the noble beasts is now forbidden in nearly every portion of our Indian Dependencies, except when an elephant has been killing people, and destroying property in a wholesale manner. Then permission is granted for the obnoxious brute to be destroyed. In my younger days, however, it was a favourite sport, and many a man who could boast of having killed his dozen elephants had never shot a tiger. My great ambition as a griffin was to kill one of these leviathans. After a severe bout of jungle fever, Dr. R., who was then Civil Surgeon of Rajahmundry, and had been formerly our regimental doctor, recommended that I should have a year's leave on sick certificate. I appeared before a medical board, one member of which disliked R., as they had been carrying on a paper warfare regarding a disease called *beri-beri*, in which he had been worsted. Another of the members had formerly been an apothecary and got a commission by some backdoor influence, and he was completely under the thumb of the last

mentioned. They owned I looked very ill. "Where did I want to go?" "Oh," said I, "as sick leave on account of fever is not allowed to Ootacamund, I want to go to Coimbatore." "What for?" asked the senior member of the board. "Oh, to shoot elephants," I incautiously replied. The board sent in its report and a recommendation that I should have three months' leave for a voyage and not a year's absence to the Western Coast. This was done to spite not me, but my medical attendant. R. protested, and when the board was asked their reason for curtailing the leave recommended by the man who had nursed me through a dangerous illness, and who knew more of the ins and outs of the case than they could possibly do after a five minutes' examination, replied that "I had stated as my sole reason for wishing to be invalided, was with a view to shoot elephants, and they thought it advisable in my then state, that I should not be permitted to do so." Well, a year or two afterwards our then Commander-in-Chief asked very kindly if he could assist me in any way. I still had elephants on the brain, and begged his Excellency to appoint me to the Sappers and Miners, whose headquarters were permanently at Mercara, a famous locality for elephants. I was duly gazetted, but the whole of the Sappers were on service in Burma, however they were not expected to remain there for more than a year or two, when they would return to Coorg. Anxious to see service and to visit a new country, I hurried over as fast as I could. When with a field force commanded by Colonel Cotton, C.B., who so greatly distinguished himself afterwards during the Mutiny, it was found that I had a fair

knowledge of surveying and engineering, having been educated at a military school, I was transferred very soon to the Public Works Department, so remained in Burma thirteen years, and have never visited Mercara in my life, and Coimbatore only once. So much for my youthful reminiscences.

I may here make some remarks on that most useful animal the elephant.

In wilds far away from cultivation, elephants lead a roaming life and do little or no harm. They consume so much and waste so much more, that no single forest could support them; hence their roving propensities. In Burma during the rains, they come down, from the sparsely inhabited districts in herds, take up their abode in some adjacent jungle to cultivation, and destroy immense quantities of paddy and any other grain they find. After the harvest they retire to their fastnesses amidst the vast forests or into ranges of mountains where they find plenty of sustenance and are seldom molested.

A female elephant has only one at a birth, and she goes two years in gestation. An elephant's life and that of a man's are of much the same duration and both arrive at maturity at the same time. We have had our centenarians and elephants doubtless have had theirs. We hear tales of their having lived over 150 years—they say Parr did the same—but I believe myself that at 100 an elephant would be as decrepit as a man of the same age. McMaster, a well-known sportsman and naturalist, who has now joined the majority, writes of these noble beasts: "Those who only think of elephants as they have seen these domestic giants working at any of the innumerable

tasks on which these almost reasoning slaves may be employed, can hardly imagine how puzzling a matter it is to distinguish them amongst the dark shadows and irregular outlines that fill up any portion of a landscape in their forest haunts. I was for some moments, it seemed to me hours, waiting in long grass and reeds within a *few feet*, not yards, of the head of a fine elephant, without being able to get a satisfactory shot at him, or even to see more than an indistinct dusky outline of form, or a dark shadow as his trunk was raised aloft, when the mighty beast, a magnificent tusker, suspected that he scented mischief. Having at length made sure that there was something uncanny near him, he uttered a shrill cry and wheeled round on the very spot on which he stood, without exposing any more vulnerable target than his enormous hind quarters, at which it would have been wicked and wanton cruelty to fire, rushed down the hill, followed by his family (eight or ten unwieldy wives and sturdy children) whose progress, as they crashed through the dense underwood of long grass, caused a noise sufficient to startle any one whose nerves were not tightly braced, and which my pen is certainly too weak to describe." General Hamilton ("Velvet foot") also writes: "On another occasion I was 'blown' at by a wild elephant, who threw her trunk out from behind the jungle lining the narrow path along which we were running to intercept the herd, and blew her nose so suddenly in the chest and face of the leading man, that he fell back right upon me. We had cut this elephant off from its companions, and having a calf to take care of, she had loitered behind. In this case we noticed what I have alluded to, the wonderful and

extraordinarily quiet manner in which these gigantic animals move through the forest when trying to avoid observation or danger."

The height of an elephant is almost exactly double the circumference of the fore-foot as it rests upon the ground Asiatic elephants are doubtless less than their African *confrères*, but there is in the Calcutta museum the skeleton of an Indian elephant a little over eleven feet in height, which therefore must have been very little short of twelve feet high when in the flesh. In 1855 I killed my first elephant —but the tale has been told elsewhere, I will not therefore repeat it here. About a year afterwards, I had to go to Mendoon on the Ma'ee, a lovely stream, some forty miles west or south-west of Thayet Myo, our then frontier station. Here I had various sport, but an old Burman, who had accompanied Ashe of the Artillery into the Arrakan range, when he shot three elephants, asked if I'd like to see some, and if so, he could show me a solitary bull. "Won't a weasel suck a rabbit?" As a matter of course I would. "But how far have we to go?" I asked, "for I have to be back in a day or two." "If we leave to-day," said the Burman, "there is a têh we can sleep in to-night, and get to the jungle about twelve next day." That meant, I knew, a good twenty miles or more, but I was young and eager. I put a few things together, which a couple of men carried. My Madras boy and his son accompanied me, and about 10 A.M. we started. When clear of the ancient town of Mendoon, then in ruins, we followed by-paths for an hour, then crossed a stream, which lower down fell into the Ma'ee, and entered a

teak forest. There was not much undergrowth, and we followed a track for a couple of hours or more made by elephants during the last rains. Then an ascent was commenced, and I thought it time to refresh the inner man. Calling a halt I made an *al fresco* meal, giving some food to the Burmese, who, having no caste, will eat with or after a European of the viands he has prepared for himself. After an hour's rest we resumed our journey; the ascent became worse and worse, and in as good condition as I was, I was forced to rest frequently. The track, made by wild animals, wound round and round hills, and was really as well constructed as if laid out by an engineer, but the Burman guide would take short cuts, which proved very laborious and fatiguing, as they were strewn with *débris* of all sorts. About 5 P.M. we were, I should say, at an elevation of 1,000 feet. Looking back, to the south-east the Ma'ee was seen wending its course and even at a distance looked lovely; to the east the mighty Irrawaddi appeared a mere thread; to the north and west rose the Arrakan mountains, which reach an elevation of some 6,000 feet, and are densely wooded for at least 3,000 to 4,000 feet of their altitude, and we could see mist rising, which indicated that there were valleys between us and the main range.

After half-an-hour's rest, we resumed our journey, and after ascending perhaps another 200 to 300 feet began to descend, and soon came to some *townyah* clearances made by Karens. In one of these, just at dark, we came to a "têh", a raised platform fully twenty feet off the ground, with

space sufficient for one or two human beings to sit on. I would not be at the trouble to mount as my servant could not cook up there, and it would cause a great deal of bother to hand up the eatables, &c. However, I was told that there were man-eaters about, so I ordered the people to collect brushwood, and soon had fires lighted all round. My dinner I enjoyed, washed down with a bottle of that divine nectar, Bass's pale ale. Then, commending myself to the powers above, lay down and slept like a top. There was no disturbance during the night, and we were up and away at dawn. This morning it was a case of ascending and descending. Being the intermediary stage between the real mountains and the hills, which are invariably separated by what in India are called "Teelahs," and horrible ground it is to travel over. We took a snack at about 10 A.M., but did not reach our destination till close upon 6 P.M., when we halted at the top of a slope—fully thirty miles from Mendoon we must have come. Above us rose abruptly the steep sides of the Arrakan mountains, and close alongside a rivulet rushed in a small torrent to the plains; the water was deliciously cool and as clear as if it had been filtered. I am very fond of water for bathing and washing purposes, or for cooling stimulants in, but as a beverage, I prefer something stronger. Here our few followers soon cut down branches and rigged up huts. I don't care to sleep on the ground if I can avoid it, so had a raised platform made, as bamboos were plentiful. On this a "razai," or a quilt stuffed or padded with cotton, was placed; an air pillow gave support to the head, and a light native counterpane formed a covering, for the night

air was chilly, we being then fully 1,300 to 1,500 feet above sea level. Of course here there were no mosquitoes or sand-flies. We were all very quiet, for the shikarie told us elephants and gaur and even "tsine" (wild cattle), wandered about, and often passed the spot on which we were encamped. Only such fires as were requisite to cook our meals were lighted, and all were put out at 8 P.M., and the night passed without disturbance. By 5 A.M. we were up and away. We neither ascended nor descended, but went along the edge of the plateau towards some salt licks, which the shikarie said were favourite places for elephants, gaur, deer, &c. Leaving the plain we entered into a deep forest, the principal trees being buttress trees, from which the people extract a kind of oil or varnish. These monarchs are immense in height and girth, not unfrequently 150 feet without a branch; the roots form ridges often five feet high near the trunk, and gradually sloping off, disappear fully ten or twelve feet into the ground. Commonly on the lateral branches are huge pendent beehives, many of them six or seven feet long by three feet deep. These the bears are attracted to either by the humming of the bees, or scent of the honey, as they rob them. The Burmese and Karens imitate these sagacious beasts in a way, as they collect a lot of bamboo stakes, drive one in, step on that, drive two more in, get on to one, hold on to the other, and so on to the top. Besides these buttress trees, there are clumps of bamboos scattered about, some of the female plant, which is frequently

sturdy male bamboos, so much prized as shafts for hog-hunting spears. Other bushes and creepers were also plentifully sprinkled about, and I soon realised that if I wanted to kill an elephant, my work was cut out for me. Only the shikarie and a coolie with some food were my companions. I had bought a two-grooved No. 10 double rifle, two years before, from Colonel Grant Allan,[1] and I was so pleased with it that I had its counterpart made. Thus I had two as perfect weapons for those days, as one could wish to be armed with. A small cannon, single barrel, No. 4 gauge, which I owned, I never had the pluck to fire, so afterwards sold it to Lindsay, for many years in the Mysore Commission. There is a legend of this rifle, which I here give, without vouching for its truth; but it was told me by a man who would have sooner died than tell a wilful untruth. He and Lindsay came upon a herd of elephants—I think in the Bassein district. The elephants were alarmed, and in their haste they rushed towards the sportsmen instead of in the opposite direction; a general stampede took place, *one or two distant shots were* made, when the shikarie who was carrying the small cannon, finding three or four elephants overtaking him, fired the weapon haphazard, was knocked over by the recoil, got up, leaving the gun to its fate, and ran for his life. Later on both sportsmen went back to recover the weapon, found it, and *two* elephants lying dead, which the man swore could only have been killed by his solitary shot!

[1] Made by the late Joseph Lang for Major Gill of Ellora fame in 1839. I and others used it up to 1878 and it was then as serviceable as a new weapon.

This was long a standing joke, whether strictly a fact no one can say; but that two elephants lay dead was undoubtedly true.

The shikarie carried one rifle, I the other; the coolie kept at a distance. About seven we came upon the fresh spoor of two elephants; they had fed along quietly, and we had no difficulty in following them. Those who wish to slay these leviathans in their forest homes, need be sound of wind and limb, for it is not child's play following them, for quietly as they feed along they are ever on the move and get over the ground far faster than one would credit. On this occasion we followed and followed up to 3 P.M. with only half an hour's rest. About four we saw the game, a few yards apart, pulling down and browsing on the tender shoots of the female bamboos. The noise they made deadened the sound of our footsteps. I reached a buttress tree which afforded good shelter and was within easy shot. The animals differed greatly. The nearer to me was an old male with very large tusks; the other was in his prime, very handsome to look at, in fact it was almost too bad to slay him. What a beauty he would have been for riding purposes! But there were no means of catching him, and the thirst for slaughter was strong upon me. Bidding the shikarie stand close and hand the spare rifle quickly, I stepped aside, waited until the old one afforded a good temple shot, and then fired. Down he fell. The other one turned round and gave me a front shot. I dropped him dead. I never thought of the first, which I deemed to be as dead as Julius Cæsar, but he picked himself

up and in a moment was all but on me. I seized the spare rifle and fired both barrels, then threw myself under the lee of a buttress tree, and the monster in his headlong charge all but stepped upon me. He ran only a few yards, then right-about faced, and made for me again. I was powerless, but had fortunately crawled from the buttress under which I had taken refuge, to one on the other side of the tree, for the brute was hunting for me by scent! Hurriedly I poured the powder down my barrels; the bullets fitted easily, but being sewn up in thin cloth, clung slightly, thus delaying me in getting them home. The beast was too close by half, and the least noise would bring him on me. In peering round I saw that of my last two shots, one had knocked out an eye and the other had paralysed to a certain extent the trunk, and that the blood was pouring from the wound into the sound optic. So I got up noiselessly, and retreated behind another tree some twenty yards off, where the Burman joined me. Having loaded both rifles, whilst the old fellow was feeling about for me, I went forward and gave him a right and left again in the temple, but as I fired, the beast threw up his head, and I missed the vital place. This salute caused him to rush towards us, a huge buttress tree caught his fore feet, and down he went a fearful cropper! I seized my other rifle and gave him the two barrels as he was attempting to rise, but he bore a charmed life. I again retreated, but as soon as I had loaded, I followed him up. Badly wounded as he was, he kept us at a trot, and when we got closer than he liked, he spun round and came for us. I fired eleven more shots, but it was useless;

it was getting too dark for accurate shooting, and the brute tossed his head about in such a manner, that to hit the brain, which is but small, was no easy task. When all but night, we had to desist for the time. Where the coolie had gone to in the excitement of the combat we did not know, nor could we find him. It was too late to go to camp; besides it would have entailed a long march there, and a long trudge back next day, for I was determined to have the tusker. We therefore returned to the one I had killed. The Burman made a meal off some portion of its trunk; but I could not stomach such food, so, after seeing that sufficient brushwood had been collected to last through the night, I lighted a couple of fires, used the foot of the defunct animal as a pillow, and was soon fast asleep. We took up the trail at daylight, but the stricken brute had wandered off fully ten miles; still we were not to be denied. During our pursuit, I made a lucky shot at a pea fowl, then "kabobed" its flesh over sŏme embers, and made a fair meal. We did not overtake the veteran all that day, so slept out that night, and on the following day resumed our pursuit. Where the poor brute had lain down we came upon, and noted how much shorter was its stride—evidence of increasing weakness—so with renewed hope we pressed on. The country was pretty open forest, with here and there small patches of elephant grass. We had just passed one of these, when there was a fiendish screech and a bloody form was all but over us. I jumped aside, and as the impetus carried our assailant forward, I fired both barrels into his carcase, close to the shoulder. This reduced him to a walk, and he went

on with his trunk pendent and limp with a very woe-begone aspect. I seized the other rifle, ran forward, and as he flopped an ear I gave a shot behind it, and with a stagger he fell forward. Poor old beast! Thank God, at last dead! His agony must have been fearful. One eye was shot out, one closed by coagulated blood, and he had received upwards of twenty bullets, yet the gallant brute never uttered a groan! His tusks were four feet eight inches and four feet six inches respectively, but thick and straight. Measuring the game by the foot test, he was ten feet two inches high.

But now where were we? The Burman climbed a tall tree, took a good look all round, and descended, saying if we walked quickly we should get to camp by dark. A sambur luckily crossed our path, which I killed, and as I was deadbeat and very hungry I preferred spending another night in the jungle and having a square meal, to tramping further on an empty stomach. The Burman soon broiled some liver, which we eat, but had to partake of Adam's ale—none other being procurable; then made a temporary shelter overhead, slept, and cooked again in the morning. About mid-day we reached camp. The coolie had returned and reported that he had seen me trampled to death by the elephant, so my boy had gone to where the encounter had taken place to pick up the pieces. He saw sufficient to persuade him that we were not dead, but in chase of the elephant, so he returned to camp and wisely stuck to it, as he felt sure we should return there. After a day's rest I took all hands, and as decomposition had set in, we had no difficulty in drawing

the tusks, and eventually got back to Mendoon four days later than I had intended, but by going down the Ma'ee in a Burmese boat, I eventually got back to Prome only a day after I was due.

On another occasion I was in the Yomahs. During the night there was a great commotion. I jumped out of bed, seized my rifle and rushed out. The camp was astir, the natives running towards where our elephants were picketed. I found that a wild elephant had got amongst our tame ones, and had maltreated one of the females, but had been driven off. I ordered fires to be lit, and told the mahouts to be alert and call me if he returned. I went back to my tent, for the air was chilly and the mosquitoes troublesome. All through the night there were disturbances, and I was aroused several times, but could not get a shot. Now if a male elephant is *must*, he very often seriously injures the females that refuse his caresses. My beasts were far too valuable to be permitted to be knocked about. As my "jemadar" informed me that the intruder, a huge mucknah, was not far off, directly I had finished my chota hazarie, I proposed we should catch him; but as the head man, an old elephant trapper, said the ground was not favourable and the beast was in the worst stage of *must*, I determined he should die. We had not far to go. He stood in a hollow, pulping and eating wild plantains. I could see the rheum oozing down his face from the gland, which exudes an offensive smelling oily substance when the male elephant has sexual desires. The wind then was not favourable and very faint, although it generally blows half a gale during the night. Followed by

one man carrying an extra rifle, I made a detour, got on to a ledge of rocks above the amorous brute and well within twenty yards. He had heard us, although he pretended to be unconscious of our presence, for every now and then a furtive glance was cast in our direction. Yet he did not attempt to get away, as he could easily have done, for there was a narrow and densely-wooded gorge close by him. Vicious he looked. I could not get nearer without leaving my coign of vantage, although the distance was longer than I cared for. But my rifles were accurate—loaded with heavy charges and hardened bullets, ten to the pound. Now ordinary aiming alone will not do in elephant shooting; you must get the requisite angle; without it, it is almost useless to fire. Every now and then I could see the point at the back of the ear which is generally fatal if hit; but he flopped his ears backwards and forwards, raised his trunk, and looked as solid as a rock. Then he would recommence to smash the stalks of the plantains across his foot, and when they became pulp to thrust them down his capacious throat. He showed his contempt for us in every way he could. I raised the rifle, waited for the ears to be moved forward, and as soon as the back was visible, fired. I had put in too much powder; the recoil was very unpleasant, and what was worse, I failed to hit the mark I had aimed at, and only inflicted a painful wound. He spun round, tore up the ground with his fore feet, tossed his huge trunk about like the arms of a windmill, and came at me like a demon. To fire down at the front head shot was useless, nor could he well get at me, for the ledge

I was standing on was somewhat hollowed out underneath and fully twelve feet in perpendicular height off the ground. If he turned to either side to get at our flanks he would expose the shoulder shot or the temple one, but the mad brute came straight on. He looked like a fiend. Yet there I stood, a puny creature compared to him, perfectly at my ease, for I knew he could not touch me and I could punish him terribly. I gave him the left barrel when he was about twelve paces off, but it did not stop him. I coolly proceeded to load, putting in less powder this time, taking care to stand back out of reach of my antagonist's proboscis. When he got to the ledge and could find no way up it, his rage was awful. He tore now at the solid rock, he shrieked, he tossed up the ground, and then, seizing a stout sapling, he half drew himself up and might almost have succeeded had not his weight torn it from its frail hold in the ground, and over he and the tree went together! I could not see him for some time for the dust. Again I was ready for him. He picked himself up and finding he could not reach me in front rushed along parallel, seeking some declivity less inaccessible. That could not be allowed, so I planted two bullets behind the shoulder; but those were shots I was not accustomed to, as they are seldom used in India. I could not have hit my foe in a vital spot, for he continued his career. Although the elephant could not ascend the ledge, it was easy for me to let myself down, and in a few minutes we had changed places. When he found he was baffled again, he became madder than ever, and I do believe he would have thrown himself over the rock to get at me, when I fired my other rifle,

heavily loaded, into his chest. Only five or six paces separated us. The blood poured from his trunk, the fight was taken out of him, and he slowly retreated. Carefully reloading I crept round and got on to his track; he had not gone far. Resting against a huge teak tree he stood. I went round to another from which I could obtain the temple shot and dropped him dead.

Having related or given instances of slaying these monsters, I will now make a few remarks as to their care and welfare, for every one interested in Indian sport, especially in the vast grassy plains of Burma and Assam, is dependent on the services of these animals for his success. Nothing can be done without them. If you are purchasing an elephant for sporting purposes, choose one that has been a koonkie, that is, one which has been employed in running down other elephants. You can distinguish such at once by the large scar on the top of the rump near the tail, which, when the animal was hunted, had been inflicted on it and kept open as a means of accelerating its speed; for "one" of the two men, who mount an elephant on a chase, sits behind and belabours this sore with an iron ball, which he swings about by an attached rope. These koonkies are more to be trusted than other animals of their kind; they are used to seeing every kind of beast, move more smoothly, and are less likely to be demoralised than those that have never been used in the chase. Don't choose a leggy brute. A female koonkie with a straight back and immense girth, even if she be but seven and a half to eight feet high, is better than a male a foot higher.

There is as much rascality in selling an elephant in

India as there is in selling a horse in England. A vicious elephant is drugged, and when perfectly docile through the effects of bhang, is parted with. Ginger and even arrack is given to make a sleepy, inert beast look spry. Every trick known to a clever mahout is resorted to. A brute that never carries flesh when worked, and can stand no fatigue is fed up with chapatties and sugar-cane, on which he speedily gets fat, but gets back to his normal condition when employed or worked. Elephants are seldom vicious. I have only known one or two. Those born of tame mothers are oftener so than others. They lose their dread of man, fear all wild beasts, as they are not accustomed to seeing them, and so are generally useless for sport.

Elephants are subject to many diseases; one called "zurbad" is incurable. It commences with dropsical swellings under the neck and extends down along the belly. An animal may get over the first attack. If so, get rid of it at any sacrifice, for the disease is sure to return and is always fatal in the long run. If an elephant commences to eat earth, stop his grain rations. In a few days he will pass quantities of bots, and then be quite well again. They are also very subject to epidemics; if such break out, they die like rotten sheep. The only resource then is to scatter them as far apart as possible and let them forage for themselves; in bheels for choice, as they there find a succulent grass, growing in water, which is very nutritive and acts as an alterative. Most mahouts can treat common ailments that an elephant is heir to, so it is not wise to interfere with them and their charges too much. Elephants utter

peculiar sounds to denote various meanings. A whistling noise produced by the trunk indicates satisfaction; when they trumpet or utter a hoarse scream, it is a sign of rage; a noise made by the mouth like "pr-rut, pr-rut," is a sign of alarm, so is the striking of the trunk on the ground, accompanied by a pitiful cry; whilst a noise like "urmp, urmp" denotes impatience or dissatisfaction. Elephants are always swaying to and fro; the ears and tail are on the move brushing off the flies, and the trunk is in incessant use, the legs are constantly rubbing one against the other, but if the animal is suspicious it becomes as rigid as if cut out of rock, with its trunk well raised and ears cocked forward. Thick as is the skin of an elephant, no animal suffers more from flies and even mosquitoes. Thus directly it has been washed, skin made as glossy as glass, anointed and decorated, no sooner is it tethered than it proceeds to cast heaps of dust and dirt over itself and in a few minutes is as dusty as a miller. Elephants snore a good deal when asleep. I have often seen them resting the head on a foot, using it in lieu of a pillow. They are very human-like in many of their ways. They use a piece of wood as a toothpick; they will plug a wound with clay; they scratch themselves with the tip of their trunk, and if they can't reach the part irritated they take up a small branch and use it as a fan.

Saunderson derides the story of an elephant lifting the wheel of a heavy gun with its trunk, and says it is impossible, yet a brother officer of mine was present and saw it done. As a rule they will not face fire, but there are exceptions, for one elephant belonging to the battery in Deebrooghur would assist in putting

a fire out, and she would perform what I have never known any other elephant do, and that was, after a buffalo's throat had been cut, except the vertebræ, when ordered to do so, she would place a ponderous foot on the neck, twist her trunk round the horns, wrench the head off, and hand it up to the mahout. I had one elephant that did not care two pins for a tiger or buffalo, but if she saw a pony or horse cantering towards her, she would almost go into a fit with fear and run for her life.

See your elephants fed in front of you every day. The rice should be wrapped up in balls of plantain stems, which are always procurable, because after a tree has borne fruit once, it is of no further use, and the people do not object to its being cut down. The usual allowance for a shooting elephant is a seer for every foot of its height. Whilst you are out shooting, the second attendant of the elephant should cut down or otherwise collect its green food, which either some of the spare animals can bring in, or the shooting elephants themselves after the howdah has been removed.

Before starting for a day's shooting, see that your howdah is tightly and straightly put on; if it is crooked in the slightest degree have it taken off and re-adjusted, for it is better to have it done properly in camp where you have men to assist, than to have to do it in the jungle where you have none; and it is impossible to shoot out of an improperly placed howdah with any degree of comfort or any certainty. A howdah should be as light as possible consistent with strength. Double howdahs, that is for holding two men—one in front and an attendant behind—are in my opinion abominations, and now that breechloaders are uni-

versally used, not required. The only use of an attendant was to load your guns; that you can do for yourself now. Double howdahs are far heavier than single ones, and when a tiger, buffalo, or rhinoceros is at the heels of your animal, how are you to turn round and fire over its back, if you have a lumbering man behind you? Many a time have I saved my elephant being cut by being able to turn round and fire instantaneously, which I could not have done had I had a man behind me. The howdah should rest on either side of the pad, the cross portion being hollowed out to prevent its pressing on the spine and so causing a sore back. The whole length of the two sides should rest, and the weight be distributed equally on either side of the spine longitudinally, the bars resting on the pad, which should be made to fit each elephant, that is, each elephant must have a pad made expressly for it. As a coat will not fit any man, neither will a pad fit every beast that it is placed upon. It should be stuffed with pith, which can be collected in almost every *bheel;* under the pad there should be a well-padded *guddelah,* and another over the pad to prevent the howdah slipping. The howdah is fastened on with ropes having belly, neck, and tail bands of stout leather, well greased and kept soft to prevent chafing. Some, to avoid the extra weight, stand on the pad, but if you do, you feel the motion of the animal far more than you will if you stand on a wooden floor which is clear of the pad. Every howdah has two longitudinal iron sloping bars, which connect the front with the back as a means of strengthening the whole. If to them you sew strips of stout waterproof cloth,

which you can at pleasure throw over your guns, in case of rain, you will the better preserve your weapons. Have a few bullets sewn on the lower portion, as they prevent the flaps being blown off the guns. The front of the howdah should not be too high and should be made for the individual who is going to use it. A howdah suitable for a man of six feet two inches would be very inconvenient and uncomfortable for a man five feet eight inches, and *vice versa*. When standing up, the elbows should just clear the front bar. For comfort and good shooting a great deal depends on the height of the seat from the floor of the howdah; it should be sufficiently high to fit inside the bend of the knee, neither more nor less. If less, if the elephant jolts forward suddenly, you are apt to go backwards out of the howdah, and if higher, the edge of the seat rubs against the back of the thighs and causes a sore, and it is apt to throw one forward, whereas if the edge of the seat catches you fairly in the bend of the knee, your body sways to and fro and you feel as if you had a grip, which is not otherwise the case. Four guns for dangerous shooting are requisite; on either side of the seat, racks are placed of the exact size of the stocks for two guns, and the closer everything fits, and the less rattling you have, the better are your chances of sport. The front bar on which the barrels rest should be of wood, with notches cut into it, lined with felt to fit the gun-barrels, or the browning will soon be worn away. In front, attached to the wooden bar, should be a long box for holding cartridges; this should also be lined with felt. Have all your rifles or guns of the same bore, and for which the same sized

cartridges will do; in a scrimmage you have not time to pick and choose the shells, but have to take what you can lay hands upon.

Under the seat on which you sit you can have a compartment in which to carry food, etc., but the less you yourself take the better. Have no rattling.

In the jungles of Assam and Burma the denizens are used to wild elephants, and care very little for the noise those animals make when crashing their way through the dense long grass, but if in addition they hear the rattling of plates or bottles they smell a rat and are off long before you can get within shot.

Take a light zephyr waterproof coat with you to put on if a storm comes up. If you have to travel long distances over plains where there is little or no game, and a fierce sun overhead, buy a common native umbrella such as is used on occasions of ceremony; they have long handles to enable them to be held over the heads of the swells by their retainers. Pierce two holes in each side of your seat, and corresponding holes in the floor of the howdah; into these insert the handle and you will have ample shade. When you wish to resume shooting, you have only to take the umbrella down, fold it up, invert it, placing the top downwards against the bottom of the front of your howdah; the handle will stick out behind and it will not be in the way in the least. Never tether your elephants for more than a day or two in the same place. Standing on their own excreta softens or rots the sole of the foot, which, though spongy, ought at the same time to be as hard as ivory. Avoid giving an elephant a sore back, not

him, but because once an elephant has had his back cut open to let out the pus, he will never be as staunch after as before.

Mahouts are the best abused servants in India, not altogether undeservedly, but I think due allowance should be made for all they go through in a day's work. They are very apt, unless well looked after, to allow an elephant to forage for himself, rather than be at the trouble of bringing to camp his *charah*; but this must be insisted upon. If let loose, the poor beast will go in search of food. He does not know the difference between *meum* and *tuum*; he will either get no food or wander miles away, or if there be a village anywhere near, he will destroy property for which you will have to pay fourfold its value. Do not keep a mahout you cannot trust. I think more can be done by judicious kindness than by bullying, nagging, or harsh treatment. Treat natives as you would children, with a judicious mixture of kindness and firmness, but if a man presumes or attempts to be impertinent, make an example of him on the spot. There are different varieties of elephants. An experienced mahout will tell you by merely looking at an animal from what country he comes.

Of all I have had or seen, I think the Shan tuskers were the handsomest. The Burmese are somewhat smaller, many rather weedy, and very many of them are mucknahs, or tuskless. The Assamese elephants are large and handsome, and as "shikaries," second to none. It is well known that the Cingalese elephants are almost all of them tuskless, a tusker being a prize indeed in that country. It is said that they and the elephants of Sumatra are similar, and have a rib less

than the other varieties, but how true that may be I cannot say. The mucknahs, called by the Burmese "hine," have the head longer and narrower, the temple very much depressed, the trunk longer and very ponderous, possessing immense strength, as if to compensate the beast for being minus the formidable tusks of its near relative the "goondas" (tuskers). The mucknah is not, however, altogether tuskless, as it has short ones somewhat like those of a walrus, growing downwards; these are never more than eighteen inches long, but by jobbing down, they can inflict very nasty wounds with them. Its eyes are small and sleepy-looking with a generally morose appearance, and even when quite young it has an old look, as we often notice in children the progeny of an old man. In size they are often taller and more massive than the tuskers. The largest elephants I have seen, whether wild or tame, have been mucknahs.

The two varieties generally herd apart, but no doubt a Lŏthario of the one may seduce the affections of a female of the other variety, and this causes, I believe, the production of many elephants of huge size to have but very moderate tusks.

If nature has not given intellect to these animals, it has given them an instinct next thing to it. One has only to hunt them in their wilds to learn how wonderfully Providence has taught them to choose the most favourable ground, whether for feeding or encamping, and to resort to jungles where their ponderous bodies so resemble rocks or dark foliage that it is difficult to distinguish them from surrounding objects, while their feet are so constructed that they can not only tramp over any ground, be it

hard or soft, thorny or smooth, without causing a sound. They prefer forests by day, and open ground at night. Huge as are these beasts, none are easier to kill, if the hunter knows the right spot to aim at and the right angle to fire. There are five vulnerable places in an elephant. First, the bump between the eyes, which should be fired at from the front, low down and pointing upwards; the best way, of getting this shot is to kneel when firing. Secondly, the temple shot, exactly in the centre between the corner of the eye and top of ear. This shot should be fired from either the right or left half face; then from the front, slightly upwards and backwards. Of all the shots this is the easiest and most fatal and safest for the hunter, because if the shot does not prove fatal and the beast rushes forward, as it is apt to do when wounded, the hunter will be out of the line of flight and run less risk of being trampled upon, than when firing the front shot. Thirdly, just behind the ear—a shot one seldom gets. Fourthly, from a height dŏwnward in a forward direction, hitting the junction of the spine and head. Fifthly, behind the shoulder; this is seldom taken by the European shikaries in India, but natives often avail themselves of it, and I have seen several Goliaths thus slain, notably by a son of the Zemindar of Luckeepore. In Africa it is the favourite shot, as it is believed the African variety cannot be killed by the head shots, but Bailey, who was with me on the Congo, killed over twenty elephants and had six down at one time, all with the front and side head shots.

I was cruel enough once to try and kill elephants off elephants. I got amongst a herd of

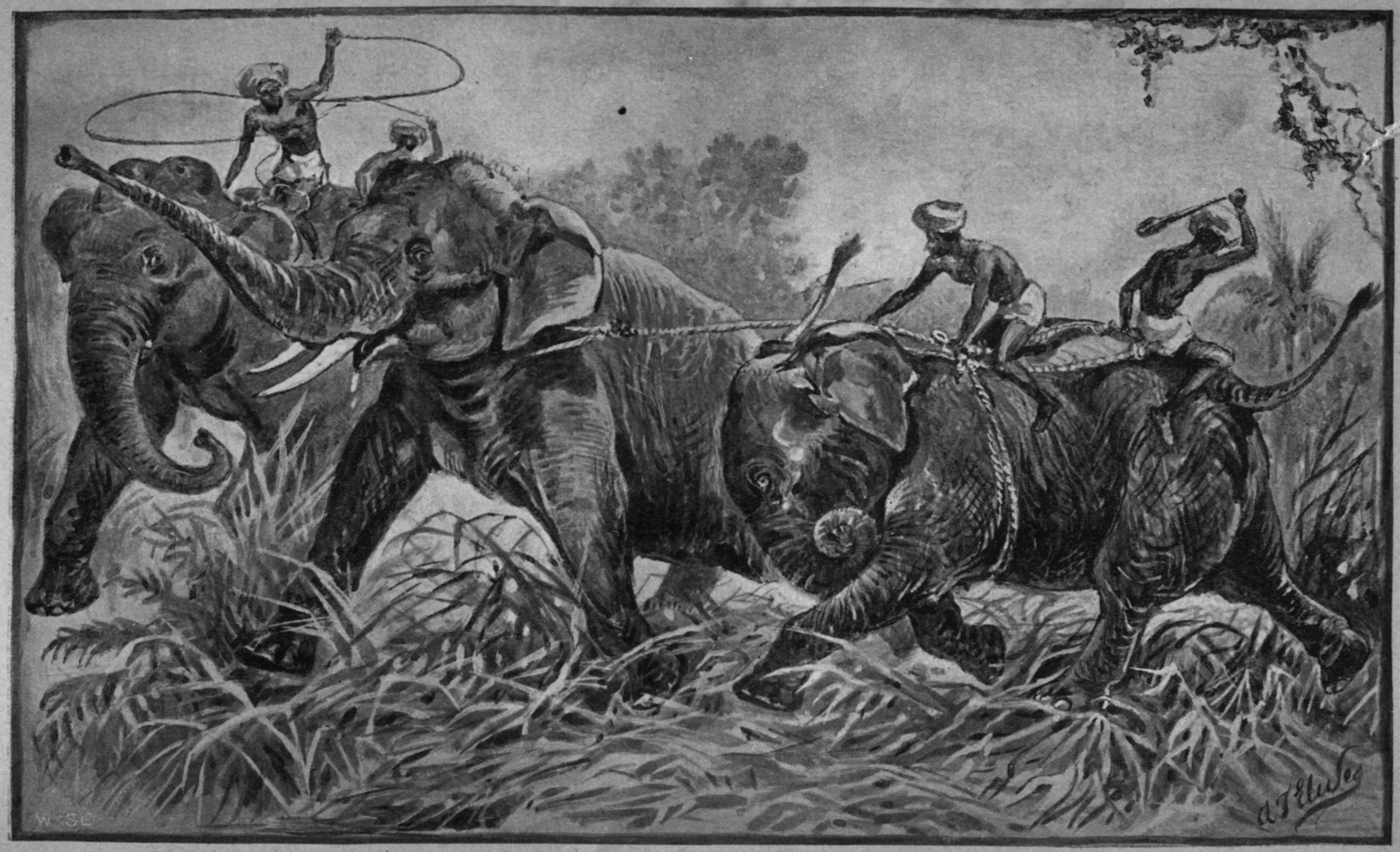
fully three hundred or more. I wounded five or six to death, as we recovered their bodies afterwards, but I only bagged one at the time and that was a three-parts grown male. A female had been charging me over and over again, my elephants were demoralized from the shrieks and cries of the wild ones, who wounded to death and unable to fight or run away, still huddled together, and groaned and trumpeted most awfully. On her last charge as I fired a male ran in between us and received the ball in the hip joint and fell partially paralysed, yet the plucky brute came at me on his knees, and when quite close, he lifted up his head to take a look at me. I seized the favourable moment and put a ball into his brain. I never fired at an elephant off an elephant again, though I have often been close to them. It is disgustingly cruel to do so, as the brain cannot be reached when firing off a pad or howdah. I have something to say of running down elephants, catching them in pitfalls and in keddahs, as I have had experience of all three modes. The first is as exciting and far more dangerous than even pig-sticking.

Noosing and Running Down Elephants.—I was under the impression nothing could exceed in excitement hog-hunting, but I am not sure that the above is not almost as much so and far more dangerous, whilst as far as bodily fatigue goes, noosing elephants beats anything I have ever tried. I only went out twice, and after each hunt I could barely move a limb for a week. As for my arms, they had been wrenched almost out of their sockets, by holding on and being

other, at times thrown backwards and then forwards; in fact, oftener off the elephant's back than on it. This is not the experience of the native shikaries trained to the sport. I believe they could stick to the point of a needle if it were tossed to and fro on the "waters wild," or carried here and there in a whirlwind. It must take years to learn to sit barebacked on an elephant going at full speed across country. One moment almost pitching on its forehead, over some hidden trunk of a fallen tree, and the next the hind-quarters perhaps, falling into and sinking into some pitfall! I will first describe the *modus operandi*. The best caste female elephants are trained exclusively for this work almost as soon as caught, are carefully fed on grain to give them wind, and only the fastest are retained as koonkies; the others assist. Females are used exclusively for running down, but a good tusker or two are employed to act as "chuckers-out," if their services are required. The koonkies, when thoroughly trained, are thus equipped for a hunt:—A stout rope is passed twice round their body, like a girth, then under the neck and tail like a breastplate and crupper, and securely fastened close to the withers for the sling to be tied to. The mahout who guides the elephant and throws the noose must be a plucky fellow, specially trained to the work, and of course he must be at home on the beast's bare back. He has a man to assist, who has also been trained, and on whom he can depend, and whose business it is to keep the koonkie at full speed by striking it on a "raw," made on purpose near the root of the tail, and he has also to assist directly the lasso has been thrown and the wild elephant noosed. On falling in with a herd, the

mahout singles out one, generally a good-looking three-parts grown tusker, as they fetch the largest prices when broken, but if no young male is present then a good female is selected. Occasionally a full-grown tusker or even a mucknah is snared, but they give a great deal of trouble to catch, and to rear afterwards, as very many, from their stubborn resistance, get so badly cut by the rope forming the noose, that mortification sets in and destroys them. The large merchants who send out these parties, do not encourage the capture of any but half or three-quarters grown calves, but occasionally when they obtain a prize in the shape of a high caste male, they forgive the transgressors, yet if their time has been wasted in catching useless animals, all the men engaged in the hunting operations are heavily fined. The mahout on his koonkie rushes at full speed after the brute selected, endeavours to separate it from the herd, and then for half an hour or more it is a case of devil take the hindmost! The plain where the hunt takes place is covered with longish grass with scattered trees, and its inequalities cannot be seen. One moment you think the elephant and its riders must go heels over head, the next that all must fall backwards. Whatever the dangers, there must be no diminution of speed, whether you break your neck or dislocate that of your steed. Full pelt you must go and bring your quarry to a standstill before it can get second wind, and the superior training and condition of your elephant enables you to do this in half or three quarters of an hour, perhaps longer if you meet a "Deerfoot." But what a time that is! Unless your arms are well trained and muscular, and

you hold on with the tenacity of a bulldog, you will be soon thrown off, and if you survived that, you will see little of the chase and its results. As soon as the wild elephant is done up and stops, the koonkie ranges alongside, and the mahout, who is invariably standing up, holding on to a small rope fastened to the girth for that purpose, throws the noose over its head. The wild one, feeling the rope dangling about its face, curls up its trunk, apparently in the hope of getting rid of it, but in so doing it really assists in its own capture, as the knot then slips under the neck and is drawn tight. The koonkie now plants herself as firmly as possible, leaning her whole weight to the side opposite the secured brute, with one foot advanced to meet the struggles of the captured beast, who, having recovered a little breath and finding itself entangled, rushes off with great violence, dragging the koonkie after it; but the noose tightens, the animal gets half suffocated and has to pull up; another koonkie then rushes along the other side, a second noose is thrown, the animal is safe. The assistants then jump off and tether the feet of their prize, which they do in a few minutes, being from long practice most expert. The mahouts, notably the one who had thrown the first noose, have now the dangerous task of loosening the slip-knots and of fastening thick ropes round the necks of their victims, but the koonkies and men are so well trained and so expert that but few accidents occur. Two or three other tame elephants now close up and lavish attentions on the half-strangled captive, while the mahout is attaching a small rope, which he carries for that purpose, to one end of the noose so as to loosen it, which is often a matter of difficulty, for the



"THE KOONKIE RANGES ALONGSIDE AND THE MAHOUT . . . THROWS THE NOOSE OVER ITS HEAD."

ropes cut deep into the flesh and cannot easily be extricated. Directly this has been accomplished, the prisoner is placed between two tame elephants, males and tuskers, if it shows signs of fighting; but generally directly a wild elephant finds itself a captive, it resigns itself to its fate, and goes quietly to the place where it is temporarily tethered with other *confrères*, whence it is moved in a few days to a permanent camp, where it is broken in and made fit for work in six months. When a wild elephant is very obstreperous and proves too strong, the rope attached to the noose is cut and it is allowed to escape; but this seldom happens, and when it does, oftener than not mortification sets in and the beast is afterwards found dead. Now and then, but very rarely, a koonkie is overthrown and her riders killed in these encounters. This mode of hunting has now been forbidden, as so many of those so caught died, that the Government forbade it, still it is carried on all the same on the strict q.t., but only in remote and far-away provinces.

The first time I was present at such a hunt was near Tikri Killah, not far from Bengali-hat. My wife was in camp with me. Off a quiet pad elephant, she looked on for a while from a distance, but when she saw us careering full speed over the plain, covered with long grass and noted for being cut up with watercourses and other obstructions, she thought I was insane, and went home fully expecting to find herself a widow before night! That was some twenty-five years ago! I knew the Mahajun (banker) who owned the koonkies, having met him during one of my inspections not far from Goalparah, when I took him out shooting on the churs—where he actually

killed a tiger—and had shown him some other civilities and treated him with consideration, for which he was duly grateful. Most of his men therefore knew me, and when I proposed to be present at a hunt they gladly consented. I had three koonkies, one of them well known, but they were not in training, so they merely joined in the hunt to help if required. I was seated on the fastest koonkie, which carried of course the most expert mahout and nooser. It was easy work whilst she went at a walk looking for a herd. The first we saw did not contain any beast the mahout fancied, so we let it alone and went on ahead, but presently we espied a three-parts-grown tusker quite alone. We had four koonkies and eight other elephants out besides my three koonkies, and four pad elephants. We had separated of course, two elephants being deemed enough to be together, for it was not anticipated that any very large ones would be seen, or if we came across any, there was no need for us to molest them, and the ground we were to go over was very extensive. It was principally a plain which extended to the foot of the Garrow Hills, but in it there were clumps of trees in which elephants took shelter during the heat of the day. Many herds had been "marked" down a day or two before. The wild mangoes were getting ripe, and there were extensive tracts of the tara or wild cardamom, both of which elephants are very partial to.

As the two jockeys lay down flat, I did so too to the best of my ability. The koonkie, left to herself, moved along slowly, feeding the while, and the young male showed no signs of distrust until we

we should have got alongside and secured it without any chase whatever. The mahout was coiling his lasso, preparatory to casting it, when the wild one pricked up his ears. The mahout jumped up, threw the noose, but he was a second too late. It struck the elephant's head but failed to encircle it. Off he went, and we only about a length behind, but a little on one side, to the left. We had met with our match in speed. For quite half a mile we did not gain an inch. The ground was very uneven and I was tossed about everywhere. I had in my youth been accustomed to gymnastics of all sorts, and had been rather a proficient, but during the chase it was like practising on the parallel bars or horizontal pole. I clung on by my eyelids, my hands were clutched and held on like a vice to the top of the girth, and I wished I had had the feet of a gorilla to hold on by them too! But I may say that for a quarter of an hour, I was never for two minutes at a time on the elephant's back. I would have cried "Hold, enough," but could not speak. The man behind me belaboured the sore and kept the koonkie going as fast as she could lay legs to the ground. Several times she came down on her head, and I almost precipitated the mahout ahead of me off her back, but he held on like grim death. I never let go either, but I never passed such a *quatre d'heure* in my life. Fortunately I was fairly strong in those days, as hard as nails, in good condition, and pretty game, but I suffered terrible agonies. My arms were all but dislocated out of their sockets, and I cannot say how thankful I was when the chase took us across ground which had been cultivated but last year, and had not lapsed into tangled jungle, when

our motion became easier! But it was fully ten minutes more before our quarry was brought to a stand. We ranged alongside, the noose was thrown. We all required breathing time, the chased as well as the chasers. No other koonkie was near us—the pace had been too fast—so the noose was not at once tightened, to allow our attendant animal to overtake us. There we were, "cheek by jowl," "all a-puffing and a-blowing," for a couple of minutes. Our attendant beast was approaching, so the mahout secured the noose. The male started off. He was nearly as large as our koonkie, but not so massive, yet he dragged us fully a hundred yards, until, becoming suffocated, he desisted. He was then secured between two elephants and removed. Fortunately the rope had not cut very deep into his flesh. He was about fifteen years old, and a year afterwards he was sold at the great fair in Bengal Hurdwa for Rs.2000. That was the best catch of the trip. I was glad to jump off and rest a bit, and to be assured that no portion of my body was out of place. But in half an hour we saw two sets of koonkies in full chase of seven wild elephants coming towards us. Mount was the word, and off we went again to intercept the herd, which appeared to have the legs of the tame ones. This time, for my delectation I think, the mahout singled out a mucknah fully nine feet high and anything but young, and not the sort of beast his employer would have thanked him for. As I was only a spectator I said nothing. We went through the same torture, but the male did not run long; he waited until we were all but alongside and then charged. This had been foreseen so the koonkie

avoided it easily, but as the wild one scraped past us, the mahout threw his noose and snared him cleverly, but our elephant was not prepared, so got dragged sideways most ignominiously and all but overthrown. Our man was on the point of cutting the rope which held us together, when a large tusker was brought up diagonally and charged the mucknah, striking him obliquely. He all but went down, but not quite. The tame beast stepped back a pace or two and was in the act of repeating the dose when the mucknah met him half-way and they crashed so violently together, head to head that both were driven back. More tame elephants arrived on the scene, and as they all closed in on the wild one, he could not resist his fate, so was captured, but the injuries he received were so great, especially from the rope of the noose which had cut into the flesh to a depth of three or four inches, that before a week was out, mortification set in and he died. We caught one more that day, a small tusker about ten years old. One of his female relatives gave us a great deal of trouble, frequently charging, so that at one time we thought of letting the youngster loose for a while and securing her, but the mahout said she was not worth the catching, so we let a couple of elephants at her and drove her off, then secured the little one. I had had enough of sport by that time, so got on to one of my own pad elephants and went back to camp, and for the next week I was *hors de combat!*

Eight were caught in two days. Of these, two were strangled outright and two so severely cut that they died. I had one other hunt in the dooars, and having practised for about a week previously I was

more accustomed to sitting on the bare back of an elephant. We on that occasion caught nineteen in three days, but with the exception of one koonkie which fell over a fallen tree, and another elephant —not a hunter—which fell into a pit-fall—both were somewhat damaged and laid up—we met with no particular adventures. One of these hunts is very much like another, but while it lasts it is indeed exciting.

CAPTURING ELEPHANTS IN A KEDDAH.

The late Mr. Sanderson has been greatly lauded for the very successful captures he made whilst in charge of the Government keddah. That he was a first-rate man is undoubted—he was unquestionably the right man in the right place—but it must be remembered that he took charge of a thoroughly organised department, and some portion of his success should be accredited to the former incumbent, the late Mr. Nuttall, with whom I hunted on two occasions. Mr. Sanderson's success was due not only to the excellent training of the elephants, their mahouts and superintendents, and his own energy, but also to the fact that, the old hunting grounds having been depleted in a great measure, he opened out fresh grounds, and in commencing operations in the Garrow Hills, it may be said he "struck oil." There are two descriptions of keddahs in use : one is merely a ditch about nine feet broad at top, only a foot broad at bottom, and about six feet deep ; the other a combination, a stockade with or without a ditch. The latter is the commonest, for most keddahs are constructed in forests where timber

is plentiful; but in parts of Assam, in the vast plains, sometimes only the former is used, though the operations are much the same. A narrow entrance is left, to be closed either by a portcullis or abattis, which is placed at the entrance after the herd has been driven in. From the narrow entrance two deep ditches or two strong fences are made in a ∧ shape and are carried to a considerable distance. If the herd once gets within this angle, and the beaters act together it is not difficult to drive the elephants within the enclosure. Every means to frighten the herd and drive it forward are resorted to; guns are fired, huge bonfires lighted, tomtoms beaten, cholera horns blown, and amidst the yelling of the beaters, the trumpeting of the bulls, the bellowing of the cows—repeated by the tame elephants used as beaters—an uproar is created sufficient to awaken the dead. Amid this overwhelming din of conflicting tumults, a final exertion is made, and the whole or the greater part of the herd is impelled headlong into the stockade or keddah, and the entrance is closed, while the wild animals, seeking in vain an exit and finding themselves entrapped, set to work and create a row to which that previous was as nothing. Great endeavour is made by the wild herd to pull down the sides of the stockade and to trample down the ditch, but every place is guarded and they are everywhere repulsed either with sharp spears being thrust into their faces or confronted with blazing torches. The scene is grand and animating, and continues without intermission for hours. The wild animals finding escape impossible, abandon hope and resign themselves to their fate. Sometimes they are left alone for a day or two, or if few in numbers, a

party of picked koonkies used to the work and their attendants, usually as. naked as on the day they were born, enter the keddah, and get a captive between two of them. Their legs are in a minute or two fettered, ropes thick as many a hawser thrown round their necks, and they are removed one by one between two powerful elephants, to a suitable locality, where fodder and water is plentiful, and it is almost incredible how soon they become docile.

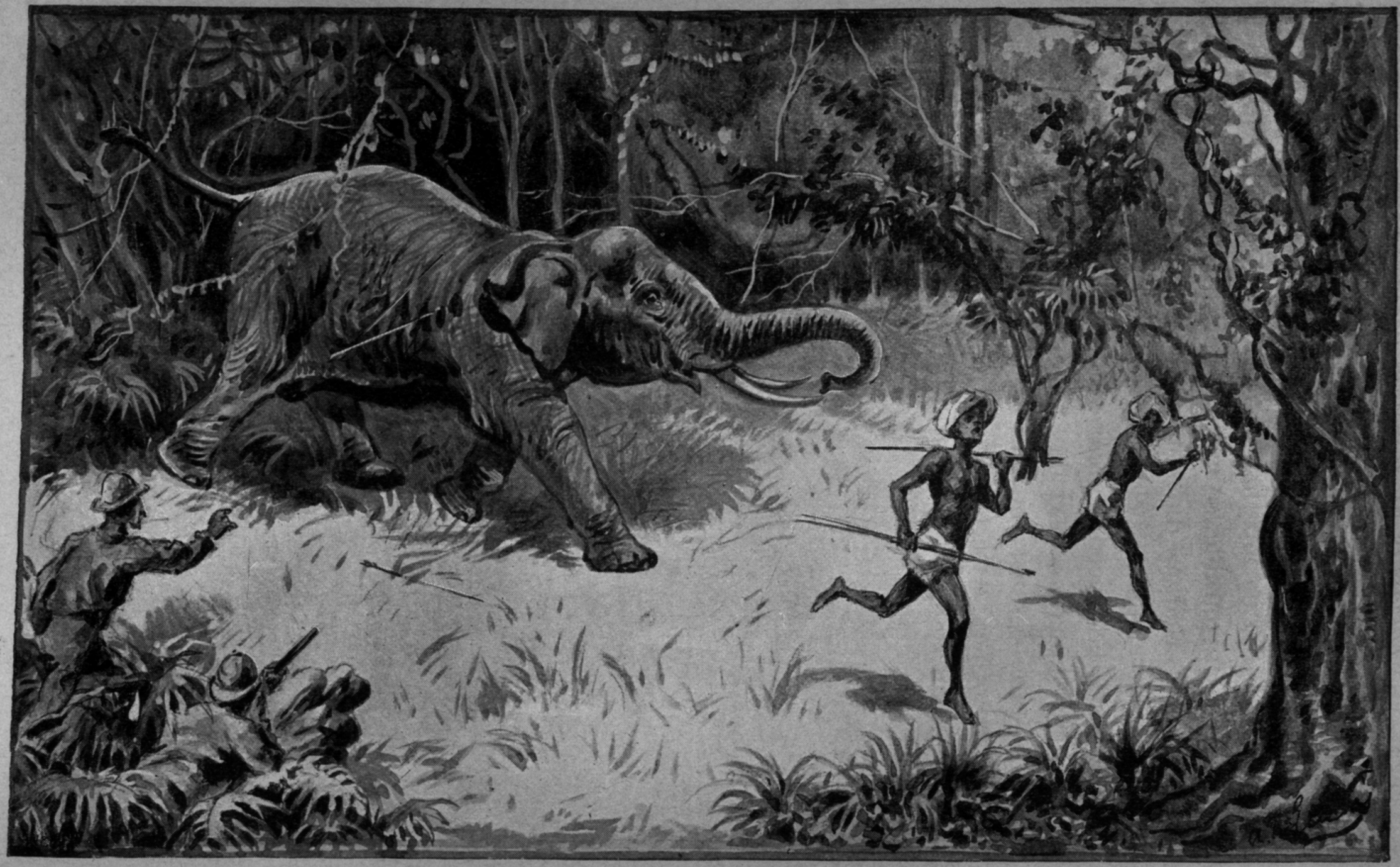
CATCHING ELEPHANTS IN PITFALLS.

This has been forbidden throughout our possessions in the East, as it led to the death of so many beasts. Men engaged in this operation note the way elephants go to their feeding grounds and back, dig pitfalls about nine feet deep—just narrow enough to contain the body of the elephant and no more—cover them up with boughs, bamboos, &c., scatter leaves and grass and fresh elephant dung over the surface, dig other pitfalls at right angles and along other paths, till there is a regular network of them. I once went with a party and was present when three fine animals were caught and not seriously injured. They (the men) lay in wait, and when the elephants entered the path and were only a few yards from the first pit, they created such a din, firing guns and rockets, lighting fires, beating tom-toms and rushing with lighted torches towards the affrighted herd that a rush forward naturally took place. The leader, a fine female, fell into the first pit, the others scattered here and there; but there were perils in every path. The noise made was awful, and I only wonder that more

animals were not entombed, for in the panic they took any path, and all others but those leading to the pits were blocked. Thus it seemed that every snare would hold its victim, but fortunately for the herd they only lost three of their leaders, two females and one male, but this repaid the hunters well, for they represented at least Rs.4,500 to be divided between some fifteen men—not bad for one night's work.

In Upper Burma, close to the city of Umrapoorah the former capital, they had two inclosures close to the walls in which they used to catch wild elephants. One was thus caught while I was there in 1856. Well-trained cow elephants were let loose. These wandered into the jungles, allowed the males to make love to them, and then Delilah-like betrayed them by enticing their admirers within the enclosure. I was told as many as twenty valuable males had thus been caught in one year. It cost nothing, for the females were let loose in the slack season, when not required for timber operations, and in almost every case they became pregnant, and brought forth in due time. But our Government has never succeeded in breeding elephants, nor was their mode of copulation known to us till lately. But in Siam, they do much as the Burmese, and when a female is inclined for the male, she is let loose, is duly covered, and generally returns back to her *Pheel-Khana*. Occasionally one is lost, but in Siam elephants are plentiful, and one more or less does not matter. But I think it is cheaper and better in the long run to catch the adult animals than to breed them, though the Keddah Department is a very considerable cost to the Government of India.

Once, whilst lying in wait for a wounded tiger, our shikaries were unexpectedly charged by an elephant and had to run for their lives, fortunately the angle was not favourable, so we did not fire and lucky it was for us that we did not, for it turned out to be a run-away elephant belonging to the Gairapore rajah on which he placed a great value. He, with the aid of our elephants, next day recaptured it, but it was in a state of *must* and had to be tied up away from all the others, with the exception of a female on each side, who soothed him during his violent fits.



"OUR SHIKARIES WERE UNEXPECTEDLY CHARGED BY AN ELEPHANT."

CHAPTER IV.

INDIAN BUFFALO SHOOTING.

I LOOK upon this animal, if not as the most dangerous, certainly as one of the most formidable of the *feræ naturæ*. They are not only very savage, but very treacherous, and most difficult to kill. A solitary bull is invariably morose. He will lie in wait in a dense patch of grass and attack anything that comes in his way. He is if anything worse than a rogue elephant. Baldwin, of the Bengal 39th, author of *Large and Small Game of Bengal*, was attacked by a wild bull buffalo, whilst out small game shooting, near Loqua-Ghat, and all but killed. Just a year afterwards, whilst out with Sir Charles Reid, I was charged by a bull, in almost the same locality, and that without any provocation. We were on elephants and were well armed, and he paid for his temerity with his life. He looked a fiend incarnate as he charged out at me, as I was passing by a patch of long grass in which he was hiding. Neither the Assamese nor the Burmese keep any entire bulls, but trust to the wild ones to keep up the breed. There is therefore but little difference, if any, in size and ferocity between the so-called wild and tame cattle.

During the breeding season wild bulls take possession of the tame cows, feeding with them during the day, and retiring with them towards where they are picketed during the night, and he often becomes a nuisance, loses his fear of man, and will not allow the *gwalas* to approach the cows. Oftentimes he attacks and occasionally kills some of the people. After he has done the needful he is doomed to death. The villagers attempt to hamstring him when he is engrossed by the females, or they dig pitfalls, or drop a heavily-weighted dart from a height on to his back, or employ someone to shoot him. I have frequently shot them at the request of the people. I had then often to kill them on foot, and it is very ticklish work meeting this formidable beast on equal terms and on level ground. The tame cattle are not to be trusted either. They dislike Europeans, and I have had many a narrow squeak from them, as they have frequently chased me when I have been snipe shooting and not expecting hostilities.

Dr. Mason has stated that he believed the wild buffaloes to be descended from tame ones run wild, but I believe the very contrary is the case. The Assamese, in strong nets, made expressly for the purpose, catch not only wild calves, but often full-grown and half-grown cows and bulls. The latter they kill, and sell the meat to the Cacharies; the former they tame and incorporate with their herds. The Burmese buffaloes have very heavy horns, much curved as a rule, but the long-horned variety is also frequently met with. The largest head I have heard of was one I gave the Earl of Mayo, when he was Viceroy of India. The horns round the curve from tip to tip measured

thirteen feet eight inches, whilst straight across the tips the distance was six feet six inches. Immense as were these horns, I am not sure whether I did not see a pair fully their equal in Burma. Near T'seben, a favourite spot of mine for snipe, there was an albino cow in a herd. When she threw back her head, elevating the nostrils, each horn lay along the back and reached almost to the root of the tail. They must each have been nearer seven feet than six—if not even more. I coveted those horns. The price of an ordinary buffalo in Burma in those days was Rs.50, but the owner, seeing how anxious I was to secure his cow, would not take less than Rs.200, which I declined to give him. Although buffaloes inhabit remote and swampy localities, they at times do a great deal of damage to cultivation, as they are fearless and often refuse to be driven off. In the wild state, they wander about the same jungles, and herd in company with elephants and rhinoceros. A Burmese elephant, often a timid creature with most wild animals, cares little for a buffalo, as he is so used to the tame cattle, and fails to see any difference between those that are denizens of the jungles, and those that are kept for domestic purposes. The buffalo's forehead is narrow and convex, horns black, colour blackish slate, hair scant. There are occasional albinos, both tame and wild. In size they are almost the same as a rhinoceros. I measured a large bull as he lay dead—twelve feet to the root of the tail from the tip of the nose; tail, two and a half feet; height, six feet two inches! The thickest horns I ever got were from the very first buffalo I killed in Burma; they were not long, but each horn measured

round the greatest circumference, twenty-seven and twenty-six and a-half inches respectively.

These brutes have given me more trouble to kill than any other animal, and the fights I have had with them have been innumerable. After the first year in Assam, during which I killed twenty-two or twenty-three, I kept no account. I seldom fired at them unless they disputed the right of way, or came across a bull with exceptional horns, or to use the carcase as bait for tigers. Although my elephants have been struck several times, only one was seriously wounded, and she could not then be worked for fully four months. On one occasion a friend and I were charged by a whole herd of these irritable brutes, a most unusual proceeding—such a thing never having since occurred to me. But on that occasion we had formed line, M. on the right and I on the left, and were in search of a stag marsh deer which I had wounded. We did not know the buffaloes were there. A rush occurred, the long grass was borne down and five of those animals dashed down upon us. So sudden and unexpected was the assault, that they were upon us before we could even fire. The bull made for M., whose elephant behaved splendidly, received the brute on his one tusk, and threw it off as easily as a dog would a rat, and M. killed him before he could recover his legs. The others, after sending the beating elephants flying, came for me. I emptied my battery of four heavy rifles into them, but so persistent were they that they chased my elephant some way, and she only escaped being wounded by her superior speed. She was one of the fastest of her

without punishment, for we picked up next day two dead, which with M.'s made three out of the five. The others doubtless had received mementoes of the event from my weapons, which they (*i.e.*, the buffaloes) were not likely soon to forget.

Once, with Frank B., I was shooting at Myung, and he wounded a bull, which only ran a short distance, and then pulled up in a small patch of long grass. His elephant would not advance, and he called out to me to beat round and take the enemy in the rear, this I proceeded to do. I got near enough to see a dusky form, and was about to fire, when the brute rushed not at me, but at my companion, whose elephant turned tail, and went off full score! While holding on to the howdah with one hand, for he was not used to riding runaway animals, Frank endeavoured to shoot with the other, but failed completely to stop his antagonist, who, rushing in with unusual velocity, gave the elephant a prod behind which impelled her several yards forward, and caused her to bellow "blue murder." The assailant followed up his success and again closed, giving the pursued two more nasty prods. All this time I had urged "Lutchmee" on at her fastest speed, for the elephant and bovine were closely struggling, the latter inflicting all the punishment, the former not attempting to defend herself. When I arrived alongside, I opened fire. The infuriated bull then turned on me and struck my elephant with his whole force close to the fore leg, but fortunately the horns passed on either side of my "hattie," so firing down I broke the brute's spine, and he rolled over, but was by no means dead,

for though unable to get up, his rage was magnificent; he bellowed, he tossed his head and forequarters about, unsubdued hatred darting out of his eyes. To hit a vital spot was not easy, as his movements were so rapid, and it took three shots before I had administered a quietus. Frank was too much done up to assist me. When all was over, we got down to examine the damage. My companion's elephant had five severe stabs, mine had escaped with only the blow of the forehead, but the part so struck swelled up, and she was somewhat lame for a day or two.

For a long time there was a "rogue" buffalo which was the terror of a large village not far from Myung. He was very often to be seen out in the open. There was no getting at him on an elephant, as he had been frequently hunted before. Once or twice, when coming back on foot from shooting small game, with only a shot gun in my hand, he had threatened to charge, so the next time I was out in that direction, I made inquiries, and finding that he was still there, C., of the Artillery, and I determined to rid the country of this dangerous brute. We took a couple of gun-bearers, each carrying a heavy rifle, and whilst C. advanced from the side of the village, I remained some way off, behind a clump of long grass, as there was very little cover in the whole plain. We both knew the way the bull retired if he decided on retreating, but we fully anticipated that he would show fight. I very easily secured my position—which I did by a circuitous route, so as not to be seen by the enemy. There the buffalo stood, like a statue, almost equidistant between my post and the village. On my

hoisting a handkerchief on a long rod, C., in company of about fifty Assamese, advanced. The object was to drive the beast past me, and not to attack him, if it could be avoided, in the open. I could soon see that C. was ready to open fire, as the brute would not budge an inch; on the contrary stood facing the crowd, shaking his head and horns and pawing the ground with his fore feet. These demonstrations were too much for the cowardly Assamese, for they began to loiter, then to get together, and finally halted. While the enemy's attention was riveted on the concourse of people in front of him, I thought I would steal a march upon him and take him from the rear and flank so leaving my cover, I quickly advanced, bidding my gun-bearer to keep close. I do not think that the animal was aware of my approach until I was within fifty yards of him and then, spinning round, he charged at once, thinking, I suppose, that two men were less formidable than half a hundred. As he turned, C., who was only about forty yards off, gave him two shots, well placed but a little too far back to be mortal; nevertheless they caused him to stumble. I now fired at his chest; his head was down when I pulled the trigger. My first shot caught him on the top of the nostril and went through both jaws, my second taking him in the breast. I had just time to seize my spare weapon when a pair of formidable horns were all but around me. The fiendish eyes glared with intense hate; the damaged muzzle and the pouring blood gave him a diabolical look, and as he lowered his head with a view of tossing me I gave him a shot in the head and, springing aside, just escaped a vicious prod he made

at me. As the brute passed me I fired into his shoulder and took to my heels towards C., who was hurrying up to my assistance. My man had thrown himself down, and the buffalo, all but blinded by the blood which poured down his face, and smarting from his wounds, did not perceive him, but went clean over his prostrate form, staggering and all but falling. As I ran, I reloaded, and was still some twenty yards from C. when the plucky buffalo pulled up, turned round, and without hesitation rushed towards us. As soon as I was reloaded I pulled up. C. came on so that we were now about fifteen yards apart. Both reserved our fire until the buffalo (who seemed puzzled as to whom he should close with) singled me out, but changing his mind made for C., who stood his ground bravely. He had his second gun by him, whilst I had but one. We lost no time, but gave the beast three barrels—C. two and I one—but the brute bore a charmed life. With my left barrel I again fired and broke one of his legs, when he came down very heavily, but picking himself up and then seeing the Assamese running across the plain, went for them on three legs. C. now gave him two more shots. I reloaded, and as it was evident the natives ran faster than the wounded animal, and that they incurred little danger, both of us, with our gun-bearers—for mine had rejoined me by this time—made for a cattle-shed which lay in the direction that the people were retreating, for by proceeding towards it direct (the mob had taken a circuitous route, followed by the buffalo), we got there before them. However, they continued their flight, so now we were

shots and one in the neck sufficed; the beast however was not dead, but lay down. There is no trusting to one of these treacherous brutes, even in *articulo mortis*, for by a dying effort they have been known to jump up and kill their foe, dropping dead the next instant! Thus we advanced carefully. When within ten yards, I got a clear view of the back of his head and fired. There was a quiver, the head fell forward, the body turned over on its side, the outstretched legs idly beat the air, and a moment after all was over. The terror of the neighbourhood had at last joined the majority. We were disappointed in his horns, as they measured barely eleven feet from tip to tip, although in life they looked immense, and we thought we had scored a record. Simson, who probably has killed more boars off horseback than anybody else in India, with perhaps the exception of the late Col. Nightingale, has, in his charming book of *Sport in Eastern Bengal*, vividly described riding down and shooting buffaloes off horseback, which, considering the nature of the ground which had to be traversed, and the tenacity of life possessed by these formidable and ferocious beasts, was unquestionably most dangerous work. Yet some fifty years ago, *spearing* buffaloes off horseback was a favourite pastime.

The late Dr. Chalmers gave a grand description of such a hunt, in one of the old Indian sporting reviews. I unfortunately have not got it by me, but I remember that, after spearing a bull buffalo twice, the gallant medico's horse stumbled and fell just as the foe was charging. The bull tossed its assailant, inflicting many wounds on him, and would doubtless

have killed him outright, had it not been for a bull mastiff which was out with his master and came to the rescue, attacking the infuriated buffalo and in other ways diverting his attention from the insensible doctor. Fortunately Chalmers's syce had seen the occurrence. He hurried into the station and gave intelligence of his employer's death as he supposed. Some half-a-dozen Europeans—officers, civilians and indigo planters—were on their horses in a few moments and galloped off to the scene of action, where they found the bull and dog still fighting, and the disabled sportsman lying in a pool of blood. The dangerous brute happily was soon dispatched and Chalmers was carried home and eventually recovered to tell the tale of his miraculous escape.

When once near Nowgong the people asked me to kill a bull for them, as he had taken possession of a herd of cows, and wouldn't allow them to come home at night. So accompanied by one man I walked out about three miles to a marshy plain where the bull was pointed out to me. I had ordered my elephant to follow. She had been taken out to bring her "charah" in, for I did not propose going out hunting that day, having some work to attend to, as well as expecting some native contractors to be at my tent about 11 a.m. Seeing no signs of my "hattie," and a convenient white ant-hill within easy shot of the buffalo, bidding my man climb a small tree and not to descend unless I told him, I crawled up until I got behind the hillock. Using its crest as a support, I fired two shots, and the bull fell down apparently dead. As I was loading I heard hasty steps coming towards me. It was the

native, who, thinking his enemy killed, was hurrying up to insult and vilify the slain. I bid the man not to move, but he replied "*Murgya*" (He is dead), and ran forward. He got close up to the beast and commenced to spit upon it, when up jumped the bull, and before I could fire he had rolled over the native, and, kneeling down, he began pounding the man into the soft ground so as to almost bury him, and then fell dead. I went back and related what had occurred. The body was recovered and taken to the Assistant Commissioner, before whom a complaint was lodged that I had caused the man's death and heavy damages were demanded. After my explanation I never heard anything more of the matter, so I presume the case was dismissed.

GAUR, FAMILIARLY CALLED BISON SHOOTING.

The gaur is a noble animal to look at. It is widely distributed throughout our Eastern possessions, but has been extinct in Ceylon for a considerable time—I may say, beyond the memory of man. It is found in Travancore, in all the Western Ghauts, in most of the hilly ranges in Southern, Eastern and Central India, and in Assam, but nowhere does it grow to the size it does in Burma, unless it be in the Mishmi Hills, from whence I have had brought down some very fine heads. There is only one species of the *Bos gaurus* or *Gaveus gaurus*, but two distinct varieties, which may be due to climatic causes, to superabundance of food, or diversity of external influences; but there is no doubt that the two varieties exist, and a comparison of the skulls in the

museum in Calcutta places the matter beyond a doubt. The Indian variety is about nine and a half or ten feet long from the nose to tip of the tail; the tail thirty-four inches long; the skull is massive, the frontals large, deeply concave, surmounted by a large semi-cylindric crest rising above the base of the horns. There are thirteen pairs of ribs. The head is square, proportionately shorter than in the ox, and the bony frontal ridge is five inches above the frontal plane. The muzzle is large and full, and the eyes small, with a full pupil of a pale blue colour. The whole of the head in front of the eyes is covered with a coat of close short hair of a light grayish-brown colour, which below the eyes is darker, approaching almost to black. The muzzle is grayish, and the hair thick and short. The ears are broad and fan-shaped, and the neck, which is sunk between the head and back, is short, thick and heavy. Behind the neck, and immediately above the shoulder, rises a fleshy gibbosity, or hump, of the same height as the dorsal ridge. The ridge rises gradually as it goes backwards, and terminates about the middle of the back. The chest is broad, the shoulder deep and muscular, and the forelegs short, with the joints very short and strong, and the arm exceedingly large and muscular. The hair on the neck and breast is longer than on the body; and the skin of the throat is somewhat loose, giving the appearance of a slight dewlap. The forelegs have a rufus tint behind, and laterally above the white, the hindquarters are lighter and lower than the fore, falling suddenly from the termination of the dorsal ridge. The skin on the neck, shoulders and thighs is very thick, about two inches, the

horns, pale greenish with black tips curving outwards, upwards, and slightly backwards, and finally inwards. General colour, dark chestnut brown, or coffee brown; legs, from knee downwards, a dirty white. The above description is from Jerdon, and is very exact as applied to the Indian gaur. The Burmese differ in the following respects:—The head is longer; the nose arched like a ram's (some of the Indian ones have this too, but in a less degree); the dorsal ridge is more prominent and extends much further backwards, to within a short span of the loin or hip-joint. Whereas in India a bull of nineteen hands is considered very large, cows in Burma have been killed at that height, and an old bull is often twenty-one hands and more. The cows in India differ from the bulls in having slighter and more graceful heads, while those in Burma have longer heads with the noses more arched than the bulls. The necks are slighter, there is no hump, and the points of the horns do not turn towards each other at the tips, but bend slightly backward and are much smaller. The legs too, are of a purer white. Whilst in the Indian cows the bony frontal ridge is scarcely perceptible, it is most prominent in the Burmese ones. All gaur have very small feet for their size, not much bigger than those of a large sambur. The old bulls have the bases of the horns much truncated with rough ridges, and each ridge, the "shikaries" assert, represents a year of its life, after six years of age, before which they are not apparent. If correct in this, I have shot gaur over thirty years of age. The skin of an old specimen exudes an oily substance, slightly offensive. Never sit on a dead one, for this substance will cause a stain

which is ineradicable. These animals browse on the young shoots of the bamboo, and graze on such grasses as they can find, but come down to the plains after the annual fires for the sake of the new growth. During the heat of the day, they retire to the deep forests, or if the gad flies are very troublesome, they force their way into some heavy grass and lie in it, to avoid their tormentors. The wind being favourable, they are not difficult to approach on an elephant, because they are so accustomed to seeing and hearing the wild ones moving about them in the jungles which are their joint homes. I never saw one charge an elephant, but have heard of its doing so when wounded and hard pressed, but many sportsmen when following them on foot have been killed; and occasionally they "run amuck." I will here relate an instance. By some accident, I fancy, the beasts had miscalculated the distance from one forest to another where they were bound, for at daybreak they found themselves close to an Assamese village, and the villagers, as is their custom for purposes of nature, were scattered about the plains, so the gaurs "ran amuck," probably more in fright than with any other intent, killed several people, and one man (who was then alive in the Goalparah dispensary) escaped with scarcely a whole bone in his body. That they do miscalculate distances and localities is proved by the fact of a wandering gaur having taken up his position in some jungle at the foot of Goalparah Hill, around which were numerous villages and houses, at least twenty miles from his usual habitat! He was there killed by a police officer, to the wonder of the inhabitants, who had never seen such an animal.

Although difficult to kill, a shot placed behind or in the centre of the shoulder, or a raking shot forward will account for them. When alarmed their enormous strength enables them to crash through bamboo and tree jungle as if they were but reeds. Often when disturbed suddenly, they will gallop forward for about fifty yards, then pull up and turn round, staring at the intruder. Several times I have admired these noble beasts when I have come across a herd composed of stupendous bulls, graceful cows, and pretty calves, peacefully grazing on the short crisp grass. If alarmed they often snort and sometimes stamp, after the manner of deer, with their fore foot, to intimidate the intruder, I fancy. The marrow bones and tongue of a gaur are a *bonne bouche* to the greatest of gourmets. I am told the flesh is very good, especially the so-called hump. On either side of the dorsal ridge above the shoulder, the flesh lies in three longitudinal layers, easily removed one from the other, the centre part being considered the tit-bit, the tail makes excellent soup, and the hide is valuable, for when cured it is grand soling for hunting boots. The very old gaurs when driven by younger bulls from the herds, become morose, and are by far the best for shooting, as they carry the largest heads, but they are not easy to find, selecting isolated and remote localities to reside in. All the gaurs, wild cattle, buffalo and deer tribe, and it is said even the *felidæ*, are very fond of a species of white clay impregnated with natron, and wherever this is found—other conditions also being favourable—there

takes their place. But in Chittagong, the gaur, the gayal and the tsine (wild cattle) are found not far from one another inhabiting the same hills and forests. Assam is never free from the cattle disease, and this at times extends to the wild cattle, who when stricken go down to the *bheels* where they die in hundreds. The Assamese call the gaur and gayal mithun—if pressed, they call the larger animal (the gaur) the asseel mithun (or true mithun), and the other mithun only. This led the late Mr. Sanderson, a careful observer, to assert that the gayal was not found in a wild state, for the mithun shot by him were undoubtedly true gaur. The gaur has not been known to interbreed with domestic cattle, whilst hybrids between the gayal and the zebu are very common.

I shot a great many gaur in Burma, a few in Assam, and many in India. The late Mr. Blyth, the best naturalist of his day, wrote to me that I must be mistaken in declaring that the gaur was to be found in Burma, as he thought its place there was taken by the gayal, but some heads which I sent him, and some he procured himself when on a visit to the province, induced him to write that, not only was he mistaken in asserting that this noble wild bull did not exist, but that on the contrary, the Burmese variety was much finer than the Indian. The first pyoung (Burmese for gaur) I saw killed in Burma, was when I was out with the late Brigadier Glencairn Campbell, Major Lloyd, and Liardet. The first-named killed it, but the second claimed it, as having first hit it. We saw many more that trip, but got no other then. The next year I was out and shot several—three in

one day. I saw on that occasion about a dozen. Every succeeding year Lloyd and myself killed many. On one trip—it was a hot sultry day, and I had not had much luck up to 11 A.M.—I came to the edge of a dry nullah. On the opposite bank stood a bull gaur facing me, looking as if much amazed. We were only about ten paces apart; I took a careful aim for the centre of the forehead and fired, but the beast turned round, and as he ran past I gave him the second barrel behind the shoulder, and killed. On examining the slain, we could only find one shot, the fatal one, and the shikarie declared my first was a miss. I could not credit it. What! Miss the broad forehead at ten paces? Yet where was the wound? Apparently nowhere. When the man opened the mouth to extract the tongue, we discovered that the ball had entered one nostril—the head was thrown up as I pulled the trigger—and cut the palate all along, and had imbedded itself in the immense muscles of the neck. Many years after I was again on "Bison Hill," up the Godavery. All these hills have a peculiar formation, being flat on the top, abut on the river, and then go inland fifteen or twenty miles. (Hills very similar in formation and appearance exist on the Niger; also in South Africa.) These are separated by well-wooded declivities that slope down to a water-course, from whence they ascend and join the next range. These are full of game of all sorts, gaur especially being very plentiful. In 1851, Cotton of the Civil Service, Dansey of our 30th, and I ascended the range and christened it "Bison Hill," bison being a misnomer in common use amongst Indian sportsmen for this grand beast. Generally on these

hills I have been very lucky, but on that occasion we could not find a bull worth shooting although we saw scores. In searching several dales and secluded valleys, where a *solitaire* would be likely to take up his quarters, we came across an old woodcutter. He had been a fine man in his time, but he was seventy if he was a day. He had lived in these wilds all his life, and earned his livelihood by collecting firewood, the blossoms of the mhowa tree and honey. He knew every inch of the country. We asked him if he had seen gaur. "Gaur," said he, "why they are as plentiful on these hills as flies in the village." "Yes, we know that," said I, "but we want a solitary bull—one that lives by himself." "Why, there is one not half a mile from here," replied the veteran. "I saw him, not half an hour ago. Come, I'll show him to you. I have known him for the last forty years. He lost a part of one ear when a calf, and for the last twenty years he has lived alone, and retires to the thick cover during the heat of the day. I see him nearly every day."

We followed the old man. He took us over the brow of the hill we were on, and descended into a hollow between two hills. It was narrower than usual; the sides steeper, and in the centre was an almost dry watercourse. The nullah sides were well wooded, affording a grateful shade; clumps of bamboos also were here and there scattered about, while in the bed of the nullah, small pools of water existed. The place was well chosen, for the gaur had all he required close at hand. We went along for about half a mile, the woodcutter leading, when suddenly he pulled up and stretched out a long bony, but still muscular,

arm, pointed half-way up the hill side. Looking in that direction, I saw a splendid old bull. His horns were somewhat worn at the tips, but still long and massive. He stood side on, but looking at us, or at his old acquaintance who had betrayed him. The shot was an easy one. As I fired, the bull rolled over and over. The old native ran forward—for what purpose it is impossible to say—for he was a Hindoo to whom the animal and all its kind are sacred, and he would have died rather than have touched it. But familiarity, it is said, breeds contempt. The old fellow had seen these animals probably for over sixty years; he had never hurt them or they him, and it could only have been mere bravado on his part, but whether or no, it cost him dear, for as the bull reached the bed of the watercourse, he sprang up and the old man was only a pace from him, when, lowering his head with a bellow which I have scarcely got out of my ears even to this day, so horrible did it sound, he rushed at the woodcutter and ran past us with the man apparently impaled on his horns. I dropped the bull in his tracks stone dead, but our ancient guide was dead too. The horn had not penetrated the victim—it was too blunt in fact to do that—but the blow must have struck just over the heart. The loin cloth had become entangled on the horns, and thus the man was carried past as described. We bore the body to my camp, sent word to Lingum Reddy, the head man, but no one claimed relationship with the defunct, so my people prepared a pyre and cremated the body. The head of the gaur when brought in was minus half an ear, and the ridges at the base of the horn just numbered thirty-two, and if the native

theory is true, the gaur must have been fully as old as reported by the man who betrayed him and suffered death in consequence. I have only known one other gaur charge. None of the others—and I slew a great many—ever showed fight.

THE GAYAL: BOS FRONTALIS.

These wild kine are plentiful in parts of the Chittagong Hills, extend into the interior to Munnipore, in a few localities in the northern and eastern parts of Assam, and probably are found extending north and east to the borders of China. They are numerous along the spurs of the Bhootan Hills, amongst the Dufflas, Tipperah, Looshais, and in the wild districts which skirt Chittagong. It is domesticated extensively and easily. Very many of the young wild cattle are caught in nets and are tamed, the great attraction being huge lumps of rock salt, which have an extraordinary fascination for them. This lure is placed near where they assemble every evening. When domesticated, they are let loose at daylight to browse in the adjoining forests, and are recalled by the tinkling of bells or the striking of gongs. The forehead of the gayal is not concave like a gaur's, but quite straight and destitute of the semi-cylindrical crests. The horns grow straight out and then curve very slightly upwards, and in the old bulls only are very slightly truncated. The forehead is broad and, like the gaur's, covered with lightish-coloured hair. It browses more than *Bos gaurus*, and unlike it, has a small but distinct dewlap. The dorsal ridge is promi-

a distance one might easily be mistaken for the other, for the colouration is the same. They frequent similar ground, and are probably cousins several times removed. It is said that they, the gayal, have been seen in the north grazing not far from the wild yak. I have seen very many of these cattle wild, tame thoroughbreds, and tame hybrids although I never shot but two, and that was upon the only time I followed them up. The bull was almost the exact counterpart of the one in the Zoo, which is as fine an animal of its kind as can be found. Hybrids between these wild cattle and zebus or Indian tame cattle have run wild, and are fairly plentiful in the lower ranges of the Bhootan Hills. As the two I killed fell to double shots right and left, there is no tale of adventure to tell. Many that have died of the murrain I have seen on the borders of Assam.

THE TSINE (BOS SONDAICUS).

These wild cattle extend from the hill tracts of Chittagong downwards, and are found in Java, Sumatra, Borneo and the Celebes. It is a wary animal, grazes in the open quins or plains, and is not easy to approach. Although a sacred animal according to their religion, the Burmese shikaries, who are looked upon as damned by their co-religionists, because they take life, sit up in trees and pot these kine as they pass by, and sell the jerked meat to the villagers, who do not hesitate to buy it. These are true cattle, very handsome, of a deep red (the very old bulls get almost black in their second childhood),

belly and under the tail, along the buttocks, and a lighter red about the legs below the knee, almost approaching to dirty white stockings. A very slight hump, which is lost in the ridge, together with a very slight dewlap, not always apparent, is also characteristic of them. The head is very like that of a wild stag, the facial angle being quite straight, altogether unlike the formation of the gaur, or even of the gayal. I have seen herds of them, but only came across them on two hunting trips—once with Charlie Hill, governor of H.M.'s Prison, Manchester, when we killed a fine bull; and once, some years afterwards, in an open space in the Yomahs, I tracked a herd. It retired to a grove of trees, which formed as it were an oasis in the vast plain; their spoor, with droppings, was fresh, but to get at them during daylight seemed impossible. I talked the matter over with Shoay Jah and Moung Kyang, the two shikaries, and we decided to start by moonlight at 3 A.M., lie in ambush in the tope of trees, and try and get a shot at daybreak. There were a lot of tigers about. I had shot two the day before, after a good scrimmage, and it is far from pleasant to walk through tigerish grass at any time, particularly by night. But such things have to be done if you are to be successful in circumventing a wary beast like the tsine. Accordingly we were up and away by the time arranged. When we reached our destination we were soaking wet, or rather I was, for my attendants were not encumbered with much clothing, so we sat shivering, longing for the sun to rise. When it did appear above the horizon, we were not benefited much, for we had to lie in thick brushwood, which could not have been more wet had it

poured with rain for the previous twenty-four hours. Six, seven, eight, and nine o'clock passed. My teeth were chattering with the cold, and yet not a sign of *Bos sondaicus*. I was so cramped I doubted whether I could lift an arm to take aim if the occasion arose to do so. A lot of thamin or brow antlered deer were grazing about, and I could have had easy shots at several fine stags. The shikaries suffered more than I did, for with the exception of the cloth they wind round their loins and pass between their legs, they were clotheless, but these people are far more patient than we are. "Wait, sir," they said, "the cattle are sure to come. To-day is a cool day, very cloudy, and they have stayed browsing later than usual." I was sick of waiting, but still, after what I had undergone, I determined to endure the ordeal for another hour. Half that time had hardly passed away when we heard the distant low of a cow. Soon several, accompanied by calves, appeared on the scene; but the beasts seemed in no hurry to take their siesta, so fed along leisurely. Two good bulls then approached from separate quarters, each accompanied by his harem of six or seven wives. It was not the rutting season; thus they all seemed on friendly terms. About ten o'clock, when the sun began to shine fiercely, several cows went into the tope at the nethermost end, but as there was no wind we were pretty safe from detection. The bulls now fed closer and closer, and at a quarter to eleven were within shot. I killed the nearest. The belted bullet (for I still stuck to my two muzzle-loaders, though I had two other breechloaders) struck it behind the shoulder, passed on and broke the leg of a cow standing near. I also

wounded the other bull, but off he and the cows scampered into the open. Those that had entered the tope now ran past me, but not very fast, seeming to be bewildered with the sudden stampede and reports of firearms, which probably they then heard for the first time. I killed a nice fat three-parts-grown heifer. Bidding the men to cover the slain over with grass to keep them safe from vultures, I first stretched my limbs, then eat a hard-boiled egg or two, had a swig of ginger-wine, and then took up the spoor of the wounded bull, and found that the cow with the broken leg had followed him. Upon her I came before long. She was inclined to be savage, but I had no difficulty in dropping her, covering her up too, we followed the bull. He had gone steadily along until he came to a running stream with high muddy banks. There his heart seemed to have failed him, for after a faint attempt to go down the abrupt side he continued along the bank, doubtless looking for a ford. The grass was not very heavy, so I could see a fair way ahead, made sure that he was in front, and did not look out as I ought to have done. On the right, I came to a place where the bank was fully ten feet high. Here the water was deep, a fallen tree lay alongside the path. I had got to about the middle of the trunk and was half inclined to sit down, as the shikaries were some distance behind, when there was a rush from my right and a fierce head and pair of horns were all but on me. I instantly threw myself backwards over the tree, holding on, luckily, with one hand to a branch, so that although I was over the bank, I still had a grip and

bull carried him clean over me, and he fell with an awful splash into the pool. This must have knocked the wind out of him, for he lay in the water half-submerged. I drew myself on to *terra firma*, seized my rifle, pulled both triggers, but the only result was snap, snap—the caps had fallen off! I screamed to Moung Shoay Jah, and he came up with another weapon. By this time the bull had recovered his breath and legs, but it was not for long, for instantly afterwards I rolled him over dead. Once afterwards these cattle, with calves, rushed past me. When I saw them first they were grazing some way off. Soon after there was a stampede, with some active beast prancing about on their backs, while to judge by the violent cow-kicking that went on, another assailant was at their heels. A family of leopards were driving off the herd, doubtless in the hopes of making a meal off one of the little ones, but I interfered, slew one and the rest decamped.

TIGERS, GAUR AND LEOPARDS.[1]

In the good old days, before we annexed Upper Burma (which ought to have been in 1852), Tongho, our frontier station, was a quiet place, and officers had no difficulty in obtaining leave; but since the last war, we have changed all that. The garrison has been reduced, and no one knows what a day may bring forth in the way of requisition for men and officers to chase dacoits and catch only fever! I had

[1] This happened to a near relative of mine, and is told in his own words.

applied several times for temporary leave, as I was anxious to try some jungles where B. some years before had been very successful. It was no use going south—I could no longer get the use of the elephants—and since the construction of the railway, big game had gone further inland; moreover the old shikaries were dead. But near Lepangyoung, after the forest fires and before the monsoon sets in, game can occasionally be seen and got at. A local shikarie of that district, Shoay-Boh, whom I knew and met casually in the market, told me that, owing to the disarmament of the people since the disturbances, no one but himself possessed a gun within twenty miles round Lepang-young, and that game was just then very plentiful, and the jungles in a nice state for stalking or beating. It was early in May, and as the man was returning home next day, I hurried off on the impulse of the moment to my commanding officer, who was also the commandant of the station, to solicit three days' leave from the following Monday. That was on Friday; I was not on duty on Saturday; I had not to attend church parade on Sunday; so I calculated that if I was successful in my application I could "sniggle" those two days as well. After humming and hawing a bit, the leave was granted. I hurried off to a Madras contractor, who had some carts, and now and then let them out on hire, but he charged Rs.2 a day besides the keep of the cattle, and in case of an accident to either cart or bullock I was to make good the loss. It did not take me long to get my goods and chattels into the cart, and to dispatch it with the servants and orderly to Tseben, with orders to go on at daybreak to Lepangyoung and to put up in

a "zyat," near a nullah, about a mile beyond the village. There were rest houses in Lepang-young, but I prefer being a little way out, for in a crowded village one has no peace. The young children, and girls especially, are so fond of staring at one. Telling Shoay-Boh that I had obtained leave and was starting my kit in a bullock-cart, and that if he wished it, he could put his things into it and accompany me, I gave him a few rupees as a *douceur*, and he went off to collect his traps. When I saw the miscellaneous articles he brought I was appalled. They would require a cart for themselves, but wishing to conciliate the man, I bade my boy hurry off and get another, which he did, and between them all they managed to fill the two pretty completely. I was glad they were to go on ahead, for the effluvia from the *gnapee* (of which the Burman was taking back a large supply, not only for his own home consumption, but also I suspect for sale) was most sickening. I sent on a syce and an extra pony too, as I intended to ride out very early and get some sport on the Saturday. I had often shot snipe at Tseben, and had once gone to Lepangyoung in the cold season, but had failed to get anything but jungle fowl and a few yit (pheasants). So by 5 A.M. I was up and away. The country is dead flat; there is no regular road, only native pathways, which formerly had been much cut up by commissariat-elephants and cattle. Riding fast therefore was out of the question, but these ponies can amble over ground where a less sure-footed animal would come to grief. In two hours I had reached Tseben. The road was fair beyond, and by nine I was at the zyat, where my boy had a cold collation ready for me. Shoay-Boh told

me he had sent on fifteen beaters, all he could get, to some low-lying hills, cut up with innumerable water-courses (just then quite dry), where there were sambur, ghee (barking deer), and perhaps a panther or maybe a tiger. Meat was scarce. Shoay-Boh had been absent some days and had been unable to procure venison for sale, so the people had been living on rotten fish and would welcome flesh of any sort. A Burman will eat anything from an elephant to a snail. So it was all fish, like Paddy Myles that, came into his net, so he had on my behalf promised the beaters and villagers that any game I shot would be given to them, if they conducted matters properly, and that in addition I would give each man eight annas, with which he could purchase *gnapee*, which he, Shoay-Boh, had brought out! My orderly had gone on with the beaters, taking with him a pet, double-rifle and a 12 smooth-bore. By 10 A.M. I was *en route* again, and got to the rendezvous by 11 A.M. After reconnoitring the country, and confabs between the shikarie, myself and beaters, it was decided to beat a long ridge, with a nullah running almost parallel along its base. The men took a *détour* so as to get well to the windward, and were to beat towards me. The grass was only about three feet high, and of a kind which deer dearly love. I took up my position on the bank of the nullah, which was pretty free of jungle, with the exception of one bush, under which I ensconced myself. The bottom of the watercourse was about seven feet below me; the bank on my side almost perpendicular. I could see fifty yards up it and about thirty yards below. There were only

would not greatly interfere with the shooting of any animals presenting themselves. I am very unlucky as a rule in this mode of sport, and am not therefore partial to it; but the day was too advanced for stalking, so I accepted the position and hoped for the best. The Burmese, when you can induce them to beat for game, if left to themselves, go very quietly to work, use no tom-toms, or other discordant instruments—which are probably necessary for driving out feline, but do more harm than good when beating for deer or inoffensive game, the deafening noise being heard for miles around, and at the first sound of the drum the game is on the move and is seldom seen. But when armed with split bamboos, and moving along in a row, extending about two yards apart, and giving a tree or a bush a tap now and then, the noise is just sufficient to send a beast on ahead, and does not frighten it out of its seven senses and make it go here, there and everywhere. Along the ridge, where there were a few trees, three men had been placed as stops and the other twelve, few enough in all conscience, forced their way through the grass and jungle. The beat commenced fully half a mile from me, and very soon after pea fowl, jungle fowl and an occasional yit moved along the bed of the nullah. Had I not been looking out for something in the way of deer, I might have made a pretty bag of these beautiful birds, but of course I allowed them to go by "scot free," and they were happily unconscious of the danger they ran. In a quarter of an hour after the beat commenced only feather bipeds were seen, but presently one of the stops indicated that something is coming this way. His tap-tap was succeeded by that

of the next, then by the last, and I see hurrying towards me a brocket! Meat is badly wanted, and I half make up my mind to kill while I may; but the first man again taps, and I resolve to wait and see whether something better will not turn up, and allow the deer to pass unhurt. So I bide my time. After the first stop taps, none of the others repeated it, and I feared the quarry, whatever it might be, had escaped. I was just before in a fever heat of excitement; now I was just as depressed. When peering intently into the jungle beyond the nullah—not into the watercourse itself—seeing nothing in that direction, I turned my eyes up stream and there, standing in the bed of the nullah, was a noble stag—a veritable jungle wallah—worthy almost of the Neilgherries, and not one of those miserable *sapt*[1] which are so numerous in the plains of Burma. He was gazing intently down the nullah, but not at me, and so was more probably listening to the beaters quietly advancing. I covered him dead, and I think I could have killed him as he stood, but curiosity overcame my thirst for blood, and I waited to see what would happen. For fully five minutes he stood still, and then, as the beaters approached nearer, he threw up his head, gave a stamp or two with his feet, and trotted in my direction.

I then noticed that he was not alone, but had his harem of five hinds with him. As he came abreast of me I bowled him over. The report of the rifle startled the ladies and they rushed here and there utterly at a loss what to do, and doubtless wondering what had killed their lord and master. I had ample

time to reload, and firing right and left, I brought down two. I did not think that I should see anything more and was about to descend to examine the fallen, when I heard a stop give a vigorous tap-tap. I reloaded and crouched down in my former position, with my heart beating with excitement, but nothing became visible. Again a stop indicated that game was afoot, and now the beaters were fast closing in, anxious to ascertain, no doubt, the results of my shots. As I could see nothing, and the third stop had given no intimation of anything being about, I thought it a false alarm, and was off my guard, and before I well knew what had happened a very large tiger sprang into the nullah almost opposite me, and bounded up the bank, his head and face being about five paces from me, he clinging to the surface above by his fore feet and scrambling up with his hind. I instinctively fired and the tiger fell backward. As I jumped up I just caught sight of a brindled mass disappearing, and took a snap shot, which the brute acknowledged by a deep growl, so I knew that if I had missed the first shot, I had hit with the second, but as the right barrel was discharged within ten or twelve feet, I could scarcely credit having missed it, so I instantly followed on its trail. I approached very cautiously the place where "Master Stripes" had disappeared. The bushes were sprinkled plentifully with blood; so telling my orderly to follow closely with the smooth bore, into which I put a couple of cartridges, loaded with eight buckshot each, I advanced very slowly, as a wounded tiger is not to be played with. I would take a step, then pause to listen for a sound. The jungle was not high, but dense, and

to move at all I had to push my way through—ticklish work when you don't know how close such a treacherous animal is in front. But in the excitement of the moment, one does not pause to calculate *pros* and *cons.*, but does all he knows to recover the quarry. None of the Burmese had followed me. I soon lost all sounds of their voices or beating, and I went on. Every now and then, as a peacock or jungle fowl would get up with a whirr, my heart would be in my mouth, and the gun at the shoulder, thinking it was the tiger springing upon me. But on I went, following the trail and getting well smeared with the blood, for the bushes on both sides of the trail were covered with it.

After going along the right bank for about a mile, the feline had descended into the nullah by a sloping pathway, caused doubtless by wild animals going to and fro. Now I was safer, as I could see some little distance ahead and around me. It was past 3 P.M. For over an hour I had tracked the tiger, the blood getting less and less, and the country worse, for the nullah narrowed and was more full of boulders and thick thorny bushes. At last I lost all traces; and there was not very much daylight left; but I did not like to desist, as I had seen frothy blood on some bushes but a little way past, which is a sure sign of a shot through the lungs, which in the long run always proves fatal. Up to five I continued my search, and as I only knew the way back to the village from the point I had started from, I had thus to retrace my steps by the way I had advanced. When I returned to the place where the blood trail had ceased, I thought I would make one more effort to find the

dead or wounded, so telling the orderly—who by the way was of the plucky Mahratta race—to go to my right, we separated with the hope of finding the lost trail and had not done so ten minutes, when the sepoy shouted. Hurrying up to him I found him standing by the carcase of a tigress, stone dead, lying jammed between two rocks. In her final death agony she had sprung up and fallen where the carcase was discovered. I was delighted, as may well be imagined. But there was no time to be lost, for immediately the sun would be down, and there is no twilight in the East. So with the help of my follower, I soon collected a quantity of thorny bushes, grass, &c., and covered the prize over—for there was just the chance of finding the body untouched in the morning, as in Burma there are very few jackals, and no hyænas. My return was much quicker than my advance had been, so I got back to the path leading to Lepangyoung at dark. Everything was quiet. There were no signs of the deer I had shot, which I presumed had been removed by Shoay-Boh. Walking as rapidly as I could, without getting off the narrow path, I reached the zyat a little before eight, and was delighted to find there not only the three sambur, but a royal tiger. Shoay-Boh soon appeared, and informed me the feline had fallen dead. The express bullet had entered under its jaw and gone out at the back of the head. So I actually killed on this occasion five animals in as many shots. I pitched into the shikarie for not having followed me or sent some one after me, but he truly said as there was no one present of his party when I went off, they did not know which way I had gone,

nor that I had hit another tiger. Before retiring to rest I had the tiger carefully flayed. It was a large one, measuring nine feet eight inches, and very bulky. My boy had had bamboo pegs prepared, so by 11 P.M. we had the skin well stretched and warm wooden ashes rubbed into the inner surface; and by midnight I was fast asleep, dreaming of various hunts and narrow escapes, when I was rudely startled with the cry of, "Coffee, sar." I was soon up, and after a bath I dressed quickly, and collecting about a dozen men, hurried off to fetch the tigress. Although it was our day of rest, I took my shot gun with me. The jungle fowl were pretty abundant, but most difficult to put up, but a village dog assisted me greatly, but woe betide the bird if he got at it before one of us could pick it up, for the brute would devour it in a moment. However, I got seven jungle fowl and one "Yit" before reaching the dead tigress, which we found untouched, and with her returned in triumph. I did nothing more that day than superintend the pegging-out of the skin and the preparation of the two skulls. The last is a very simple matter. I put the heads into a large earthenware pot, and boil them until the flesh peels off; they are then sweet and clean and as white as driven snow. Then I tie them round with twine, sew them up in bags, when they are ready to be sent home to be set up.

During the day I had a long confab with Shoay-Boh, and it was decided that he and I should start for some salt-licks, in a north-easterly direction, two or three hours before daybreak, so as to get there before sunrise. He said that there were

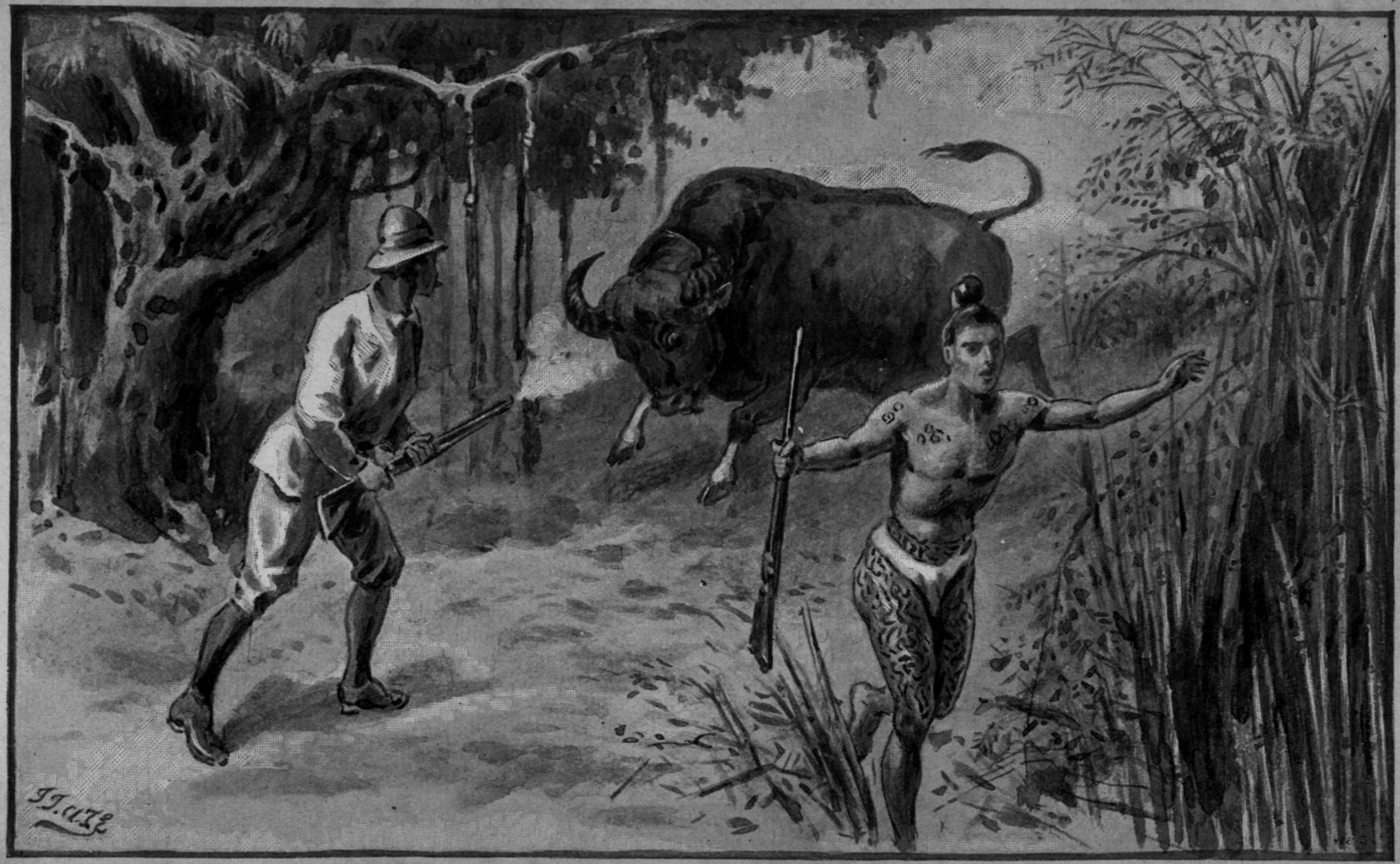
"pyoung"[1] about and that one was a monster leading a solitary life. About 3 A.M. we got away and walked steadily for three hours, as the greater part of the route lay through forests consisting of teak, sal, and other trees and bamboos, so there was not much undergrowth. We reached the neighbourhood of our destination soon after daybreak, and I closely followed the guide, stepping into his footmarks so as to make as little noise as possible, for though the *solitaire* might be fearless, he might be from home, and all game are ever on the *qui vive*, and disappear at the slightest noise. As objects became more visible, we saw the slots of gaur and sambur all going in one direction—that of the licks; but as it was down wind it was no use following their trail, so we hurried on, making a long *détour* so as to approach them from the opposite side. It was fully 7 A.M. before we ventured to make for the depression where the white earth impregnated with sodium is found. The ground became uneven, the jungle more dense, and we moved along with greater caution. In front there was a heavy fringe of bamboo, extending to a considerable distance north and south. We approached it from the east, so as to have the wind in our faces. The belt was nearly half a mile broad, and in one part the bamboos had flowered but were dead, yet the remainder were most luxuriant and on the point of blossoming, but would also pass away before six months were over, for all bamboos die after flowering. But it is not often one sees this plant in the latter stage. I have only seen it in flower three or four times during nearly forty years'

wanderings. When seeding, the bamboo is lovely; the flowers hang down in clusters, and in times of scarcity the poor people, if they can only find the bamboo in seed, collect it and use it in lieu of rice, and I am told it is almost as nutritious. The grain that falls germinates, and the bamboo forest that succeeds the defunct one is ten times as dense and extensive as the one which existed before. When the bamboos die, the canes fall, get interlaced, and render the forest inpenetrable, which is perhaps a provision of Nature to allow the fallen seed to spring up in safety untrodden and undevoured, for all ruminants graze on it if they can obtain it in its immature state. The outlying ones suffer greatly on this account, although a few survive, but the main crop, protected by their dead ancestors, live, and in a couple of years the fallen ones have rotted away and the new, now graceful successors, take their place. I know of no sight more lovely than a forest of young bamboos, of which there are many varieties all equally beautiful.

Owing to the dead forest, we did not hit off the best of the licks, although there was a path to them, for it was still dark, so we had to get to the nullah by circuitous routes, and did not reach it till nine. By this time it was getting unpleasantly hot, and the game would be retiring to its strongholds in impenetrable jungles, so we went steadily along the best way we could. We disturbed a doe sambur or two, who with a bell, would rush away, but as I had plenty of meat in camp I would not fire at them. However, no pyoung (gaur) were visible. Marks

in hiding, or we were too late on the scene. I told the shikarie I did not want an ordinary gaur, but the monster. He said the leviathan was usually about here, and that although he kept to himself, he was as fond of a salt lick as his brothers, sisters, cousins and aunts. At midday we halted in a comfortable shady place on the sloping bank of a stream and partook of our breakfast, with a drop of the "craythur." Knowing it is no use looking for game in the heat of the day, I took a nap. When I awoke, Shoay-Boh was no more to be seen, and as I should be lost in these solitudes if I ventured to roam about alone, I waited where I was, reading an old newspaper. It was past four, and I was beginning to think something must have happened to the shikarie, when he returned and beckoned to me to follow him. Without a word, off I went, armed with my pet ·577, loaded with $6\frac{1}{2}$ drachms of powder and a solid conical in each barrel. After going a mile we crossed over the nullah and made for some hilly-looking ground, where, were it not for the wild beast paths, we could not have progressed at all, for the jungle was so dense and so matted with vines and creepers; but in about half an hour we got into more open country with bamboo-like grass growing on the sides of the hills. As we walked along Shoay-Boh told me that, finding I was asleep, he had searched about for the slots of the big bull, had found them, and followed him to a knoll not far distant. He had not actually seen the monster, but had heard either its breathing or snoring. The brute's retreat was in such a dense thicket that to get a shot at it it was necessary to climb a tree, and my

Shoay-Boh quickly climbed up first, but gave a despondent look down, for the bull had gone. That was a disappointment indeed, yet he could not have gone far. After a brief search we got on his tracks, and they led fortunately in the direction of Lepang-young. There was but little wind and that was in our favour. We pursued quickly, for we had not much time to waste, and on turning an abrupt corner where there was luckily a banyan tree, with numerous pendant roots, the bull charged us so suddenly that I had not time to raise the rifle to my shoulder, and as the shikarie sprang on one side I fired both barrels from the hip and then jumped amongst the roots. The bull went but a few yards, then Shoay-Boh fired at him with both barrels of my gun, but the monster never swerved. I had by this time reloaded and gave him both barrels at a distance of less than ten feet. He could not squeeze his body between the roots to get at me, so before he had either advanced or retreated a yard I had reloaded and fired two more shots. My foe then retired very groggily into the jungle. He was certainly a monster. A bull of his age in India would have had the tips of the horns worn away, but his were perfect, though he had seen probably nearer thirty years of age than twenty, and such trophies are rare and therefore to be desired, so we took up the trail—the Burman most unwillingly—for which I do not blame him. Before we had gone half a mile, the bull had turned, and was going away from, instead of towards, our camp, so as there was barely an hour of daylight left we postponed further pursuit until the morrow. We had a dreadful trudge home, and it was fully nine before we got to the



"THE BULL CHARGED US SO SUDDENLY THAT I HAD NOT TIME TO RAISE THE RIFLE TO MY SHOULDER."

zyat, still four o'clock next morning saw me leaving my tent for another hard day's work, this time buoyed up by the hopes of getting the prize. We took a short cut, so reached the spot where we had parted with our quarry last night soon after daybreak, and we had not advanced a mile, when we heard growling and snarling, so guessed that the gaur was the bone of contention between two felines. Where this scene was being enacted we crept up inch by inch on all fours. Coming out of daylight into the obscurity of this dense thicket, it was some time before we could distinguish objects around us; at last on my left front I saw an immense dark mass, with two leopards snarling at one another, ready to do battle for the carcase, although the flesh before them would have sufficed to feed a dozen of their race for a week! Raising my body, till I was on my knees, I took a shot at the nearest, but just as I fired, he sprang forward and I in consequence made a clean miss, but as the two closed I fired again and I believe the solid conical passed through both, for they separated at once and went off. The gaur was stone dead, and I tried to follow the leopards, but there was very little blood and as they had gone in opposite directions, I left them for the time being, intending to look them up later on. The shikarie went for men to cut off the head of the gaur, and to bring home the meat which to them would be a godsend. The giant bull was fully twenty-one hands high, and the greatest breadth of his horns from bend to bend was fifty-seven and a half inches. At 2 P.M., Shoay-Boh, with some twenty followers, turned up, and, to my great disgust, with them a mounted

orderly bearing an official letter from the station staff officer, saying I must return at once, to take command of a detachment starting next morning for Karennee, some troubles having been reported from that quarter.

My boy had been told the news, so had sent on one pony to Tseben and the other for me to ride. Of course I abused my luck, and anathematised the Karens and the civil authorities generally, who more frequently than not made mountains out of mole-hills, and find mares' nests where none exist; still, there was no help for it, and go I must, so telling Shoay-Boh to try and retrieve the leopards and to send the gaur's head to Tongho, I went across country under the guidance of a Burman, reaching Tseben, at 2 P.M. and Tongho that evening. On my return, after six weeks' wandering in Karennee (the whole report of an outbreak was false), Shoay-Boh told me he had come across part of the skeleton of a leopard, not very far from where I had seen the two, but whether it was the remains of one of those I fired at or not, I could not say. My luck on that trip was certainly unexceptionally great.

AFRICAN WILD CATTLE SHOOTING.

On arriving at Bonny *en route* to the Congo, an emergent letter from an officer recruiting Haussas up the Niger was handed to me. It was to the effect that he had not sufficient officers to assist him; and that unless some more joined him, the whole thing would be a failure, and all the money expended by the Association lost. Now I was far senior to the individual in question, but putting my dignity in my

pocket I did about the most unwise act of my life, and wrote to the Committee in Brussels, enclosing a copy of L.'s letter, and also to General G. (then Administrator on the Congo) in similar terms, and as a French vessel was to start the next day, and the captain very kindly offered me a passage, I embarked. The craft was slow, full of cockroaches—so full that to go to sleep below was impossible—and the so-called pilot, a West Indian nigger, knew nothing of the channels, so we grounded frequently, and instead of being five days at the most to Lakoja, we were nine, and I had the pleasure of seeing the fine passenger vessel of the Niger Company, which started four days after us, and for which I in my eagerness would not wait, pass us. I slept on my trestle cot on deck; we had constant showers and I was more or less wet the whole way. What I should have done for food even, I do not know, had I not fortunately had some of Barrie's Madras currie-paste with me. This condiment would cause even an old shoe to become somewhat less indigestible than it otherwise would be. They had a few chickens and rice on board, and I soon taught the man who did duty for a cook to prepare me some-thing more palatable than eternal preserved meats, not too fresh of their kind. As we anchored, I saw a launch with the steam up; I hastened on board to find that she was about to start for Bida in half an hour, so I hurried back, got my impedimenta and three pointers on board, and off we went. The scenery in the Lower Niger is decidedly flat, but as you ascend the banks are clothed with the richest verdure and splendid vegetation lines the shore. Of animal

all. Habitations are conspicuous by their absence, although occasionally you pass a têh—a high platform on four uprights, on which a nigger sits fishing. The population were then hostile, and several shots were fired at us from the dense bush as we steamed along. Shortly after, some of H.M.'s gunboats had to go up this river and bombard a couple of the principal towns. When about three or four hundred miles from the sea, the nature of the country changes and high land becomes discerned. Flat-top hills also abut on the river, go some ten or fifteen miles inland, then take a sweep and return again to the water, somewhat in shape like a horseshoe. They are all exactly similar; the sides are heavily wooded; the table-land has clumps of trees here and there, with long grass prevailing. These look as if they had been artificially constructed by some one whose idea of a hill had been derived from German toys made for children. They reminded me of the flat-topped hills on the Godavery, but whilst the latter was the resort of many gaur, the former were the habitat of the buffalo of this part of Africa, which differs in shape entirely from its brother further south, but is equally savage and partakes much of the habits of wild cattle. To resume my narrative. After steaming an hour up the Niger, leaving the Binnue to our right, we entered a narrow and winding creek, and went up it at a great pace. We saw a few crocodiles. Some were monsters, but the greater part were from twelve feet down to a few inches. I could see no difference between them and the Indian "mugger." We should have arrived at our destination—nine miles from Bida—the same evening, but did not, so I had to sleep in this vile

creek, and be devoured all night by mosquitoes, and, what is far worse, sandflies; but all things have an end, and we reached our landing place the following midday. The overseer (a West Indian, with rather a pretty wife, more like an Indian than an African) in charge put me up, and sent off a letter for me to the recruiting officer, requesting him to send down a pony and porters. Money is useless in this part of the world; everything is done by barter, the chief thing in demand being salt. This is sewn up in sacks of 100 lbs., and at times 120 lbs, and as the men will do nothing, the carriers are women, both young and old. Everything they carry on their heads, and once a load is placed on a female, her head seems to sink between her shoulders, and she has to toil nine or ten miles before she can rest, or be relieved, for as every one is similarly loaded they cannot assist each other, as no single person could lift such a load off and replace it. I did pity the poor creatures, but there was no help for it.

About ten next day the pony and porters arrived, and I started for the large town of Bida,[1] the residence of the principal chief in that part of Africa south of Sacota; but as I did not know the way to it I had to go at a walk, as the beast I bestrode wanted to say its prayers every few minutes; such a broken-down "yahoo" I never saw in all my life. I got to Bida about 2 P.M., and received a friendly reception from L., the recruiting officer; B., his adjutant; K., a Swede; P., and a medical officer.

The houses are circular in shape, with conical, extinguisher-like roofs, and are surrounded by walls

[1] Capital of the Nupé Country.

about four feet high, made of mud, which when dry is as hard as stone.[1] Bida proper is about one-and-a-half miles square, rudely fortified, with but four gateways, one in each face. It is densely populated. A small stream runs through it, the only water the people have for drinking; yet so filthy are the population in their habits that they use the banks for purposes of nature and lave their persons in it! It is disgusting to approach the stream; you have to pick your way to avoid the ordure scattered about, and the stench is dreadful. If a pony, a dog, cat, or other beast die, it is left to rot, and were it not for the vultures, no one could exist in the place, for it is worse than the interior of the Parsee towers near Bombay.

We had no liquor. Milk we could not obtain, and although about a mile from our dwelling a market was held daily, none of my comrades had visited it, so left the catering to a Lagos nigger, who did not give us the best of fare. I volunteered to take that duty in hand, so I went to the market the next morning. The walk there was enough to give one the cholera, so I could account for the other Europeans not having performed it, for the filth all round was abominable, with crowds washing in the stream, and that the only water in the place. This river wound so about that I had to wade it three or four times before reaching the market.

The people in this part of Africa have a very large dash of Arab blood in their veins and are strict Mussulmans. I found dozens of zebu cattle for

[1] When a person dies in Bida, he is buried underneath the floor of his house, and the household continue to live in it, all the same.

sale—the humped oxen of India—drawn up in line, and all you had to do was to select one. Your choice being made, it was felled at once and its throat cut, and before life was extinct it was half flayed! The price was a trifle—so many yards of cloth for so much meat; I forget now how much it was. I chose two fine humps, had them properly taken off, took two tongues, marrow-bones and a fine sirloin—a load which the Lagos man objected to carry, so girls were pressed into my service. I also found an abundance of bringals (egg-plant), eggs, fowls, large Muscovy ducks, plantains, ripe and unripe, chilies and other tropical vegetables. As for fruit, there were quantities of mangoes and guavas, and very fine they were of their kind. I went back in triumph, for my friends had been starving almost, subsisting on tinned meats in the midst of plenty. The only drawback was that the weather was too hot for keeping meat, and we had no vessels large enough for salting purposes. None of the others had ever tasted a hump, although L. had been in the army, but his experience did not extend to luxurious India. He knew South Africa well, and it was he who first conveyed the news of the disaster at Islandwalla to Lord Chelmsford. I had brought a couple of dozen of Madeira wine with me. This did not last long amongst so many, and when expended we had to fall back upon the not over-wholesome waters of the stream. L. had unlimited command of money, and authority to provide what was requisite for the welfare of the Europeans, but he seemed dazed, and had never been the same man I was told, after the gruesome sight of the Zulu carnage. The recruiting was a farce. Any one

calling himself a Houssa, whether sound, maimed or halt, was enlisted, a "fez" given him, and several yards of cloth ; he was then enrolled and had to report himself once or twice a week. In this way we had several hundred men on our books, but when it came to their being ordered to be in readiness to march, nearly every man Jack bolted. I had ventured to differ from L. in his mode of recruiting (which gave dire offence), but I did not like to say much, as he had never risen to a grade higher than that of a lieutenant, for I had placed myself in a false position. The deadly nature of the country and the exposure I had undergone coming up told on my constitution, which I had thought impervious to malaria, but in a week I was down with the dread African fever, and all my comrades suffered more or less from the same complaint.

I had an interview, first with the Prime Minister (very wily, like our G.O.M.) and afterwards with the chief. Every matter we named was acquiesced in verbally, but never fulfilled. I got permission to go out shooting, and the doctor accompanied me to a place about seventeen miles distant, where we shot a few guinea fowls and partridge, but nothing larger was to be seen. Every village we saw is so built that the outer walls form a defence, as they are subject to constant raids by the heathen populace, as distinguished from the orthodox Mussulmans, who however are not backward in reprisals, so the people, it may be said, live in a perpetual state of feud, anarchy, and war. Cannibals too abound.

The laws of Bida are very stringent. If a man, woman, or child steals a goat or a sheep, or in fact

anything, he, she or the brat is decapitated, the head hung on a pole, and the body and the object stolen placed in a conspicuous part of the market. When more than one execution has taken place, word is sent to the cannibals, and they come in and carry off the dead, to the disgust of the vultures who had assembled on the top of the roofs of the sheds, waiting for the surging mass of people to disappear before pouncing down on the corpses. We heard of these cannibals, and L. asked the Premier to send some for us to see, so one day three were ushered in. They wore a kilt of grass and were armed with spears, and looked a sleek, well-grown race, and far from repulsive. I saw a female afterwards in the market-place, and she was rather comely for an African. Well, our visitors were told to sit down and we discoursed with them by means of an interpreter, but we learnt very little of their *modus vivendi*. One of them drew something from his packet and began to nibble it. Our horror may be imagined when we found it to be the charred remains of a human hand; so they were quickly ejected, but although they pretended, they did not know they had done anything *outré*, I feel convinced it was an act of bravado. After a six weeks' prostration more or less from fever, I was asked to go to Lakoja, to receive recruits there, and out of the hundreds on our books, we by force obtained only twenty-three, for all the others had disappeared, and this was the result of an expenditure computed at £10,000! We eventually got the twenty-three to the Congo, where meeting others of their race from Lagos and the Gold Coast, they became reconciled to their fate, and did good service.

Lakoja is the most desirable place I know on the Niger. It is situated on the right bank on an eminence, and at the junction of the Binnué with the main river. The best site is occupied by the missionaries of course. Everywhere in heathen lands I have found these men better housed and better cared for than even Government servants. At the head of the Mission was Archdeacon Johnson, a coloured gentleman, who had not only received a good education in England, but had travelled considerably, and lived in the Holy Land for two years to study Arabic. He was one of nature's gentlemen. Bishop Crowther lived on the opposite bank. He was then old and somewhat infirm, and his sons were as much trouble to him as Lot's daughters had been to that patriarch. There was also a European medical officer attached to the Mission. With these exceptions, the others were full-blooded Africans of a very low type.

Now the history of this place is peculiar. Very many years ago it had been ceded to Great Britain by the then chief of that part of Africa. We had vice-consuls there, but about the last of them was given to intemperate habits, rode about stark naked on a pony, prodding a man here and a woman there with a spear. Misgoverned as it had been, and misrepresented for some years, it was still deemed British territory, and the King of Bida had never ventured to put a foot thereon, though his armies skirted it every year to carry war into the interior among the heathen. Nearly every man and woman spoke English. They liked us, and we got on well with them. The Arab element much predominated, so there was very little of the true African to be seen

in either the complexions or features of the residents. The young girls were decidedly well made and comely, and not remarkable for virtue. They had a curious custom. When moving about amongst their own people their bosoms were covered by the dress they wore, something like the "loonghie" of the Burmese, but when calling upon a European, directly they were inside the compound and the gate closed, they would turn down the upper portion of their dress, fasten it round the waist, and leave the full bust exposed; and most of them were remarkably well made and developed. How unlike is this to their sisters further south, who tie strings round the chest to break the cords of the breasts to cause them to fall, drooping breasts, even in an unmarried girl, being *de rigueur*, the prevailing fashion. These three-parts Arab girls of Lakoja, glory in busts which in form rival those of the finest Greek statuary.

In Lakoja there were two famous hunters. One was getting old and had lost the enthusiasm of his youth, but the other, a fine tall man, more like a "Beloochie" than an African (he was in fact three-parts Arab), had been taken to England by Dr. Barth, the great traveller, and there educated, so he understood English perfectly. He was a crack shot, and a most courageous man. I fear some two or three years after I left he revolted against the Niger Company, and was the cause I have heard of the deaths of two British officers in their employ; but when I was on the Niger no man could have been more friendly than he to us. I may be mistaken when I say I think it was he who revolted, as very many Mussulmans bear the same name; but if he did,

he was just the man to prove himself a formidable opponent, for he had great influence with the people. Both he and the older shikarie declared that the unicorn still existed in Bornu and adjacent states *en route* to Lake Chad, but they differed as to the name it went by. The younger man said, when he served as a soldier with the forces of the Sultan of Bornu, he had seen one killed, and he called it by a name I have forgotten ; but the elder man said that was the native name of the oryx, and not of the unicorn. Although they differed in particulars, they insisted that such an animal was still to be found. I had many a talk with both men. The elder said it was not the season for hunting, as the grass had not been burnt. The younger agreed with him, but said if I liked to ascend the high hill which dominates and towers above Lakoja, he would show me some antelope and buffalo. I had not shaken off the fever, but as I knew my stay in this part of the world would not be protracted, I fixed an early date for our excursion ; and two days afterwards I got up at 4 A.M. It was a bright, moonlight night, and reaching Buddrodeen's house at 4.30, we started to climb the hill by a steep, narrow path, by 5 A.M. I was as weak as a half-starved rat, but having once made up my mind I persevered. It took us two hours' real hard work to reach the flat surface at the top, and I had a bad fall on the way, barking the whole of the skin off the knuckles of my right hand, which held a heavy rifle, from a loose stone under foot, at a precipitous bend, giving way, so that in saving my weapon my person suffered. I was dead beat when we got to the

I carried, somewhat revived me. The surface seemed composed of laterite, and in it were depressions where water had existed, but which were now perfectly dry. In the earth which lay over the laterite, there were numerous marks of buffalo and deer hoofs; but the animals, owing to the want of water, were not there. Guinea-fowl were in thousands, but there was no getting them, for they flew into trees which grew on a projection, like the berm of a road, about fifty feet below the hill top, which was scarped similar to those on the Godavery. I could have potted many there, but it would have been useless slaughter, for they could not be retrieved, as there was no getting down to where they would have fallen. Once in the trees, these birds showed no signs of fear, and would let me get within easy shot, but on *terra firma* they maintained a distance of fully one hundred yards between us. We walked about the level surface, peering into patches of long grass, but beyond a small antelope or two, not worth firing at, we saw nothing. Looking to the west and north-west, the country was lovely; beautifully wooded and undulating, with a stream meandering through it. Buddrodeen said, "Later on, it would be full of elephants and deer," and that he had shot many there. Ultimately we made towards the south. There was a sloping shoulder in that direction which led us inland to a very marshy tract, but to get to it we had to cross a river, which I did on my comrade's back. After this escapade, we entered a savannah, and soon hit off the track of a large herd of wild cattle, for they more resembled them than buffaloes. The game had fed as

had even lain down in pools of muddy water. As we advanced, the country became denser and the foliage thicker, and eventually we traced them into a thorn thicket where one could not see a yard ahead, so we had almost to grope along by touch. We here separated, but kept not far apart, for I took up the trail of one portion of the herd, and he of the other. My companion advanced much faster than I did, and in about a quarter of an hour I heard two shots fired, right and left, followed by a crashing through the thicket, and not fifteen paces from me rushed past the whole herd, at least so I thought. A grand old bull, in colour resembling a gaur, brought up the rear. I gave him two shots behind the shoulder, and then hearing Buddrodeen's voice calling, I hurriedly reloaded, and went in the direction I supposed him to be. I advanced very slowly and soon discovered my guide lying along a bough, and with his hand irritating a bull that had treed him. He was as cool as a cucumber, although only just out of reach of the enemy; still, by stooping forward, he could tickle, as it were, the animal's head, when thrown upwards in the vain attempt of getting at him. I had to circle round, as only the hindquarters of the game was towards me, and this was not an easy task, as I had no wish to bring down on me the infuriated animal. So it took me several minutes to get into position for a broadside shot. The shikarie saw me, and irritated the bull more and more, even taking off his turban and flaunting it in his pursuer's face, so as to draw off his attention from my approach. At last I could see the shoulder, but there was no screen near to ward off an attack if the bull charged; so I pushed on further

till I got behind a good sized tree, and then gave him a shot. It told, but was a little high. In an instant after, the foe wheeled round and went for the smoke. His head could not have been more than a couple of yards off when I gave him another bullet and brought him down on his knees, and before he could recover, I had reloaded; my attendant had also leaped from his coign of vantage, and was advancing, rifle in hand (he had had to drop it to jump into the tree), but the bull was up in a second, and catching sight of me, rushed for me full pelt, but I stepped behind the tree which he struck with his full force. Simultaneously there was a report, for I fired, almost touching the animal on his shoulder at a point close to the chest. Buddrodeen also shot, his first ball going into my tree unpleasantly close to my head, but the second broke the beast's spine and over rolled our quarry, and was "hal-lal-ed" in a jiffey. My companion now asked me what I had fired at. I told him. "We will follow him up," he said, and off we went for the track. On it there was plenty of blood and froth scattered about. Further search disclosed the body, but close by, sniffing at the blood, was the whole herd. They were not of a uniform colour, like most wild cattle, for there was an albino and a piebald amongst them, both cows. I told Buddrodeen that I coveted their skins. "Very good," said he; "you take one and I'll take the other." As they were facing us, their noses in the air, snorting and pawing the ground, we expected them upon us any moment, so lost no time in planting steel-tipped conicals in their chests. Mine fell at once: the other attempted to advance, but a

second shot laid her low. The herd now thought discretion the better part of valour, wheeled round and went through the heavy vines and creepers as if they were so much pack-thread. My Arab friend was for following up the herd, but I had had enough; so we retraced our way to the steep path by which we had come. The descent was worse, if anything, than the ascent, and when I got back to the bungalow, I could scarcely move from fatigue. Yet my associate was as lively as a cricket. After a cup of coffee he departed to bring in the slain. That was my only hunt there, for I was laid up again with fever and unable to leave my room for many a day. These buffaloes are the *Bos Brachyceros* of naturalists, and extend north of "Mossamades" along the Coast, up the Niger and into the interior to the Lake regions.

CHAPTER V.

HOG-HUNTING, COMMONLY CALLED PIG-STICKING.

THIS is probably the finest sport the world can afford. It differs from our national amusement, fox-hunting, in many respects. Doubtless both have their advocates. But the generality of fox-hunters have never had a chance of following "the boar, the mighty boar," spear in hand, over such breakneck ground as these porcines generally take across in India. But on the other hand very many "pig-stickers" have hunted at home, and I do not think that any of these would hesitate to pronounce in favour of the Indian sport, to running down a puny fox with some fifteen or twenty couples of hounds, even if the chase should take them over an enclosed country such as is principally met with in English and Irish counties. In India there are very few big jumps; an occasional nullah has to be negotiated, but oftener than not it is too broad to clear, and the horse has to go in and out, very often a most dangerous proceeding, as the drops are deep and the landing is probably on a slate bed. To overtake a boar, even when he has not had a long start, a horse has to be pushed to the utmost. The riding must be reckless and generally

over difficult land, ground which in cold blood you would prefer to walk across on your own legs, than trust to your horse's. Again, there is the rivalry for first spear, when a wounded boar becomes a foe worthy of any man. I know no pluckier brute, nor one who dies so game, for he utters no sound of pain and gives up the ghost with his face to his enemy. "A firm hand and eagle eye, must he possess who would aspire to see the wild boar die."

My first experience of this glorious sport was in this wise. I was *en route* to Condapilly to relieve an officer of another regiment, who I may say, *par parenthèse*, had one of the prettiest women in India for a wife. Whilst at Rajahmundry, Tom Prendergast asked me to join a pig-sticking party ; my detachment could go on and I overtake it before it could get to its destination. This I gladly accepted. I had a chestnut, christened "the man-eater," and a very high-caste gray Arab, as fleet as the wind, but so excitable that in the hunting-field you could do nothing with him, as he generally threw up his head and ran away. I also possessed a golden bay with black points, a Gulf Arab. How I became the owner of a part of my stud was in this way. Whilst at Secunderabad I received much kindness from officers who had known my grandparents, my father and mother, and myself as a baby. One of them, who commanded a regiment of irregular cavalry, asked me if I'd like a good horse or two, as he was sending down Nightingale to purchase a lot of remounts for the regiment, and that buying such a lot at a time, he got them all round on an average of Rs. 400 each. I told him I would like a couple, but that I had only Rs. 500, but would

borrow the balance from Bunselol, the Sowcar. "You will do nothing of the kind," replied the old gentleman. "I received much kindness from the general, your grandfather, in the Mahratta war, and when he commanded the Hyderabad contingent, and it would be odd if I could not lend you the money myself, in preference to your having to borrow it from that harpy. When you are rich you can repay it, but if you never do I shall not feel it." In good time two horses were sent to me. One won some petty races, and I sold him for Rs. 1,000, repaid my benefactor, and kept the other, which I might have sold over and over again for nearly double what I had paid for him. At the time of the meeting, however, he was lame, for I had, like a fool, chased a wolf on him through prickly jungle, and the consequence was that he had to be laid up, and his fetlocks well poulticed. Prendergast always had about a dozen nags, all Cape horses, with the exception of one, an immense English hunter. They were weight-carriers, for their master stood six feet four in his stockings and was an immensely powerful man and one of the best bruisers of his day.

We met at daylight near two conical hills about eight miles from Rajahmundry. All were the guests of the Collector, and were regaled right royally. I may here say, these two hills, rising abruptly from a plain, went by the name of the "Bubbies." We had several ladies in camp who came to look on, and for whom machans had been built. We had the judge and sub-judge of Rajahmundry, C., W.A., of a firm of bankers in Calcutta, Madras and elsewhere; a ship captain, T., a most eccentric individual, but

a right good fellow; C., S., and B., of my own corps, and a few others, about a dozen riders in all. I was stationed with B. in a dry watercourse. The beat had not commenced very long when there was a whoof-whoof, and a boar most unexpectedly broke cover near by. Our horses, unaccustomed to the sport, spun round on their heels. I was on the chestnut, and cramming in the persuaders, I got off on good terms with the hog, a very old fellow with splendid tusks. I could hear the clattering of horses' hoofs after me, so pressed mine to the utmost, thinking to distinguish myself and take first spear, for certainly I had a good chance. My mount though vicious was fast and a good fencer. No one near me and the pig not fifty yards ahead, so I raced along and was rapidly coming to close quarters, when the boar "jinked," and as he did so I endeavoured to spear him over the bridle arm, but the next moment I was floundering over the horse's tail and lit on my head, when I saw more stars than the firmament can show, and this almost opposite the machan on which were stationed several ladies. I was half stunned, and staggered about in attempting to get on my feet and catch my horse. C. passed me and, bidding me pick up the pieces, disappeared. By the time I recovered my nag the boar was dead. C. missed the first spear as the boar turned in the bushes and charged, though still uninjured. The sub-judge then speared him, and C., an old pig-sticker, finished him off. I think he was, if not the biggest, one of the biggest boars I ever saw. His height was thirty-eight inches and his ivories were splendid. We then beat the "Bubbies" and a sounder rushed off.

Prendergast had begged of me not to ride the gray, and I could have had any of his, but I was obstinate. The ground was the very worst of cotton soils, with baubul bushes growing here and there; the river was about half a mile off. Alone on the right, and seeing the direction the riders were taking, I cut straight across, and got to the bed of the stream, there a mass of sand. The horse being alone did very well, and as the boar was bounding over the "deep going" a few hundred yards away, and I did not care if the horse bolted here or not, for he would soon be brought up, it was such "ploughing" I let him out. C., S., and I were all pretty close, so we rode the hog through the long grass of one lunkah (island) towards another. There was no water, but depressions pointed where the channels had existed.

The grass on the second island was very high, and in it we lost sight of the boar. Beyond, all was open. He had not gone that way, but he could not be found anywhere. In the meanwhile Prendergast and the others killed three, one proving a barren sow. We had syces following us with extra spears. Suddenly they separated, yelling out, "*Pundaloo! pundaloo!*" (pig! pig!). The boar had doubled back. Being the lightest weight and on the fastest horse, I again led the way; but the boar had a good start, reached the river-bank, and scrambled up its almost perpendicular side. To follow on horseback was impossible, so I galloped along looking for an incline less steep, and at last saw a narrow track, made probably by goats. It was steep and the soil very crumbly,

pretty well blown, at it, and he scrambled up, nearly falling backwards several times. But there is a little angel aloft who looks after Griffs as well as sailors. By constant spurring I at last reached the top, to find C. and S. far ahead, close to the pig, and riding parallel to the river. The baubul bushes safely past, I was still some distance behind, but the boar doubled back and threw out C. and S., so I cut him off, and was once more not above twenty paces behind the game. All this time we were going full pelt over the most abominable cotton soil, and the pig thinking that he had more than enough of being chased, turned suddenly and came at me, when I disgracefully missed him, and nearly unhorsed myself by driving the blade of my spear into the ground. The boar was now facing away from the east, where he had before been heading. C. and S. were coming up sideways, I was immediately behind the beast; in front there was a belt of jungle. My horse, hearing the others, got, for the first time, out of hand, and was fairly away with me. Thinking it was all plain sailing, I did not mind. The hog took the fringe of bushes at a bound, and my horse flew over them, only to topple down at least fifteen feet. Fortunately just there there was a deep pool of water, and into this we plunged. I must have cut a complete somersault, and then parted with my nag. Many parts of this river, especially where there is water, are very treacherous with quicksands, so I swam to the bank, where the soil was firm, in preference to landing on the lower side. My horse, after lying still a moment, scrambled out; he was trembling all over, but uninjured. The boar was now nowhere to be seen; he had certainly not fallen over the bank,

so must have doubled, and keeping close under the lee of the bushes, got away, for neither C. nor S. saw him again. "He lived to fight another day."

It was too hot to go on, so we made for the tents, I leading my horse. S. had got an awful cropper by his horse coming down; result: the loss of a tooth. During breakfast Prendergast pitched into me for having ridden my gray. "It would make an admirable charger," he said, "or do for a park hack, but for hunting it was far too excitable, and so dangerous." I may here say I sold him soon afterwards to the adjutant of a regiment of native infantry. In the afternoon P. put me on his English horse. I felt like a fly on an elephant. We saw pig, but I was nowhere. I did not admire this immense steed. That evening, after a good dinner, we all retired early to rest, and were awakened at 4.30 A.M. This time we went up the river several miles, and beat the different small islands. I was on my chestnut. Riding along quickly through a piece of long grass, just ahead of me I saw a three-parts-grown boar, listening intently to the noise made by the beaters. He had either not heard me, or if he had, he did not seem to care, so, driving in the spurs, I was instantly almost on the top of him. This time I held the spear straight, and drew not only first blood, but killed, before any of the others came up. That day four boars were killed, and I fleshed my spear in one, and repelled two charges creditably; so at least Prendergast said. Thus I was at last fairly entered to this glorious sport.

The next day we beat a further and isolated hill. I was riding a boar as fast as my horse could lay feet to the ground, when down he went on his head, and

sent me spinning along the hard but crumbly soil, on which I lay stunned. The horse scampered off across country and was not recovered for three days, with my saddle and bridle (which were nearly new) ruined. W. A. picked me up, put me under a bush, and went on. I came to in good time, and got back to the tents, and a pretty object I was. The right side of my face was peeled as if it had been flayed, the skin of my eyelids even was gone; my eyes were bunged up, my nose swollen to double its size. The sores thus caused were full of gritty earth. I did what I could to wash my injuries clean, and Prendergast tied a cloth soaked in salad oil over all. But, alas! I had to ride on the next day to overtake my detachment, the Collector kindly posting horses for me as far as Ellore; but by the time I got to Condapilly proud flesh had formed, and I was the most disgusting-looking object possible to contemplate. How ashamed I was to meet D. and his wife in such a state I need not say, but there was no help for it. So much for my first essay in hog-sticking.

While at Condapilly, the Nugied Rajah sent word to me that he was going to have a beat, and would be glad if I would join him. I had visited him before, and knew the country, so sent on two horses—for I had bought another by this time from G., the civilian, a splendid Arab and a well-known pig-sticker, in place of the one I had sold. Four or five other Europeans were to be present, but when I got there they had not arrived. So the Rajah proposed to beat an outlying hill. My host was going to shoot pig, and in ridable ground! Awful! I begged him not to, but he under various pretences preferred the gun to the

spear, yet I stuck to the last-named weapon. In the first beat several boars broke. I took after one, but a huge mongrel dog greatly impeded the hog's movements by snapping at his tail, so I soon overtook the boar, and now that I had learned the knack, which is not to thrust, but to allow the impetus of your horse to drive in your spear, I soon drew blood, passed on, and turned. The boar was quite ready to meet me half way, and charged. I was on my best horse, the last purchase. He quickened his stride, and the spear entered at the game's chest and the point protruded near the tail. The beast was completely spitted, and as I could not draw the weapon, let it go, yet the pig all but cut my horse. The next moment the game brute ran forward a few yards, then fell heavily forward, breaking my fine spear-shaft in two.

In the evening the Rajah had a nautch for my especial benefit, but I found out that the troupe consisted, not of *girls*, but of BOYS! I did not consider it much of a compliment, for there was no lack of damsels in the country. The next day R., W., and S., of the Engineers, turned up. I persuaded S. to ride, and mounted him on my second best nag, but the others would shoot, not spear. The pig were unusually plentiful. I do not know that I have ever seen them so numerous elsewhere, except, perhaps in the churs of the Brahmapootra. When the first sounder broke, a volley greeted us, and numerous bullets whistled past our ears! The hogs took across an enclosed country—very unusual for India—we after them. The fences were stiff, but our horses cleared them in fine style, and *that* one chase, as far as jumping went, was as good as a hunt in England.

Unfortunately, as I singled out the boar of the sounder, and S. took after another, there was no rivalry and no fight for first spear, but both killed after sharp encounters. We then shifted to another patch of long grass. This was full of hogs, yet they would not break, but by driving them in the contrary direction, we got a few to face the open. I had the legs of S., but he took a spear from me cleverly, by waiting by my quarter, and on a pig "jinking," he drove in his persuaders and met him with a thrust through the shoulder. I had four hard runs that day.

In the evening the Rajah invited us to go to another nautch. Not if we knew it—unless the performers were of the right sex, and of that we wanted ocular demonstration. So six of the youngest and best-looking girls were sent over for our inspection. I recognised three at once as old acquaintances from Condapilly; the others were known to be residents of Bezwada. Having given each of them a *douceur*, we attended the nautch; but a native dance is very stupid, for it is the same thing over and over again, so is monotonous to a degree, and were it not that the so-called dancers (a better term would be extortionists) are generally good-looking and remarkably well made, I don't think many men would care to see the performance more than once. When these girls are ornamented and dressed up to within an inch of their lives, they look well, but the songs they chant are shrill and ear-splitting. Of course they pretend to be very modest, almost as much so as Clementina Clemens, the Yankee girl, who would not walk in the garden because potatoes had eyes, and she did not wear drawers!

On one occasion, I was riding across the Kistnah, before the *anicut* or dam had been constructed. It was just dawn. I saw an old boar feeding, and laid into him. I got out of the river bed, for there quicksands were more plentiful than firm ground. When on the bank I saw that I had not more than a clear mile before me, so if I wished to possess myself of the ivories, I must go the pace. My horse went like the wind, for he delighted in a hunt, but fast as we went, the boar went as fast; thus, unless I brought him to bay within the next few hundred yards or so, he would be lost. A boar appears to be proud of his "credentials," and carries them in a prominent position in the rear, so a prick there generally suffices to put his dander up, and then he thinks more of fighting than of running away. My horse seemed to realise the position as well as I did, for I never knew him to go so fast. The jungle was not more than a hundred yards off. Piggy grunted and tossed his tail about, thinking no doubt he would be safe in a few moments; but my mount bounded forward, I held the spear by the very end of the shaft, and stooping well forward, almost lying on my horse's neck, I managed to prick him in the part I have indicated. Although he was then within ten yards of shelter, he spun round, and I had great difficulty in avoiding a collision, but my horse jumped clean over him and from being the chaser I became the chased. I led the angry beast on, for the further we got away from the jungle the worse it would be for him. He chased me more than 150 yards and then, pretty well blown, he pulled up, champing his tusks, and looking a very demon. I galloped round and got between him and his refuge,

he eying me all the time, but only turned round on a pivot, so as ever to present his front. When I had a clear thirty yards run, I gave the horse the reins—he required no spurs—and as I charged, the boar, with every bristle in his mane on end and with many a savage grunt, came at me with a series of ludicrous bounds. I could scarcely help laughing, but as I had no second spear, my syce being nowhere in sight, I had to be cautious, so aimed at the point of the shoulder. The weapon went in and through him, coming out a good foot on the right side. I was forced to let the spear go; the plucky brute missing a savage prod he made at my horse, and then for the second time chased me, trussed like a fowl! I just then caught sight of my horsekeeper, and galloped off to him. The boar had stopped his pursuit and was attempting to draw the spear with his teeth. While so engaged I got hold of the spare weapon and renewed the fight. It was not easy to close, for the shaft that transfixed him swayed to and fro, one end being leaded and the other as sharp as a razor. But the difficulty was further increased as the boar was still full of fight, and invariably rushed to meet me. For some time I could do little more than prod him, but not liking so one-sided a game, the foe managed to rush in. My mount rose to spring over him, the horizontal spear-shaft caught him in the fore feet, and he went an awful cropper. I fell clear but still held on to my new weapon. The horse I was afraid was injured as he did not rise at once. I was considerably shaken, still quite calm, so seeing the boar bearing down on my prostrate nag I interposed, and received him on the point. Exhausted as was the hog, he drove me

back several paces, but I quickly withdrew the blade and stabbed him several times. Although all but *hors de combat*, the plucky brute made a feint at me, then sprang aside, and went for the horse's quarter. I gave him a good dig in the ribs as he did so, but he just managed to reach my noble quadruped and to inflict, I am thankful to say, but a superficial cut, the marks of which, however, he bore to his dying day. This rough treatment invigorated the horse, who at once sprang up and saluted the boar with both heels, sending the foe a perfect somersault. In a moment after I was on to him, and drove my blade from the back of the head into the spine, and then the grizzly boar laid down his life.

Get only the best blades for spears. There was no one formerly who could compete with Arnachillum of Salem in their manufacture, but he is dead and his sons do not carry on his business, preferring to fight for (and will eventually lose in law expenses) the wealth the old man had amassed. I was assured that in the workshop at Dawlaishwarum, the Government armourers could turn out weapons equal to, if not superior, to the Salem ones. I had half-a-dozen made for me. The first hog I speared with one of them, fortunately broke the beast's back. Withdrawing the weapon, I endeavoured in vain to drive it in again. No wonder that it would not penetrate—the point had curled up! So C. of my regiment had to come to the rescue and kill the boar for me.

Leaving Condapilly at five in the evening, I arrived at Masulipatam by seven next morning. I put up with a friend who was to be one of our party, and became an honorary member of his mess, so enjoyed

immensely my two days' stay in Bunda, for I had been on solitary outpost work for more than six months, during which I had not seen a European to speak to. Tents and camp equipage were sent on before us, and we followed a couple of days later. Our party consisted of eight. I shall call them A., B., C., D., E., F., G., and H. To reach our destination we had to ride out about eight or nine miles, then to cross over a tidal stream by means of ferry-boats, thence by a fair unmetalled road to Umsuldavy. Our tents were pitched in a grove of mango trees, and as soon as our ablutions were completed we were told that dinner was ready. After that meal succeeded grog, and a few songs and anecdotes of sport. Our captain, D., then tells off the various riders, and what time we are to mount our nags, to the call of "boot and saddle," after which we retire to our tents, two of us being in each. Soon all are asleep, and unconscious until we are awakened, after, as it appears to us, but a very brief repose, by the repeated cries of our dressing boy "Sar, sar, tea is ready." To "shake off dull sloth and early rise" is no hardship to old Indians. We take our cup of tea, chocolate, or cocoa, as it pleases us, pour some half a dozen chatties (pots) of cold water over our heads, and feel like giants refreshed, then don our hunting costume, none of the best or newest, as it has seen much service and meet at the mess tent. No time is lost; the syces (grooms) are waiting with our horses and various spears, principally made by that prince of cutlers, old Arnachillum of Salem. Girths are tightened, spurs adjusted, and we mount, speculating on the sport we shall come across during the day.

Our captain, D., leads the way ; with him are E., F., G. ; they are to precede us by half an hour and to endeavour to cut off "sounders" of pigs returning to their day retreat, from their feeding grounds on the sea-shore, which are either in the wild indigo or in long grass, to be found in the deserted beds of dry, unused tanks. We, on the other hand, are to try and cut off such swine as have been inland after grain, and would return for their siesta to divers swamps in the vicinity. Our party is unlucky, we see nothing ; but D. and his comrades come across a sounder, lay on, although it is still so dark that hard riding is dangerous, and after a short spurt two boars are numbered amidst the slain. They remain about a mile to our left, we near the bund of a tank, into which we send some fifty coolies to beat or drive out the game. Our porcine friends have not settled down in their miry beds, so at the first sound of tom toms, cholera horns, and other discordant noises, six or seven pigs break, and we are saluted with a cry of "Pundaloo !" (pigs), and see some dark objects scampering over the plain.

I had made the great mistake of keeping my best horse rather too fresh, and although he bounded off with the lead and maintained it easily until I had separated the boar from the sounder, his eagerness was such that he kept over-shooting the mark as the hog "jinked" either to the right or left. This enabled C., who was mounted on a strong, steady, but somewhat slow Cape horse, to keep up with me. A. and B. left us after the rest of the sounder. Had the boar gone straight away I would have killed him long before C. could have got near me ; but the un-

clean animal, finding my Arab too fast for him, ran in circles, and this enabled C. to cut off corners. For a good quarter of an hour both were pressing for the first spear, neither having any advantage. We were riding in grass about three feet high, with clumps somewhat higher here and there; in one of these I lost sight of the boar. "Where has he gone to?" I cried, as, twisting at the bridle with both hands, I brought my horse round. C. did not say a word until he was some lengths ahead, when, exclaiming "Here he is," prodded downwards. I was alongside in a moment and thrust my spear well into the boar's back, who was playing 'possum in the long grass. This started the beast, with me after him. My comrade, owing to a gun accident many years before, had lost a couple of fingers off his right hand, and could not grasp the spear firmly; thus it slipped out of his hand and he had to dismount to recover it; so I was alone. The boar did not run far, but spun round suddenly and charged direct, gnashing his teeth and uttering a short "whoof, whoof;" he was a large animal, and, with every bristle on end, looked a monster; "his dander was riz." I kept the spear steadily pointed at the boar's chest, and we met with such force that I was carried from my seat on to the croup of the horse, and should have been "spilt" had not the tough bamboo shaft splintered into pieces. At length I seized the tree of the saddle, and as the horse pulled up of his own accord I scrambled back into the pigskin. The boar, after running forward a few yards, fell heavily forward dead, for my weapon had passed through his heart. Dismounting, I admired his proportions, and as he had but two wounds, both

inflicted by myself, he was mine. My companion, in his anxiety to get the first spear, had missed, and driven his blade well into the ground, where he found it. A syce running up with fresh spears, I was soon astride again, and had ridden but a few yards when another boar got up. I went for him, but a nasty marsh was close at hand, and in a few seconds I was floundering in the mire and had to give up the chase, whilst the boar, with a series of bounds, got through the difficulty and escaped. Rejoining C., we rode back and found that A. and B. were still following their game, which, though severely wounded, doubled back and received a spear from us both; but these we could not withdraw, so waited for fresh ones. A. and B. then delivered theirs, and they, too, remained in the boar! What a plucky brute a wild pig is, to be sure. Here was this poor animal charging us all round, looking like a monstrous porcupine, with the four spears standing upright in his body! Soon we were armed again, but to get within spearing distance was the difficulty, for with every bound our foe gave—and he was not indolent—the shafts spun about like the arms of a windmill, and, as they were heavily leaded they could inflict severe blows, so we were some time dodging him and them. But at last spear after spear was driven home, and our gallant antagonist gave up the ghost without once uttering either a groan or a cry of pain. Thus dies the wild boar—ever silent to the bitter end, and almost invariably with his face to the foe.

D., E., F., and G. now rode up. They had killed four boars, and, as our horses were blown, we rode quietly to a tope about a mile off, where our breakfast

was laid out. Every requisite that could be desired we had. Tables and chairs were placed under the shade of some mango trees, on which the fruit was already ripening; to their branches were suspended many bottles enveloped in thick jackets, which were kept constantly wet to cool their welcome contents, consisting of beer, claret, sauterne, and hock. On the table were all the delicacies of the season, whilst, from the extemporised cooking-places, odours of various stews, curries, and other compounds, which only the natives of India, and especially Madrassies, know how to concoct, gratefully assailed our nostrils. A little distance off were ranged numerous chatties, or earthenware pots, full of cool water, and soon we were stripped and pouring their contents over our heads. Our ablutions being over, and the head servant reporting "Hazarie tyar hie" (Breakfast is ready), we fell to, with the proverbial hunter's appetite, and whilst satisfying the wants of nature, fought our battles over again. Our meal finished, we indulged in the fragrant weed, and while some read, others lolled on the soft turf under the grateful shade and courted Somnus; for we knew that the porcine tribe object to taking to the open during the heat of the day, but prefer either the thick cover, or the mudpools in which they delight to wallow. As my comrades are taking their siesta I will describe briefly the plains of Umsuldavy.

To the east is the sea, the lighthouse at False Point Davey being about three or four miles off; to the west, a vast plain, covered either by wild indigo, longish grass, or bare paddy fields, which, in a few

ploughed up and yield a golden harvest. At present these are as hard as brick-bats, and are divided into various sized squares by tiny dams, which retain the water during the time of cultivation. To the north and south the country is much the same, except that topes of trees occur, with more or less of under-growth, in which occasionally a sounder of pigs is found. The country, although flat, is not easy to ride over, for it is intersected by arms of the sea, which are either full or empty according to the state of the tides. Many of these are too wide to jump, and impossible to scramble through, owing to the ooze in their bottoms. Thus wherever practicable, turf bridges or dams are built across them as a temporary measure, for these will be swept away by the first heavy flood. White flags denoted the sites of these most necessary "rights of way." The pigs cared nothing for the armlets of the sea, as they can wade, half swimming, through liquid mud, in which a heavier body would sink out of sight. But there are other creeks always full of water, too broad to bridge, and if once a pig plunges into one of them, he is safe for that day, as there is no following him. The indigo, too, is high and matted, and very apt to bring a horse down. There are also marshes, almost quagmires, through which no horse can go. So, though to the eye the vast maidan looks easy to gallop over, all is not plain sailing, as I have shown above; but it is easy compared to ground in Central India, where the abominable cotton soil is so prevalent. This is a kind of friable black earth, with innumerable deep cracks covering its surface, over which the hog-hunter has to gallop at full

speed. Frightful accidents are therefore frequently met with. Even the best fox-hunters, fresh from home, are at first incredulous that any horse can traverse such land; but use is second nature, and after a while a man will go over it as fast as his gallant mount can lay legs to the ground. Let a dozen men start together, say, on the best Arabs, which are the surest-footed of all the nags I know, and ride hard for first spear, at least one-third will come to grief before they have gone a mile. There is seldom jumping, as at home, but many of our blind nullahs are not to be despised, and require a hunter which can clear from fifteen to eighteen feet. For pig-sticking your mount should be not only speedy but tractable; the former without the latter is entirely unsuited. A hog will turn or double like a hare, so a headstrong animal is useless after them. At times cactus hedges and scind-bunds (date palms planted closely together) are met with, and have to be cleared. Then you require a clean jumper. Take it all in all, and I have tried every kind of sport in the world, nothing approaches this princely pleasure, for in it there is good fellowship, emulation for first spear, a dangerous foe to contend with, and, every variety of ground to ride over, and as the old song before alluded to says:—

> Youth's daring spirit, manhood's fire,
> A firm hand and eagle eye, doth he require
> Who would aspire to see the wild boar die.

But to return to our fascinating subject. About 3 P.M., the bugle sounds, and every man rouses himself. Horses are saddled, girths tightened, spears

seen to, and we are soon away in search of our game. This time we go towards the lighthouse and separate into four parties, A. and I together, E. with B., C. with F., and D. with G. Our syces follow with extra spears. I was on my country-bred, and A. on a clever Mahratta pony. The others were variously mounted, D.'s horses being the best, if I may except my gray, which was out and out the star at this meet. We advanced in skirmishing order, riding two and two at intervals of about half a mile, our nags plunging through the indigo, which was very thick and high. Two sounders broke almost simultaneously, one on the extreme right, and one in front of A. and myself. Ours consisted of a fat old boar, almost gray with age, a three-parts grown hog, and some half-a-dozen sows with a few squeakers. The boar turned to the left, and my comrade and I followed him. The remainder took towards E. and B., who laid into them, whilst C. and F. and D. and G. followed the other sounder. I knew my friend would prevent him going far. Moreover, he was making towards the sea. A. and I were fairly matched, and we raced neck and neck. I was on the spear side, A. on the other, close together, craning for first blood. Fat as the boar was, he managed to keep out of reach of our weapons for some time, when, getting blown, he doubled on us so suddenly that, though my spear struck him in the shoulder, he tripped up A.'s horse, which came down a "cropper." Before the poor animal could recover his legs, the boar ran in and gashed him dreadfully. I told A. to jump up behind me, which he did, so both rode back towards the syces for a spear.

Seizing one, and leaving my friend to find another steed, I galloped back. A.'s pony lay stretched out in its last sleep, and the slayer, disdaining flight, stood, champing his tusks, awaiting my charge. When I was within twenty yards he rushed at me with a series of absurd bounds, the broken shaft of the spear protruding from him like the horn of a unicorn. I could not help laughing; he looked so queer. My horse swerved at these unusual tactics and such an uncanny appearance, so I inflicted but a slight wound; however, the effect of it was, that the brute turned round swiftly and chased me. Keeping out of harm's way I made a detour and again went at him. He met me so pluckily that we closed with a crash. My spear went right through him, entering at the back and protruding through the bowels, so I was fain to let go the shaft, my horse only escaping being cut by a sudden bound to the left. The boar pulled up, eying me viciously. Fortunately A. was remounted and galloping up, followed by some syces with extra weapons. Having secured one of them, we both closed with the unclean beast. Our antagonist was game to the end, fighting desperately until he turned over and expired. He was rolling in fat, with tusks nine and a half inches round the curve. Sending for coolies to take him to the camp, A. and I rode towards the others. E. and B. had killed the young boar, E.'s horse having been slightly cut. C. and F., D. and G. had killed two boars and a barren sow. The latter had run up the spear and bitten G. severely in the right foot.

We then adjourned to ground nearer the camp,

and sent in some forty beaters to drive a sounder out of the dry bed of a tank. This time D. and A., G. and E., F. and I, and C. and B. were together, stationed two and two on each side of the cover. At first the pigs would not break, which was wise of them, for all round was open paddy fields, and the nearest cover a mile and a half away. The head man of the beaters now came up to us, and said, "Feeders of the poor, we have beaten through and through several times, and though there are many pigs, they will not leave." "Rattle it through the other way," we replied, and off the man went; and, with tom-toms beating, cholera horns sounding, and the most discordant yells, they reversed the experiment. The pigs evidently did not know what to make of it, and first one and then another took towards where D. and A. and G. and E. were stationed, and both were quickly accounted for. More yells and unearthly noises, then another boar broke near D. and A. We were nearly a mile off, but could see the various chases as well as if we had been engaged in them ourselves; but to remain quiescent so long, and with no prospect of any game coming to us, was too trying; so, seeing that D. and A. were both pumped and riding gingerly, while we were quite fresh—having procured remounts, I being on my famous gray—I voted we should cut in and have a try for a spear. It looked almost hopeless, for D. and A. were the two best riders and most experienced pig-stickers amongst us; but, "nothing venture, nothing win," so, taking our steeds in hand, we cut across country diagonally. I was overhauling D., who was taking matters very

coolly, when, without looking round to see who was galloping up to him, he called out, "It's no use, A., I have the legs of you." "It may be," I replied, "but you have not the legs of me," and passed him, spearing the boar three times before anyone else came up. C. was soon on hand, but his Cape horse, which had behaved so admirably in the morning, would not approach a pig now, and when forcibly reminded by the spurs that he had a rider on his back, plunged and kicked so violently that he sent his owner over his head right in front of the boar, who made at him immediately; but we were all close up, and, rushing in, rolled the plucky beast over, dead. As the "shades of evening were falling fast," we made for our camp, a good five miles off. How pleasant everything looked. Our mess tent brilliantly lighted up with numerous wax candles, a snowy cloth on the table, plenty of plate, crockery-ware and glass. We lost no time in taking off our hunting suits, and, after a most refreshing bath were *en déshabillé* in our white sleeping garments, consisting of loose jackets and drawers. Had the famous Gunter supplied our refreshments, he could not have done better than the mess cook and butler of the gallant —— Regiment. There were haunches of spotted deer (shot by a shikarie), capon, ducks, fowls, ham, and that great delicacy, a Bengal hump, besides soups, entrées, curry, made of fresh prawns, with tarts, puddings, &c., for we live well in India, even when under canvas. Of liquor we had from champagne downwards, all deliciously cooled in saltpetre. After dinner we assembled in the open, to enjoy the cool air. There was a bright moon; and the only drawback to this truly Arcadian

scene were the mosquitoes, which provokingly took advantage of our being in undress. "Early to bed and early to rise" is a maxim cultivated amongst sportsmen in the East, so ten o'clock found us in our cots, our bearers having tucked in the mosquito curtains around each sahib to ensure him having a good night's rest.

It is difficult to say how the poor natives manage. On such excursions they have little or no bed clothes with them. Cleaning up and tidying after we retired occupy them hours, yet by 4 A.M. the whole camp was astir, with kettles bubbling, ham being grilled, eggs boiled or poached. At half-past four we were roused; at five dressed. A hasty snack followed, and half an hour after we were ready to start, which in the East is just about daybreak.

To-day E. and I., F. and A., G. and C., and B. and D. were told off together. We went due west, crossing the bad watercourses by means of the bridges I have before mentioned. E. was on rather an old, but powerful hunter, I on my Mahratta pony. We came across a spotted deer, and foolishly chased it. We certainly had a splendid run. The watercourses we encountered were not too broad to jump, and we cleared them nearly together, whilst the deer, some fifty yards ahead, sprang over them beautifully; our horses were in tip-top condition, both of us light weights, but for an hour the deer kept straight. Our mounts were now panting, although going strong; but we knew the pace was too good to last long, and were therefore glad to see the buck swerving from its direct course, and in another quarter of an hour it was trying to

throw us out by doubling; but we stuck to its haunches, for we were determined not to be beaten. Our beasts began to stumble, and to show signs that they could not last many more minutes, when the pursued lay suddenly down. We, too, pulled up, undoing the girths and turning our horses' heads towards the breeze, which was blowing steadily from the sea. In fact, all were "pumped." The deer, with its tongue lolling out, breathed with the greatest difficulty; its beautiful large eyes were filled with tears, and so dimmed as scarcely to be visible, while we, its mortal foes, stood over it spear in hand. All the agonies of death over and over again it must have suffered, for it could hope for no mercy from those who had hunted it so hard and fast, and all but broken its heart. What our intentions were I don't know. We thought the deer unable to rise again, so were waiting for our syces to come up. We might then have captured it alive, or we might have converted it into venison. I say I do not know what its fate might have been; but, before we decided upon anything, the deer sprang to its feet, and with one reproachful glance at us, plunged into the arm of the sea close by, leaving us, like Lord Ullin "lamenting." It was done so suddenly that we had not time, even if we had had the intention, of using our weapons; but I am glad *now* that the noble creature escaped, though I must own I was very sorry at the time. Such are man's inconsistencies, before and after and during the ardour of the chase. No real sportsman would be guilty of an act of cruelty in cold blood. Yet, when his passions are aroused, he is little



"SENT HIS OWNER OVER HIS HEAD, RIGHT IN FRONT OF THE BOAR, WHO MADE AT HIM."

better, if at all, than the wild beast to which he is opposed.

Our steeds were utterly done up, so we sent them to camp, and ordered other nags to be brought, for we resolved to remain where we were. F. and A. now joined us, having followed and lost a boar in a jheel close by; in consequence, it was determined that he should be driven out as soon as the beaters could be assembled. It was getting late when we espied the coolies and horses approaching. The cover was rather extensive, and the boar would not break; yet the beast had cut one of the beaters, so we rode in, keeping line with the men. Presently away went F. and A. through the long grass to the right, and we were undecided whether we should follow, when we espied a boar looking at us; he was all but hidden by the stems which had fallen down, and under which he had crawled, but his long snout and twinkling little vicious eyes betrayed him, so, getting to his right, to cut him off from heavier shelter, we laid on. I suppose our appearance was not very intimidating, for he simply trotted ahead, occasionally looking back at us. The cover was so dense that our progress was not great, but it was fast enough to keep him from dodging or giving us the slip in the undergrowth, so perforce he had to take across the open. The beast had been lying in some mud hole, for he was plastered with a thick coating of slime that shone brilliantly as he moved ahead. After covering a lot of ground we got close enough to spear him. I was on the country-bred, as near almost as E. to the pig, when he "jinked" to the right, and E. struck him over the bridle reins, but

such was the impetus that the boar knocked the fore-legs of the chestnut from under him, and both came heavily to the ground. The horse galloped away, and as the foe continued his course, I kept up the chase. There was nothing unusual in the size or appearance of the boar; but he emitted a most disagreeable odour. To this I attribute the country-bred's behaviour, for he refused to close, and, when pressed, kicked and reared. I lost my temper, and felled him with a blow between the ears from the loaded butt-end of my spear. I had no intention of flooring my mount, and ought not have struck him as I did, so what followed I thoroughly deserved. Seeing us on the ground, the boar charged. The nag was quicker on his legs than myself, but, instead of running away, rushed open-mouthed at the enemy, who cleverly avoided the attack, and got between the horse's legs, ripping his stomach from the chest to the pelvis, the whole entrails dropping to the ground. The boar eyed his victim for a moment, but seeing him motionless, turned his attention to me. I jumped aside, so avoiding the rush, and gave my assailant a deep stab in the side as he passed by. Badly wounded as he was, he turned again, and once more rushed at me. This time I held the spear firmly pointed for his chest. The monster ran up the steel, bearing me down with his weight, and fell on me, dead! Faugh! How can I describe the agonies I suffered, not only from the weight of the animal, for my chest and ribs felt as if they were being staved in, but from the abominable stench that his carcase emitted. The smell from a boar when clean is bad enough, but this brute had been rolling in some awful filth, and, being covered

with it from head to feet, I got the full benefit as he lay across me. I kicked, I struggled, and I fear swore frightfully, worse than the fighting chaplain in *Peter Simple* when boarding the Russian frigate, but release myself of the load I could not. I have no doubt but that I should have died of the dead weight and the vile odours combined, had not E. come to my help. Alone he was powerless to relieve me; but, fortunately, more aid was at hand. A couple of syces joined us; they seized the brute by the hind legs, while E. got hold of the front, and with a heave ho! they succeeded in rescuing me. I was a mass of gore and filth from head to foot. As I sat up, my appearance was so comical, to say the least of it, that E. burst out laughing, and I, very unreasonably, got "awfully riled," and was about to give vent to my feelings when I noticed a broad grin on the countenance of the usually sedate natives. My wrath was dissipated, for I knew that I must be a rum-looking object indeed, for them to so far forget their respect as to laugh at a sahib logue; so I joined in the merriment, with, I fear, but a bad grace. A "tat" being brought, I transferred the saddle and bridle from the dead horse on to its back and galloped home, and calling my "maty" boy, I quickly threw off my stinking garments, which were ordered to be burnt forthwith. After a good scrubbing I got something to eat, and mounting my gray went off to join the others, who were still out. I found that they had killed three boars and two sows. One horse had been severely cut in the stifle and another

were assembled round one of the topes, which I have mentioned as having rather thick undergrowth, and into this the beaters were sent. After a great deal of hullabalooing, several pigs broke, and G., C., B. and D. took after them. We were on the other side of it, and did not know they had started until it was too late to join them. The drivers now declared that there were no more beasts in the tope, and we were thinking of shifting our ground, when A. espied something creeping along a hollow ditch, overgrown partially by wild indigo. "What is that!" he asked, and I, turning in the direction, also saw something move.

"It is not a pig. I suspect it is a wild cat. Let us drive it, and have a chase," he said. No sooner said than done. We galloped among the bushes where the animal was last seen, and, to our amazement, not a cat, but a splendid leopard bounded out in our front, not pleased at our intrusion, as the whisking of its tail proved. The superior speed of my horse gave me the advantage, and I was soon alongside, and delivered my spear through its body, but as I turned sharply to the left, the brute gave a spring and clawed my gray, who in return gave it a vigorous kick in the head and rolled it over. A. came promptly up and the brute made at him; his horse shied, but the rider turned the game by a dexterous thrust in the face. It then charged F., who missed it as it sprang on the horse, which it seized by the throat, whilst its fore legs were clasped round its neck; so the horse came down a frightful cropper, sending F. flying. E. and I. sent our spears through the beast. This caused the leopard to release

the horse, when it bounded at E. who received it well on the spear, but as it passed through, the brute got in and seized him by the arm. The horse plunged and kicked so that I could not get near, still I could hear the bones in my comrade's arm give. At last the nag reared right over, and all rolled on the ground, a confused mass. My mount, too, became restive, so jumping off, I went to the rescue. The feline lay under the horse, and I had no difficulty in despatching it. E. was frightfully mauled, and eventually lost his arm. The horse broke its back, and had to be shot, but F. was not seriously hurt. We bound up E.'s arm, made a stretcher as well as we could, and sent him off post haste to Bunda.

G., C., B., and D. killed two more pigs, but as all our nags were done up, with the exception of my grey and one of D.'s, and owing to the sad accident to our comrade, we determined to break up the meet. Accordingly, early next morning the tents were struck. The kit had been packed up over night, and by 10 A.M. we were seated at breakfast in the mess house of the hospitable — Native Infantry. Having ten days' more leave, I purchased D.'s horse, and dâked up to Rajahmundry, had some capital pig-sticking with that prince of Collectors, Tom Prendergast. What I have attempted to describe will give the reader, I hope, a faint idea of this glorious sport, but no description can ever come up to the reality,

A SPURT AFTER PIG IN THE BURHAMPOOTER CHURS.

W., the Deputy-Commissioner of the Garrow Hills, and I had been shooting for a few days in the churs

below Doobree, and as pigs were very numerous, my friend proposed that we should try a little hog-hunting. Neither of us was well equipped for such a sport. I had a couple of Burma ponies, but no spears. W. had a country-bred mare and a pair of hog-spears such as are used in Bengal; these are barely six feet long, heavily weighted at the butt end, and are used for "jobbing," whilst those in vogue in Bombay and Madras are much longer and are for "prodding." The Commissioner had had a little pig-sticking with some friends of his in Tirhoot, and it was years since I had ridden a boar, and, alas! I had put on flesh, and the largest of my nags was only 13·2, but strong and plucky; the other, a gray, was about 13, speedy but violent. Neither were up to my weight for hunting, still the temptation to follow a boar was too great to be resisted, so we determined first to try the mainland on the right bank, where we had disturbed many a thundering big fellow lying out almost in the open. The country was the very thing for riding, being nearly flat, pretty open, and full of not only pig, but there were tigers about; also rhinoceros and marsh-deer. Hedges or ditches there were none, but occasionally a dry watercourse, with sloping banks, down and up which it was easy going, was encountered.

The jemadar of the mahouts was directed where to take the elephants (we had ten with us) at daybreak next morning, and to beat in a certain direction. We were hunting under difficulties, for we had no spare spears, and were inadequately mounted; but there is a charm in hog-hunting which is impossible to resist, if you have once been "entered" to it. W.

was an out-and-out sportsman, plucky to a degree, a splendid shot, a good rider, and considerably under thirty, while I was over forty. He weighed about ten stone, I twelve. His mare was close on fifteen hands, and he had ridden her after pig. Mine had had no such experience, and was a hand and a half lower, so the handicapping was all against me. In a straight run I should have been nowhere, but in hog-hunting even the slowest of horses has now and then a chance, particularly when the pig is a "jinker." Moreover, I was tired of eternally being on the back of an elephant, and welcomed the chance of a gallop, even should I not be able to draw first blood. To be early at work, we crossed over from the right to the left bank of the river over night, sleeping in an unused cattle-shed, so we were up and away by the dawn. The jemadar, on a small elephant, was waiting for us, and so receiving his orders off he went, and in about half an hour we could see the line of beaters advancing towards us. W. was ensconced behind a patch of long grass on the right, I was similarly concealed a little to the left, with an interval of about fifty feet between us, having previously arranged that we were only to follow boars, and to let them pass us and get well ahead before we "laid in," so as to prevent their breaking back. The *terrain*, though not quite a plain, was ridable for fully three miles; but these pigs carry an immense quantity of flesh, as their feeding-grounds are close by, so they were not likely to run far. The mahouts were instructed to shout only when a boar broke, otherwise to advance silently. In less than a quarter of an hour there was a hubbub all along the line, the mahouts shouting and

prodding their elephants, they trying to break back, and showing every sign of being in a stew. We at first thought they had been attacked by a tiger, so were watching the beaters, when there occurred a slight rustle, and some fifteen or sixteen pigs appeared. We let them go fully a couple of hundred yards, when W. shouted "Ride!" I was just about to ram in the spurs, when I looked backwards once more, and there, trotting along quietly, yet champing his tusks, was a gray old boar. Half the fun of hog-hunting is the rivalry for first spear; but as I said before, I had little chance with W. in a straight run. The pigs that had gone away were fair of their kind, with two large boars, but the one that brought up the rear was a veritable Goliath. Thus I restrained my impatient steed, who, generally placid enough, had lots of pluck in him, but excited by W.'s cry, and seeing his mare go off at best speed, naturally wanted to be also in the fun.

By the time the veteran passed me, W. was half a mile away, so I allowed the quarry a hundred yards' law, and then started in pursuit. "Pekoe" was very fresh and spurted along, pulling double. Hearing a clatter behind him, the game looked round, and seemed half inclined to meet me, then changed his mind and increased his pace. The boar was very fat, and with his bristles on end looked nearly as big as my mount; nor did he seem to hurry himself, but it is wonderful how a beast of his kind can get over the ground. I raced after him for nearly a quarter of a mile; gaining a little, it is true, yet he was still fifty yards ahead. There was a patch of grass in front, into which he bounded, and I was in it also in a

second or two after, but carrying a jobbing spear rather bothered me. I had seen Dansey, of our 30th, use one, so following the lesson that he taught me, fortunately I was ready for action, although I did not expect to come upon the pig for another couple of hundred yards or so; but no sooner was I in the grass than a gray mass almost sprang at me. Mechanically I jobbed, and drove in the spurs; the spear just missed the spine, but went well into the neck behind the immense head, and luckily as I bounded forward the spear came away; thus the boar just missed a vicious prod he made at my pony's quarter, but nothing daunted, the gallant old beast with a "whoof, whoof," chased us. I went easy until we got to an open space, then put on the steam, wheeled round, and went at my adversary again. He had been bleeding "like a pig," as the saying goes, so I fancy some small artery must have been severed, and this had weakened him, for though he met me in the most plucky manner, there was less and less impulse in his charges: Ultimately, with a downward job, I drove the spear deep into his withers, yet with an upward jerk he cut the sole of my boot right through, his enormous head catching us amidship. The pony and I were, as a result, sent spinning, but the boar was *hors de combat*, and neither of us were more than shaken. (I found afterwards that his tusk, after penetrating the thick leather, had cut my sock and just grazed the skin of my foot.) Picking up the pieces and withdrawing the good blade, I remounted, in time to see W. coming towards me in full chase, so I hastened to meet him. He had apparently a large

boar before him; it was evidently wounded, so I reined up until the two were alongside, and then joined in the race. "Why, W.," I sung out, "this is not a boar." "But look at the tusks," retorted my comrade. "Yes, I see them; it is a barren sow." "I have killed a boar and have wounded her, so we must put her out of pain, but I thought most certainly that she was a boar too, or I would not have followed her." Just then she "jinked." My comrade's mare, rather hard-mouthed, did not turn as quickly as she ought to have done, so allowed me to cut in. "Pekoe" was not a bit alarmed, notwithstanding his upset, and took me up nicely, so I gave her a good dig in the ribs, but could not withdraw my weapon so had to let it go. W. was alongside of me in a moment or two, but it was no easy matter for either of us to get near the brute to administer the *coup de grâce*, for the heavily-leaded shaft kept upright, swaying about, and with a "job spear" you have to get to close quarters before you can use your weapon. W. tried to cut in several times, but once he got a blow across the shins from the shaft of my weapon which made him sing out, and I much doubt that we should have secured her, had she not rushed through a bush and got rid of the spear, when W. went up alongside and finished the *mêlée*. Fortunately my spear was not broken, the handle or shaft of a Bengal weapon being so much shorter, thicker, and tougher than those of the longer weapons.

I forgot to mention that we had sent on our guns and rifles, as there was no knowing what game might be started. So telling the bearers to keep pretty close to us, we rode on to meet the elephants. The

jemadar told us that the confusion at the commencement was caused by a large boar, almost white, which had charged the line and had cut one of the elephants. I had no difficulty in recognising my veteran friend as the culprit.

We then shifted our position, and I mounted the gray called "Elgin," then proceeded towards the Garrow Hills. The ground was not nearly so favourable for our sport, as there was a quantity of long grass standing. A few pig broke back through the line of beating elephants, when there was a great deal of trumpeting on their part, and a huddling of them together, a signal unmistakable to the initiated. "It is a tiger," cried my friend, and dismounting we seized our rifles, and each advanced towards a couple of rising knolls on which we took our stand. I saw W. turn round to his left and fire—a roar—then another shot. I ran forward, just in time to see as wicked a head as it is possible to conceive not above a yard from my comrade, who was ramming in a couple of cartridges, the man with his extra weapon having "vamoosed." I got a clear shot at her chest; the conical, a solid one, went right through her, but she required another shot from me and one from W. before she gave up the ghost. We expected no more game to appear, but the men pointed towards the river, calling out, "Soor! soor!" (Pig, pig). So, mounting, off we galloped, spears in hand. I have before said there was a good deal of unburnt grass about. "Elgin" was always headstrong, and seeing the country-bred ahead, he tore along, and I found I had no control over him, but that did not much signify, for I thought it was all plain sailing. It was a clear

mile or more to the chur, and I let Master "Elgin" go. Galloping through a patch of long grass "Elgin" went heels over head; I was sent spinning and I heard no end of grunting and squealing. The pony had struck his fore feet against a sow in her lair surrounded by her young, and had come a cropper; no harm was done. I was up again, but W. had no end of a start. I was glad to see the sounder had taken a turn to the right; so by cutting across I might almost head them. Wild pig—sows in particular—form a sort of covered-in nest; they bite the grass all round, pile it up, and then crawl under, and by lifting it up in the centre, they have a fair roof overhead; in this they litter and remain during the heat of the day. It was over one of these that I had come to grief. I got up to the sounder; there was only one boar, and W. was too close to him to enable me to cut in; although his mare was somewhat blown, whilst "Elgin," notwithstanding his tumble, was very fresh. There is no certainty in hog-hunting; hog when pressed often "jink," and I hoped this one would too, and in my favour, so I kept about ten paces to the right, "Elgin" holding his own in speed. W. crept up, lifted his arm to drop the spear down, when over he went. A creeper had caught his mare across the legs and the two went a "buster"; but no time was to be lost. A sloping bank leading down to a navigable part of the river was close at hand, and however much domestic pigs may object to swimming, wild ones are adepts at it, and take to water freely. The best place to take a pig with a jobbing spear is the centre of the withers, but I could not get alongside to deliver that stroke. We were descending the bank,



"ON THE BANKS OF WHICH WAS AN ENORMOUS CROCODILE."

so I did the best I could, and dropped my heavily-weighted weapon on to the croup, between the hip bones, which I could just reach. Over the pig went. I turned my pony sharp round; he sprang over the prostrate body which was rolling down the incline, and I just avoided taking a header into the river, on the opposite bank of which was *an enormous crocodile!* The pig's back was broken, and he was all but drowned. We endeavoured to drag him to shore, but our joint strength was not sufficient, as we had no firm foothold, and letting the body go, we ran up the bank to call for assistance from our gun-bearers. We heard a snort, and turning round had the pleasure of seeing a knob at the end of a snout project, seize the still struggling boar, and carry him off to the slimy depths below! It was the alligator (these are so called in India, but they are veritable crocodiles, same as those found on the Nile). We stood there, rifle in hand, hoping the beast would rise, but where he went to I don't know, for we never saw him or his prey again. It was now getting hot and we saw no prospect of any more sport. W. rode on and I went back towards the elephants, the gun-bearers, with mine and W.'s guns, accompanying me. I had not ridden half way, when there was a shout of "Geddha!" (rhinoceros). I was off my nag and seized the first gun I could get hold of—it was a double 8 bore of W.'s—when a cow rhinoceros accompanied by a three-parts-grown youngster came up. As she passed me, not fifteen yards off, I saluted her with the contents of both the barrels. Just then "Elgin" broke loose, the wounded pachyderm got a sight of him, and off she went in chase of the pony, and I

after her. I had changed the 8 bore for my own ·577. The youngster galloped on straight ahead. It took me over half an hour to come up with the rhinoceros and to kill her. I then had to walk home, for "Elgin" was not recovered till late in the afternoon. When I reached camp I found W. had *speared* the juvenile! Seeing the animal coming past him and having no gun handy, for a mere spree he laid in. His horse at first objected to the uncouth beast, especially to its squealing, but W. was a determined rider and getting alongside drove the spear in behind the shoulder—not jobbing, but prodding—and he was astonished at the ease with which the blade penetrated. Just then the rhinoceros uttered such diabolical noises that caused the mare to rear and become unmanageable. W. had to let go the spear and so become a helpless spectator. The antics of the stricken rhinoceros he declared were most grotesque; he capered, he shook himself, he sprang from side to side, roaring blue murder the whole while; the shaft of the spear swaying about like the arms of a windmill, and W. was thinking of riding back for a rifle to put the poor beast out of pain, when the pachyderm went an awful crusher on to its wounded side and drove the spear home till it protruded out of the chest; a few more squeals and gasps, then its spirit fled. It had been tripped up by a creeper, and W. could say, what I believe no other man could boast, that he had fairly ridden down and speared a rhinoceros. When the spear was extracted we found the shaft, though not broken, splintered and useless, so we had to give up all idea of hog-hunting for the present. Before the next season came round

I was *en route* to India. Poor "Pekoe" had been killed by a tiger. W. was transferred from the hills to a better post, which he did not live to fill long. His death was most painful and inexplicable. He was the most rising man in the Assam Commission, and peace be to his ashes, for a better fellow never lived. The old boar was I think, the largest, certainly the most massive, I ever saw. W. and I differed as to its height. It is no easy task to measure accurately a dead beast; I made him out $38\frac{1}{2}$ inches, but W. declared he was nearer 40 than 39. The one he speared was all but 37. The sow was 36; the other boar taken by the crocodile was never measured of course, and thus ended my hog-hunting in the Burhampooter Churs.

CHAPTER VI.

BEARS (ASIATIC).

In Burma, we have two varieties of bear, the *Ursus Euryspilus*, or sun bear, and the *U. Malayanus*. In Assam the *U. Tibietanus*. In India the *U. Labiatus* and in the Himalaya, Cashmere, &c., the *U. Isabellinus*. The pitiful howls a wounded bear makes are sufficient to shake the nerve of even an experienced sportsman, to say nothing of the novice, but if a man only keeps cool and waits patiently, the attack of a bear, formidable brute as he is, is not greatly to be dreaded, for before closing, the beast always exposes the horseshoe on his breast, and a shot there at once proves fatal. Why, I do not know, but the objective point of attack is almost invariably a man's face. To get at it the bear has to stand up, and then there should be no difficulty in accounting for him. I do not use shells usually, but for bear shooting they are very effective. In Assam more people are killed by bears than by tigers. I have seen some poor fellows completely scalped, the skin hanging down over their faces. In the East, the bears are generally shot on foot, but in Assam, I have come upon them and slain them, when on

"hattees" who disliked them more than I think they did tigers. Although in Burma bears of the two varieties named are very plentiful they are seldom seen and therefore but seldom shot. They have glossy skins with short smooth hair, muzzle blackish, but face, mouth, and lower jaw a dirty white; throat, black; and large heart-shaped white mark in the *U. Malayanus*, and a chestnut one in the smaller species. The head is flattened and very short; ears very small, smooth and round. It is very powerful, but somewhat less than the Indian variety. They have immense claws for their size.

When a youngster I obtained a month's leave, and had been shooting with various success, but as luck would have it, one day I lost my way by attempting to take a short cut, got benighted and slept in the ruins of a village which had been deserted on account of man-eating tigers, and not without great difficulty at last reached Mulkapore, where cholera was raging at the time. My servants urged me to go on, but I was tired and refused to budge. In fact, cholera is so prevalent in India, one gets used to it, and as long as you are not afraid of it, and don't think about it, you run little or no danger of infection. I engaged the best shikarie, and he promised to show me a famous locality for bears. At the time there was a full moon, and I was up and away by 3 A.M., it being necessary to take up our position close to the bears' dens before daylight, as these beasts feed all night and return to their homes at dawn. We had a long distance to go, but at last, about 5 A.M., when it began to drizzle with rain, we got to the caves and crept almost into them, to keep ourselves

and guns dry. As soon as objects could be seen a scout who was perched on a high conical rock descended and gave the welcome news that three of the *ursæ* were coming straight up the hill. I had a double rifle and gun. To avoid a miss-fire, I ascertained that the powder was well up the nipples, put on fresh caps, and got behind a rock at the edge of a platform, and awaited events. Very soon three black balls, as it were, came at a shamble, and funny objects they looked, moving along with a rolling gait, every now and then pouncing upon a beetle and halting to gobble it up. This was my introduction to this genus in its wild state. My shikarie carried my spare gun, I the rifle. Having waited until the leader was within twenty paces, I let fly. Such a hubbub as ensued then is indescribable. The first bear fell upon the second, and the two upon the third, and they all set to work to maul one another in the most approved style. I fired my second barrel at the struggling mass, and the shikarie fired both barrels and took to his heels. The bears left off fighting and came for me, but I was young and active, and more than an average runner, so I had no difficulty in distancing and dodging them amongst the rocks. Before I could reload, they had got into their dens. I lost little time in getting hold of the shikarie and gave him a good drubbing for having fired off my spare gun. To smoke out the beasts I tried, but did not succeed, so lost them for the time being. But two days afterwards one was found dead, and about a week later on, another was mobbed by some Bringarees and also killed. I then shot a couple at Narkapilly, and occasionally at considerable intervals,

I shot one here and there In Assam I killed several. In the Cossyah and Jyntiah hills I also killed a few. I was charged once or twice by bears, but was neither mauled myself nor were any of my followers hurt. But my own adventures with these beasts are very tame compared to the following adventure of a friend.

Towards the end of April, 1849, Colonel, then Lieutenant, Nightingale, of the Nizam's Irregular Cavalry, one of the best sportsmen that ever lived, started for the Neermal jungles, and Douglas Scott, of my regiment, accompanied him. He was the only man I ever heard of who made "bear-spearing" a regular pursuit. Bears have doubtlessly been occasionally speared by others, but only in isolated and rare cases. In the first place, they are seldom met with in ridable ground, and in the second, not one horse out of fifty will face them. I will continue the narrative in Nightingale's own words.

"Scott could not get leave just then, but followed a few days after me. On April 25th I reached Polumpilly, a small village near which good shooting is to be had. I went out to the hills, a mile distant, to look for a tigress said to live there, but after a long walk, having found nothing more than fresh prints in the sand, I gave it up, and commenced to throw crackers into various dens without success. Suddenly, however, when we were sitting down to rest, out rushed two bears from a hiding-place and made off with such swiftness that they escaped unscathed.

"28th.—Reached Hurroolah to-day. There is a rocky range half way between this and the last stage,

in which a villager said lots of bears were to be found. In the evening I went to the hill east of the camp, posted the men on all the heights, and waited patiently till dusk. Just as I was returning to the tents, I heard Meer Saib, my orderly, whistle. On running up, two bears were shown me. I cut them off from their dens, and shot the female dead with a two-ounce ball through the head. A good-sized cub that was with her was also secured after a great deal of roaring and a free fight, in the course of which two of my men got rather severely bitten, owing to their own stupidity. Returned to camp, as it was now dark. It appears that five bears were afoot at once, but the other three, hearing the uproar, made off.

"29th.—Out this morning, long before dawn, but got nothing. In the afternoon I rode over to Torla-koonta, as my shikaries informed me that bears were plentiful in a small rocky hill near which the village was built. Posted my markers, and towards dusk a large bear that lived under one of the bastions came out. I ran after him with my rifle, but as he took to the open I preferred spearing him. Mounting 'Dicky'[1] I was after him in a minute, but the knowing brute, when he saw that I was overtaking him, made back for the hill; however, I met him at full speed and sent my spear through his body. He tried to lay hold of the horse, but I pushed him over, the weapon unluckily being broken in the struggle. Bruin now got upon the rocks, but my dogs being let loose, brought him to bay, when, dismounting, I clambered

[1] Dicky was a galloway, barely fourteen hands high. He was rather head-strong, but out of all the horses Nightingale possessed, he was the only one he could depend upon to take him up to a bear.

up close to him and sent a two-ounce ball through him. He rushed on and was met by Meer Saib, who fired and missed. This turned the beast back towards me, when I greeted him with another bullet. Notwithstanding this severe punishment he reached his den, where he afterwards gave up the ghost.

"30th.—Went out early this morning, and posted the markers as usual on the rocks. A couple of hyænas were seen, and as it was then broad daylight, thinking there was no chance of any nobler game, I gave chase to one of them. Suddenly, however, hearing a cry from my shikaries, I returned and found three bears running towards the rocks. This proved to be a well-known family, that had been here for the last five years and together had destroyed two men (at least so the villagers said) during that interval. I cut them off from the rocks, on which they made for some hills about half a mile distant. The ground here was most 'break-neck,' there being large sloping slabs of stone, with loose rocks upon them. However, I managed to drive them over this, but at one place they turned and roared at me, as if about to attack. In another half mile or so, I caught them up in tolerably open ground, and riding in upon them gave the rearmost one a severe wound. The whole three then charged me, but the handiness of my horse 'Dicky' saved me, and giving the wounded beast a spear through the lungs which proved mortal very soon, I made off, pursued by all three, roaring furiously. The wounded animal soon lagged behind, and my shikaries kept throwing stones and mobbing him, until he fell over and expired from loss of blood. On coming to

a favourable bit of ground, I turned on my foes, and wounded one badly. They still kept together, and made one or two determined rushes at me, when having both received severe hurts, one of them made off as hard as he could. I stuck to the other, and after a hard fight, and spearing him some half-a-dozen times, I at last sent the steel right through his heart and rolled him over dead. There was but one antagonist now left, which proved to be the largest of the three and very fierce. He rushed at me most furiously every time I approached him, and in so doing he received twelve or more severe wounds. At last, although quite exhausted from the length of the conflict, seeing that bruin had very little further to run to reach his den, I rode in front of him, charged, and planted my spear well in him. The bear, however, proved too strong for me, tired as I was, and making good his charge, threw himself on the horse's crupper, seizing me by the inside of the thigh with his claws, and took my leg in his mouth! I stuck firmly to the horse, knowing it was my only chance, and hoping bruin would soon be shaken off. 'Dicky' behaved splendidly, kicking with considerable effect. At last, however, the infuriated brute, by sheer weight and strength, dragged me off on to the ground. The bear even then did not let me go, but got hold of my foot. As I expected him every instant to seize me by the back, I made a vigorous struggle to escape, and to my delight and surprise, my long sambur-skin boot came off my leg and remained with the bear, who took no further notice of me, but ran off towards his den worrying the boot as he went. My "dander was riz" at this mauling, so picking up my

spear, I ran after bruin and drove it through and through him. He seized it in his mouth and turned on me, but just then most opportunely another spear was thrust into my hand, and I ran it several times into his chest and at last made an end of my savage foe! My escape was most providential, I having got off with only three slight wounds, two on the instep and a deep scratch on the thigh; this soon became very painful, so I imagine the claws are somewhat venomous. My three troopers, with most of my shikaries and lots of villagers, were close at hand while I was being mauled, and afforded me no assistance, owing probably to their surprise. The former said that they could not get their horses up to the bear. This would appear to be the case, as throughout the whole trip not one of the horsemen with me drew blood from a bear, and most of these men were plucky enough. One of the under tusks of this formidable brute was buried in the heel of my boot, and the other caught the stirrup. The upper tusks went through the boot and some little way into my instep in a slanting direction, so I got off better than could be expected, and was only lame for ten or fifteen days. Though very sore from my bites, the next day I could not remain idle in the tents, so early in the morning I went up to the rocks. A bear was seen sleeping on the top of them, but heard us, and escaped into a cave. We had just thrown in a cracker, when another bear was seen quietly going past us. I fired my heavy rifle (which I christened 'Wapping Poll') and the animal ran into a clump of rocks about seventy yards off. He presently put his head out of his den and looked at me in a most idiotic way! I

sent a ball from my other gun into the centre of his forehead, followed up by another from a smaller rifle. These were more than sufficient for bruin, who died incontinently. In the afternoon I went to a small village called Letchmapooram. Here there was a nice banyan tree under which I pitched my tent. A little way off there was an extensive range of rocks full of caves.

"Wednesday.—I was out early this morning. At daybreak two bears came past my tent, and made for the hills. Hearing the preconcerted signal I mounted 'Punch,' took the two-ouncer, and galloped after them. I saw a bear climbing up the rocks after I had gone some way through thorny jungle, so dismounted, and hobbled up to the foot of the hill. Bruin was just entering a den when I got a snap shot at him and rolled him over dead with a single bullet. This was a large male. In the evening I went to the small hill, west of the conical one. I was climbing up the rocks (the markers had not even been posted), when I saw two bears emerge from a den. I followed them up and soon came upon them, almost within five paces, and gave the larger the contents of 'Wapping Poll,' which smashed his shoulder. Down he rolled and I put another ball into him, after which the coolies and dogs finished him. The other bear received a two-ounce ball as he rushed past me. I then knocked him over with another shot—as I thought dead. Then I descended the hill; but the second brute managed to crawl into a den, and I lost him. My bull-terrier behaved very pluckily to-day, rushing at this bear and pinning him by the throat, but he was knocked off at once, and had a very narrow escape.

"This night I was roused by the cries of '*Reench*,' so mounted 'Dicky' and rode about in the moonlight, without, however, viewing bruin; the yells had doubtless driven him off.

"May 3rd.—Went out this morning to the Litchmapooram Hill after daybreak. A signal shot was fired by a marker, and a bear pointed out. As she was on tolerably ridable ground and had a good-sized cub with her, I determined to kill her mounted, although I rode 'butcher fashion,' *i.e.*, with only one spur, my injured foot being encased in a slipper. I soon caught her up and speared her through the shoulders. She then pulled up, looking very sick. I rode at her again, and received two vigorous charges. The second time we met, I broke her spine with a thrust, and she gave up the ghost. The cub rushed at my shikarie, but after some trouble, with the help of the small dogs, was secured. Tried the small hill in the evening, but found nothing. The next day I rode over to Torlakoonta early and waited near the hill; only hyænas were seen. In the evening, a she-bear and two cubs were viewed, but she was too knowing and would not descend the hill.

"The next morning I posted the markers as usual. One of them, Murza, gave a false alarm, and drew me away from the right spot, just as two bears were approaching the hill from the Sind-bund. I, however, got back just in time to cut them off from the rocks, and rode them through the bund. I caught one up in a bit of open ground and speared him. Unluckily the spear-blade broke in a bone and I had no second weapon left. I therefore galloped to the hill, seized

my gun, intercepted bruin *en route* to his den, and sent a heavy ball through him, and eventually finished him. The other bear escaped; the troopers pressed him too hard, so he doubled back and got to his den before I could reach him. I might have bagged both animals had I not been drawn away by the false alarm, for they broke cover exactly where I had taken my stand.

"On May 6th I moved to Purkeer, and pitched camp in the mango tope. Went to the Black Hill, which lies east of the village, and soon after arriving there, saw a bear walking about. I followed him up-hill towards his den, and when about half way up, there sat bruin, about eighty yards off, looking at me! Fired my two-ouncer at him, and the ball, entering his right eye, shattered his head to pieces. He fell dead, without a groan even, at the very entrance of his den. He proved to be a large male. After this I sent Akbur Ali to the top of the hill, where he saw six or seven bears in the bushes. I came upon two more of these animals while walking round the place, but could not get a shot. I remained on the watch, trying to circumvent them in the moon-light, but I did not succeed, owing to the rocks which shadowed the ground on every side, although I heard the objects of my search growling, so must have been close to them. I got back to the huts at 9 P.M.

"The next day I went to the hills west of Purkeer. Towards daylight, I rode quietly on to Trooper's Hill (as I have called this clump of rocks), and had just reached it, when a large bear was seen by the markers. I gave chase and soon speared him. He fought gallantly, but after a furious combat and several fine

charges, he fell. At this moment, one of the dogs came up, and going too close to the dying bear was seized by the head. He had an extraordinary escape, but was much mauled. After driving my spear again and again into the bear, the disabled beast let the dog go. This was an enormous animal. As soon as the fight with this grand old brute was over, a cry of 'Bears! bears!' arose from the markers, so taking a fresh spear I rushed after the view. A male and female appeared making for the rocks. I went for the latter, one being the bigger of the two, and as she kept on charging me I must have killed her, had not my horse become unaccountably violent and unmanageable, so that I could not turn him when necessary. The consequence was that the bear, though desperately wounded, reached her den, where we afterwards heard her crying as if in her death agony. Much disgusted at the turn affairs had taken I faced round and engaged the other brute, who was fighting the dogs and chasing them about. Several deadly thrusts terminated the struggle.

"Rode to the Black Hill this morning. A couple of bears appeared, but retreated to their dens as soon as they saw us. We waited patiently till dusk; but though several more were viewed, none would leave the rocks until just as we were going away, when the two that had tantalised us so last night, descended. I went for them. Though they must have seen me, they quietly pursued 'the even tenor of their way,' permitting me to approach within ten yards. I hit the male with a ball from my heavy rifle, on which a fight ensued between the two. However, just as I had charged my gun, they perceived me, and roaring

furiously, made a most determined charge. On the foremost bear coming up, I shot him through the chest, on which they both turned off. The dogs were let loose, and brought the wounded beast to bay, which gave me time to run up to within three paces and to put a ball through the maimed brute's head. I also wounded the second one grievously, but in the dusk, she got into a den and escaped.

"May 7th.—Went at dawn to Trooper's Rock. A large bear was seen coming across the plain towards the hill. After a sharp run of half a mile on 'Dicky,' I came up with him and sent the spear with so good an aim through the heart that he fell dead. A very fine male was then seen, a long way off, and I went to meet him; but 'Dicky' began his pranks and was so violent that he ran away with me, and I broke my pet spear over his head before bringing him to subjection. Taking another spear I soon overtook bruin, whom I wounded and by whom I was charged 'instanter.' After wounding him again, as he turned to make a fresh charge, I drove the blade clean through his heart; he staggered a pace or two and then fell dead. This splendid bear would probably have escaped, had I not had my shikaries posted on the rocks, for their shouts and the barking of the dogs kept him from his sanctuary until I was able to get 'Dicky' into a proper frame of mind.

"Went to Black Hill in the morning, saw no bears, but speared a couple of hyænas.

"Tuesday.—Out early to the Black Hill. Came on a bear while riding along, but the orderly with the rifle was so 'taken aback' at the sight that he failed



SPEARING BEARS IN THE DECKHAN.

to hand me the weapon, and the game got off. Meer Saib saw three others. In the evening I went to the same hill. At dusk, a large grey bear came down, and on our pursuing, stood at bay between two rocks, so that to reach him I had to ride up this narrow passage where there was no room to turn. The dogs were barking at him, but no sooner did I approach him, than he charged with such fury as to break my spear (a portion of which remained in him) and knock over my horse 'Punch.' How both escaped, I know not, as the bear, after flooring us, was actually close enough to be touched. Darkness terminated the fracas with the loss of our quarry. Douglas Scott joined to-day.

"Wednesday.—Out early to Trooper's Rock. Scott on 'Punch.' Hardly had we arrived when a bear was viewed; we gave chase and after a short run I speared the unfortunate beast through the heart, but she still went on, so I gave another thrust, when she subsided. In the evening we saw two bears, but did not get either a shot, or a chase.

"10th.—Out early to Trooper's Rock. On arrival a bear was shown us. She (for it was a female with a cub) charged me when I came near her, and was speared through behind the shoulder; but my spear bent and became useless, so I had to get another, and after two more gallant charges, I slew her. The cub was also secured. Soon after, another bear was signalled, but got off before we could come up with him. In the afternoon we went to Armoor, distant two miles. Here there are plenty of bears in the immense range of rocks, but it is difficult to get at them. We tried a hill with two toddy trees on it,

which we christened Palmyra Hill. We here heard of a large brown bear, said to be very fierce, but we could not find him, and saw no game, though the markers on the rocks did. The ground is ridable round this hill.

"11th.—Armoor. Tried Palmyra Hill, but saw nothing. In the evening went to Purkeer Black Hill. Scott saw a 'sounder' of hog, which he lost after a long run. I also saw another but failed to get on terms with them.

"12th.—Tried Trooper's Hill this morning. No bears; but we saw a hyæna and killed it after much dodging and a severe run.

"13th.—Moved camp to Balconda, seven miles.

"14th.—Out very early; but the game was earlier, and had got to its den. Sent a shikarie to look at a large hill. He reports it blank.

"Moved to Doodgam, ten miles.

"Pitched camp on the river bank and passed a cool quiet night.

"16th.—To Neermul, ten miles. Road good. Bivouacked in a tope about two miles beyond where it is said all kinds of wild beasts come. Went in the evening to some rocks near at hand. Saw indications of panthers and bears. The former are dreadful scourges to the people, and in this very place this night a man was dragged out of his hut by one of those beasts and eaten close to his own threshold. This appears to be a common event here.[1]

"At night a tiger got past the fires, syces, sentries and horses, and not far from our beds and servants,

[1] It was near here I had my adventure with man-eating panthers, a year afterwards, as related further on.

into camp, when one of my dogs barked, and all the people, without knowing why, set up a most demoniacal yell. This, fortunately, so alarmed the intruder that in a couple of bounds he was off. I failed to get a shot. We found by his footsteps that he must have been prowling about us half the night.

"17th.—Did not go out to-day. Picketed sheep, dressed up as men, in the hopes of enticing a man-eater—a very artful dodge suggested by the Cotwal—only it did not answer, and indeed appeared to keep the tigers away from our camp, for we were not disturbed.

"18th.—To Burgaon, six miles. Road bad, water bad, camping ground bad, no shelter, small village. Looked for hog but saw none. Heard of the fight with Rohillas. Poor Bosworth killed and a lot of men.

"19th.—To Apparowpett, ten miles. Road fair, but there are some bad nullahs to cross, running through dense jungle much infested by tigers. The bullocks attached to Scott's hackery were driven to frenzy at the sight of one; while those carrying packs, threw off their loads, and bolted into the jungle, so my friend's impedimenta was strewn in every direction. My bullocks and horses were also much alarmed at another place, and no sooner had the camp been pitched than a panther was found in the middle of it. On being fired at by a Daffadar, it made off. This is a good sized village, but so haunted by tigers that no one will stir out except in broad daylight. Four bullocks had been killed by them a few days before our arrival near where our camp is. We moved to Seonee, seven and a half miles.

"Moved camp again in the afternoon to a deserted village. We took the left of the road, *via* the tank, and I saw an antelope, which I missed. Scott got three shots at Neilghie and floored a fine bull, but he got up and I finished him off with a spear, which broke in the scuffle. I saw a bear, but did not kill. Just as it was getting dark, the guide announced that he did not know where we were! This was nice, considering the jungle was full of man-eaters, and that we were not aware which way to turn! I at last took a northerly course and finding a "massaul" tree, we tore off a large part of its bark of which we made torches, and by their light pushed our way through thorns, grass, bushes and jungle, with not a drop of water to be had. We were all done up, so made up our minds to bivouac for the night, when, to my delight and surprise, I hit on the road near Dounra, a deserted village, and only two miles from our camp. Scott, who had taken a line of his own, lost his horse. He saw lots of game, and got to camp soon after we did. There is a nullah with good water near Seonee, but supplies have to be brought from long distances.

"20th.—Moved to Burra Koompty, five miles.

"21st.—To Wurhona, twelve miles.

"From the 22nd of May to 2nd June we wandered over the country, had shots at gaur, near Singie, but got none. On the 2nd we returned to Neermul again.

"3rd June.—To Ghur-Chunda, eighteen miles. Road pretty good at first, but very rough towards the end; supplies good; small watercourse. Bears lived, we were told, in the bastion of a ruined fort close to the village, and from never being molested, roamed about in broad daylight! We went to look

at the place in the evening, and soon saw a couple near their den; we waited behind the rocks to let them come well out. While doing so, a large bear was seen quietly walking about among the low thin jungle beyond the village. I ran down the hill, quietly mounted 'Dicky' and gave chase. Bruin stood looking at me in amazement till I got close, and then he legged it into the jungle. I came up and speared him behind the shoulder. My compliment was returned by his charging furiously, and very nearly getting hold of my nag. Soon afterwards he sat down among some rocks. As I rode up, he charged viciously, which I stopped by driving my spear right through his body. He now took refuge on the top of a small rocky hill, and as he would not leave it, and my horse could not go near him, I dismounted, walked up to him and drove my spear through his heart. Still the game foe charged with great fury, and drove followers and self down the rock. He, however, fell dead in this his last effort. I rode back towards the hill where Scott was waiting to get a shot at the bears. But being told that another beast was in the maidan (plain), I turned off and went for him. It being now moonlight I only saw the bear when I was close upon him, and as I pursued him he rushed for 'Dicky' and very nearly caught him. Luckily my spear took the assailant in the back, and rolled him over, under my nag's feet, who was thus compelled to jump over the quarry. My weapon was broken by the shock, but the bladed portion remained in the bear; nevertheless he made at me open-mouthed. Before I could get another spear 'Dicky' became so violent that the plucky brute, though very severely

wounded, ultimately escaped. Another bear was spied by a coolie, but I failed to see him.

"4th June.—Ghur-Chunda. Went out very early but saw nothing. Followed yesterday's bear by the blood, but failed to recover the game. About 11 A.M., while sitting in the tents, Meer Saib reported that there were four bears coming across the maidan to the hill, but though we got on our horses as fast as we could, we were too late to prevent them reaching their stronghold. In the evening we sat over the dens. After dusk, one came out and took up a position under a tree. Scott fired and hit him, and as he attempted to run, I sent a ball through his body, but although we then lost him, owing to the darkness, his body was found a little way off. In the night we were roused by a cry of "Bears!" and now occurred rather an uncommon adventure. Taking our guns, we ran out as we were, in our 'pyjamas,' and slippers, and after pursuing the animal for some distance without getting a sight of him, I got disgusted, and was returning to the tents when the horses were brought up. The moon at this hour was very bright, so I mounted, and after cantering a short way saw an enormous male bear. As soon as I came within some thirty yards, he turned and charged with a loud roar. I rode at him and the spear entering his neck, broke by the force of the collision. I soon got another weapon and continued the 'run.' Scott in the meanwhile rode after him, but on bruin charging, his horse, a very high-caste Arab, shied off, which was not to be wondered at, as we were riding without spurs, almost bare-footed. The bear chased him for some distance, but on my

coming up, rushed at me with great ferocity, but though I stopped him by driving my spear more than a foot deep into his head, yet such was the force of his charge that it broke to shivers. Thus were my two pet spears, with one of which I had previously slain eight bears, *hors de combat*. As Scott could not get his horse to close, he gave me his weapon, and though bruin had got into fearfully holey cotton ground, I managed to wound him several times. On the last occasion, the bear was so nearly seizing my horse, that he had raised himself on his hind legs to do it, but I just managed to get out of his reach, leaving my spear in him. One of my servants now came up, and gave me a hog spear, and drove my large bear spear into bruin's hindquarters! The bear seized the shaft and broke it to pieces, but while he was thus engaged I rolled him over dead with a thrust through the heart. Thus ended my first encounter with a bear by moonlight, and considering that we were in our night costume, and that the brute was of great size and ferocity, it may be pronounced a very satisfactory bit of 'shikar.'

"5th June.—Out early this morning but saw nothing. In the evening went to the old 'boorj,' and made ourselves comfortable with carpets, lemonade and books till just about dark, when Ramdéen, a sepoy, whistled. I went down to him and he showed me a bear a little way off; as soon as he moved I knocked him over with 'Poll' and then both Scott and I hit him again. He managed to get down nearly to the foot of the hill, though again wounded by me. I then went up and speared him, but finding he had a good deal of strength remaining, I

left my spear in him, and finished him off with a ball through the head.

"6th June.—About 10 last night, we were again roused, and told a bear was near the tents. We mounted our horses and went for him, but to our disgust found him returning up the hill. I tried to get a shot among the rocks, but could not. We returned to our beds to sleep, but in about another hour we were again woke up and told that Mr. Bruin was at hand. At first, thinking it was useless to attempt to ride, I tried to get a shot, but finding I could not, I got on 'Dicky,' and followed Scott, already mounted. Scott rode near bruin, but could not get up to him owing to his horse refusing to close, so I passed him and speared the bear, who ran in among some rocks, where I had to follow him—no pleasant thing 'by the light of the moon'—and being merely *en déshabillé* both Scott and I suffered considerably from the thorns; bruin now passed through the jungle, beyond the rocks, and took across the maidan. On my nearing him, he charged and received my spear through his heart. He had strength enough left, however, to make one more furious rush, which smashed a spear. This was the brave beast's last effort.

"In the morning we walked to the hill and stood on the 'boorj,' meaning to put some crackers into a neighbouring den. Before we could do so, two bears suddenly rushed forth, one of whom I instantly knocked over with 'Poll' and another gun. Scott fired, but missed the second bear, which took across the plain. I ran down, mounted, and after a long

after this animal retreated into thickish jungle, so that I could not easily get at him. At last I gave him a desperate wound behind the shoulder, but he still ran on, and the jungle became so dense that I could not retain my view of him, more especially as 'Bull' suddenly became mute. I can't imagine how the bear got away, but escape he did. I returned to the hill, and found that Scott had finished my bear with three more shots. While doing this, three bears rushed out close to him, but luckily did not charge, so that he was able to wound them all, having the greater part of my battery at hand. The big female went into a den, streaming with blood from various wounds, one of them inflicted by 'Poll.' Scott also knocked a cub off her back with a bullet, and the third bear also got into the den. When I arrived, I found the female crawling out of one of the dens, so shot her dead. Having put lighted straw into the caves, out rushed a bear. Both Scott and I wounded him, in fact he was in chase of one of my coolies when I stopped him by a two-ounce ball. The coolie in his fright fell with his head against a rock, and remained senseless for an hour or more. Bruin now ran round the rocks, and Meer Saib hit him in the head, after which he got a salvo from us. This rough treatment caused him to make for a cave, down to the bottom of which I sent him with 'Poll.' Upon the dead bear that was lying in the cave he now turned his wrath, so I had to go down into it with lighted straw to dispense the *coup de grâce*. This was objected to from a rifle, so finally I had to crawl into the den, and finish him off with my spear. On the coolies going to remove the bodies, the remaining cub charged them, but was

soon knocked on the head. So much for Ghur-Chunda. On arrival we were told that twelve bears lived there. We bagged ten and mortally wounded the other two. With the exception of the cubs, all had been the terror of the natives, several of whom they had killed, and mauled and disfigured many others; in fact their ferocious characters made it doubtful whether they or the residents were masters of the situation.

"On the 7th and 8th of June, two bears were wounded, but lost. On the 9th there were no less than twelve bears on foot, but we did not bag one. On the 10th, 11th, and 12th we wounded several bears, but only secured one. There our hunting trip may be said to have ended, but we did not return to cantonments until the 20th."

CHAPTER VII.

SAMBUR.

Cervus Aristotelis.

I AM convinced that there are two varieties of this deer, one which inhabits the mountain districts of the far east, and the other frequents its vast plains, principally those of Burma. The former is a prize worth obtaining; the latter, although nearly its equal in size, yet has insignificant horns, and is all but devoid of the mane which is so conspicuous in the first mentioned. Another peculiarity of the sambur of the plains, is, that almost every one, in the hot season, at all events, has a sore or abrasion of the skin underneath the neck, about the size of a shilling, caused, the Burmese assert, by its rubbing against fallen timber to get rid of parasites. In Burma, the "rusas" begin to shed their horns in June or July. The marsh deer in Assam do not lose theirs until October and November. All these deer are possessed of immense vitality, and will go away with wounds that would stop the progress of any other game. "The Old Forest Ranger" mentions a case of a sambur stag going off with thirteen well-placed bullets, and I have myself put eight belted balls (No. 10 bore) in a moderate-

sized male before he fell.. I have known another shot through the heart run for two hundred yards before dropping. Steaks of the sambur, cooked like beef are scarcely to be distinguished from the real article. The marrow bones and tongue are unexceptional, but the greater portion of the carcase is coarse, and as it cannot be hung is very tough, so is seldom used in cuisine if other flesh is procurable. The "bell" of a *rusa* can be heard a long way off and when disturbed by the approach of a tiger or some other dangerous animal, they make the surrounding country resound with this alarm. As they are essentially gregarious, a stag is generally accompanied by several hinds. The very old and therefore those worthy of the greater attention of the sportsman are often, however, "solitaire," like males of the bovines, elephants, &c. Although generally a timid animal, I have had a doe stand and look steadily at me whilst I have, off an elephant's back, fired three or four shots at her head, the only part visible, the bullets striking the trunks of the saplings amongst which she was standing without causing her to move a muscle! I have shot this animal in many parts of India, Assam and Burma, and I once witnessed a fight between two stags which is worth relating.

I was on Bison Hill—had in fact just arrived—when the shikarie sent with me by Linga Reddy, said, if I liked he could show me some deer not far off. So taking my rifle, and giving an extra one to him, we went along a spur of the hill leading towards the gorge of the Godavery River. We had to pass through several patches of long grass, clumps of bamboos, and at last, when about a mile from camp,

we came upon a most park-like scene. Right in front of us, extending fully three-quarters of a mile, there lay a broad expanse of country, relieved from monotony by undulations, and with clumps of trees so arranged, as to look as if artificially planted by some landscape gardener. I have never seen a more picturesque spot in my life, the further extremity ending on almost a precipice, beneath which the deep waters of the Godavery flowed along peacefully without a ripple, exemplifying the old saying that "still waters run deep," for just there the river is supposed to be unfathomable. Steep as is the declivity, here and there, narrow paths sloped downwards to the heavily wooded country, in which the mighty stags repose during the day. The formation of this succession of hills is most peculiar. They are composed almost entirely of laterite, and anything moving fast over it, causes a reverberation which can be heard a long way off. Moreover the sides are perpendicular, often forty, fifty and more feet, over which nothing can pass except at far apart places where there are narrow shoulders sloping down to the valleys which separate these tablelands, and along which various animals travel. The general height of these hills is about 2,300 to 2,500 feet. Where we were, the grass was only about thirty-six inches high, over which we made for the shelter of a clump of bamboos. When peeping beyond them, I saw three or four hinds feeding a little way off. Within thirty yards of them was a huge prostrate tree, and creeping on hands and knees we got under the shelter of its trunk—not that I intended to do the does any harm—but to lie in wait for a stag, which it was more than probable would

turn up. We were now within fifty paces of the edge of the tableland. On one side, to our right, even almost with the surface of the country, was the crown of a tall tree, a wild mango, the roots being in the ground fully 120 feet below. The laterite "cropped" over, forming a ledge, a good deal hollowed out underneath. So a lead line dropped from the edge would have touched a natural terrace, on which a few trees, including the tall mango, grew, below which again there was a sheer fall of about twenty feet, and then a slope which ended in a narrow but dry watercourse which divided that hill from the next. These particulars are requisite to explain what followed. I had lain *perdu* perhaps a quarter of an hour, when first one doe and then another pricked up their ears and looked to our right. We gazed in that direction too, and saw presently the tips of a splendid pair of antlers. The warrior who carried them seemed in no hurry. It was not the rutting season, or probably he would have been a little quicker. While looking in the direction of the advancing beauty, the shikarie touched me on the shoulder and pointed to an altogether opposite course, and there, equally slowly marching along, was another stag, for all the world the duplicate of the one on the right. I anticipated some fun as I was sure these gay Lotharios would not agree, for although the hinds would not then accept their attentions, I have no doubt the object in view was to ingratiate themselves with the does and walk off with them, for more ardent advances at a future date. I fancy the one on the right was the lawful owner of the harem, the one on the left an intruder, as he advanced quicker and immediately

began to caress the hinds. When number one looked up and saw as it were a twin stag taking liberties with his wives, he drew himself up to his full height, gave a snort, and trotted towards his rival, who, in no way embarrassed, devoted his attentions first to one and then to another of the ladies. But though apparently ignoring the advent of No. 1 stag, No. 2 had his eyes open, and when the other was within a yard of him, he faced round and charged at his foe. The two met, as we read knights did of old. Great was the crash, neither gave away an inch. It was a case of "push devil, push baker." The hinds collected in a cluster and came nearer us, and looked on as interested spectators of a grand combat. They were splendidly matched—the suborbital glands were extended to the utmost; fury glared out of their eyes as they determinedly opposed each other. The fight lasted about ten minutes. No. 2 stag must have been in better wind and perhaps a little stronger, so forced his rival backwards foot by foot. After a few vicious prods, which inflicted wounds, they both retreated backwards a few paces, then bounded forward and again met in conflict; this time No. 2 stumbled, and his antagonist gave him a severe prod in the side, which rolled him over. He then retreated a yard or two, preparatory to a final effort to extinguish his opponent, but it was evident that the latter was not a novice, for he was on his feet instantly, jumped aside, evaded the thrust, and in turn rolled over his adversary and knelt on him. They were both pretty well exhausted, but not much damage had been done in the rough and tumble scramble. Finally both got on their feet together, but their antlers were inter-

locked, and, in endeavouring to extricate themselves, they approached the edge of the tableland and, before I could raise my gun to fire, toppled over. We rushed to the edge and there, 120 feet below us, jammed between the mango tree and the edge of the precipice, lay these two warriors—dead! The hinds went off about a hundred yards when they saw us, then turned round and stared at us, but we did not molest them. There was no means of descending to where the stags were lying, so I went back to camp, where I arrived about dark, and sent a party out with torches to bring in the trophies. They even could not disunite the two heads, so cut them off and transported them home as they were. I should have liked to have sent them to a taxidermist, but as none was within three thousand miles, I skinned the heads and retained the skulls with the horns interlaced. Then, foolishly, I sent them with other trophies collected during fifteen years to a friend, but he became insane. Thinking that my treasures were all hung in his hall in Suffolk, I did not move in the matter for some time; but on visiting his home I saw only a few specimens, so after inquiries I discovered that, after lying in the Customs warehouses for years in Liverpool, the collection I had been at the trouble and expense of securing, had been sold by auction to defray expenses. Who got them or what became of them, I could never find out.

In 1863, when on "leave" to the Neilgherry Hills, I made the acquaintance of the late General Douglas Hamilton, and he very kindly placed his hut and his shikarie at my disposal. His bungalow at Ooty was a curiosity, the walls were covered with innumerable

horns and heads of gaur, sambur, spotted deer, barking deer, also tiger and leopard heads and skins. I admired the sambur horns in particular, but I am afraid I riled the worthy sportsman by saying that the cow gaur in Burma could show better horns than the largest bull's head which he possessed; and as in this trip I also came across the *so-called* Neilgherry ibex,[1] I will describe the beast here as I have only shot a few specimens. Francis, the shikarie, went on two days ahead of me. We encamped on the Ooty side of the great valley. Starting at daylight next morning, and looking down a natural slope, I was amazed to see almost every crag occupied by an ibex. There must have been over a hundred visible, nor did the herds seem alarmed, but were somewhat cuddled together as if for warmth, for at 5 A.M. on the top of the range, the thermometer does not stand many degrees above freezing point. I took out my binoculars, but even with its aid I could only see one "saddle back," and he was on an eminence, beyond his flock. I could have killed a doe or perhaps two, but I had not come all this way for that purpose. What I required was a good head or two to add to my collection. How to get within range of the old ram was the puzzle. There was a nullah to my right rear, and, by following it, I might reach a point whence I could get a shot. I crawled along the side of the ravine, and when I thought I was within about thirty yards of Master Billy, I looked over the side, but the large male had disappeared, and only kids and females were in view. Francis now touched me and moved away, I following.

[1] Hemitragus Hylocrius, closely allied to the Himalayan tahir. They are wild goats not ibex.

We went along the hollow, which was more of a crevice than a nullah, following its upward course. Very soon the walking became very bad and we had to pick our way carefully among the various *débris* which lay scattered about, for if we made the slightest noise we knew the chances of a shot would be remote. For fully half an hour we steadily ascended and, rounding a point, on our right was a high conical peak. I carefully scanned every crag, but could not see a single ibex; we still went on, the nullah winding until we got very nearly to its source: here we left it and, going through a belt of undersized trees, again emerged on to open ground. To the left, scattered in groups of five and six, there must have been fifty ibex, but not an old one among them! Nearest to me, about a hundred yards off, stood a fair-sized buck. I took a careful sight and fired; the animal dropped, but something lay struggling on the ground beyond, the whole flock, were now off at full gallop. I again fired at my victim, but before the bullet could have left the barrel, the goat ceased its efforts; it was dead. Francis promptly pushed the second rifle, an express ·577, into my hand and pointed eagerly to the left, and there, going at his best pace and fully 200 yards away, was a huge black goat, with the unmistakable white saddle back. My first shot struck in a good line, but a little too far forward, but it was near enough to cause the animal to partially pause and then bound forward. Just at that moment I again fired; the result was a stumble, but the beast picked himself up and ran on three legs, for the off fore-arm was broken. We marked the direction that he took, as Francis said he would not go far, but lie up in

a small "shola" in our front. On approaching the first buck we found an ewe also dead; the bullet after passing through the ram had struck her in the neck. Now commenced one of the hardest fags I have ever undergone, but I was determined to have that "saddle back," even if I had to sleep on his trail all night. His track we soon found, and a fair quantity of blood along it. Sure enough he was in the shola, but on the further side. We had to track him carefully as the undergrowth was somewhat thick, and all the satisfaction we got was hearing him rush out, without even getting a sight of him. I ran forward, but came an awful cropper, my foot catching in a trailing vine. After I picked myself up, I saw a glimpse of the tail of the animal as he wound round a rocky peak. He was going strong, but did not face the steep ascent, selecting for his course the side of the valley. I fancy he did not like irregular ground, with only three legs to trust to. We were at fault once or twice, for the ground became rocky and there was but very little blood; but making way for Francis, that experienced shikarie took up the trail like a well-trained hound, and though our progress was slow it was sure. While my attendant was looking down examining the ground, I happened to cast my eyes to the left and just saw the tips of a fine pair of antlers. The owner was going away with lowered head, but he had not caught our eyes (a beast will often gaze upon a man until the eyes meet and then he will bound off); so the buck was not unduly alarmed, thus he stopped for a moment to take a backward glance. I fired and heard the "thud" of the bullet. Francis turned round, thinking it was the old ram I

had shot at, and catching sight of the big stag said it was one Hamilton had been in chase of for the last two or three years, as he had a white mark down the rump, where he had been clawed by a leopard. Marking the spot up to which we had followed the goat, we took up the trail of the stag. I fired altogether eleven shots at him—of which we found nine had taken effect—before we secured our quarry, and a noble beast it was too, with splendid antlers, each over thirty-seven inches from the burr to the tip. By the time we had secured the game we were fully three miles or more away from where we had first seen it, so we had tiffin and rested a little. Instead of retracing our steps, Francis took a bee line straight up a steep hill, saying the ram would be in the "shola" on the other side. Climbing that hill was a "buster," but it saved us several miles. When we reached the top, I found we had to descend fully five hundred feet, the hill top itself being as bare as a bone. On our downward course we put up several ewes and kids, but let them alone, although I was sorely tempted to shoot one of the latter for the pot. It was now past two; and Francis said the buck would be stiff, so lie close. I ready to pull the triggers at the least sound, entered the "shola." Immediately there was a rustle. I fired more at the noise than at anything I saw, and as I did so up got the ram. I caught him with the left barrel, but he went on; but, strange to say, I found that with my first shot I had killed a wild dog, which I have no doubt had been after the wounded quarry. As the skin was a very good one, Francis placed the dead animal among a group of

sent for the stag. Resuming our tracking we soon found that the old "saddle back" was not only hard hit, but was a knowing old brute; for though we started him two or three times, I did not get another shot at him till close on 4 P.M. Fortunately he was unable to go over bad ground, so picked his way along the most level country he could find. Finally with a snap shot I killed him, not a mile from the camp. He had a good head, horns close on fourteen inches. I hunted for three more days, but only got one other "saddle back," and that not nearly the equal of the first I obtained. During this trip I saw several sambur, but none as large as the stag that I had killed, so was content with having slain the monarch of the glen.

Sambur shooting in Burma is so mixed up with general shooting that I propose having a few words to say about it hereafter.

Marsh-deer (*Rucervus Davaucellii*).—This deer is widely distributed. It is found in various parts of India and I have shot it near the Godavery, but nowhere is it more plentiful than in Assam. Its *habitat* does not extend to Burma. Very few deer in the wild state in the East carry much fat, but the marsh or swamp deer is an exception, for I have shot them in such condition that lumps of fat, nearly the size of my fist, have come through the bullet holes. Many of the stags carry very fine heads and it is not uncommon to find them possess eighteen points, although twelve to fourteen is more usual. I once saw a head, not a large one by any means, which had no less than twenty-seven tines, but they were mostly stunted. Of course the head was valuable as a curiosity.

On one occasion I was near Loqua-Ghat and wanting meat for my people I went out to get anything I could obtain for the pot. I tried first ground that was considerably higher than that surrounding it. The new grass was a nice height, and ere long I saw several herds of doe swamp deer, but I preferred a stag if I could find one. Although there were several brockets in sight I had to hunt about in unburnt patches before I came across a mature buck. The first I killed had its horns still covered with velvet—yet the greater part of the antlers had formed, although the tips were still soft. Thinking all the stags would be in the same state, I killed two hinds, then rolled over another, which kept turning head over heels, apparently being unable to get up. In its gyrations it fell into a nullah, the banks of which were so rotten and steep that I had to make a *détour* to get to where the doe had lain, to all appearance in the last gasp. When I got to where she should have been, she was *non est!*—what became of her I cannot tell. I can only imagine that a tiger must have carried her off. I then came across a large rhinoceros, hit it, and whilst going full pelt in pursuit, my elephant almost kicked up a marsh stag. As I fired, the poor brute sprang up into the air, and then kept bounding on its hind legs and falling down; at last it lay on its side breathing heavily. I got down to give it the *coup de grâce*, and to examine the head to see whether the horns had formed. Two does had already been hal-laled, thus there was plenty of meat for all; so I suppose I must have approached the moribund beast incautiously, for it instantly sprang up and made a vicious prod at me. I jumped aside and as I did so

fell, and the stag still had enough life left to continue its assault; however I caught it a blow on the nose with the full force of my right foot armed with a shooting boot, and in a moment after I seized it by the antlers, when there was a brief struggle, for the poor wretch was dying fast, being shot through the lungs, so I had no great difficulty in throwing it on its side and cutting its throat. This was a lesson not to be forgotten, so I never again approached a stag in so careless a manner. The horns, though still in velvet, were perfectly formed, and when their envelope peeled off, very handsome. In the dooars, at the foot of the Himalya or Bhootan range, these deer are literally in thousands. After the stag has shed his horns, which takes place in October and November, he retires to some remote locality and keeps in hiding till they are fully matured. Their growth is very rapid, for they will have acquired their full size in three or four months, but the velvet is not shed till towards the end of May or early in June. Gracefully formed, they are smaller than the sambur, but larger than the thamine or brow-antlered deer. Marshy localities are their haunts—that is, they feed on aquatic plants, standing often in water up to their bellies, but always retire to perfectly dry land to rest. In the rutting season, combats between the stags are frequent, and occasionally one or both antagonists are killed or die of their wounds. As well as sambur they are affected by disease or murrain, and I have seen not only these deer, but buffaloes, lying dead by the dozen. When that occurs tigers and vultures, as well as jackals, "have a high old time" and feed to repletion.

Thamin (*Cervus frontalis*). Hog-deer (*Cervus porcinus*).—There are two varieties of the thamin—one that inhabits Burma and Siam, and the other Manipur. The basal antler of the latter is longer and a continuation of the main horn, slightly bent upwards and forward, and often there are no terminal branches even in a full-grown stag, whilst with the former there are always terminal branches, the basal and main horn forming more of an angle and less of a curve. In size they are larger than a spotted deer, but less than the marsh deer. In proportion to their height they have large and graceful antlers. I have shot them with six tines on each beam, but often there are excrescences which might almost be counted as points. They are gregarious, live in open "quins" or plains surrounded by forest, and a herd of from twenty to thirty members is not unusual. As a rule they are very wary and difficult to get near, but after the first rains have fallen the graceful creatures are so tormented by gad flies, that their whole attention is taken up in knocking off those pests, so provided the wind be favourable, a wary hunter should have no difficulty in getting within shot. Hog-deer abound everywhere in Assam and Burma, but are not plentiful in India, being found in only a few localities far apart. They run like hares and are anything but easy to shoot with ball, although they lie very close; so if you want meat for the camp, use shot, when you can bowl them over as easily as rabbits, but at the same time they possess great vitality and I have seen one run before it fell a hundred yards and more with the entrails trailing. In the monsoon they are more or less spotted, the young invariably so. They can be easily

tamed when caught young, and make pretty pets, but are very destructive, eating cloth, paper, etc. The males lie up in high grass and creep along in front of an elephant for all the world like a feline, and many a time, with my heart in my mouth I have been on the *qui vive* for a view of Master Stripes, when at last only a wretched little deer has bounded forth. They, as well as the barking and "four-horned" deer, are excellent eating.

I was out with Lloyd in one of the early sixties. We sent on our camp to Banlong and followed a few days afterwards in boats. By starting at 4 P.M. we usually arrived at our destination about 6 A.M. next day. I had a house built at Myet-quin, about ten miles inland. Game of nearly every variety abounded, for there were no villages to speak of, only a few Karen huts scattered about, so the wild animals were seldom disturbed. Near my shooting-box there was an extensive *bheel* or *jheel*, with an ample supply of water, but further inland there was only one pool, which was composed more of liquid mud than anything else, but which sufficed for the wants of the denizens of that vast tract. Salt-licks also were numerous, an unfailing attraction to all bovines and deer, and, it is even said, of felines. This pool, called by the Burmese Gna-Ein, in the dry season was full of fish resembling the Indian murrul, and our mahouts used frequently to wade in and by groping about catch many weighing from one to three pounds. As long as there was water in this pool, game, especially big game, abounded. We tried hunting its locality at various seasons, but found May to be the best month, for earlier the annual fires take place, causing the wild

beasts to keep on the move; later on the rains have set in, whilst in the cold season, November, December and January, the grass becomes twenty feet high.

May 4th.—I was the first to reach our destination, my boat being faster than Lloyd's; so I ordered all the elephants, which had arrived the evening before, to be got ready and packed for an immediate march inland, then sent for the three shikaries, Shoay-jah, Monwine and Shoayoo. Because *en route* thamine and hog deer abounded I did not send the camp ahead. Lloyd arrived about 7 A.M. There was no delay, so mounting our ponies and followed by the shikaries we went on. In the first two miles our route lay across paddy fields—then dry, of course—afterwards we entered a forest of various trees which extended for three miles. On emerging from it, in front of us the country consisted of patches of open ground, long grass, and belts of forest. The shikaries now went ahead, while the syces were told to be near to hold our steeds in case of any game turning up. Before long we saw several doe thamine, but would not fire at them, as they were numerous close to our hut in the "quin." We also disturbed a few hog-deer. We had gone half way through the first plain, when in a small tope we saw standing, somewhat apart, a couple of stags. Dismounting, we attempted to stalk them, but they had heard us and went off long before we got within shot. This country we both knew, having hunted over it many times, so separated, Lloyd with Shoay-jah going one way, I with the other two men went another. I made straight for the "quin," sending my pony on by the path, as he could not scramble through such ground

as I had to walk over. In many places the surface would be quite smooth and covered with short grass, in others (very marshy in the rains), there would be a series of hummocks—made, it is said, by worms—covered with creepers and vines, most difficult and fatiguing to traverse; then grass from three to four and more feet high, just the place for a lurking tiger; would occur. It is no joke crossing this description of country on foot, but we did not often do it, preferring to be on elephants, but this day something induced us to try "shanks's mare," and I for one was heartily sorry, long before I got to our destination, being dead beat and in fear that I should have a sun-stroke. The only thing I saw was a rock snake, in a dormant state, about fifteen feet long. It had evidently swallowed a hog-deer, for the projections made by the small horns were visible within it. I never spare a snake, so although in a good hunting country, I put a ball through its head. Thank goodness, at last I got into a forest free of jungle, fair to walk in, and with shade overhead most grateful. I heard Lloyd fire three or four times. He was an excellent shot, good rider and cricketer, in fact good all round, but rather excitable and somewhat jealous out shooting. Myet-quin was now in sight. How I longed to get there and pour water over my heated brain, for my head felt as if on fire. The exertion and sun combined had unquestionably been too much for me. We were moving noiselessly along when the tips of a pair of antlers to our left caught my eye, but the animal itself was invisible, so signing to the shikaries to stand still, I crept forward, and got within fifty yards of a fine stag, lying down, busily engaged in

shaking and knocking off flies, but in the position he lay I could only fire at the back of his head or into his rump. I was so unsteady and shaky that I was afraid I should miss, but resting my rifle up against the trunk of a sapling, holding my breath, and steadying myself as much as I could, I drew a bead on to the back of the skull, and on pulling the trigger was delighted to see the animal's head fall forward, the body stretch out, a few convulsive quivers of the legs and feet, when all was still, with the exception of my own head, that ached and racked as if it would burst. Leaving the shikaries to bring in the deer, I hurried to the hut, and put up many hog-deer on the way, but let them severely alone. The servants had arrived, so I was soon in the bath-room, and a dozen chatties of water over my head somewhat relieved my pains. Putting on my "pyjamas" and nightshirt, I lay down and kept quiet for the rest of the day. Lloyd turned up about an hour after I did. He had shot a doe thamine and a young sambur stag, and had been in chase of a herd of "t'sine" or wild cattle.

In the evening he went out again and brought in two "da la él" (hog-deer) and a peacock. The latter was converted into mulligatawny soup, and the small deer afforded excellent chops and joints, while the sambur and the thamine were handed over to the camp followers.

My two shikaries went off to some Karen huts about two miles further in the jungle and returned one of the inhabitants, who reported having seen tracks upon tracks of game of all sorts. The only drawback, he said, was that the jungles had not been thoroughly burnt, as a good deal of rain had fallen in

March and April and put a stop to the process, but it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good, and though the rains had spoilt the burning, they had filled the Gna-Eein, and other pools in the jungles, near which we should be sure to get good sport. Early next morning we were on our elephants, Lloyd on a tusker belonging to the commissariat and I on my own "hattie." We had eight more as beaters and for carrying game. I may here say, that there are no professional shikaries like those in India to be found in Burma, yet every village of any importance has a man or two who kills game and sells it to the people, but for a long time we could not induce them to accompany us. In the first place, they did not want their own preserves, or what they considered as such, to be encroached upon, as it would have deprived them of their profits, and, secondly, they had an idea that if any European came to grief, they would be blamed and perhaps hanged! Of the niceties of sport they knew nothing, were not good trackers, but they were acquainted with the country and could take you with precision from one place to another. Every Burman knows sufficient of the stars to guide himself by them at night. Moreover very few Europeans at that time had acquired their language. But Raikes of the Artillery and Charlie Hill of the 69th both learned to speak Burmese fluently, and they were the first men on the Sittang side, with the exception of Berdmore and O'Riley, who induced the Burmese to show them game. I followed in their footsteps and moreover had had four years' experience of the country and people in other parts of Burma, and so I knew that if kindly treated, given all game not required as

food for the camp, a lot of grog and a little tobacco now and then, a Burman will do anything for you. Lloyd too, besides being the Deputy Commissioner of the district, talked the language well, but in that respect his wife was far his superior, for in a year or two she picked up the language so thoroughly, that the Burmese themselves wondered how she had acquired such a perfect knowledge of it. Moreover neither of us were stingy, and paid the men well, and they found that in one trip, what with the money they got as pay, the government rewards, and by the sale of dried meat, they made more than they would do in a couple of years by the beasts they had been in the habit of killing by torchlight. I had hunted with these men in 1856–58 and again in 1859 and 1860, and for three years afterwards, and had no difficulty in getting them to take us to the best places. But to return to our trip.

May 6th.—The shikaries took us away from the Gna-Ein into grass too high to see anything in, and though we heard dozens of animals bolting, we saw nothing for the best part of the day, so lost our time and I fear our tempers. But towards the afternoon we got into better ground. Here the country is covered with trees pretty far apart. One is the pemah, which has a lilac flower; the other is very like the laburnum,[1] but if possible finer. Between these trees there is what the Burmese term kine grass, growing from three to six feet high. Here we formed line and soon put up sambur after sambur. We were both reluctant to shoot hinds, but if we did not provide the shikaries with plenty of meat, which

[1] Cassia Fistula.

they jerk and form into a kind of biltong, they might have struck work, or pretended illness and have left us. So every now and then we let fly—not always anxious to kill—but Lloyd bowled over two and I one. I then saw a very large stag standing near a fallen tree, with very fair antlers. He was watching Lloyd and had his body turned away from me. Directing the line of elephants to halt, I advanced alone and got within fifty yards and fired. The deer spun round and went off full score, and but for the "*thud*," I should have thought I had missed him. He ran for some way, then descended a steep nullah, but in attempting to ascend the other bank, fell back, picked himself up again and ran along its bed. I was sure of him now, so followed as fast as I could, whilst Lloyd went after a large thamine, which at that moment sprung up. I found my stag lying dead. I never shot one greater in bulk, but his horns were only twenty-four and a half inches long. We then turned homewards, carrying the slain on the spare elephants, when we came across a sounder of hog; several of the sows had porkers just fit for the spit, so I potted two, and Lloyd wounded the boar, and after a long chase secured him. He was only fit food for the Burmese, but had fair tusks, eight and a half inches long. It was with some difficulty we could get these so-called unclean animals on the hatties, as the mahouts would not touch them, and indeed objected to their being placed on the guddees. We got home just at sunset and when close to the *bheel* I shot a hog-deer. I may here say, wild pigs are clean feeders perforce of circumstances, for where they roam, they can usually find no offal. But if they

come across a "kill," however putrid the flesh may be, they will greedily devour it. Sows and the young ones are capital eating, but an old boar's flesh is coarse and rank.

That night we had a long confab. with the Karen and our shikaries, and it was decided we were to go straight to the Gna-Eein and not shoot at anything but big game, or an aged stag if it came in our way. What capital cooks the Indians are! Lloyd had only Burmese servants. Mine were all Madrassies, and I never knew them to fail to serve up a repast that would not have done honour to a feast, except on one occasion. We had arrived at our halting-place very late—after dark—and missed the huts prepared for us, so slept in the open, and the cooking of course was *al fresco*. A capital dinner was extemporised, but when served up, every single dish was full of flying bugs—not the ordinary small green ones, which are offensive enough, but monsters which, attracted by the fires, had invaded all our cooking pots; so met with a deserved death—but spoilt our meal. However, we had always plenty of canned edibles with us, and a tin of sardines, partaken of under the protection of mosquito curtains, sufficed to allay our hunger.

May 7th.—We were up and away before daybreak. Our breakfast, under charge of my Maty boy, was carried on an elephant, and sundry bottles of beer, duly wrapped in wet cloths, were hung on the sides of the pad to cool. We saw lots of deer of sorts, but none we cared to kill. We also disturbed a few jungle and peafowl. As we entered the heavy cover, Lloyd came upon a herd of buffaloes. He emptied his battery into them, when they all crossed the line in

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as I had to walk over. In many places the surface would be quite smooth and covered with short grass, in others (very marshy in the rains), there would be a series of hummocks—made, it is said, by worms—covered with creepers and vines, most difficult and fatiguing to traverse; then grass from three to four and more feet high, just the place for a lurking tiger; would occur. It is no joke crossing this description of country on foot, but we did not often do it, preferring to be on elephants, but this day something induced us to try "shanks's mare," and I for one was heartily sorry, long before I got to our destination, being dead beat and in fear that I should have a sun-stroke. The only thing I saw was a rock snake, in a dormant state, about fifteen feet long. It had evidently swallowed a hog-deer, for the projections made by the small horns were visible within it. I never spare a snake, so although in a good hunting country, I put a ball through its head. Thank goodness, at last I got into a forest free of jungle, fair to walk in, and with shade overhead most grateful. I heard Lloyd fire three or four times. He was an excellent shot, good rider and cricketer, in fact good all round, but rather excitable and somewhat jealous out shooting. Myet-quin was now in sight. How I longed to get there and pour water over my heated brain, for my head felt as if on fire. The exertion and sun combined had unquestionably been too much for me. We were moving noiselessly along when the tips of a pair of antlers to our left caught my eye, but the animal itself was invisible, so signing to the shikaries to stand still, I crept forward, and got within fifty yards of a fine stag, lying down, busily engaged in

shaking and knocking off flies, but in the position he lay I could only fire at the back of his head or into his rump. I was so unsteady and shaky that I was afraid I should miss, but resting my rifle up against the trunk of a sapling, holding my breath, and steadying myself as much as I could, I drew a bead on to the back of the skull, and on pulling the trigger was delighted to see the animal's head fall forward, the body stretch out, a few convulsive quivers of the legs and feet, when all was still, with the exception of my own head, that ached and racked as if it would burst. Leaving the shikaries to bring in the deer, I hurried to the hut, and put up many hog-deer on the way, but let them severely alone. The servants had arrived, so I was soon in the bath-room, and a dozen chatties of water over my head somewhat relieved my pains. Putting on my "pyjamas" and nightshirt, I lay down and kept quiet for the rest of the day. Lloyd turned up about an hour after I did. He had shot a doe thamine and a young sambur stag, and had been in chase of a herd of "t'sine" or wild cattle.

In the evening he went out again and brought in two "da la él" (hog-deer) and a peacock. The latter was converted into mulligatawny soup, and the small deer afforded excellent chops and joints, while the sambur and the thamine were handed over to the camp followers.

My two shikaries went off to some Karen huts about two miles further in the jungle and returned with one of the inhabitants, who reported having seen tracks upon tracks of game of all sorts. The only drawback, he said, was that the jungles had not been thoroughly burnt, as a good deal of rain had fallen in

March and April and put a stop to the process, but it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good, and though the rains had spoilt the burning, they had filled the Gna-Ein, and other pools in the jungles, near which we should be sure to get good sport. Early next morning we were on our elephants, Lloyd on a tusker belonging to the commissariat and I on my own "hattie." We had eight more as beaters and for carrying game. I may here say, that there are no professional shikaries like those in India to be found in Burma, yet every village of any importance has a man or two who kills game and sells it to the people, but for a long time we could not induce them to accompany us. In the first place, they did not want their own preserves, or what they considered as such, to be encroached upon, as it would have deprived them of their profits, and, secondly, they had an idea that if any European came to grief, they would be blamed and perhaps hanged! Of the niceties of sport they knew nothing, were not good trackers, but they were acquainted with the country and could take you with precision from one place to another. Every Burman knows sufficient of the stars to guide himself by them at night. Moreover very few Europeans at that time had acquired their language. But Raikes of the Artillery and Charlie Hill of the 69th both learned to speak Burmese fluently, and they were the first men on the Sittang side, with the exception of Berdmore and O'Riley, who induced the Burmese to show them game. I followed in their footsteps and moreover had had four years' experience of the country and people in other parts of Burma, and so I knew that if kindly treated, given all game not required as

food for the camp, a lot of grog and a little tobacco now and then, a Burman will do anything for you. Lloyd too, besides being the Deputy Commissioner of the district, talked the language well, but in that respect his wife was far his superior, for in a year or two she picked up the language so thoroughly, that the Burmese themselves wondered how she had acquired such a perfect knowledge of it. Moreover neither of us were stingy, and paid the men well, and they found that in one trip, what with the money they got as pay, the government rewards, and by the sale of dried meat, they made more than they would do in a couple of years by the beasts they had been in the habit of killing by torchlight. I had hunted with these men in 1856–58 and again in 1859 and 1860, and for three years afterwards, and had no difficulty in getting them to take us to the best places. But to return to our trip.

May 6th.—The shikaries took us away from the Gna-Ein into grass too high to see anything in, and though we heard dozens of animals bolting, we saw nothing for the best part of the day, so lost our time and I fear our tempers. But towards the afternoon we got into better ground. Here the country is covered with trees pretty far apart. One is the pemah, which has a lilac flower; the other is very like the laburnum,[1] but if possible finer. Between these trees there is what the Burmese term kine grass, growing from three to six feet high. Here we formed line and soon put up sambur after sambur. We were both reluctant to shoot hinds, but if we did not provide the shikaries with plenty of meat, which

[1] Cassia Fistula.

they jerk and form into a kind of biltong, they might have struck work, or pretended illness and have left us. So every now and then we let fly—not always anxious to kill—but Lloyd bowled over two and I one. I then saw a very large stag standing near a fallen tree, with very fair antlers. He was watching Lloyd and had his body turned away from me. Directing the line of elephants to halt, I advanced alone and got within fifty yards and fired. The deer spun round and went off full score, and but for the "*thud*," I should have thought I had missed him. He ran for some way, then descended a steep nullah, but in attempting to ascend the other bank, fell back, picked himself up again and ran along its bed. I was sure of him now, so followed as fast as I could, whilst Lloyd went after a large thamine, which at that moment sprung up. I found my stag lying dead. I never shot one greater in bulk, but his horns were only twenty-four and a half inches long. We then turned homewards, carrying the slain on the spare elephants, when we came across a sounder of hog; several of the sows had porkers just fit for the spit, so I potted two, and Lloyd wounded the boar, and after a long chase secured him. He was only fit food for the Burmese, but had fair tusks, eight and a half inches long. It was with some difficulty we could get these so-called unclean animals on the hatties, as the mahouts would not touch them, and indeed objected to their being placed on the guddees. We got home just at sunset and when close to the *bheel* I shot a hog-deer. I may here say, wild pigs are clean feeders perforce of circumstances, for where they roam, they can usually find no offal. But if they

come across a "kill," however putrid the flesh may be, they will greedily devour it. Sows and the young ones are capital eating, but an old boar's flesh is coarse and rank.

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gaur moved on at all I don't know—for practically he had two broken legs—but go he did, and hid behind a patch of long grass, intending doubtless to charge, but a seven-footer cannot hide like a mouse. So his huge carcase, looming like a rock, caught my eye; the dorsal ridge being fully exposed, I fired at it, but the shot did not move the beast. As there was no tree close and I did not care to encounter a charge at close quarters with only one barrel loaded, I aimed for the neck and pulled trigger, expecting that this time he would inevitably come for me. No, not he, so I reloaded. When I looked up again there the bull stood in exactly the same position. Lloyd came up, and separating, we advanced upon either flank, but no fresh shots were required, for the grand old beast gracefully knelt down, toppled over and expired. This was the finest gaur I ever saw. We left a man and an elephant to flay the "pyoung," and to take his head and as much of the meat as was wanted, with the marrow bones, to camp, and continued our hunt. Again the jungles had been disturbed and we saw nothing worth shooting until close to the foot of the Yomahs. That meant ten or twelve miles from camp, when we came upon more gaur, from which Lloyd secured a cow. On our route homewards we knocked over a sambur stag, two does, and a fine hog deer.

On the 15th we went to a vast plain where large game was said to abound. It was miles away from any village that we knew of. The days had been intensely hot, for not a drop of rain had fallen for many weeks, and the grass was on the greater part of the plain nearly twenty feet high, and as combustible as tinder. It was hard work pushing one's way through it, for the

elephants had to use their whole weight to crush it down and make a path for themselves. Through all these obstacles we had to go to get to a place where we were informed that wild cattle were abundant. We had got perhaps half-way across our hateful course when we saw smoke rising in the far distance, but as the wind was blowing from us we did not heed it. In a quarter of an hour, the fire had spread considerably but still we did not think it menaced us, so went on in single file, a large mucknah leading the way and stamping down the reeds which were of the consistency of small bamboos. In another quarter of an hour there was a great blaze, and the flames spread rapidly along to our right. Beginning to think things did not look quite so pleasant, we hurried on our animals, still not surmising that we were in danger; but one thing we owned looked threatening, and that was that the wind showed indications of veering round, blowing one moment from the north, then from the south, and never remaining consistent for five minutes. As the flame increased so did the wind, ending at last in a gale. These prairie fires destroy some game, but not as much as might be expected, for every animal has his own run, and at the first signs of smoke they clear off into forests devoid of undergrowth. But to return to this occasion. The fire had heretofore been receding from us, but suddenly it spread to our right front, then a fresh blaze broke out to the left. The greater part of a "maidan," some ten miles long by almost as many in width, was now ablaze. Our elephants became alarmed and would not go straight, but kept turning round and hesitating, so the mahouts had to use the driving-hooks freely to make them

advance. Kites and the small king crows were darting about, pouncing on grasshoppers and other insects which were disturbed by the conflagration, and how these birds could live in such a fiery furnace was a marvel, but they seemed impervious to its effects, swooping down on the insects until the flames seemed to envelop them. While the reeds were bursting with reports like pistol shots, huge flakes of lighted matted matter were flying about, causing the fire in our rear to break out afresh, and was overtaking us at railway speed. It now became a question of almost minutes as to whether we were to be overwhelmed or not. Shoay-jah said that a short distance ahead was a brake, where there was generally a pool of water, and the ground was bare of grass. The wind now became a tornado, so we had to crouch on our animals, who at last realising their danger, were ambling along as fast as the nature of the ground would permit, but what is the speed of a racehorse even to that of the devouring element? If the tempest had blown either from behind or from either side of us for five minutes consecutively, we must have been enveloped in its fiery embraces and been destroyed; but the very eccentricity of the wind saved us. Still the fiery element was fast overtaking us, and the heat was awful; the flames licked round our heads, when a "guddie" became lighted, scorching the elephants as well as ourselves. Then there was a momentary stoppage, followed by an awful crash, as the leading elephant with his weight, bore down the creepers which lay between us and salvation. In a moment after we were beyond the reach of the destructive element. No one could have lived over a few

minutes in the atmosphere we had just escaped from. Jumping off the elephants and lying prone upon the earth was the action of a moment, for heated air ascends, so the surface of the ground is the coolest. The fire in the "guddie" was extinguished. A few minutes after, we were able to get on our hands and feet and crawl to the pool of so-called water. It was partly gruelly-looking mud, diluted with a large proportion of buffalo urine; but such as it was, we threw ourselves into it, drank it greedily, and thought it almost nectar. When sufficiently recovered to look around, it was difficult to recognise individuals for the whites were burnt black and the natives had become almost fair. Looking at Lloyd I burst out laughing; he did the same when he looked at me. Now Lloyd was a good-looking fellow, somewhere about twenty-six or so, and prided himself greatly on a luxuriant moustache and a pair of "Piccadilly weepers." And where were they? for now he had neither, not even eyebrows or eyelashes, and the hair on the side of his head, up to the cap was frizzled off. I was a few years older, sported a pair of black whiskers, etc., but devil a hair had I left on my "phiz," while my hands and face were peeled. My skin, never very fair, was now a sickly white colour like that of a beastly albino. Nor had our attendants fared better, for the Burmese had lost their top-knots, and large blisters dominated over the naked portions of their bodies. As for the mahouts, their own mothers would not have acknowledged them: they were transformed into some race utterly unknown to science. The state of the elephants was even worse; the soles of their feet were so scorched

that they could scarcely stand, and the end hairs of their tails had disappeared. To get back to Myet-chin was hopeless. Shoay-jah said about two miles off there was a village where we had better remain for the night, so we made for it, the beasts of burden limping along, and we in no better plight. At last we got there, taking four hours to traverse two miles. Fortunately, the food in our baskets was all right, but the beer on the pads had burst. Still, we had some claret under shelter, and although it is a tipple I care very little for, yet that night we thought it delicious. But where was the village we sought? Utterly destroyed. The fire had demolished every house, and the people were searching in the ashes for their valuables, picking up here and there sticks which would serve again in the reconstruction of their frail edifices. Our lodge, a Zyat, situated under a peepul tree, fortunately escaped. We were thinking of adjourning there for the night, but the first rain of the season burst upon us. It was a deluge. While the lightning beat the best displays of fireworks that I ever saw, the thunder reverberated again and again and almost deafened us with its unequalled artillery. There was no help for it. We put the women and children under temporary shelter, and contented ourselves with such protection from the elements as could be found. Thankful enough were we all when day broke.

The Burmese are a strange people, easily depressed and as easily elated. Over night they were despondent; as the sun rose they were jubilant almost, singing, and moving about as cheerfully as if nothing had happened, and no one could realise that they were

homeless and almost destitute of food, for their granaries even had been burnt. The river was not far off, so, sending word for a boat to be provided, we left the elephants to recover, and walked to the place of embarkation, so reached Myet-quin that night, for we found that by following narrow creeks, we could get within a mile of my bungalow, so there was no need to go round by Banlong. We had still two weeks' leave, but what avail were they without elephants; so mounting our ponies and taking but a few things with us, going round *via* Nouksedouk, we reached Tongho on the third day. Our wives would scarcely acknowledge us. Deprived of all hirsute ornaments, blear of eye, burnt to a cinder, we might have been anybody except the "Simon Pures." The more they looked at us in amazement the more we laughed, for Mrs. L. was staying with my wife, and we found them together when we turned up. The elephants did not arrive for fully twenty days, and a pretty bill we had to pay the commissariat. The next time I wanted to take the "boy" with me, he gave me warning, saying, "He not take service to be burnt to death," but a clout on the head brought him to, and I am thankful to say that he did not again have such a narrow shave. Ultimately, he forgot that fearful reminiscence, and remained with me for years, and rose to be my head servant. Our bag that trip was sixty-four head of game and a burning. I will not inflict the whole diary on the reader, for one day's shooting off elephants in Burma is very like another; sometimes of course, we get more sport than on others, but there is always sufficient to reward one, although it is rather expensive work.

Besides the deer described, there are others such as the Mouse Deer (*Memimna indica*), a diminutive creature found in the Tenasserim Provinces, but I never saw it in Pegu proper. The Serow (*Nemorhædus rutrida*) is found also in the hill ranges. One was shot near the Duke of York's Nose, a mountain up the Salween, and one was caught swimming the Sittang river near Shoay-ghein. This beast, or a very closely-allied species, is also found in the hill ranges, not very far from Gowhatty. Wild pigs are plentiful in Burma, but no one has succeeded in spearing them in the lower province, but near Pagan Myo, where the ruins of thousands of pagodas are, I have seen them in ridable ground. In Assam, below Doobree, they lie out in the open, and I have put up a tiger within fifty paces of a sounder. In the "churs," capital pig-sticking can be had as described elsewhere, but whilst chasing a boar you run a chance of being chased by a tiger. In fact a few years ago, a party of hunters thus met a tiger face to face and had to beat a retreat. Wild dogs are plentiful in both Burma and Assam, but they are very inferior in appearance to the noble wild dog of the Neilgherry range. Jackals do not exist in Lower Burma, but I have heard them near the frontier, and the late Capt. Bosworth shot one near Meaday. Once or twice I think I saw them near Namyan. In Assam they are simply in thousands. At times the jackal utters a peculiar cry, called the phēēal, which is only a cry of fear given utterance to, when disturbed by a tiger or a leopard. In Assam we have the "hispid" hare, the pigmy hog—a fine specimen of which I shot near

the Monass—and a curious beast in the Mishmee hills, called the takin.

The Spotted Deer (*Axis maculatus*). This beautiful deer is plentiful in many parts of India, but is only found in two localities in Assam—on both banks of the Monass, and again in the Durung district. McMaster, whom I knew well, thus speaks of this deer:—"I don't know why it is or how it is, but so it is, that somehow there is a greater charm in the pursuit of spotted deer than of any other of the denizens of the bonnie brown forest or tangled jungle where it loves to dwell. I am not alone in this feeling. Many sportsmen, and some of them who have slain the mighty behemoth, taurus the bull, and even the feline king of the forest, recall with pleasure the sport they have enjoyed after this less noble and timid creature." Its general colour is yellow or rufus fawn, with numerous white spots, and a dark dorsal streak from the nape to the tail; head brownish, and the muzzle dark; chin, throat, and neck in front white; lower parts and thighs internally whitish; ears brown externally, white within; tail longish, white beneath. The basal line is directed forwards, and in old individuals has often one or two points near the base. Whereever this deer is found it is invariably gregarious. Early in the day it feeds out in the open, but retires to the forest during the heat of the noon. The antelope exists in very many places in India, but in Assam only near the Monass, principally in the south, but occasionally a few are found in the north. I have been present at two or three hunts with "chitas," or hunting leopards, but

can't say I see much sport in it. The animal is hooded and taken in a cart to a plain where antelope abound. When the cart has approached as near as it can to the game without alarming them, the hood is taken off. The beast slips off the cart directly he views his quarry, and crouching along on his belly gets as near as he can, which is seldom closer than 100 yards, when he makes his rush. His speed is almost incredible; fast as is an antelope, he is far faster for a short distance, so generally overtakes the buck within 150 yards. If he misses that chance, he desists; if he kills, his keeper approaches him stealthily, slips the hood over his eyes, gives him a cup of blood to lap, and then reseats him in the cart.

CHAPTER VIII.

PANTHERS AND LEOPARDS (*Asiatic*).

SPORTSMEN and naturalists have not agreed whether there is only one species of "pard" or two, or even more, but I have no doubt in my own mind that although there is but one species in India, there are two distinctly marked varieties of the same beast. The larger is generally known as the panther.

Blyth, a first-rate authority, states "that the *larger* is *paler*, with the spots more disposed in groups or rosettes, with not unfrequently one and sometimes even two small specks within these rings, and that the *lesser*, or leopard, is of a *deeper* coloured ground, with the groups or imperfect rings of spots smaller, less subdivided, and thicker as regards the quantity of black they contain." Shaw says the *leopard* is distinguished from the panther by its *pale yellow* colour and is considerably the smaller of the two. This coincides with my own view.

Besides these two varieties, there is the snow leopard, found in the Himalaya, and occasionally melanoid specimens are met with. The latter are only a *lusus naturæ*, and are found only in well-wooded countries, where the forests are extremely sombre in hue, where they feed principally on

monkeys, and climb trees in pursuit of them, so that nature has doubtless adapted their coat to suit the shades in which they reside, or otherwise they would be too conspicuous and so fail in obtaining food. In Malaya, where the climate is very damp and the forests luxuriant they are more frequently met. But isolated cases crop up here and there. It is curious that whilst black leopards are met with, no one has ever heard of a black tiger;[1] and again while there are occasional white tigers, I never encountered a white leopard south of the Himalaya. The size of the two varieties depends of course on the quantity of food obtainable. The leopard is generally found in the remoter hills. The panther lives more in ravines in the plains and preys upon cattle. A tiger invariably commences to break up his prey at the hindquarters, the panther or leopard always at the forequarters or chest. The reason for this peculiarity has not yet been solved.

At Shillong, when we first went there, leopards were very numerous and no one could keep a dog. Major Montagu, in twelve months, caught in a trap not far from his house, twelve leopards and one tiger. When wounded I consider a panther or leopard more dangerous than a tiger, for it is as ferocious, its body much smaller to aim at, while its activity is far greater. The Assamese villages are many of them straggling places, and have at times either a swamp

[1] Since writing the above I have read of a melanoid tiger having been killed near Chittagong, and was seen by Mr. C. T. Buckland. I have seen the skins of three albino tigers, the finest at Edwin Ward's, when he lived in Vere Street, and the other two were obtained in the Cossyah hills.

or a cane-brake in their midst or adjacent, and nothing is more common than for a leopard to take up its abode in one of these places and to prey upon their dogs and cattle. I have killed many of these animals, having shot them on foot, off elephants and out of "marts" or machans, and on one occasion I was instrumental in ridding a locality of two families of man-eating panthers as described hereafter. I never shot but one "chita," the only one I ever came across in the wild state. Judging from the numbers of skins brought in to me whilst in East Africa, I should say the chita, or hunting leopard, is far more plentiful there than in India. The first panther I shot was at Condapilly, while almost a griff. They were then very plentiful there, and scarcely a day passed without a "kill" of some sort taking place. The large Hooniman monkey was a frequent prey, and we used to find portions of the victims very frequently. The panther I killed was a well-known one. For five or six years everybody who had been in command there had endeavoured to rid the place of this beast, but without avail. I had sat up for him a dozen times. Mogul Beg, the shikarie, had been after him for years, and although he had shot many others, he had never got a crack at the "chor" or thief, as the animal was christened. Sitting up for this notorious animal over a "kill" was useless, for he never returned to his victim; but by the merest chance I discovered that he generally followed a narrow footpath leading up the hillside, where he had his den, and down which he came nightly in search of prey. I have said elsewhere that the old Mahrattas had fortified this country for miles around, the walls connecting

the bastions extending a great distance. One of these I noticed was close to the path in use by the panther; I got a pariah dog, tied him up within easy shot, and ensconed myself behind the wall, having removed a stone or two to enable me to fire through. Sure enough he appeared and got shot. He measured seven feet six inches.

MAN-EATING PANTHERS (INDIA).

Of all the scourges afflicting a locality it is generally supposed that a man-eating tiger is the worst, but when leopards or panthers take to the same practices they are infinitely more to be dreaded. I will here relate one instance in connection with the last named animals.

I had obtained two months' privilege leave, and having sent on my "kit" ahead, and laid a "dâk" of ponies and horses, I rode out to my camp, distant about seventy miles from Secunderabad on the Nirmûl road. I was going to join "Verderer," an old friend of my father and a noted sportsman. Starting about 4 A.M., and halting only half-an-hour *en route* for refreshments, I reached my destination about dusk, and found all in a state of confusion, my impedimenta still in the hackeries or carts, the bullocks put to, and all ready for a move. "Why, how is this?" I asked my boy very angrily. "Why is not the tent pitched and dinner ready?" "*Gurreeb purwah*," he replied, "we cannot remain here, there is a "shitan," who kills people every night, and fearful of your honour's life we have everything ready to go on to the next village, which is but five *coss* off, and where

we shall be safe." "You infernal fool," I replied, "unpack at once. Do you think, after a seventy mile ride, I am going ten miles further, just to allay your fears. Much you care for master; it is for yourselves that you are afraid. If the 'shitan' does come, I hope he'll take you for your cheek in not having obeyed orders. Quick!" I cried, raising my whip in a threatening attitude; "if everything is not ready in an hour, I'll know the reason why." "Orderly," I called out to my pattern man, "what is the meaning of this?" "Sahib, we got here last night, too late to pitch the tent, so we put up in a village hut, placed at our disposal by the Cotwal. He told us to bolt the doors and windows, and to have no light, for there was a 'shitan' who prowled about killing people, and that in the last ten days he had lost ten people, and could find no traces of them. Sahib, we heard fearful noises all night, and were in fear of our lives. An hour before daybreak something lifted the thatch of the roof, and a couple of eyes, each of them the size of a full moon, looked down upon us, and our livers became like sieves, and in my fear I fired off master's shot gun, and the apparition disappeared. But, Sahib, do not remain here; two people were killed and taken away last night, and it may be our turn to-night." "What sheer nonsense," I replied; "send for the Cotwal. But, boy, have the tent pitched at once, and if I don't get my dinner in an hour, look out for squalls." I took off my clothes, got my syce to bring a lot of chatties of water, which I poured over me. I then put on clean night-clothes, and getting into a comfortable easy-chair, waited for the arrival of the native official, and superintended

the pitching of the tent. The Cotwal appeared, accompanied by a posse of armed men, and salaamed before squatting down. It was now quite dark, but numerous torches illuminated the darkness. "What is this, Cotwal?" I asked. "Sahib," he replied, "I cannot say, but some devil has taken to devastating the country; only three days ago I lost my only son. He was brave to distraction. He would have it that it was not a demon, but some animal, and he sat up with Peermal, our shikarie, and said he would shoot it; but we heard no report during the night, and in the morning my son had disappeared, and his companion was found in the topmost branches of the tree, unable to give any account of what had taken place, and he has been ever since a drivelling idiot. Sahib, we cannot remain here much longer, unless indeed, your honour, by your magic, will relieve us of our enemy. Not a night passes without some one disappearing, and the whole village is in mourning." "I agree with your son," I said; "it is some animal who is killing the people. Where are your shikaries? Bring them here." "Sahib," he replied, "we have only three left; two have been killed or spirited away, but they shall be at your honour's feet in a few minutes." My "boy" then announced dinner, and I told the Cotwal to have the men ready in half-an-hour. Whilst partaking of my frugal meal, which consisted of Oxford sausages as they were then made—not the apologies they have since become—and an egg currie and rice, washed down by a bottle of Bass' beer cooled in saltpetre, I asked my servants all about the supposed devil. No two accounts agreed, beyond the fact that a person or two disappeared in the most

mysterious way daily, either out of the village at night, or from the fields when they went to work. Of course, in accordance with native customs, every trifling act was exaggerated, and it was impossible to arrive at the exact truth; but one fact was undeniable: for some time past villagers had disappeared and no traces had been found of them.

When the shikaries appeared, I again asked them all about it, and offered a reward of Rs. 20 if they would sit up and account for the "devil." The amount offered was a small fortune to them, yet they hesitated a good deal before accepting it, but they finally agreed. I was too tired to sit up myself. Although in good training, a seventy mile ride in May is no joke, and every bone in my body ached, so devil or no devil, I determined to rest that night; but before going to bed, I walked round the village. The country was open on three sides, and had been well cultivated, but on the fourth there was a belt of jungle, which led, I was told, into the heart of the noted Nirmûl Forest. I obtained two sheep, which cost in those days from eight annas to ten annas each, and had them picketed some distance apart. We chose two tall trees, had a native charpoy or bed slung in each, on which the two natives took post, and then retired. I took the precaution of lighting several large bonfires round my own camp, and once in bed and tucked up inside the mosquito curtains I was fast asleep in a few moments afterwards, and did not awake till close on daybreak. My boy had the matutinal cup of coffee ready, and swallowing it, I sallied forth accompanied by my orderly. We went to where the men had been placed. The sheep were

there untouched; the men—nowhere! I examined the ground and the trunks of the trees, but could discern nothing. I began to suspect it was a plant—that the Cotwal and villagers wanted to get rid of me, and had got up this tale to frighten me—but yet again why should they do that? There was not much game in the neighbourhood, I should only remain a few days until I heard from "Verderer," and in the meantime I should be a source of profit and not a loss to them. Why then try and get rid of me? Mysterious and unaccountable as were the disappearances, I made up my mind to see it through. Three of my relays arrived during the day. I had them picketed in camp to give them rest, intending to send them the next day further on, so as to be able to get over the ground more quickly in getting to my destination. I put the remaining shikarie and the orderly, both well armed, on the tree from the watchers the night before had disappeared, and took up my position in the other. There was no moon, or a very young one, and I heard not the slightest noise. Fagged and tired, bitten with mosquitoes, I was off my perch at the dawn of day, and going to the other tree, found the orderly and the shikarie all right. I made sure it was all nonsense, and went to the tent and sent for the Cotwal. He was nowhere to be found. There was a hole in the roof of his house, and though asleep with two wives in the same room, neither of whom had been disturbed, their lord and master was *non est!* Then there was a hullabaloo and no mistake. The villagers packed up their goods and said they would remain there no longer. Nothing I could say would deter them.

My own camp-followers were almost in open mutiny, frightened out of their wits. If the people left, there was no use in my remaining. I had come for sport, not to exorcise evil spirits, but somehow I was most anxious to ascertain the cause of these disappearances. I asked if there were tigers about, and was told a few, but not man-eaters; besides, they did not climb trees. Were there panthers? None, as far as they knew. There were no rocks or hills near. About a mile from the small stream which ran past the village, the Nirmûl jungle commenced, but in it there were only sambur, neilghye, a few tigers, spotted deer, and further on, gaur. It was not the kind of country to which the smaller felines were partial. I sent off a note to "Verderer" by my orderly, mounting him on a pony of mine, explaining that I was anxious to ascertain the cause of the disappearance of the people, and asking him to wait for me one week or ten days, and packing up my goods too, I accompanied villagers to their new home, which was about ten miles off. It was a straggling place inhabited by wood-cutters, who gladly welcomed the newcomers, and whilst I pitched my tent at the entrance of the village, the people erected temporary huts for themselves some little way beyond. In this new village there was an intelligent shikarie. I had a private confab with him, and asked him if he could account for the disappearance of the people from the village we had left that morning. He said, from my description, it could only be caused by devils or panthers. "If the latter, depend upon it, Sahib, they will follow the people here, and we had better erect 'marts' about half a mile off, on the path you followed this morning,

and lie in waiting for them." I agreed, and he went off with a couple of men to get them ready. A "mart" may be either in a tree off the ground (then usually styled a machan), or hollowed out of the ground, a shallow circular pit being dug and the earth raised a little all round, with a few clods left here and there, to prevent the person sitting up being too conspicuous. Each has its advantages. Raised off the ground one is safer, but when beasts approach a kill they are very apt to look up and gaze around. Perhaps they have been fired at before from such a coign of yantage, and if they see the slightest suspicious disarrangement of the foliage, they quickly disappear, but they seldom look around on the ground, trusting probably to their acute sense of smell to detect a hidden foe. We sat up that and the following night without being disturbed, and the people were getting reassured and I was thinking of going on, when the wife of one of the peons disappeared. So that night the shikarie and I took up our position extra early. We were almost a quarter of a mile from the village. On the right side going from it, there was a small clearance where we were, and the little moon there was, shone upon us for about three hours. The jungle adjoining was pretty dense, consisting of thorny bushes about six or seven feet high. I am sorry to say the man with me was not as brave as he had been. The stories he had heard, coupled with the disappearance of the woman, told upon his nerves, and he had got that tantalising sort of half-cough half-expectoration, which one so often notices in a native who is half afraid at a critical moment, and which generally ruins all sport, as it gives warning to any wild beast who

may be approaching *your câache.* Whilst we had the moonlight he was not so bad, but about ten his cough became so incessant that I gave him a pretty stiff go of whisky to instil some pluck into him, and then bade him lie down and go to sleep, whilst I took the first watch. Wrapped up in his cumbley he was soon fast asleep, whilst I kept my weary vigils. Every now and then a prowling hyæna or a jackal's pit-a-pat on the dried or decaying leaves would set my heart beating a little faster, and with cocked rifle I would lie on the *qui vive,* expecting to see something worth powder and ball, only to be disgusted and to inwardly mutter a few curses, deep but not loud, on their accursed heads. About three I awoke my assistant, bidding him keep a sharp look-out, which I thought his fears would compel him to do. I in my turn lay down with my rifle, a 14 double, cocked by my side, and enveloped in my black blanket I was soon fast asleep, and had been asleep probably for an hour, when I suddenly awoke with a feeling of danger upon me. I was trembling all over, but I had my wits about me. I carefully moved the blanket off my face, and peered about. The shikarie had fallen forward fast asleep; for a second or more I saw nothing further, then over the mound of earth which had been piled up round us, I saw indistinctly the devilish head and then the glaring eyeballs of some black beast taking count of us. The shikarie gave a slight snore and moved; the eyeballs were diverted in that direction and taken off me. Without sitting up, but lying full length on my back, I moved the rifle, pointing it at the object in front, and just as he brought back his form to bear upon me, I pulled the triggers both together. A lurch

forward and a heavy mass fell upon me, throwing up the same moment a mass of half-digested beastliness, and rendering me in my turn as sick as the vomiter. My sable companion, thoroughly awakened at the double report so close to his ears, jumped up with a yell, and seeing a black mass on me thought I was seized by the devil, so took to his heels and ran for his life. It took me some time to release myself from the incubus and to get rid of the filth as far as I could. I then found that my antagonist was a black panther of the largest size; throwing my cumbley aside with its abominable contents, I dragged the panther into the obscurity of the jungle, and as it still wanted an hour and a half to daylight, reloading the rifle as quickly as I could, I remained where I was. In half an hour the village was astir, and I concluded the people were coming in search of me, and almost wished them to the devil, for I felt certain there were other panthers about, and hoped to get another shot, but despaired when I heard the noise. I was just on the point of half-cocking my rifle and going to meet the villagers, when I saw two shadowy forms gliding past, which I took to be a pair of panthers and I gave them both a right and left. There was no response, but the first villagers pulled up, afraid to advance, thinking there might be a wounded beast to pounce upon them, and then, hearing my voice to hurry up, they ran up in a body, and with the aid of their torches, I ascertained that I had wounded one of the panthers badly. Telling the people to pick up the one dead, I hurried to the tent, threw off my soiled raiment and linen, and after a good scrubbing down felt a bit sweeter, and donning fresh clothes, I partook of my "chota

hazaree," or early breakfast. I asked the shikaric what the deuce he meant by bolting away and leaving me in the lurch, and the poor fellow, all in a tremble, for he expected a thrashing—first, for having gone to sleep during his watch, and, secondly, for deserting me—said he had been thoroughly demoralised by all the stories he had heard, and so hearing the report of my rifle and seeing me as he thought in the clutches of the devil, he had run away and was coming back with the villagers to my rescue. When they heard me fire they were glad to find me safe, and hoped I would forgive him. I told him to run away, get something to eat, and to collect as many coolies as he could, and I would follow up the other brute as soon as there was sufficient daylight for that purpose. The villagers on collecting found a man missing, and before I could get them to act with me, they insisted on searching the jungle close to the village. In half an hour the remains of the poor fellow were found. He had been taken out of his house and dragged some way off and partially eaten, and but for my first two shots, would no doubt have been entirely demolished and the bones scattered, but the man-eaters had been disturbed and were doubtless *en route* to their lair when I fired the second shots. Leaving his sorrowing widow and children and two of the people to cremate his remains—for he was a Hindoo—I went off to take up the trail. Judging from the blood marks which were scattered on both sides of the narrow path along which he had crawled, I came to the conclusion that the beast had been shot through the abdomen, and expected to come upon him every moment, but the vitality of these animals is marvel-

lous, and I followed mile upon mile for I should say four or five miles almost in a straight line. The trail then turned into the densest jungle, through which it was impossible to go upright, so I had to crawl upon all fours and every now and then came upon the half-digested remains of the native which the brute had thrown up. The stench along this path was awful, covered with their excreta, bones and human remains. I knew, therefore, we were not far from their lair and stronghold. This tangled brake only extended about three-quarters of a mile, and then we entered a glade which was covered by an immense banyan tree and its offshoots. I should say that it and its belongings covered ten or twelve acres. It was impossible to distinguish the parent stem from those which had grown from it; many, probably the oldest, had decayed away, but sufficient remained to show that this extraordinary growth had its origin in one tree, which throwing out feelers from the pendant branches had taken root, became in their turn the trunk, and so went on multiplying until this huge space was entirely under shade of one tree and its satellites, as there was very little undergrowth. The path made during many years by these blood-thirsty felines was clear enough, leading to two old hollow trunks into which the wounded panther and his companion had crawled. Man-eaters are generally cowards. How many there were I did not know, but I determined to burn them out. So bidding the people collect all the dry brushwood they could, I mounted guard over the one which, by the drops of blood which had fallen, I guessed held the wounded beast.

In a couple of hours we had a fine pile of old decayed wood and dry brambles collected round each trunk and had them soon alight. The outside of the trunks themselves was old and rotten and blazed away right merrily. Soon we could hear growls and groans and smothered cries; an attempt too was made by one of the beasts to break through the fire, but the heat drove it back. One got through on to a branch, but a shot brought it down and it fell into the bonfire and was consumed in a few moments. The smoke became dense, the noises in the interior became less and less, and as the fire began to die out, which it did as soon as it reached the solid green portion of the tree, we knew that the horde of man-eaters were no more. We dragged away the *débris* and found in one tree the remains of two full-grown panthers and three young ones, besides the charred bones of the one that had fallen off the branch. In the other there were, as far as we could judge, four full-grown and four young ones. So we had rid that locality of no less than fifteen panthers, every one of which was either a man-eater or would grow up to become one. The remains of human beings were numerous, for we counted no less than twenty-seven skulls. These we collected and burnt, and then returned to the village. Suffice to say that I remained there a week, during which no one was missing. So the people who had migrated, returned to their deserted homes, and I went on to Hingolie, met "Verderer," and had six weeks' sport of a varied kind.

SPEARING ANIMALS OUT OF BOATS DURING INUNDATIONS.

This is a sport, I should say, peculiar to Assam and portions of tropical Africa. The Assamese, although a debased and cowardly race, yet join in this method of netting game. The Cacharies, when they take to these modes of sport, far excel the Assamese, from their superior physique and pluck, and there was a fine old fellow at Burpettah who was credited with having killed over 100 tigers. Receiving a letter from Campbell, at Burpettah, saying that the country was completely under water, and that he was going to have a hunt on a certain day, I got into my boat and was with him the evening before the appointed date. The next morning there were assembled fully fifty boats, these holding according to their size from six to ten persons. Each man was armed with a dhaw, something like the two-handed swords of the Burmese. The head man stood at the front, spear in hand, and several more spare ones were laid in the bottom of the craft; an experienced man held the tiller. C. went in one boat, I in another, and at a given signal away we went racing over the submerged plain, which resembled a vast lake, with small islands (telahs or prominences) dotted about. The noise the people made was deafening. I took an old breech-loader with me. C. was used to the sport, and was accoutred like the Assamese even to a sparcity of clothing. I too had on very little raiment, for going at the rate we did, the water splashed over and rapidly soaked us. A few cartridges in a waterproof bag I carried, and though assured I should not require to use the gun,

I thought it just as well to be armed in case of need. Soon the fleet was scattered, every boat making for an islet. I had the old tiger-slayer with me. He was a brawny old fellow, about sixty, but still hale and hearty, and his muscular arms, deep broad chest, and well-developed thighs and legs denoted no small amount of strength. He laughed at my carrying a gun, as he said it would not be required, and if we were upset I should probably lose it; but it was of no great value, for it had seen its best days. We went on for fully three miles, and approached a large mound, fully 150 yards long by 50 broad, and covered with long grass; the noise we made evidently startled some animals, for we could see the grass waving about; the shouts were redoubled, and the poor beasts, thinking, no doubt, that the very devil himself was let loose, took to the water. They proved to be five marsh-deer—four hinds and a brocket. Away they swam at a great pace, but were overtaken and slain by the old man. A tender, which accompanied us, took the carcases on board. The sport, if it could be so called, was as yet very tame. I did not admire seeing hinds and immature stags pierced to death when helpless and swimming for their lives; but I was merely a spectator and could not well interfere. We then went towards other islets. Some were uninhabited, but out of others a few hog-deer were started and duly accounted for. Of course there was not a universal depth of water; it varied in accordance with the undulations of the country. One moment we would be in deep water going six or seven miles an hour, then we would be suddenly aground and all but thrown out of the boat by the unexpected shock. Thus a couple

of hours passed, and Burpettah was left a long way astern. Ultimately we got into a creek, went up it for about two miles and then emerged into another inland sea. Out of one islet a very large stag, with good horns, and two does took to the water, and we after them. We were warned of the approach to a shallow by seeing the deer galloping along and splashing the water so as almost to conceal them; but beyond that there was deep water again, and they also were killed. The next game that we slew were a whole sounder of hog, whose flesh the Cacharies are very fond of, so they also were added to the bag. The tender by this time was almost gunwale under water, so it was sent back, and another boat impressed to take its place. We could see other boats returning, so knew that they also were pretty well laden. By this time we were in what in Burma would be termed a "quin," a vast plain surrounded by forest, but submerged. I saw the old man change his spear, which was somewhat blunted, and after inspecting several and feeling their points, choose a sharp one. He told me we should now probably see buffaloes. After the usual diabolical noises, out rushed, open-mouthed, two rhinoceros; if they could have got at us I have no doubt we should have felt the effects of their sharp tusks, but seeing a boat full of men all yelling together, they changed their tactics and swam for their lives. I proposed to shoot them, but the old man would not listen to it. We were soon alongside of the pursued, the keen razor-like blade was repeatedly thrust by the stalwart arm, blood poured forth and dyed the water around us. The pachyderm opened his jaws, but was helpless,

That cruel blade was thrust again and again, and in five minutes he turned over dead, and would doubtless have sunk, but a rope was quickly attached to one leg and he was towed into shallow water and there left, while we made up leeway by energetic paddling as if for dear life. We rapidly came up with the second animal, who was then within 100 yards of dry land, which reached, it would have escaped; but it had no chance; it was helpless, so was soon defunct. Having secured the rhinoceros, a fresh spear was now chosen, and we continued our course. Several more deer were now killed. The horns of some of the stags were particularly good, the velvet having only lately peeled off. Soon after we got into a series of shallows, and our boat got aground every few minutes, when the only real danger occurs, for no animal, however vast its strength or ferocious its nature, has a chance of doing mischief when in deep water, but in shallows it often turns to bay, and natives not infrequently have then been killed. We had gone as far into the Terai as the inundations allowed, and were returning by a circuitous route, still skirting every islet we could see, when at last a tiger was started. I full-cocked my rifle, for if wounded and we went aground, the animal I knew would charge. The old man speared it, the tiger gave a roar and felt ground at the same moment; in an instant he turned upon us; fortunately it was still pretty deep, so our boat was quickly backed. The veteran now made a vicious thrust, broke his spear and went overboard head over heels, but dived under the boat, and coming up on the other side scrambled in, and was back in his place in a minute with his "dhaw" in his hand. I was on

the point of firing, but the old fellow begged me not to. By this time the tiger had seized the prow of the boat and was attempting to scramble into it, but just as luck would have it he got out of his depth. The old Cacharie, raising himself to his full height, brought down the powerful weapon with all his might, and fairly brained the beast, the dhaw sticking in the gaping wound. The victim gave a few gasps and sank, but was quickly recovered, was dragged to a sand-bank, and as the "tender" had by this time arrived, the carcase was deposited in it by the joint exertions of some dozen men. It was a magnificent specimen, and I had the skull with the dhaw imbedded in it for some years. After this, we got a hog-deer or two, when we were within a couple of miles of Burpettah, a herd of buffaloes were started. For some way the water was shallow, so the quarry soon got far ahead, but the people knew the nature of the country and what they were about, so using their utmost strength and keeping well away from the shallows, they were alongside the game almost as soon as the animals had commenced to swim. The spears were not as sharp as they ought to have been—in truth we had met with more game than had been anticipated—so the most valuable weapons had become blunted and the others were of inferior quality. Thus the old man was not as successful as usual and rather bungled his work; so it took considerable time to kill three cows. These matrons dispatched, we made for the bull; with him were about a dozen more. Having called for the assistance of other boats, the chase was renewed; the bull had been prodded twice when we ran on to a very bad mudbank and stuck

fast, and the bull also scrambled up on to the ground over which he had foothold; then he turned round and came at us; our men tried to back into deep water, and then sprang over the further side of the boat into the flood, and I fired a hurried shot, but the next instant—the old man, the boat and I were lifted bodily up and tossed into the air. Nevertheless I stuck to my gun, but the cartridge-bag had disappeared. The bull took no notice of us, but vented his spleen on the craft, attacking it furiously and turning it over and over. Of course, I and the men thought discretion the better part of valour, so swam off into greater depth; not so the old man. He swam until he got behind the bull, then crept up and with one blow of his "dhaw" hamstrung the animal and it fell. Then the veteran hunter gave a yell which savoured more of a demon's than of a man's voice.

Campbell's party had met with greater success than even we, as far as the number killed went, but they had not seen a tiger or any rhinoceros. I joined in two other hunts of this nature in consecutive years, but am happy to say was not tossed again.

NETTING GAME IN ASSAM.

This mode of sport is also in vogue in Southern India, and when the "Old Forest Ranger," Captain Campbell of Skipness, first described it, it was openly disbelieved, although every word that distinguished sportsman and soldier wrote is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. In Assam it is of common occurrence; every village possesses nets and

entraps not only deer, but leopards, bears, tigers and even ponderous buffaloes. I had read the "Old Forest Ranger" as a boy, but never thought that I should see the sport he so graphically described, yet in my very first year in Assam I met a party going to hunt with nets, and joined them. For many days before the hunt commences, the natives mark down the game they want—deer, &c.,—for meat, but they also like to capture young buffalo heifers, which they tame and put along with their so-called tame herds, but which are in reality more than half-wild. I promised them Rs. 20 if they showed me good sport. On this they held a consultation, and said that day they could only catch deer, as there was no other game in the plain where their operations were to take place, but if I would wait a few days, they would surround a herd of buffaloes and perhaps a tiger or two, and show me how they managed their work. I did not care to see helpless deer cut, mangled, and speared, so went after florikan and black partridge, and amused myself by hunting over the adjoining country with various success. On the third day after, a villager informed me that they had surrounded a herd of buffaloes and also some tigers, and proposed to have the drive on the morrow. I was willing, so my traps were soon on the elephants and I got into the howdah and by 2 P.M. I was in a Nam-ghur,[1] close to a village some fifteen miles distant from my former camp. Before daylight I was up, but the villagers were even earlier, for over a hundred men carrying nets had gone on ahead, while fully fifty more followed with other nets, made of jute cord, the

[1] These contain idols, but are also used as rest houses.

size of my little finger; the former formed as it were the first parallel, the latter the second. The first would entangle anything from a hog-deer to a tiger, but the second were placed only for such heavy animals as buffaloes, etc., about fifty feet beyond the first. These nets are never more than eight feet high; they are pitched, supported by bamboos, and pegged down at the bottom, so when they receive a blow, they fall forward and entangle everything within their compass. Men, and boys even, are placed in ambush close by, whose business it is to rush forward and to administer to entangled beasts the *coup de grâce*. If this network is broken through, the watchers rush to the second line and crawl under it until they are on the right side. It is seldom that anybody is hurt. The nets enclosed a vast space, and when I was posted—they had built a machan for my accommodation, which I declined to use—the usual tom-toming and cholera-horn blowing took place. As the game was driven forward, so the nets in the rear were pushed on, curtailing the circle gradually. The watchers were armed with spears and dhaws, and lay prone on the ground under any shelter they could find sufficient to conceal their bodies. In half an hour our circle had diminished considerably, a few deer showed, were entangled and slain, the nets being immediately afterwards rehoisted. Feints for a dash were made, but the beasts lost heart—perhaps they scented blood, or the natives in front—they were odoriferous enough, I am sure, for the Assamese and Cacharies are not a clean people like the Burmese—and broke back, but finding more men in the rear than in the front, they ultimately made a determined move

forward. Down went the nets; more than a dozen animals, and amongst them a bear, were entangled. These dispatched, the nets were hastily re-erected, when a commotion of no common order proved that there were some animals which had not yet put in an appearance. A tigress at one point, and a three-parts-grown cub at another, now made a rush; the latter was easily killed by two men, but the former had only two lads opposed to her; still they did their *devoirs* right well, and gave the foe many a stab, but had not strength enough to drive the blades home. I hurried up, armed with a breechloader. Of course I thought a rifle more effective than any spear, but the lads wanted no assistance. The tigress tore, bit, and struggled until she had got her head and one forearm through the netting, when I thought it quite time to interfere, and going up to her I put a ball through her head. While this was going on at one point, many buffaloes had stampeded over the first line and were entangled in the second, which they carried a considerable way with them in their impetus. Finding I was no longer required at the inner circle, I hastened to the outer, where I found at least fifty natives stabbing bulls and full-grown cows, whilst others were passing nooses over the legs of the calves and heifers. One bull was very powerful, the meshes of the net burst before him; a native approached the brute incautiously, and in consequence got tossed; only the forehead had struck him, but he was pitched a good twenty yards, and in alighting he fell against the stump of a tree which fractured his thigh. With two balls I killed the enraged beast. Had he got loose I have no doubt he would have killed.

several people, for he was in a desperately frenzied state. I then went back into the inner enclosure; in it we found a bear cub, and of all the beasts least expected—two porcupines. These are repulsive animals to look at, but very clean feeders, and if properly cooked are not to be despised as an article of diet. It was fully twelve before this beat was over, after which we had two more essays, but with the exception of deer we got nothing. Very often when a tiger is surrounded, word is sent to the petty rajahs, for whom tall machans are built; into these they climb, the victim's death often being delayed for a day or two. Though a tiger could spring over the nets easily, he never attempts to do so. In my own tea-garden I entrapped two leopards and again a tigress by means of nets, and killed them without difficulty. The sport looks supremely dangerous, but in reality it is not so.

A REMINISCENCE OF EAST AFRICA.

Thanks to the courtesy of an Arab proprietor, whose acquaintance I had made in Mombasa, I obtained a number of his slaves to accompany me on a fifteen days' trip into the interior.

Crossing over from the island, I pitched my camp about a mile inland. I had tinned provisions with me, but wishing to economise them as far as possible, I took my gun, and having about two hours' daylight took a stroll to the southward. There are small villages about, but very little cultivation; still there is some, and a little grain I found standing. Traversing the dry bed of a watercourse, I followed a native path

for about half a mile, and then turned to the left towards some enclosures of "dhurra." I had scarcely entered the first when a florikan got up; I only winged it, and as it could not fly, it ran across the fields and an adjoining plain. Reloading, I ran after it, going at a good pace, when up got about twenty guinea fowls in a covey. They were so close, that to miss them seemed impossible, so I fired rapidly at the largest cluster, expecting that five or six would drop at least, but did not bring down either a bird, or even a feather. My second barrel however was more effective, and one toppled over, but it was only winged, and when I went to pick it up, it had disappeared.

To lose a florikan, then to miss a lot of guinea fowl, then to fail to find a bird knocked over, were enough to "rile" a saint, and I felt about as amiable as a bear with a sore head. I commenced to search about in every direction, using two of the natives with me as beaters. Presently we started the lesser bustard, which had been hiding in a small clump of long grass, and it ran for its life, so closely pursued by the native that I could not fire, but gave chase too, thinking it might turn and give me a shot; but it went straight on and disappeared, and the African got a header into a blind nullah. Seeing him disappear head over heels, I pulled up just in time to avoid a similar fate. Turning sharply off to the right, I ran along the banks of the nullah looking out for some declivity by which I could descend to its bed, but I had to go some little way before I could find the means of crossing. I then saw a tiny path made probably by some of the small antelope so common in this part of Africa; it ended at the bottom, at

the brink of a deep pool of water, and not wishing to get wet, I was looking for a means of going round it, when my attention was attracted by a slight movement in the bush, not more than twenty yards off. I had a charge of No. 4 shot in both barrels, and after intently examining the spot for a moment or two, I saw a dusky form and a pair of eyes looking at me. No sooner had our eyes met, than it saw that it was discovered, rushed out of the bush and bounded up the bank, exposing its flank. The right barrel caught it fairly enough; but these little deer have wonderful vitality, and it was not until it had reached the top of the bank and got the contents of my left barrel, that it toppled over and lay in the agonies of death almost on the very spot whence it had started. As I could see no way of getting round the pool, I was about to wade across, when my native appeared on the opposite side, some way down, waving the florikan which he had secured. Bidding him keep on till opposite to me, I pointed out the deer, and pretending that it was still alive he cut its throat, otherwise the meat would not have been lawful for a Mussulman to eat. He then shouldered it and plunged into the pool and waded across; as he was considerably taller than I, and the water reached to his arm-pits, I thanked my stars that I had remained on my own side.

The native was not overburdened with clothes, he soon wrung out his waist-cloth, and, taking up the slain, we were retracing our way to the camp, when coming to the spot where the guinea fowl had fallen I took a cast round, and put it up—it ran like a race-horse, but a snap shot brought it down. As I fired

up got three more; this time I held the gun straighter and dropped one dead. Going through the long grass to pick it up, I heard a hiss: stepping backwards, I just avoided a puff adder's strike, it was not three feet off, and as I never spare a snake, I did not hesitate to blow its head to pieces, I then picked up my bird and reached the tent just at dark.

Finding so much small game about, I determined to halt here for a day. I had brought some cooked viands with me, amongst them some currie puffs, and washing them down with a bottle of Beck's lager beer, I was soon tucked up in one of Edgington's swing cots, and slept the sleep of the weary up to 4 a.m.; then seeing the morning star high up, I called the people, and after a wash and a cup of coffee, I was ready to sally forth again. This time I went towards the east, and found I had taken the worst possible direction, for there was little or no game to be found there. I got a hare, it is true, but it had little flesh on its bones; and though I trudged along, first east and then south, not far from the sea, I only saw a few quail and a partridge or two, and those out of shot. As it was getting hot and I saw no prospect of sport, I turned homewards, going across some old cultivated fields. In this, putting up a few quail, I loaded with small shot and soon had half-a-dozen brace. I then came to a belt of jungle. I had scarcely entered it when up got eight francolins, fine large birds. I bowled over a couple, and they were added to the bag. By beating amongst bushes in the long grass, I put up, singly or in pairs, several brown partridges, and got four. They are easy enough to hit but require a deal of killing.

One bird I thought I had missed; it flew across a nullah and over an open space, apparently unhurt, when it gave a lurch and rolled over dead, fortunately close to a solitary "toddy tree," otherwise we should probably have lost it.

I got to camp about eleven, had breakfast, a snooze, and then ordered the tent to be struck and all hands to be ready to move about five, as I wished to go a short distance off and incamp in a garden belonging to the Arab who had lent me my followers. I only took one man with me, and started about 3 P.M. I went across a plain covered with long grass and bushes towards a patch of mimosa trees, but for a long time I saw no game. After a while I did see several antelope well out in the open, but on searching my pockets I could find neither ball nor slug cartridges. I had put on the wrong coat. I had two exactly alike. In one I had cartridges for small game shooting, in the other for larger beasts, such as deer, &c. To fire at them except at close quarters with shot is wanton cruelty; so, disgusted at my own carelessness, I had to leave them alone, and tried for small game. I saw at least three if not four varieties of antelope, but all were out of shot. I then got into bush jungle, and there too, the deer—I call them so, but they are antelope of course, there being no deer in this part of Africa—were plentiful, but the knowing wretches would bolt on the right side if I were on the left and *vice versâ*, so for a long time I got nothing. We had wandered further than I thought, and I was about to retrace my steps, when far in the distance to the right I saw my people moving along in single file, making for a

cocoanut grove about a couple of miles off. The men, anxious to get drink, were hurrying off to collect toddy, which is always procurable in such "*shambas*," and had moved camp earlier than ordered, and if I had not fortunately seen them I should have gone back to camp for nothing, and they would have been hopelessly drunk by the time I overtook them. I had by this time got to a sort of bund or dam which forms a kind of breakwater to a hollow, which in the rains is a "jheel." Using my binoculars, and scanning the country, I noticed a narrow path which apparently led to the same destination or thereabouts, to which my camp was bound, so I hurried along in order to get there, if I could, as soon as or very soon after my people. But the way was not so smooth as it looked; there were ravines to cross and much broken ground. Fortunately the man with me had been employed in that very shamba, and, anxious to get his share of drink with the others, as I thought, he went merrily along, but I fear his object was more to delay me than to accelerate my arrival, so as to give his *confrères* time to secure the toddy before I got in. Be that as it may, he took me a roundabout way after all, for close as the grove appeared to be, it was fully eight o'clock before I got to the hut, which had been arranged for my accommodation. On asking my servant, a low caste Madrassie, a good-enough boy when sober, why he had not waited for me to return to camp before moving, he audaciously asserted I had ordered him to go on as the things were packed, and the Africans being in the plot, swore so too. As this was their first offence I let them off with.

a "jobation." I knew the liquor had been secured and that an orgie would follow, so told them if I was disturbed during the night by any quarrelling or fighting or other noises, I would flog them all round. No sooner had I turned in, than every living soul went to a tope about half a mile off, and there, I have no doubt, kept it up all night. In the morning none of them were fit for work, all complaining of fever, and sitting wrapped up in their blankets, shivering in the sun. So I went out alone, telling them I should move camp at two and, if they were not fit to march then, I should return to Mombasa and hand them over to their master.

I had gone about a mile, when I heard a guinea fowl calling, and secured a brace out of the first lot, and three out of the second. I then turned off to an open space, thinking to pick up some quail, but at its very edge up got a lovely francolin, as large as a pheasant, which I was lucky enough to secure. On examining my prize I found it a very handsome bird, with the neck and body feathers pencilled. I picked up a few quail further on, and as they got up by twos the shooting was pretty. Having as much game as I cared for, I tied it to my waistbelt, and with the gun over my shoulder, but at full cock, so as to be ready for any chance that might arise, I made for camp.

Near a dry nullah, with a "cûk-cûk-cûk," a large bird rose; as I fired up got a lot of guinea fowl; I killed right, and left. My first bird was another description of francolin, but dusky in plumage, and though not as handsome as the first, fully as large. Not knowing whether these birds were rare or not, I hurried on, so as to preserve the skins before we moved camp. I

got through the job in good time, but lost the specimens after all, as my people left them out in the heavy dew and rain, the skins rotted and were useless. I never saw any like them afterwards, though I have been told by a lay missionary, who is also a capital sportsman, that he had shot very many of them at times and in different localities in Africa. I led the way, one of the men acting as guide, and from two till five we went through shamba after shamba (plantations) of cocoa-nuts, mangoes (which are in this part of Africa, as well as Lakoja on the Niger, most excellent and bear three crops a year, so that a tree is never without this delicious fruit), and manioc; so as I was told there was a scarcity of water ahead, we camped on the edge of the plateau. Ahead of us there was a rolling and undulating plain, covered here and there with thorny bushes, long grass, and now and then with dwarfed mimosa, Indian *baubul*, which yields the *gum arabica* of commerce. The country was cut up by ravines, and must be very difficult to cross in the rains; even now I could discern a distant pool here and there. I asked if there was any game there, but was told not at that season; later on there would be herds and herds of various antelope, the hideous hartebeeste predominating. I inquired about the road to Shimba, where I was going, and was told there was nothing to be shot *en route*. Following the native path, it would take us a good twelve hours' marching to get there. The hills were right in front of us, could we not get there direct by a short-cut across country? No; we must follow the native paths. Seeing water about, I thought if we went past the pools we might find

game, as there were no inhabitants, and the country looked favourable for antelope. But the natives with me declared it was impossible to go off the beaten track. I had just finished dinner, and was taking it easy, when a string of some five or six men approached, armed with bows and arrows and laden with meat. I at once got hold of my interpreter, and after giving the strangers a tot of grog all round, questioned the leader. At first he was very reticent, but another glass of gin and a view of a few gorgeous handkerchiefs loosened his tongue, and Andrew, my interpreter—a very good lad, who had been fairly educated and brought up by the missionaries—informed me that the game they had with them had been killed that day near a pool not five miles off. I asked their head man to attach himself to me for a few days, but he said he must go into Mombasa to sell the meat at once, or it would be tainted and be unsaleable. I told him to send it in with the others, who could return and meet us at any place he chose to appoint, and, after a long confab, and a present of three handkerchiefs to himself and a couple to each of the others, and a promise of more hereafter, he agreed to take me across country to the best sporting localities, but that if we went with him after game it would take us five days to get to Shimba, instead of twelve hours by the ordinary route, for though the distance in a bee line was much the shorter, the country between us and the hills was very bad, and we should have to ascend them by a long circuitous route, and if I wanted to shoot game we must halt near some of the pools and lie in wait for the deer when they came to drink. I was in no hurry to get

to Shimba; and, although I detest sitting up for and potting game, yet, as I wanted to get the heads, horns, and hides of the African *ferœ naturæ*, and these men had killed three different kinds of deer and had seen, I was assured, three other kinds, I agreed to his proposals. The other natives, with the venison, went off soon afterwards, leaving their leader behind. We were up before daybreak; there was a good deal of murmuring on the part of my men, who declared they had been sent with me to go to Shimba and not to wander over unknown tracts; and one lazy rascal, the leader of the gang, flatly refused to take up his load, or to accompany me to where I proposed going. Now, it is a disgusting practice always to be thrashing your niggers; they are very like children, and can generally be ruled by a judicious mixture of firmness combined with kindness; but some of these men, especially those who, although slaves themselves, have accompanied their masters in slave-hunting expeditions, are apt to be mutinous, and even now and then, to show fight. It would never do for a European to give in too much, or to show the white feather; so going up to the man, with a smile on my face, I desired him to take up his load. He merely spat on the ground by way of answer. Still looking at him as pleasantly as I could, but inwardly boiling with rage, I brought down my cane with all my might right across his ugly face! He sprang up, and tried to close; I eluded his grasp, gave him first a cut across the shins (the weakest and most sensitive part of an African), which made him yell, I knocked him down, barking my knuckles on his thick head; putting

my foot on his neck, half throttling him, and gave him the most unmerciful thrashing I ever gave a nigger in my life. He was purple in the face, and unable to move, and I feared I had gone too far, but in a short time the other Africans got hold of him and poured water over him; he recovered and was a wiser and a better man. Drawing my revolver, I swore I would shoot the first man who disobeyed, and the others, seeing the fate of their leader and my determined looks, took up their loads and followed the guide across country without a word. I may here say that on my return, on reporting the man's conduct and my own to his master, the latter told me I should have been justified, by Arab law, in putting a bullet through him, and that would have been his own conduct under similar circumstances; in fact, had I not interceded, the man would have been then and there tied up and half flayed alive. The plantation where we were encamped was on an arm of the sea, which runs inland many miles, and is a continuation of the great port of Mombasa, where, just before the British fleet, under Admiral the Hon. Sir E. R. Fremantle, had been anchored. Leaving this to the right, we plunged into a vast undulating plain. A great deal of it was very stony, and covered with stunted grass, a good many ravines or water-courses, thorny bushes, and occasionally forests of low "baubul." We went almost parallel to the foot of the Shimba range in a southerly direction. After we had got clear of the ravines, we came to a plain standing somewhat higher than the surrounding country, and covered with fine grass about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet high. In this there were many florikan: I shot several, and as I

don't care for them I told the porters they might have them; so directly a bird fell he was hal-laled. We also picked up a couple of their eggs: the first I had ever seen. We saw the marks of deer in abundance, but not one in person. By the evening we had done perhaps twelve miles. In front of us was a "tope," pretty free of undergrowth, but with numerous rattan canes creeping up the trees. Half a mile beyond was a pool, perhaps half a mile long, nowhere over twenty yards across, and not more than a couple of feet deep. In a very short time, unless rain fell, it would dry up, and the game would go elsewhere, so we had just hit off the right time. At its further extremity there were a good many trees and long grass, where I had no doubt game retired to during the heat of the day. We entered the first "tope," and as there was no appearance of rain, I did not pitch the tent, the trestle cot answering all purposes of shelter from the heavy dew, as it had a waterproof sunshade over it.

The guide, or shikarie as I shall call him in future, took his bow and quiver of arrows, and glided off to ascertain the whereabouts of game, and did not return till late—not till I had finished my dinner, and had become somewhat impatient. Across his shoulders he brought the hind-quarters of a water buck, whilst in his hand he carried the head, with fine horns. The moon was obscured by fleeting clouds, and it was not till past 10 p.m. that he and I sallied forth. I took an express ·577, and gave him the "Paradox" to carry; in addition he had his own arms and poisoned arrows. On the further side of the pool there was a sort of natural "bund;" we crawled along under its shelter.

until we were more than half way, and there I found a circular pit which had been dug by this man and his companions a short time ago. Into this we crept, and with the guns handy, lay still. At all times watching for game by night is unpleasant, but doubly so when your companion is an odoriferous African—why these people should all have this abominable bouquet, aptly called *d'Afrique*, I do not know, but I think I would sooner take a black draught than be in close proximity to a nigger all night, but by getting to the windward of him and making him sit as far away as possible, I managed to exist without being sick. Now and then by half raising myself and looking over the pool to the furthest point, I saw at times various indistinct outlines of what I suppose were antelope, but it was impossible to be certain what they were. We watched the whole of that weary night, exposed to the heavy dew—just the way to catch the dreaded African fever—but I had had my share and more, when up the Niger and Congo, and was "salted" as it were—so did not fear it. At times I even dozed—and just as day was breaking, the shikarie touched me, and, looking in the direction he pointed, I perceived several dark objects, how many I could not say, coming right opposite to us to drink. They boldly waded in and crowded together; two were so close that their flanks touched, one was a buck and the other a doe of the hartebeest *genus*, mule deer I call them, hideous ugly brutes, but they were fair specimens, and a solid conical from the Express passed through both, and they fell with a splash. So unused were they to the report of a gun, that the remainder of the herd, somewhat startled, but not very much frightened, sprang forward in our

direction and then stood still. The savage by my side had an arrow fitted, and let fly before one could say Jack Robinson: It was not a good shot, it struck the beast in the flank and away it and its companions fled. I was curious to see what effect the poison would have and how soon, so I timed it.

The wounded animal separated from the rest; it had hardly gone a couple of hundred yards when it commenced, not exactly to stagger but to run in zig-zags and presently rolled over and with a quiver or two was dead. All within five minutes! The man went up to it, flayed it, cut a piece of meat all round the arrow-head, which he threw away, then quartered the game. It seems extraordinary to me that such a virulent poison does not affect the whole of the flesh. But it does not; with the exception of the part incised the rest is perfectly good and fit for human food.

It was now broad day, and my porters had soon dragged out the two antelope. As I intended to halt where we were I allowed them to take the whole of the meat, and odd to say nothing was said about its not having been hal-laled. It is true they cut the throats, but then the beasts had been dead fully ten minutes—but of course I made no allusion to it. The guide hung his meat in the shade in long strips, and told my men to hang it out with theirs in the sun at midday. I had told him I would have no more shooting by night and that he must accompany me in search of game by day in the neighbouring forest. We took some food with us and set out. The man made a long *détour* until we were favourably placed for the wind, and then entered the forest,

through the centre of which ran a tiny watercourse, with little or no water in it, and but few pebbles or stones, so we moved along it almost noiselessly. The deer scampering away at dawn must have disturbed the forest, for we saw nothing up to twelve o'clock. We then ate something, had a tot of grog, and smoked placidly till past three, we then took a south-easterly course, there the forest was more open, with patches of long grass here and there, and every now and then some deer would sneak away. Suddenly the man stooped down, and with his hand bade me do likewise. Directly I saw his movement I had done so too; we remained immovable as statues for several minutes, then the shikarie glided forward and I followed; every now and then the man would lie down flat, and I of course did the same. In about a quarter of an hour, which appeared to me an age, he pointed, and looking in that direction I saw three indistinct forms about a hundred yards off. They had not seen us; they gazed at nothing, flapping the flies off with their tails. Looking more intently I saw that they were elands, probably a buck and either two does, or a doe and a youngster half-grown. They were amongst a lot of saplings, and the great danger was that the bullet might be deflected by one of them, for the trees were very close together. I sat up, and being perfectly concealed, remained examining the beasts, wondering which was the male, for I could not distinguish more than a bit of the head of one at a time, as they tossed them about. Natives of India would have urged me to shoot, they think a gun can do anything, but the African never moved a muscle, and crouching down, lay perfectly

still, leaving me to choose my own time. These ruminants, which were chewing the cud in peace, suddenly jumped up, sprang forward, and were almost on the top of us before I could raise the rifle to my shoulder. I threw myself down. The guide sprang up like a jack in the box, and with a yell which might have frightened a person of the most stringent nerves, to say nothing of poor harmless beasts like antelope, he brought them to a momentary standstill. I fired at the largest, the shikarie at another, mine toppled over at once and proved to be the bull. It took us over an hour to find the one hit with the arrow, not that it had gone any long distance or that it had survived many minutes, but in its death struggles it had bounded here and there and had finally fallen into a narrow watercourse and lay concealed amidst a quantity of foliage. I sent the man back for porters, and cut off the two heads, both good of their kind, and had partially flayed the bull by the time the bearers arrived to take back the meat to camp. Wondering what could have frightened the animals, I searched the surface of the surrounding ground, more especially near where they were lying down when first seen. The ground was hard and it was not easy to trace the spoor of any footsteps, but in a slightly moist bit I saw the imprint of the foot of either a very large leopard or a smallish lion.

Everything was as still as death. So, sending the men back to camp, I hid myself to ascertain what had caused all the commotion. After waiting until I was heartily sick of my cramped position, I got up and went forward. I had brought a bottle of strychnine with me, and cutting an incision or two

into what was left of the deer, and dropping some of the poison in them, I went home and forbade anyone going to the deer which had been shot, for fear he might be poisoned too. We had disturbed these jungles sufficiently, so determined to move camp, but whilst passing the scene of our adventure I found the remains of both the elands had been dragged away, so I followed the trail and came upon a lion, not a very big one—dead! So I had obtained my first African feline by murder. In the meanwhile the guide had followed the other trail. I saw him fix an arrow and shoot; a lioness bounded upon him. I had just time to take a snap shot, and fortunately hit her in the lower jaw, fracturing it completely; but though unable to bite, she clawed the man, and would have doubtless injured him severely, had I not run up and put a ball through her head. As I wanted the skins carefully removed, I temporarily halted there.

We were ready to move again about one, and went on to another pool of water, at the very extremity of the Shimba range. There we pitched camp for the night. Moving as we were, I was unable to peg out the pelts, but I had them well rubbed over with wood ashes and stretched them as well as I could on a framework, and on halting we slung them and all our meat to the topmost leaves of a cocoa-nut tree, the only one in the place, and as it was tapped, we were very glad to avail ourselves of its delicious juice, which is very wholesome, and refreshing, if taken fresh, but very intoxicating if allowed to ferment.

The night was made hideous by the cries of hyænas and other prowling beasts, who, smelling meat and not being able to get at it, vented their

wrath by swearing at us in their own discordant language!

Early next morning we commenced the ascent of the range. The shikarie would not take us to the part occupied by missionaries, who had a station there, but crossing many miles lower down, he took us to a deserted village with large pools of water, where it was said hippopotami, and even giraffes were at times to be found.

Hippoos require a good deal of food, and they soon devour the stock of aquatic plants in a circumscribed sheet of water, they then migrate elsewhere and only return when the pool has become stocked again. So a visitor to a locality may on certain occasions find behemoth and at others not; These hippoos bore a bad name, and were said to care nothing for anybody, and now and then took the initiative in attacking. This view of their character was borne out by the guide, who declared his brother had been killed by one of these river horses at one of these very pools. He said there were no trees near and but a fringe of grass round the edge of the *vley*.

On the plateau we saw a great many florikan and deer, but got none. I shot a few partridges, as they lay well and allowed one to almost walk over them before rising, so afforded easy shots; but for the table they were scarcely worth powder and shot. By 3 P.M. we began the descent of the range, to the west, but going down was almost worse than climbing up, and it was dark when we got to the plain beyond, and finding a cleared spot, pitched our camp and made ourselves comfortable for the night. But during sunset and sunrise a lion prowled round us,.

uttering a peculiar cry, and the superstitious natives said it was the mate of the one we had shot and the father of the one I had poisoned. The brute kept us awake. He might have been a man-eater for all we knew. It was too dark to see him or I would have sent a bullet or a charge of buckshot after him.

At daybreak we resumed our journey, traced the lion's feet-marks for some way, but he had gone into a ravine so densely matted with thorny bushes, that I could only have followed him by going on all fours, along the tunnelled path which led to his lair. Whilst I was examining this place the comrades of our guide, who had gone on to Mombasa to dispose of the venison, came up. They were carrying a water buck which they had killed. After some trouble I induced them to quarter it, and whilst retaining all the good meat for themselves, to leave the carcase as a bait close to the path leading to the lion's home. Covering it over with grass and bushes to prevent the vultures from seeing it, I left, determined to return later on and try and get a shot at the *king of beasts.*

We reached the camping place about 11 A.M.; pitched the tent in a group of trees about a quarter of a mile from the nearest water, which was but a stagnant pool, not very inviting in its appearance; as it was evidently a favourite resort of buffaloes to wallow in, but close by there was a small excavation which yielded good clear water and which would suffice for our wants. After a hasty breakfast I visited all the neighbouring pools; there were foot-prints of game of all sorts round them, but the hippoos resided in a large "vley" of water some way

off so I deferred my visit to them till the morrow. About three I walked back to where we had left the remains of the water buck. Removing the *débris* we had put over it, the shikarie and I hid ourselves behind some boulders of rocks, which formed a very respectable *cache* within easy shooting distance. We had not been there five minutes, nor had the carcase been uncovered more than ten minutes, when, with a whirl, with closed wings, shot down a vulture, and then another and another! I was for driving them away, but my sable companion made signs to leave them alone. I thought the obscene birds would pick the skeleton clean in a few minutes, but their chattering and fighting and the noise made by them when darting through the air, I suppose roused the lion, and he must have crept up so noiselessly, that the first intimation we had of his presenee was the flight of the birds. Looking up, over our barrier, there stood a magnificent lion not fifteen paces away. A shell behind the shoulder dropped him dead, I heard a rush and just got sight of the tip of the tail of another lion or lioness, as it ran back into cover. If I had waited, I have no doubt I should have got both. Thinking there was just a chance of the one who had retreated coming back later on, we dragged the one slain aside (it was as much as we could do jointly), and covered it up. I sent the man back to camp with orders to return by dark with men, and then ensconced myself again, but the filthy birds returned, no feline put in an appearance, and long before the porters arrived there was not an ounce of flesh left on the bones. The lion not having been seen, although not twenty feet away, was unmolested by the

vultures. Leaving the men to carry home the spoil, I hurried ahead, had pegs prepared, bathed and dined. It took us over an hour to flay and then to peg out the skin. The head I put into a large earthenware pot and left it simmering on the fire all night; in the morning the flesh peeled off, and I had as fine and white a skull as one could wish to see. The teeth were loosened a bit, but these can easily be fastened in with beeswax as a temporary measure, and afterwards with plaster of Paris. After drying the skull thoroughly in the sun, I wound twine round the jaws to keep them together, and then made one of the "boys" sew it up in a piece of gunny.

Next day I determined to visit the "Hippoos' Rest," and ascertain if they were at home and as savage as reported. Three of the Africans accompanied me. I took my ·577 loaded with six and a half drams of powder and a solid hardened bullet in each barrel, also a single elephant gun,[1] and lucky it was that I did so. I also had the "Paradox." It took us over two and a half hours' walking to get to the big pool. Before we reached it the ground was a mass of dents and pitfalls, as if a herd of elephants had been wandering about there for a month. The "vley" in the monsoon had approached the dimensions of a lake, and as the waters subsided during the dry season, the soil had cracked, and much resembled the "cotton soil" of India. Besides the tracks of the hippoos, there were marks of elephants, buffaloes, giraffes, and of many kinds of antelopes, from colossal

[1] Made by Messrs. Bland & Co., of the Strand, called the Equatorial.

elands down to the tiny *duiker.* There were but three trees, at some distance apart, and, bearing in mind the evil repute of the hippoos, I made for the largest. As the men refused to follow me, I slung the Express over my shoulder, and carried the big bore in my hand. It is called the "Equatorial." I directed the man with the Paradox to go to the next tree and remain there, either at the bottom or up in the branches, but ready to hand it to me if I required it. The ground was execrable, but I stumbled along, reached the long grass, and with some difficulty got to the tree, but found I was still some way from the water. I tried to climb the tree to take a view around, but found it too prickly, so resting the single barrel against the trunk, I commenced to form a pathway by treading down the grass, so as to have a means of retreat should one be necessary. The Express I kept in hand at full cock, ready for any emergency. It was not far to the water's edge, but it took me fully an hour to get there, for the stems of the grass were like those of large reeds, not easy to break or to tread down quietly. Silently as I had moved, as I thought, I must have made some noise, for on pushing aside the last of the grass I saw, not ten paces off, just emerging from the deep water, the hideous head of an enormous bull hippopotamus. Our eyes met. I made a step backwards, intending to get behind the tree, but he rushed at me at once, opening out his cavernous mouth, exposing a horrible set of ivories and bellowing with rage. Although in his depth, fortunately the water was up to his middle, so his progress was laboured and not very rapid. I

gave him both barrels in the neck, turned round and ran to the tree. Dropping the Express, I seized the "Big-bore," wheeled round one side of the tree as the hippoo passed it on the other. Almost touching him, I gave him the contents behind the shoulder, then dodging round the tree I seized the double rifle, reloaded it "in the twinkling of a bed-post," fully expecting the brute to be upon me every moment, but the impetus with which he had made at me carried him on, and, seeing the natives in the plain, he blundered on after them. I again seized the single rifle, thrusting in a cartridge I ran to the edge of the grass, and, taking a deliberate aim, fired. This time the brute stumbled, and fell on his knees, the blood pouring from his nostrils; but he seemed to bear a charmed life, was up again and after the men, but at a very reduced pace. Again I fired the elephant gun, but apparently without effect, as he took no notice of the shot. I loaded and fired again. This time he was a good hundred paces off. This last shot seemed to have struck some tender spot, for he pulled up, and trotted back towards me, but very groggily. The "Big-bore" I knew to be not only very powerful, but very accurate. I did not care to let the beast come too close, for he was a nasty customer. So when he was about fifty paces off I knelt down and fired at the junction of the neck and chest. Down he fell, this time to rise no more. I picked up the Express, loaded both weapons carefully, and joined the natives, who were grouped round the slain. The bullets were all well placed, and any one of them should have sufficed to deprive him of life, and would probably have done so, but

for the brute's determination and ferocity which alone kept him alive as long as it did.

The men took out their knives, and were commencing to cut up the slain, when we were startled by hearing snorting, and, looking round, there was a full-grown hippoo coming at us at a lumbering gallop! The natives spread, each running a different route. I dropped close alongside of the enormous carcase by me, and the pachyderm singling out the shikarie went for him open-mouthed. He did not see me, but passed within ten yards. I fired, first the "bone smasher" and then both barrels of the Express at not more than twenty yards' distance, and had the satisfaction of seeing the monster roll over after running a short way. Back came the natives, and after a hurried consultation, two went off full pelt, whilst the third commenced to cut up one of the animals, swallowing at the same time great pieces of raw meat and fat. There was not much more than an hour or so of daylight left, when the natives who had so suddenly disappeared, returned accompanied by about fifty others. Whilst some shouldered the meat which had already been cut, and made for camp, the others remained behind to complete the quartering. I did not get back to my tent till 8.30 P.M., very much done up, but a cold bath and a good dinner and a bottle of lager made a new man of me, and it was arranged that our shikarie and I were to start about 3 A.M., and the rest were to follow later on, and meet us at some rendezvous, agreed upon between them. By day-break we were close by the place where the encounter with the hippoos had yesterday taken place. We

gave the place and pool a wide berth, not wishing to encounter any more of these pugnacious beasts, and went on to a gully in the heart of an acacia forest, where it was said giraffes were to be found. The walking was most difficult. In the dim daylight of the forest I often slipped into a "crevasse" or a pit, and got several falls, and many a shaking. But getting on to a path made by wild beasts, we were enabled to traverse the ground at a better pace. There were the footmarks and the droppings of many animals, those of giraffes predominating, as those beasts seemed to go and return by the same way. We disturbed several deer, but saw nothing to shoot up to nine o'clock. I was then told to sit down and rest, and the shikarie would look about for fresh tracks. I was to conceal myself as much as possible, for if giraffes were started they would be sure to come my way. I accordingly got into a kind of pit, which some one had dug out in search of water, and squatted down, having my weapons loaded and handy. I cut a few branches which I stuck into the ground in front of me so as to form a screen, and after eating some cold meat—hippoo's, I believe—and taking a swig of whisky and water, I was half asleep, when I heard a twig break. I was on the *qui vive* in a moment, and cautiously peered about, but could see nothing. After a considerable pause there was another slight sound and then faint footsteps, and I saw about eight giraffes in single file coming past my post. How my heart did beat! They looked so lovely. It seemed a great shame to deprive one of these animals of its life! Yet how disappointed I should have been had I failed to bag one! Their

heads towered over the vegetation. Their long tongues would dart out, seize some succulent morsel, then disappear for a second in the mouth, and then the process would be repeated. When nearly opposite me, they halted. I was afraid they had winded me; but as they scattered somewhat, and recommenced to feed placidly, I knew that they did not suspect the presence of their deadly foe—Man. I might have brought down a couple at any moment, but it was such a beautiful sight, that I refrained from firing. We thus remained for fully five minutes; then in the distance there was the sound of hoofs, as if some heavy beasts were in a stampede. The giraffes collected together with their heads towards the noise, and with the exception of stamping one foot at a time, they looked as if cut out of so many rocks. But this barely lasted a minute, and then, in a straggling line, some twenty buffaloes rushed past. The leader was a huge bull with an immense head and horns. In a second the bovines and the cameleopards were mixed as if running a race. Directly the stampede took place indecision on my part ceased. I gave the buffalo the contents of the "bone breaker" behind the shoulder, and with the right barrel of the Express laid low the bull giraffe with a ball through its neck, and afterwards wounded another with the left.

Leaving the giraffe, I hurried on with great caution after the wounded buffalo, for these animals are very treacherous, and when followed often hide and pounce upon their foe when least expected, and when the victim is so close as to prevent the possibility of his escaping. The wounded animal had turned off to

the left into horrible ground, so densely covered with thorny jungle that it was only possible to traverse it by following on the trail. As very many of the bushes closed again after he had forced a passage through; it was very ticklish work, and I did not half like it, but I coveted the head, so waiting until the shikarie appeared, and giving him the Equatorial and making signs to him to keep close, I led the way with the ·577[1] in hand, full cocked. Two of the Africans had turned up; telling them to flay the giraffe, and then to look for the wounded one, I went on very slowly, stopping every moment to peer ahead as well as I could, and to listen. But I got out of the low jungle and had entered another with "baubul" trees only, which were about seven feet high, the lower branches intermingled, so the leaves formed a crown above, and the whole made almost a canopy overhead. Here I could see a little way in front, but still did not hurry forward. I had gone perhaps half a mile; there was a dry rivulet, the bed being about three feet lower than the banks, which were composed of some friable black-looking very dry earth. I kept as near the edge as was safe and followed the trail, on which lay patches of frothy blood—a sure sign that he was shot through the lungs. If I had had any sense, I ought to have waited till next day, and then have followed, with the certainty of finding him dead. That, I think, was the opinion of the shikarie, for he kept lagging behind as soon as he ascertained from the footmarks that I was following this dangerous beast. About fifty yards ahead the dry rivulet took a sharp turn

[1] One of Westley Richards's best weapons, which won the Grand Prix at Paris.

to the left. I could see so far that all was plain sailing, so I hurried on, having my weapon ready for instant use. I was near the bend and advancing more cautiously, when there was a rush, and the broad head of the buffalo was within a couple of yards of me. Unfortunately for him, but luckily for me, for the sake of greater concealment he had left the bed of the nullah and taken up a position on the further bank. To get at me he had either to clear the nullah or to jump in and out; the banks were crumbly, and as he sprung forward the ground gave away partially under him, his foot caught in a pendent vine, and he came an awful cropper, rolling right over on to his back within a couple of feet of me! So I gave him both barrels, then springing up, I caught the lowest branch and drew myself aloft, resting my feet against the trunk of the tree, just underneath the branch I was clinging to. This did not take me a second and I was in a horizontal position just out of his reach when he rose to his feet. Let him toss his mighty head ever so high he could not get closer to me than about six inches, but the position I was in was not over safe, and very constrained. I could not hold on very long, and the bull did not seem inclined to move off; in trying to shift my hold with one hand to go higher up, and to get astride of the branch I was clinging to, I found my left hand impaled—one of the long massive thorns had gone right through it. I had not, in the excitement of the moment, felt the pain, but when I attempted to move it now the wound caused the most intense agony. Throw a leg over the branch to relieve myself of the weight was impossible, as in so doing, I would be almost certain

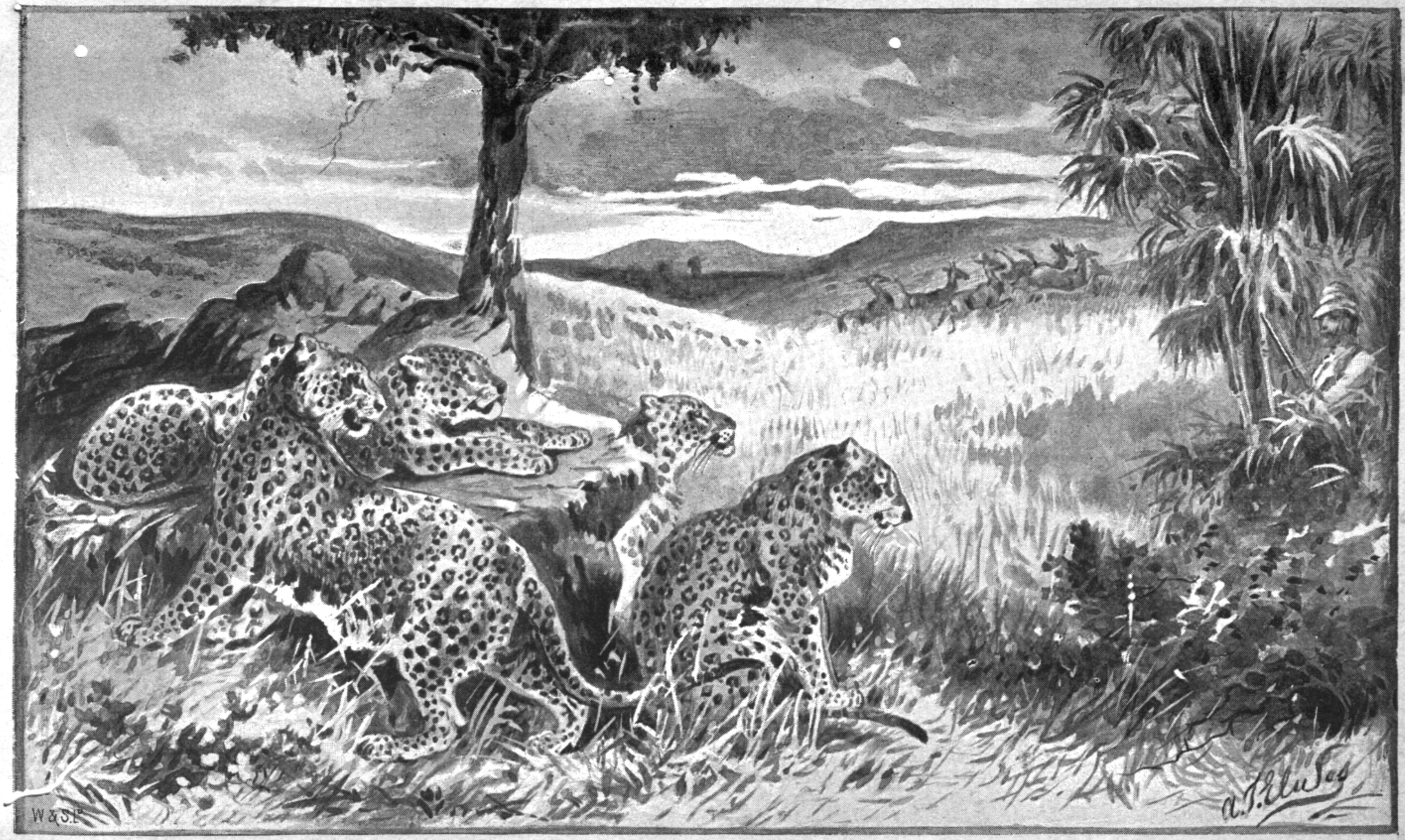
to impale that too, for the long straight thorns on these trees are innumerable. As the brute, in his vain attempts to get at me, kept lifting up his nostrils in throwing back his head, I watched my opportunity, and as he next did so, I brought down my left leg and with all my might gave him a kick on the nose; but in doing this idiotic trick, my right foot also got disengaged; my lower extremities were thus at his mercy, and no doubt inwardly chuckling, he made a vicious prod at my legs, but beyond a graze he missed his aim. Before he could repeat the blow I had drawn up my legs out of harm's way again; but it was impossible for me to bear the tension on my arms much longer. Where the shikarie was I did not know—he knew nothing of the use of firearms or he might have aided me by letting drive the contents of the big bore into the monster, and I unjustly accused him of cowardice and abandoning me; but I was wrong, the man had done his best, for as soon as he saw the buffalo he fired a poisoned arrow into its chest, and not till then did he slip away. I could only have been a few minutes suspended in mid air holding on to the thorny branch for dear life, but it seemed to me an hour.

I found I could not hold on a couple of minutes longer. Just then I saw a dark mass walk away a few yards and lie down; my strength failed me, so I let go to drop, although my left hand was, as it were, nailed to the branch. Expecting to be tossed up high amongst the thorny branches or to be impaled on the horns, not of a dilemma, but of the buffalo, was not a pleasant prospect, but let go I had to, the weight of my body releasing my hand as the thorn broke

and directly I touched earth I scrambled off on all fours as fast as I could. Thank goodness the bull was not in a state to wreak his vengeance—for though not dead, he was all but so, yet he looked as if he should like to annihilate me with a glance. The wounds he had received from me, combined with the action of the poison from the shikarie's arrow had undermined his constitution, and in a few seconds he rolled over and died. This was about the narrowest escape I ever had in my life. The shikarie was not far off, and soon made his appearance. I pulled the thorn, two and a half inches long, out of my hand, which swelled up to an immense size and gave me intense pain. For many days, as far as shooting was concerned, I was *hors de combat.* We got back to where the giraffe had fallen; all the men were there, they had also recovered the second beast. I should have liked to start back at once, but the men evidently were bent on securing all the meat they could, and gormandizing. So we cleared a spot and made up our minds to spend the night there. The hunters cut strips of meat off the giraffe and broiled it over hot embers, and it was really not to be despised; but then I was very hungry, and had it not been for the mosquitoes and the pain in my hand I should not have passed a bad night. Before separating for the night the Africans collected some leaves and after chewing them applied them as a poultice to my hand, but though it relieved me somewhat, it did not altogether alleviate the gnawing pain. I fancy some tendon had been injured. By the next morning I was in a high fever; the men made a rude palankeen out of my trestle cot, and carried me back, first to

camp, then hearing that Dr. Baxter was not at Shimba they carried me to Simba (not Shimba), a place on the arm of the sea, put me into an Arab dhow and took me into Mombasa, where under proper treatment I soon recovered.

On another occasion I had wandered barely ten miles beyond Makupa, when I came upon four leopards watching a herd of hartebeestos. It was a pretty sight to contemplate, but before I could fire the wild cats bounded off one way whilst the antelopes now thoroughly aroused went off another.



"I CAME UPON FOUR LEOPARDS WATCHING A HERD OF HARTEBEESTS."

CHAPTER IX.

A MIXED BAG IN SOUTHERN INDIA.

When I was a youngster and in the fifties, stationed with my regiment at Secunderabad there was excellent sport to be obtained within an easy distance of the station, but since privates have been encouraged, and in my opinion very properly so, to indulge in shooting, small game has nearly disappeared, so to get anything like a bag one has to go a long distance. But by crossing the Moosa excellent sport could be had in the *rumnah*, a large tract very carefully preserved for antelope hunting with trained chitas, by the Nizam and his sirdars. I learnt that no soldiers were allowed to pass the river, and that it was very difficult for an officer even to get permission to shoot there; but meeting his Excellency Sir Salar Jung at a party given in his honour at the Public Assembly Rooms, just before Christmas, I was introduced to him by the General Commanding the Subsidiary Force, and as he was good enough to say that my name was familiar to him as a successful sportsman and great traveller, and that he would be pleased to take me out later on tiger shooting, which

offer I gratefully accepted, I was also emboldened to ask if he would give me a *purwannah* for some sporting in the *rumnah*. He promised to send me one, and he did. I was no longer in the service, but was endeavouring to secure men for a Company in Africa, and as soon as I could get away I sent on a syce and a dozen beaters to the ford,[1] where travellers for Masulipatam *via* Narkapilly usually crossed, and starting myself on the 5th January, and got there at 5.30 A.M. As I entered the preserve I was at once accosted by a keeper, who asked to see my permit. The minister's séal was quite sufficient, the man salaamed and allowed us to go on. The aspect of the country was not much changed, though it was more than thirty years since I had been there. To the north-east there used to be several "bheels," noted places for duck, teal and snipe. I asked the head beater if they still existed, and he replied, "*Ho, sahib, bahoot shikar hi, koé ne marta* (Yes, sir, there is plenty of game as no one shoots there)." About a mile from the river's bank, as the country looked favourable, I formed line, and with six men on either side of me commenced to beat. I was armed with a light breechloader, No. 16 bore,[2] and I found that when loaded with $2\frac{3}{4}$ drams of Schultze and one ounce of No. 6 or 8 shot, it would perform splendidly up to fifty yards, and if held with judgment, it occasionally killed much further. A better and a handier weapon I never possessed. We had barely gone fifty yards through coarse grass, a couple of feet high, sometimes more than that, with small bushes scattered here and there, when up got a bevy of quail. I

[1] Oopal.

[2] Made by Westley Richards.

brought down one, and was about to pull trigger on another when a hare ran across about twenty yards off. It did not take me a second to shift my aim, and the hare rolled over, but when going up to it, what was my astonishment to find a little further on a cobra writhing on the ground, shot through the head! It was fully five feet long and thick in proportion. As it was not quite dead, one of the coolies soon hammered it to bits with the "lattee" he was beating with, and throwing the carcase aside we went on. Finding nothing but quail, I changed my cartridges to those loaded with No. 10 shot, and as the little beauties lay well and got up in threes and fours, I had capital sport, and soon there were pendant by their necks on my shikar stick eight and a half couple. Of these, seven brace were corn quail, three were the small button quail, which, though charming to look at, are not worth much for the table. Coming to the end of this *rumnah*, we entered a piece of ground covered with prickly bushes and with very many rocks scattered over half a mile, with an extensive "bheel" beyond. Telling the coolies to be doubly careful in beating, I soon had the pleasure of starting a couple of the painted rock pigeon or sand grouse, a small but lovely variety, found in such places and generally only in pairs. I brought one down with the right barrel, but only wounded the other with the left. I knew it was hard hit, but it flew along very strongly and I thought I had lost it, when I saw it tower, and with a splash fall into the "bheel," which was there very narrow and shallow. Marking the spot as well as I could, I went on with the beat. Two more pairs of

these lovely birds were disturbed, but they got up out of shot, and settled at the foot of a rocky eminence, the only one visible. So I determined to look them up towards the afternoon, when they would lie like tops. Closing on to the "bheel," I wheeled the line round, and beating the thick scrub close to the water's edge I put up several of the common Indian red-legged partridges, and though I fired five shots I only secured a couple. Skirting the "bheel" until I came to a very marshy place, which looked favourable for the "long-bills," I went into it, and had scarcely done so when on every side up rose snipe and went off with their usual cry, "Scape, scape." I secured a couple, but it was early in the day when the birds are generally wild, so I determined to leave them alone till later on. I can never resist snipe shooting—to me it is the prince of sports. Probably my fondness for it arises from my being able to bowl them over when I can't hit anything else. That snipe shooting is a knack is proved by the fact that owing to long practice I can kill them when I often miss such large birds as a florikan, a bustard, goose, guinea-fowl and even pheasants. Snipe and quail and such small deer are far easier to me to slay than birds the size of a barn-door fowl and even larger, but *chacun à son goût.*

Leaving the marsh and getting back to *terra-firma*, I went through a portion of the *rumnah* covered with fine grass about three feet high, very level and free from bushes. Out of this I put up several doe antelope and their fawns; their forms were numerous, but I desisted from killing one, as my permit to shoot did not include the slaying of them. Some years

ago, two or three officers had been maltreated, tied on hurdles, and carried through the blazing sun into the city, for some infringement of the rules, or for having fired at or shot an antelope. I had gone about a quarter through this maidan when within ten yards of me up got a cock florikan. As it rose straight into the air I fired too quickly, and, shameful to say, missed it clean with my right barrel; but learning wisdom by misadventure, when the bird commenced its horizontal flight, the left barrel, a modified choke, did its duty and down it came. As it fell, up got the hen, but as I was unloaded off she went, to be marked down near a scinde bund. Skirting the top of the "bheel" I put up one more florikan, a hen bird this time, and bagged it. Then for half an hour I did not fire a shot. Having reached the extremity of the "bheel" I commenced to beat down the other side, towards where the sand grouse had fallen. Seeing some teal and duck, I allowed a couple of the common partridges to go away unscathed, but leaving the beaters, with the exception of a couple, and sheltering myself as much as possible behind the bushes, I crept up as close to the former as I could get without alarming them. They were on a small ridge of partially dried up mud-bank, pluming and cleaning themselves and all close together, affording the easiest of pot shots. I put a cartridge with No. 8 shot in the right barrel and had a No. 4 in the left. Letting drive, before the light smoke cleared away there was a whirl, a quack, quack, and up rose two pin-tailed ducks from behind some bushes, and flying close together went across me about twenty yards off. Firing just in front of

the leader I brought both down, one stone dead, but the other was only wounded, and went off at railway speed, skimming over the water and lilies, for its life, followed by two coolies! The pond was apparently only a couple of feet deep, but there were holes, into which first one biped and then the other fell, and rolled over amidst the roars of laughter of the lookers-on and the muttered curses of the fallen. But these aborigines had on only a strip of cloth a few inches broad, tucked in between their legs, so a ducking did them more good than harm. Leaving them to follow the wounded duck, we went to retrieve the teal —the dead duck had already been picked up, and recovered five, but there were two or three others wounded, that had swam away some distance, whilst we were watching the duck-hunt, and on being followed, dived, and probably got entangled in the weeds and never rose again, so we lost them. By the time we had strung these birds on the stick, the two coolies were seen coming back in triumph with the duck as well as the sand grouse, which they had stumbled upon, and just saved as a hawk swooped down to carry it off in its clutches. It was now past eleven. I had never known the country so full of game, even thirty odd years ago, but then the rules of protection were not so stringent as they were now, for none are allowed into the "rumnah" without a pass, whereas in former days, though it was forbidden to shoot the deer, yet no restriction was put upon the slaying of small game.

Finding a dry place I rested for half an hour, ate some bread and Strasburg potted meat, washed down by a pint of lager beer, gave the gun a wipe

out, and then went back to the snipe ground. For the next three hours I tramped it backwards and forwards. It was easy walking, the birds lay remarkably well and gave easy shots, and I accounted for twenty-two without a miss. By 3 P.M. I had twenty-seven couple of snipe, seven jack-snipe and three painters. These latter are not snipe at all, though called so, nor do I generally shoot them, but I knocked a few over to-day to vary my bag. I then rested awhile again, ate something and drank another pint of Beck's lager, a refreshing and a harmless drink, very different from the heady Bass and Allsopp of my youth. Afterwards I made for where the sand grouse had betaken themselves in the morning. *En route* the country was very favourable for game of all sorts, and I got a couple of hares, three painted partridges, two of the large smoky sand grouse, one of another variety, and three more of the painted kind. Several of the keepers came up and admired my mixed lot, but not more than I did myself, for never in my life had I got such a varied bag in India as I did on that day. I went towards the scinde bund, but the shades of evening were falling fast, the birds got up wild, so I left that portion of the "rumnah" and made for the southern end of the "bheel," which as yet I had not approached. The cover was good, and I could hear the quacking of various kinds of duck. I sneaked up, fired a shot at some on the water and again as they rose, but only picked up a mallard, a widgeon and two pochards, or birds which I took to be so. I had just loaded when I heard the peculiar noise made by the blue-winged teal, which I believe naturalists declare is allied to the geese—we call them

cotton teal—and as they passed I fired into the "ruck," when two fell and two went away hit, but it was not worth while going after them, especially as I saw some of the peons mark them down and make for them. Further on I fired at and killed a whistling teal, and as its companion would not leave the spot, but kept calling piteously, and circling around, I added it to the bag. I was just thinking it was time to shut up and go homewards, when a water pheasant ran along over the broad leaves of the water lilies, and I shot it, but it gave us no end of trouble to get, as the bed of the "bheel" there was very boggy. Still, wanting it as a specimen, I waited until it was gathered, and then, as there were several rangers present and I had more than I cared for, I gave them a mallard, the pochard, and the two cotton and whistling teal, all of which had been "halaled," as well as some of the other birds, by the only Mussulman I had out with me. The birds I gave away are not good for the table, and my game-stick was crowded. Each string had two or more pendant on it, and I could afford to be generous, especially as I intended to visit other portions of the "rumnah" again, my permit being a general one, which would carry me through the shooting season. I also distributed a few rupees, and leaving them contented, I made for the river, which was fully four miles distant. Whilst I went one way the keepers went another, and we soon lost sight of them. By the time I got near the boundary it was getting dusky, and as antelope often come down to the river to drink, I loaded with a ball cartridge in the right barrel, having shot in the other. I did not think we should

see anything, but it is as well to be prepared for all chances. Leaving the coolies behind, I rode on alone. My horse was perfectly quiet, and would allow me to fire off his back without winking. It had formerly belonged to an Arab, from whom I bought it. When I got close to the water, looking over the fringe of grass which grew on its bank, I saw about fifty yards off, close to the margin, a buck and three doe antelopes. The does were still drinking, but the buck either scented danger or had satisfied his thirst. He was broadside on, but looking in my direction. A shot behind the shoulder rolled him over dead into the water, and at the report up got perhaps a hundred or more of golden plover, and with the left barrel I cut a lane through them, killing five and wounding several others. We got two which fell into the water and one on the further bank, but it was getting too dark to see what became of the rest. The coolies had soon shouldered the buck, and retrieved the dead plover, and in a few minutes we were on our own side of the river, with a mixed bag, the like of which has seldom been made. The buck had horns $22\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, extraordinarily good for this part of the world, though they are obtained much longer towards Jubbulpore and Saugar. I was often asked where I got them, but I always declined to say, for the trophies were to all intents poached.

I had two more days in the "rumnah" after small game, but never made such a mixed bag as on this occasion.

CHAPTER X.

SPORT IN SYRIA.

SOME years ago I read a book called *Eight Years in Syria* by Consul Neild. In it he stated, that do what he would, he could not spend more than £40 a year, although he possessed a capital house, with a bath-room, a fountain, some land, two servants, kept three horses, horse-keepers, &c. His headquarters were at Antioch, with a country place a little way out, where he enjoyed the finest field sport, the country swarming in the seasons with woodcock, snipe, florikan, black and red-legged partridges, occasional gazelles and wild boars. This appeared to me, a poor military man, a perfect Elysium. Thus when I retired from the service I went to Beyrout, left my family there, then on to Alexandretta, Antioch, Aleppo, the Euphrates, Damascus, Baalbec, Tripoli, and Lataquié. I should have preferred Aleppo to live in, but everybody who goes there suffers from a virulent boil, named the "Aleppo bouton," and which does not differ much from the "Delhi boil," or the irruptions to which Europeans are subject on the West Coast of Africa. The sores cannot be prevented or even mitigated, but must run their course—generally for twelve months—and leave

fearful scars behind. This disfigurement unfortunately attacks the face principally. I have seen women who would probably have been beautiful, almost hideous from their effects. As I had a young family I did not care to subject them to such a fell disease, and much as I liked Aleppo I made up my mind to leave it alone.

In my searchings, I found that to get a suitable home for a family was almost impossible. A Greek at Lataquié offered to let me the upper part of a large house for £36 a year! This rather astonished me; not much of the £40 limit assigned by the Consul as an annual expenditure remained; then, and not till then, did I discover that the book was forty years old. In the early forties living in Syria may have been moderate enough, but in 1879 it was bad, and the expense not much short of some cheap locality in England, while the inconveniences were much greater.

I purchased furniture, a piano, &c., and made my people as comfortable as I could. I bought two good horses at Aleppo for £12 a piece, a mare in Lataquié for £12 more, and a couple of donkeys for £5 each. I brought with me from India, iron beds and bedding, saddlery, &c., and a large stock of eatables and drinkables. The hotel proprietor at Beyrout told me to leave it to him and he would clear all my baggage, free. In three days, after considerable delay, I think he brought to the hotel three boxes out of a hundred! Then I told him to mind his own business, secnred an interpreter, and knowing the value of *backseesh*, by doling out two pounds I got the rest of my traps passed without

examination, which was a desideratum, as I had with me some 20 lbs. of Schultze powder and about 2,000 cartridges. Powder in Syria is a contraband article, and a monopoly of the Government as it is in France. When my Schultze was expended I could only get vile Greek black powder by smuggling; but it was better than nothing. During the season 1878–79 I explored more than I shot. I had great difficulties to contend against, the worst being my own ignorance of Arabic. Fortunately the head of the Telegraph Department was a young fellow, very fond of shooting, and who spoke almost equally well English, French, Italian, Turkish and Greek and Arabic. I induced him to chaperon me, so I bagged several hundred couple of cock, a gazelle, geese, hares, two kinds of partridges—francolins—quail, sand grouse, and a few florikan. But when the season of 1879–80 commenced, I found game far more plentiful; but knowing the localities may have had something to say to this, and besides, such a winter had not been seen for eighteen or twenty years. Fortunately we had purchased an American stove, or I think we should have been frozen to death in rooms built to exclude tropical heat, and not to endure an Arctic winter. The jungle on the hill-tops, the hills, their sides and valleys, were covered with deep snow, so woodcock swarmed into the olive groves almost in the centre of the town, and it was computed that in three or four days the Arabs and Greeks alone, killed upwards of 3,000 of these birds. I was not idle. Thus my stock of Schultze powder was exhausted; I have used it since 1870. No vessels would bring it out, the secretary was not

over civil, and although I had deposited the money, I could get no answers until I mentioned his courtesy, or want thereof, in the columns of *The Field*. I had plenty of cartridge cases, wads and shot, but did not know what to do for powder—still with bribing you can do anything in the Turkish dominions. Also a few piastres judiciously expended, and no questions asked, had their effect, and soon I got all the powder I required. On several occasions I bagged fifty-four, eighty-three, sixty-six, seventy-two brace of cock in one day, besides other game. I always took a donkey with large panniers, which were generally nearly full by the time we left off our labours. I have shot six hares in half an hour. It was a common occurrence to kill two cock at one shot, but I once killed three.

Starting one morning towards the middle of January, I sent my pony and donkey across an old bridge, and walked along the seashore, crossing the creek near the exit of a river by a boat. It was bitterly cold, and I did not care to fire at quail, the only game so far that I had seen. There must have been thousands of wild ducks in the sea, yet just out of shot; but in the marshes I was bound for, they were also in hundreds, and far easier to get at than out in the open water. Beyond the fisherman's creek there was a mass of sandy hillocks extending close on to Giblie some ten miles down the coast. Birds continued passing over head but out of shot, so I only got within range of a sand grouse. It allowed me to closely approach it, but I was too proud to shoot it on the ground as I might have done, so allowed it to rise, making sure of it on the wing; but my fingers

were so benumbed I made a clean miss! Further on, on the beach, were five flamingoes. These birds were useless to me except for a few brilliant feathers, but there was a taxidermist[1] in the place who collected and sold birds, so getting up as close as I could I let fly both barrels and killed three; but the difficulty was how to carry them until I met my attendants. This I solved by hiding them in a bush, in which I stuck a stick with my handkerchief attached to mark the spot, and afterwards continued my course. Leaving the seashore I had to go through a heavy piece of scrub; out of that three francolins (black partridge) rose. I knocked down two and my spaniel retrieved them. I then missed another, but bowled over a hare. These I thrust into the capacious pockets of my shooting coat but not caring to burden myself with more game, I made for the rendezvous, now not far distant, where my nags were to be in waiting. I got there in half an hour. The servants had not arrived, but I could see them in the distance. It was too cold to sit down, so I walked about briskly, and put up two more hares, shooting one and missing the other. My people were soon up. Depositing the game in the panniers, I sent the moke back for the flamingoes, and mounting the horse rode on to some "bheels" which were about a mile ahead. Long before I got there I heard the quacking of numerous ducks. I got a pot shot, and at the report four teal and a duck lay dead; one or two cripples went away, and the

[1] A Pole who had been with Maximilian in Mexico in command of a battery of Artillery, and had been terribly wounded. He was a refugee, and his family were detained in Russia and I all

sky became almost black from the number of aquatic birds which the popping of my gun had alarmed. At first, hiding under some bushes as the birds flew past, I got many easy shots and bagged five and a half couple, but they soon became shy and kept out of range, still I had as many as I cared for. I then turned my attention to the snipe, which were "snicking" away right and left, but the light was not good and they flew low, so I did not kill as many as I should have done. In half an hour I only gathered eight birds. After this woodcock began to flush. I had lost interest in this game. They were so plentiful, even along the roads, that they would get up in threes and fours out of the cactus hedges, and thus they had lost their attraction. We were sick of eating them, but I thought I'd try how many it was possible to kill in one day. The cover that they had selected was low shrub, wet and inclined to be marshy underneath, and I should have lost many birds but for my retriever, who was one of the best dogs I have ever had in my life. I commenced luckily by killing two at one shot out of five that rose, and a third with the left barrel; this went on till ten o'clock. I had then forty-seven brace of cock, eighteen snipe, seven teal, twelve ducks, two francolins, three hares and three flamingoes. After this performance I rested to have some breakfast. By the time that my meal was over it was just comfortably warm. I had put my gun down a little way off, and was still munching some sandwiches when I saw a lot of curious-looking birds flying towards me, well within shot, but before I could get my double barrel they had passed. Their flight was with

outstretched necks, and they looked nearly as large as swans. I thought they were some kind of gigantic geese. I then made for a ridge of highland, on which I had now and then seen red-legged partridges, which, by the by, much resemble the "chickor" of India. The birds lay well and got up in twos and threes, so I soon "grassed" five. They were so fat that one that had towered, fell burst in two. Descending that ridge I got another hare, and coming to a pond found it full of teal, and on its shore some ruffs. Of teal I had shot very many in my life, but had never seen any of the others. I killed a male and a female in one shot, but the former had not assumed the fringe from which it derives its name. As the teal flew away I gave them a raking shot and two fell. A little further on I got a big and a small bittern; the former resembles the bird now and then shot in England, but the other was not much larger than a good-sized kingfisher. I may here say that I saw even smaller bitterns on the Congo near Vivi, but I never met with the dwarfs in Europe, although bitterns were plentiful enough in every marsh in Syria. Passing the pond, and marsh attached, I saw eight geese feeding in some open fields. It was hopeless to attempt to get near them on foot, so I got on my horse, a very steady, strong and quiet cream-coloured nag, who stood fire admirably. In fact all horses in that part of the world do so, as the Arabs gallop about, on feast days, blazing away incessantly. The geese being unalarmed I got within fifty yards. They then showed signs of fear, putting up their heads and craning their necks, so I galloped in and was amongst them before they were well off the ground. I killed a bird, but another

flew nearly one hundred yards before toppling over, this my dog retrieved. Another I saw separate from its comrades and alight near some bushes, whilst the rest continued their flight; so I thought that it had received a pellet or two, as I had fired the first barrel at the birds when close together; so getting off the horse, I approached it in a roundabout way, hiding amongst the bushes; until I got to where it ought to have been but it was nowhere to be seen. Hearing the flapping of wings behind me, I turned round and got a right and left, at long distances, and the bird fell. I found that one pellet had struck it in the head. I was a long way from home, so turned and made for a favourite snipe ground. Passing a field of beans, which looked miserable enough, having been under snow some days, a lot of cock got up. I fired at the leading one; two fell. Going to pick them up, I saw another fluttering on the ground; a stray shot had struck it, so I actually got three cock with one shot. I then got amongst cock and snipe and blazed away till my head ached; I saw five more of the big birds, but they were too far off. About 4 P.M. I had had enough. Counting the slain, I found that I had 137 brace of cock, 29 couple of snipe, 2 bitterns, 2 ruffs, 9 teals, 12 ducks, 2 francolins, 4 hares, 5 partridges (red legs), 3 geese, and 3 flamingoes.

The game was being shovelled into the panniers again, when I saw twelve or thirteen of the same big birds flying straight towards me. I crammed in two No. 2 shot cartridges, and as they passed overhead, fired. To my great joy, I brought two down, one dead and the other winged, and I found out that they were the great bustard, the first I had ever seen

or shot, for though I had been in parts of India where they exist, I had never come across them. I discovered afterwards that the Ansaries in the hills, had killed a lot of bustards, by knocking them on the head, as owing to the intense cold, the birds were unable to fly. When I went to Syria, I was told always to go armed with revolvers, and to expect a man behind every bush, ready to pot me. The Ansaries in particular, bear a bad name, but except once when marching to Aleppo, I never saw the ghost of a bandit or a hostile person; on the contrary, I met with the greatest civility and kindness everywhere, and I visited and lived with this people, and better fellows I never wish to meet. Most of the Syrian Arabs are armed with a double breechloader, principally of French make, and excellent shots they are too. Many of them, if they saw me out shooting, would join, and once a cock gave me a difficult shot as it flew round a boulder, at the edge of a steep hill. I made a clean miss. The Arab on my right brought it down like a man! Some chiefs living at a place called Talsarim, a good distance inland, asked me to visit them. So the Greek telegraph officer, my son and I, went to Giblic by boat, having sent on our horses; and then, after a long and fatiguing ride, for the greater part up mountains, we arrived at their stronghold. There is no love lost between these people the rightful owners of the soil, and the Turks and Syrian Arabs. They are a fine, stalwart, handsome race, reminding me of Afghans, and I have no doubt they are a remnant of one of the lost tribes mentioned by ancient writers, and in Scripture. One gave us a house, and treated us most civilly, refusing to accept

any remuneration for things supplied, but when we left, by advice of my Greek friend, I gave them some powder, shot, and caps, for which they were very grateful. These people make no secret of it, but say openly, that if they were certain other powers would not interfere, they would drive the Turkish garrisons into the sea. Turks seldom go into their mountains, or trouble their inhabitants to pay taxes. The country we were in was most peculiar, like the Giant's Causeway, only ten times magnified, rocks upon rocks, deep gullies and narrow passages. A sanguinary fight had taken place there about ten years before, when a Turkish force had been annihilated. We had very good shooting too, principally red-legged partridges. We were told that about five miles inland there were the ruins of an immense city, which they called "The City of the Sons of Israel." It had only once been visited by a European, a Frenchman, who had taken photographic views of portions of it. We gladly consented to go, walking through what I may still call the Giant's Causeway, but constantly ascending. We went on for *three hours* over the water-shed, and, after descending, came to a tableland, the extremity ending in an abrupt precipice. The pinnacles around, and the plain, such as it was, were a mass of ruins, inferior to Baalbec alone in the stupendous nature of their construction, but far grander in the variety and the ornamental work of the buildings. There was not one edifice intact, but all showed with what skill they had been built; and the taste displayed was marvellous. Truly there must have been giants in those days. How otherwise account for the

immense blocks of stone collected, and in some instances raised, at Baalbec and in this city of the dead! The legend said that it was destroyed by fire from heaven, and by an earthquake combined; that its inhabitants had perished; that it had never been inhabited since. The Ansaries themselves did not care to visit it, but thinking we should like to see it, had guided us to it. I have no doubt excavations would well repay the explorer, that is, if the Ansaries allowed it, which I doubt. We strolled about amidst the ruins several hours, yet did not go half over them, and reluctantly left. We did not find any relics. After spending five days with our hosts, we returned to Giblic, shooting some florikan on the way. The Ansaries are nominally Mussulmans, but in reality they have a secret religion of their own. What it is exactly is not known to the generality of the people themselves; only their "Moolahs" know its secrets, and it is handed down from father to son, who are the high priests in perpetuity. A Frenchman declared that he had discovered a portion of the secret, having purloined a sheet of the written laws, and that one object of veneration was the creative powers of man, but more especially those of woman. Giblie itself must have been a place of importance under the Romans, as there is a portion of an immense amphitheatre still remaining. The ancient baths now form the Turkish baths, so common in all towns in Syria and Egypt, and which are such a boon to the traveller. To utilise them there is nothing to pay. If you employ a man to shampoo you, you may or may not as you think fit, make him a present. Our men neither asked for or solicited a *douceur*, and

where given, it was taken with the utmost indifference. I saw an assembly of the dancing dervishes and nothing more absurd can be conceived. The men stand in a circle, one begins to spin like a tee-to-tum—there is no other comparison—the next follows, and in a short time even the lookers-on get giddy. The men are dressed in a kind of skirt, which revolves round them like the dress of an opera dancer. In time they drop down one by one, unable to go on any longer.

APPENDIX A.

List of Game Killed in One Season in Syria by Four Guns.

Number of Guns.	Bittern.	Rail.	Bustard.	Hill Partridge (brace).	Hares.	Godwits.	Teal.	Snipe (brace).	Duck.	Golden Plover.	Woodcock (brace).	Quail (brace).	Pigeons.	Francolin (brace).	Sand Grouse.	Florikan.	Geese.	Flamingoes.	Ruffs.	Gazelles.	Boars.	Porcupines.	Grand Total.
1	5	3	2	33	36	2	74	137	30	13	833	172	4	44	3	10	2	3	5	7	4	1	2642
2	—	—	—	—	13	3	15	5	57	9	351½	6	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	—	843
3	3	4	1	8½	13	1	56	19	94	11	155½	27	1	14	1	1	—	2	—	1	—	2	639
4	—	2	—	2½	11	—	57	16	71	31	182	10½	2	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	606
																							4730
	8	9	3	88	73	6	202	354	252	64	3044	431	7	144	4	11	2	5	5	10	5	3	4730

CHAPTER XI.

MAHSEER FISHING.

When a boy I was devotedly fond of fishing, and participated in it to my heart's content. In Southern India, there is very little angling except for "murral," but I found I was nowhere in the pastime—although possessed of far superior tackle and the same bait, a live frog—to an experienced native; in fact, such a person could give me eleven out of a dozen and beat me at this sport. They had a peculiar knack of working the frog on the surface of the water, of which I was altogether deficient, so being unsuccessful, I took very little interest in that kind of sport. In Burma I had too much to do, laying out roads and inspecting works, and seldom came across a river where good fishing could be had, yet I caught a fair lot with fly in the Shoay Ghein River. The Burmese called these fish gna-mein, the Bengalies bahsah. It is a superior article of food; and grows to a very large size, but those about six to eight pounds are the best eating. It was not therefore until I went to Assam that I took to fishing in earnest.

I had bought some second-hand tackle from a Deputy-Commissioner, so when in Bagh Dooar, en-

camped on the Manass, I threw in a spoon bait, and at my very first cast I hooked a large mahseer, but the line was very rotten, so broke, and the fish got away. I then fixed on the only other spoon I had, and threw it in, trolling against the stream; it was seized at once, and I succeeded in landing a fish seven pounds in weight. It was then all but dark, so we went home, had a moiety of it boiled and the other made into currie, and very good it was cooked either way. The next day I caught a fish, eight pounds; then I lost nearly the whole of my tackle in another, so having no more at hand I gave fishing up for the time, and wrote to a tackle maker [1] for good rods, &c. &c., and glorious sport I had upon their receipt, as is related further on. Of course I only give the result of one or two trips, fishing like shooting sambur in Burma, gets monotonous, for one day is very like another.

Some years back, General B., O. of the 44th Ghoorkhas, and I started on a fishing trip. We were not hurried for time, so visited Nurting and Jowai. The march from this stage to Jarain is beautiful, high tableland, well wooded, and with three rivers passing through it; only one of these rivers was regularly bridged, the others were spanned by means of huge stone slabs. The country reminded me very much of the Neilgherries. One plateau was particularly lovely—tableland at an elevation of 5,700 feet, a river skirted it to the north, and another to the south, and both full of moderate-sized mahseer and a spotted fish like a trout. In the cold season the "sholas" are full of woodcock; even when we were

[1] Farlow, in the Strand.

there, we put up a few, but did not get a shot. On a clear day, Chirra Poonjie, famous as a former cantonment and as a place where the rainfall is fifty feet in the year, is visible.

As the distance to the Durrung, where we desired to go, is fully twenty miles, we started very early, but we had got but a short way, when finding the road very bad, we sent our ponies back, with orders for them to go to Jyntiahpore by another route. We were walking the greater part of the day and could not find a drop of water anywhere, and were therefore very glad to get to a village called Sankur—overlooking a precipice, at the foot of which flowed the Durrung—at three o'clock. Here we rested awhile and quenched with avidity our fearful thirst. But though near, we were yet far from our destination, as we had to descend into the "cañon" by means of steps which required the agility of a well-conditioned mountain goat to negotiate! Even by the way we went we were not above half or three-quarters of a mile from the river, but it took us an hour to do it. We reached the Cossyah, or rather Jyntiah village at last, but to our horror, we found our hut had been erected in the heart of the hamlet, instead of on the river bank, so we would have nothing to say to it, but went some 300 yards lower down the stream, and finding a pretty level place, about twenty feet square, we determined to make it our headquarters We soon enlisted the services of some of the natives, and made them collect poles, branches, leaves of trees, and erect a platform over the spot chosen, as the night dews are very heavy and very unhealthy. This we made our bedroom; a little lower

down, another position, where we could put up a table, chairs, &c., was adopted as a kitchen. We were about fifty feet above the river, which is very deep, and we could see, looking down, thousands of mahseer of all sizes, feeding about, a tolerably reliable promise of sport. We had brought a good supply of fishing-tackle with us, but the rest of our traps were behind, so as soon as we could procure boats, General B., I., and O. went out. B. and I. had never been here before; O. knew the place well. We did not get a nibble, while O. caught three fish, seven pounds, four pounds, and one pound respectively. By dark most of our traps had arrived, but only two servants; the rest had remained at Sankur to get drunk, so did not appear till late next day, when we gave them "toko." While my servant prepared the dinner, and the other man got the table and camp arranged, we submerged various bottles of wine and beer into the icy waters of the river, arranged our beds—which owing to the confined space were touching one another, then took headers into the Durrung. By Jove! how cold it was. We swam about as hard as we could for a few minutes, then emerged and dried ourselves and put on our nightclothes. About 8 P.M. dinner was ready, and a better repast I never sat down to, for my boy John had excelled himself, the result being that we got a meal which was all that could be desired. As we were very tired from our long walk and intended to rise early, we went to bed immediately after we had fed, and slept the sleep of the weary.

The next day the General and I were up and swimming about, just before daybreak, O. with

many a grumble at such early rising, made tea. The water is so clear and deep, that headers can be taken off the rocks into twenty and more feet of water, where every pebble at the bottom is visible. We obtained three boats, each manned by a Cossyah. I took the first that came to hand and found I had secured if not the fastest boat, certainly the best boatman. He had been in the habit of accompanying Mr. Hind, the popular *padre*, and others, fishing, I christened him "Wind up," from the only words of English which he knew, for whenever we came to a bad and shallow rapid, or struck a fish, he always cried out, "Wind up!"

This river is divided in its upper course into rapids with deep pools in the various gorges, while the sides of the hills, over the river, were perpendicular; in many places from 250 to 350 feet high, and densely clothed with verdure from the water to the tableland above. The Cossyah boats are very light, broad in the beam, have a small false keel, are moderately steady, perfectly safe, and are easily propelled. Not knowing which way to go, I left it to my Cossyah; he took me up stream, whilst B. went down, and O. preferred fishing with the fly near home. I went up to the first barrier, beyond which no one can proceed, unless the boat is "*portayed*" and deposited beyond the waterfall, where there is another reach of half a mile, and where heavy fish are to be found.

I was trolling with a spoon bait, a most deadly lure for mahseer, still did not get a run going up, but coming down, in the first rapid I struck one, but as

not be stopped till we got into smooth water, by which time my prize was drowned. It was only two pounds in weight. It was spotted, and might, by a stretch of imagination, be called an Indian trout. I then passed the village and our camping-place, and so on over four rapids to the very extremity of the furthest gorge, where there is a weir, without a single strike; but on our way back I caught two fish, one three and a half pounds and the other one and a half pounds, and was beginning to think the fish not worth the candle; but in the heaviest gorge, while trolling very deep with my largest spoon on, I hooked a big fish. At the first rush it took out about 100 yards of line. I did not like to unduly check it, so got the boat to a sandbank and landed to play it. It struggled desperately, and for half an hour I did not get a sight of it. The sun was not very high, but its rays poured on my face, and the perspiration ran down till I was nearly blinded. I then drew the fish into shallow water, and watched its every movement. It did all it knew by lying down on its side and rubbing its head and leathery mouth into the sand to get the hooks off, but without avail. At one time, a fish every bit as big as the captive approached it, but was received open mouthed. General B. now joined me and looked on, and eventually after threequarters of an hour's struggle, I landed about the handsomest specimen I ever saw. It weighed between twenty-eight and thirty pounds. The scale I had that trip was graduated only to twenty pounds, so to weigh it, we had to cut it in two; it thus lost weight. For our next trip I had a scale which marked up to sixty

pounds, but I have known mahseer taken up to eighty pounds, and I think Mr. Sanderson mentions one over 100 pounds. (N.B.—A fish should be weighed directly it leaves the water; it loses weight as it dries.) We then returned to camp, swam, had breakfast and took it quietly till the afternoon. In the rapids I caught two, a four and a half, and a half pounder, all on the same huge spoon bait; I then dragged my boat over the weir, and in the pool beyond hooked a monster, but it gave very little play, and soon succumbed; it weighed forty pounds.

O. had bad luck, losing several fish and bagging only one with the spoon, a small two and a half pounder, but with the fly he caught thirteen, weighing altogether nine pounds. B. caught two, four and four-and-a-half pounds each, and found his line rendered useless by a gar fish hooking itself. These are very voracious; they have a long snout, full of sharp teeth, and go at the spoon greedily; do not struggle, and are so light that the angler does not feel them, and is therefore unconscious that they are on, but the spoon ceases to spin, and hours may be wasted without the chance of attracting the nobler species.

The next day I had all the luck again. I caught the following in the order shown: four pounds, one-and-a-half pounds, thirty-five pounds, five-and-a-half pounds, three and-a-half pounds; the largest I took in the pool below the weir, very near where I caught the forty pounder. I also lost a fish about eight pounds. I had exhausted it, and told the steersman to spear it, but he missed his blow, struck the hooks out of its

thigh, and I had to cut them out. The next day, W. of the Artillery, an old schoolfellow of mine, and L., of the 44th, joined us. W. got a fish nine-and-a-half pounds with the spoon, and several fish with the fly. L., using only the fly, caught some fifty small fry. B. caught one (eighteen pounds) with the spoon, and a lot with the fly, but they were of no size. O. had very bad luck, and caught only little ones.

The next was our last day; I hooked a lot of fair sized fish, but they all got off as the hooks either broke or straightened out. I was in an immense fish for over an hour, but at the last moment the hooks gave way, so I only landed one (six and a half pounds). W. one (two pounds), whilst B., O., and L. got nothing.

In September, 1870, Colonel H., O., B., and I left Shillong for the hunting and fishing grounds on the Sylhet side. We started early on the 13th and rode to Chirra Poongie. Got wet to the skin of course, for it does nothing but rain there, but as our things had been sent on some days before, we had dry clothes to put on, and found a good dinner and a roaring fire awaiting us.

September 14.—We ordered our fishing tackle and breakfast ahead, giving the people an hour's start before we made a move. Our impedimenta was to follow. We reached Terreah Ghat at nine, got four boats with some difficulty, and after breakfast went up the river. This stream used to be famous for mahseer, but the Cossyahs had taken to poisoning its waters with the *Cocculus Indicus* and strychnine, until but few fish were left. Moreover the whole of the bed of the stream is a mass of limestone, and the action of the water has undermined many rocks, so

when a fish is struck it is necessary to keep an extra taut line, because if you do not, the unfortunate will get under the hollows beneath the boulders, and then good-bye to your tackle, for you cannot force the fish out, so you have either to cut the line or you are saved the trouble of doing so by its chafing against the sharp edges. The boats here are much heavier than on the Darrung, and the boatmen are lazy Chittagong or Dacca Mussulmans—very ill affected to our government, and thus require a stern hand to keep them in order. H. got one fish, eight pounds, another three pounds, O. three pounds and two-and-a-half pounds, and a lot of small ones with the fly. I got one three pounds. In the afternoon B. caught a three, two, and five pounder; O. a three and two pounder, and some small ones with the fly. I got three—twenty, nine, and two pounders. We moved camp to-day, trying a short cut to Lakat; had great difficulty in getting there, as our boatmen kept running away. At length we reached a sand-bank at dark, and encamped there. We heard fish splashing about all night, but did not think they were mahseer.

September 16th.—As we started early this morning I was the only one who threw out a line, and I almost immediately hooked a heavy fish. My comrades were close by and all pulled up to witness the tussle. Some asserted that I had the line too loose, others that I had it too tight, and so on; but without heeding them in the least, I kept steadily playing the fish in my own way, and at last reduced the captive to its last gasp. It had already turned belly uppermost several times, and we all admired its grand proportions, for the fish was undoubtedly an immense and well-made

one when with a last expiring effort it turned over and every hook broke. Thus I lost about as fine a fish as I ever struck. After this everybody began to fish. O. was in the same boat with me, using my tackle, but I got all the luck. About 10 A.M. it began to rain. B. was leading, and as our boat was approaching a rapid, we saw him coming towards us, fast to a large fish, and with the whole of his line out, so he had perforce to follow it down stream; as he passed I hooked a large fish, and had also to follow mine. I got a thirty-two pounder, but B. lost his. I had no sooner thrown out the spoon again, than I struck another fish, and landed one of twenty-two pounds. About eleven we arrived at a hut which had been built for us. It was near the weir where last trip I caught my heaviest fish. Col. H. had nine fish weighing, forty-three pounds, the largest thirteen pounds; B., six fish, weighing twenty-seven pounds, the largest weighing eleven pounds; O. had one, a six pounder; I had five weighing sixty-six pounds, the largest being thirty-two pounds. In the evening we went up the stream through the gorge, and the result was, H. caught one, six pounds, two, four pounds each. I caught five—nine, five, two, one-and-a-half, and threequarter pounds respectively, all on the same spoon which I had been using all day. B. caught two, ten and four pounds; O. seven fish, weighing forty-seven pounds, largest twenty-six pounds. Our bag to day was 255 pounds of fish.

September 17.—I went back towards the sand-bank below the weir and I caught seven fish—forty-one, twelve, nine-and-a-half, four, four, three, four

pounds each. H. caught three, four, half, seven pounds each; B. one, eight pounds; O. one, eight pounds. We all lost several fish.

September 18.—To-day, in a rapid, O. caught two fish—thirty and twenty pounds each; H. two,— one pound each; I got two—seven and five pounds. In the afternoon, O. caught three, seventeen, seventeen, and six pounds; H. two—ten, three-and-a-half. I got four—twenty-six, fourteen, three-and-a-half, six pounds. B.—six, fourteen, eleven, four, three-and-a-half, two, and two-and-a-quarter pounds. The fish caught in the afternoon were all taken off the sand-bank where we had slept on our way up. No sooner was the spoon in the water than a fish rushed at it. A small rivulet fell into the main stream and the best place was the junction; it was about the best half hour's work I ever saw. B. lost me a good fish, about fourteen pounds in weight, by insisting on gaffing it behind the shoulder in what he termed a scientific manner. Now the scales of a mahseer are very big, lying closely one upon the other, and as tough as tin plates, so after failing in his scientific stroke twice, in the third attempt he knocked the hooks out of the fish's mouth. As the mahseer was close to the boat, all he had to do was to insert the gaff into the gill to have lifted it into the boat. After these futile attempts, no wonder that I look upon the gaff as useless for mahseer; a two pronged spear is infinitely better. H. and B. returned to Terreah Ghat, whilst O. and I slept on the sandbank.

September 19.—I fished for a long time without a run, whilst no sooner was O.'s spoon in the water

than there was a fish on it. I did at last what I should have done at first—examined my tackle, and found the spinning gear out of order. I put it to rights and then caught three fish—fourteen, four and six pounds each. O. caught five, one twenty-six pounds, followed by four, twenty-two, twenty, fourteen and four pounds each. We bagged 736 pounds of fish, of which I got 276 pounds, O. 258½ pounds, H. 105½ pounds, B 96 pounds. In October I again visited this river, McW., Deputy-Commissioner, going a part of the way with me. I had capital sport catching the following—two fish, each three pounds; these were the bassah or gna mein of the Burmese: capital eating, but afford no sport. The following weight of mahseer I also secured: 537 pounds, and eight more bassah weighing thirty-five pounds. In September of the following year, in four days I caught 376 pounds of fish; three largest forty-four, forty, thirty-six pounds, and the rest from twenty-eight to four pounds; besides of course losing many other fish hooked but not landed. In September, 1872, V., of the 11th Hussars, and I had capital sport. I got 277 pounds of mahseer; V. fell out of the boat and hooked his man twice, and I had to cut the hooks out. In the Manass I caught a lot of fish, but the largest was under thirty pounds, and since that some officers have caught in that river, fish up to sixty pounds. Where I had trolled[1] over and over again without getting a a run, a Lascar, with a lump of sodden rice, caught a mahseer eighty pounds.[1] Col. C., one of the best shots and fishermen in Assam, and who was in the com-

mission for years, has caught them up to sixty pounds. Col. Nightingale hooked a sixty-pound mahseer in the gorge of the Godavery, close to Bison Hill, and it took him twelve hours to land it, but judging by my own experience, heavy fish don't give much play, they often sulk; those best worth catching are between twenty and thirty pounds.

CHAPTER XII.

IN THE AZORES.

WHERE to settle and what to do with one's self in Europe on a limited income, after a life of freedom spent in India, with a certain amount of luxury, I did not know. I liked Syria, but my belongings did not, and after trying various parts of France, Spain and Portugal, I crossed over to the Azores, intending to settle for a time in the large island of St. Michael's, but I found the place so full, principally with American visitors, that induced by the representations of a naturalised Portuguese American, I crossed over to Fayal, but before doing so, I visited St. Mary's, the only island where there are any numbers of the French partridges left. All the islands once had them, but they are now virtually extinct in most. There are a few left in Pico, but so few as not to count, and also an occasional one is seen in St. Michael's, but in St. Mary's they are fairly plentiful. I had excellent sport with quail and blue rocks in the three days I spent there. This is the only island of the group where no volcanic eruption has taken place since their discovery. All the islands are well-stocked with quail, which are not migratory, and which were probably introduced; but how to

account for the existence of numerous woodcock, also non-migratory, I know not. On arrival at the island we put up at Mrs. Edwards' hotel, an Irishwoman married to an English-speaking Portuguese. There we were fairly comfortable, and the charges were moderate; but very shortly afterwards they parted with their interest in it to a native of the isles, and things went to the bad. We were fortunately able to secure a very good house, about a mile out of Horta, the capital, belonging to a Mr. Lane, who had formerly been manager of the only bank in the place. It was built on Indian lines, that is, it was one-storied, had verandahs on three sides, ample accommodation inside the house, and plenty of out-offices and garden. The difficulty of getting furniture was great. There was not a decent mattress procurable in the island; we had to manufacture them ourselves, stuffing them with the husks of the Indian corn. The pillows were stuffed with a kind of wild cotton.

On the island there are neither springs nor streams but, during the rains, rivulets; however, these cease with the monsoon. The islands are wholly volcanic, but none have been in an active state for many years past. The markets are fairly supplied. Meat, fowls and wine of the country good and cheap. If you live like one of the inhabitants, a very small income will suffice, but the Customs duties are prohibitive. I got over a few hams and a side of bacon. I was not only charged duty on the articles themselves, but on the salt in which they were packed! The Portuguese are the same everywhere, a grasping and a dirty race. I allude to the upper or governing classes in the first charge, and to the lower in the second. There is an

immense influx and mixture of native races in their blood. A pure Portuguese of European descent solely, is difficult to find, for the Arabs during their occupation of Spain and Portugal left scarcely a pure European behind them. Not that a little trace of Arab blood is detrimental to beauty—on the contrary, many of the most beautiful of the Spaniards have Arab blood in their veins—but the Portuguese have intermarried with the low races from the western coast of India, and with Africans from Loanda, which is certainly not an improvement to the breed as it existed before, nor to their manners and customs as they exist now. Very many of the Fayalese get away on the sly to avoid the compulsory military service, and return as naturalised Americans, and laugh at the authorities. Smuggling goes on to a great extent. A former American Consul, of some eighty years ago, had realized a large fortune in the islands, and had spent immense sums in importing tropical and other plants, and they all did equally well. His heirs were the princely merchants of the isle, but when I was there, they appeared to be only too anxious to sell their property and to return to the States. They had houses and lands which they could not sell, yet like the dog in the manger, they would not let them on hire, and preferred letting them go to rot and ruin. They were also very chary of assisting strangers, especially the English, and although I applied to them for information about the shooting, I could get only vague answers, but I soon found it out for myself, and I was then a thorn in their sides, because for every bird (quail) they shot, I killed a dozen. When I first arrived I had broken the mainspring of my gun, so I

had to send it to England to be replaced; then Mr. Edwards very kindly got me the loan of a muzzle-loader.[1] It must have been fifty years old, for the nipples and locks were not reliable, but better barrels, though no doubt they were fearfully honeycombed, never existed, and in a day or two I got to shoot with it very well indeed. I then heard that a shop-keeper in the town had some breech loaders for sale. I visited him. The price asked was £5 each. They were of Belgian make, not bad, had top snap lever, locks back action, which worked easily. I picked out one, tried it, and purchased it. It was a handy weapon, and it was cheap at the price. I got so used to it, that when my own gun came back, I oftener used this Liége weapon than my 42-guinea one. I then wrote to the firm at Liége, I may as well mention them, for they make guns and rifles at ridiculously low prices—Laloux and Dresse. The highest price for their hammerless, best quality gun, with any action, is but seven guineas; and the original price of the gun I had bought in Fayal I found was in Liége £1 6*s.* 4*d.* They sell only wholesale now, but a few years ago, they would supply any one retail at wholesale prices. Anything connected with the gun trade is exceedingly cheap in Liége. As an instance, I may say that, wanting an extra pair of barrels to a No. 16 bore, I found I could only have them fitted for from ten to fifteen guineas in England, yet I got Damascus twist barrels made in Belgium for sixty francs, about £2 8*s.* 0*d.*, and it is well known that very many of the barrels used by slop-shop makers in England come from abroad.

[1] By Reilly.

Quail in Fayal abounded; they have lost their migratory instincts so breed in the islands. Blue rock pigeons were in thousands; rabbits not plentiful; no hares; woodcocks in all the hilly and well-wooded portions. What they got to eat is a puzzle, for there were no marshes, and as the surface is disintegrated lava, they could not force their bills through it in search of their ordinary food, and even if they did I don't believe there is a worm in the island, still they exist and are fine plump birds. To get at them is very difficult work, and beaters are hard to obtain, and the bush is very heavy. The Portuguese content themselves with flight shooting, when the birds are pairing and out of season, and kill a good many, and I am sorry to say I was told the American residents followed their bad example. This scolopax is more numerous in Pico than in Fayal, and I shot a few in each island, but the trouble and expense were more than the game was worth. The vines grow luxuriantly; the principal grain produced is maize, and directly a crop has been gathered, lupins are thrown broadcast, take root, attain an immense size, but when on the point of flowering are all dug up and interred into the ground, so do in place of manure. Of course a few fields are left here and there for seed, potatoes flourish, chilies are perennial. Apricots are abundant in Pico, and a basket load can be purchased for a shilling. Fish is very plentiful, but not good of its kind. The sea fishing is excellent. Using hand lines the sea-bream and other kinds of fish up to three pounds weight can be caught almost faster than the extra lines can be baited. By trolling we caught a fish, very like a pike, which runs to fifteen pounds, but

the largest we ever got was eight pounds. The great fishing was for tunny. These monsters of the deep run to over one hundred pounds in weight, but do not afford much sport. Whales are caught on the coast, and the Americans had a pair of shears for hoisting them on shore and a regular boiling-house for extracting the oil. Cray fish as large as lobsters were common. Turtles were occasionally obtained, and one which would delight the soul of an alderman could be bought for a dollar. Sweet potatoes were another staple product of the island.

The "tipparie" or Cape gooseberry, a delicious fruit, grows wild all over the island. How it got there is a puzzle. Tea and coffee, if looked after, do well. Oranges used to be the great article of export, but the trade has fallen off, and now pine apples under glass are cultivated and principally exported, to England, where they are sold as English hot-house produce! I left a few mango trees, both Indian and African, whether they will come to anything remains to be proved. Guavas were common, but not good. Plantains throve well and were excellent and consisted of several varieties. The climate is damp, the sea "mistral" is frequent, and the spray destroys all cultivation it reaches. Thus everywhere there are huge, ugly, high walls as a sheltering measure which answer the purpose but partially. Tomatoes if planted and protected from this spray grow into a jungle. There are no snakes or noxious animals. The fields are separated by walls about four feet high, built of loose stones; these are a sad nuisance to the sportsman, as during a day's tramp he has to climb over fifty or more and has to be careful, for it does not take much to crumble them to

pieces, and then there is a great hullabaloo. There used to be no harbour, but a breakwater has been in course of construction for some years past, and will no doubt be finished some day. This is a favourite spot for condemning ships, and a lucrative trade is carried on in derelicts by the people. These vessels are heavily insured of course, are sold for a song, and somebody makes a good thing of it. During the struggle in America, between North and South, large fortunes were made in the island, and also during the time when trade was carried on by India-men to the East, as these islands were a place of call, but with the exception of St. Michael's, all the other islands are going down. If they were peopled by any nation but the Portuguese they might become favourite resorts, especially during winter, as though snow occasionally falls and frosts are not unknown, yet the climate is a great improvement on our own. The peak of Pico, over 7,000 ft high, is always enveloped in a thin covering of snow, and ice is often brought down for the use of the wealthier inhabitants during the heat of summer. There are no incidents to record of sport in these islands. The most quail I ever got in a day were forty-eight couple; generally I contented myself with about twenty brace. Five woodcock in one day is my best bag. I kept no record of blue rocks. I shot but few rabbits. These remarks I have added because some reader may wish to go there, but he had better choose either St. Michael's or Fayal; in the latter very many of the common people speak English, having learnt it in America. It is best to take second-hand furniture and everything you require, even servants, for you will then have less duty to pay than if you import them

afterwards. There is a mail once a fortnight. Steamers now ply to Fayal and St. Michael's from America; there were only sailing vessels in my day. Gunpowder is a contraband article and has to be smuggled. I got mine over from New York. But on first going there you might put any quantity between your clothes in your boxes, as the chances are they would not be examined, but anything coming afterwards by steamer or sailing vessel is rigidly searched. Shot and gun caps can be bought, but wads had better be taken. A stove is requisite in winter; there are a few to be picked up in the island, but they are scarce and dear. Fuel can be purchased. Every house has attached to it large reservoirs for water, which is carefully collected off the roofs and stored. It is the only water procurable in the islands. It takes two hours to cross from Fayal to Pico, by regular passenger boats manned and pulled by Portuguese. At the landing place, there is a fair inn where one can put up for a day or two, but beyond a few partridges and woodcock, there is not much to recommend a visit.

Servants are the plague of our lives everywhere, they are a curse in Fayal. We tried Portuguese, pure and mixed, and full-blooded negroes and negresses, and it was a toss-up which were the worst. The laws are absurdly lenient amongst themselves. A man we had, who did odd jobs now and then, stole some of our spoons and forks and was caught in the act. I took him to the magistrate. "Are they silver or electroplate?" he enquired, alluding to the stolen articles. "Only electroplate," I replied. "Fancy," said he, "prosecuting a poor fellow for such a trifle as that." "When will the case come on?" I enquired. "Oh,

in five or six months," he said, "and then be carried on probably for another year. In the meantime the prisoner is let out on his own recognizances to appear when called upon." "Under these circumstances," replied I, "you may as well let the man go at once, for I don't mean to stay six months more in the island, or to be at the expense and trouble of a protracted trial of a case which is palpable, as the property was found on the person of the accused by the constable who took him in charge." "We consider such an offence very trivial," he said, and there was an end of it. Had the offender been any nationality but Portuguese, he would have been walked off to prison and kept there without trial for months. The islands are priest-ridden. There are people living on them over 100 years of age. In the days of their prosperity the better classes had built superb churches and dwelling-houses; the former are still kept up, but the latter are decaying, as their owners have no longer the means of keeping them in repair. The shops are excellent, well supplied with English, American and German goods, which are sold at fairly cheap rates. The shoemakers and curriers are also good. Both red and white wine are made, and are deemed excellent by those who partake of them. A good deal of spirit is also distilled in Fayal as well as in Pico. Both German and English beer, and doubtless now "lager" from America, can be bought, but at fabulous prices, owing to the heavy tariff imposed. There are loose women of many nationalities, except English, who live in a quarter by themselves. Their livelihood is derived principally from sailors visiting or passing by the islands. They are anything but attractive to look at, and more brazen-faced

than the same class in any part of the world. The Portuguese steamers are manned by people of the country, with the exception of the engineers, who are all English.

I imported a pointer, but did not find her of much use, as quail lie well and are easily walked up. For woodcock a team of well-broken spaniels would be a blessing. Tackle for sea fishing can be got in the island.

CHAPTER XIII.

A WEST AFRICAN EPISODE.[1]

HEARTILY tired of an inactive life, I volunteered for service in West Africa, the deadliest hole on the face of the earth. Whilst in command of an out-station on the Quillo I had to visit certain outposts, and finding an old friend, manager of a factory, he invited me to go with him to certain localities in the interior, where it was supposed petroleum was to be found, and perhaps coal. He had an establishment at Bonga, an island some three or four days' journey off, and situated on a beautiful river, the name of which is unnecessary. Just as I joined him, he received an order directing him to return to Liverpool by the next steamer, to consult on matters connected with trade, so although he could not accompany me himself, he placed his boatmen and house on the island at my disposal; and as I was anxious to report on the rumours so long current to the government I was serving, I started a few days after. I had eight Kruboys with me, as I was told game was plentiful, but I did not take many stores.

The buffalo of this part of Africa is that described

[1] Related by a Friend on the Congo, the late Major V.

by Du Chaillu, and is quite distinct from its relative in the south and east. I had already shot some of these, as they were plentiful on the banks of the river and near Lakoja on the Niger. I had a good battery, a No. 8 bore double rifle burning twelve drachms, which I never used except on elephants or hippopotami; and a ·577, both by Westley Richards; and besides, a 12 bore "Paradox," suitable for ball or shot. My head boy gloried in the name of "Blue Ruin." He was a splendid specimen of a man, stood at least six feet three inches, with a chest of forty-four or forty-five, and would have been immensely powerful if he had been in the habit of exercising his muscles. These Krumen are the only natives in West Africa who will work; but are generally useful only as sailors; they will not carry loads inland, for they have very little pluck—about as much as a grasshopper. We went up the river for a week until the shallows were reached, then left the boat in charge of some villagers who lived on the banks. My men were lightly loaded and we took a north-easterly course; soon after I met a native chief whom I had seen at Bonga, who was "interior bound," and after a palaver and "a dash" he agreed to take me to the elephant and gorilla country. We generally started at daylight, I going on either side our route, with a couple of gun-carriers, under the guidance of a native of these parts, in search of game, whilst the chief and his ragtag and bobtail went by beaten tracks to the proposed halting-place. Occasionally the chief accompanied me out shooting, which I did not encourage. I was very successful and killed a lot of game, but what astonished my sable com-

panion and the Africans was the ease with which I rolled over elephants, formidable beasts like hippopotami and rhinoceros with one or two bullets each. The leader appeared very friendly, and we got on very well together, so I often gave him a tot of grog. We had gone a good distance inland, fully 100 miles, but the Kruboys did not like penetrating so far, and Blue Ruin often said to me, "Master, go no furder. Country bad—people bad—chief very bad." But I only laughed at him and told him I wanted to see the hot spring, and crevasses with gas issuing therefrom, which I had heard of, and which now were only a few days off from where we then were; but the poor fellow shook his head and was dead against our proceeding. A couple of days after a successful hunt, Blue Ruin again came to me and said, "Master, chief very bad man—hate master—want big gun, and will kill we and master." "Why, Blue Ruin," I replied, "I promised to give the big gun to him after our trip. Why should he hate me and want to kill me? I give him plenty of dash." "I no know," replied my follower, "but master find out I speak truth." A couple of days after this, the chief told me we were then in the gorilla country, and that he would take me to a forest where the man-monkey abounded, but said I need not take more than one of my men, as he was going with me himself and would give every assistance. So accordingly, we started at daybreak next morning; Blue Ruin carried my big rifle, I the ·577, but my attendant was very despondent and kept warning me not to trust to my ebony acquaintance as he was very wicked and wanted to make "chop" of me; in other words, to kill me. But the idea seemed

to me absurd; the chief could gain nothing by my death. The dash I had promised him he could only get in Bonga; and would certainly lose it in the event of my death. Moreover, should anything sinister happen to me, he would never be able to show his face on the coast, and would lose his trade entirely; and would probably be killed by his subjects.

We started very early, and the chief had more men with him than I approved of, but he said they would leave him when we commenced our beat or hunt, and go on to his village, which was only a short way beyond the forest inhabited by the apes. Blue Ruin was now in a greater funk than ever. The main body of the natives, who travelled by a beaten path, we left, and went to the northward, over detestable ground. Here, I certainly saw indications of petroleum, or some allied mineral oils. Iron, stone, and copper I also saw. At 11 a.m. we halted for breakfast.

The chief and I were seated under a tree, Blue Ruin had gone to a stream close by for a can of water; my guns were resting against a log close by. While amicably conversing, I was seized suddenly, and before I could offer any resistance, my arms were tied behind me; as soon as I was helpless my quondam friend gave vent to his mirth, laughed and mocked at me saying, "White man beat me—I make chop of he." "But," said I, in as mild a tone as I could assume, for I was boiling over with rage, "I have never struck you in my life or done you any injury, on the contrary, I have given you many things and promised you a good dash on our return to Bonga." But the brute only jeered at me; I am sure he was more than half drunk, for he kept repeating the same thing, viz., that "White man beat

chief, chief make chop of he." Then I heard a great hullabaloo, it was from poor Blue Ruin, he had made a gallant resistance, for the few clothes he wore, were in tatters, but both he and I had been taken unawares, and so were at the mercy of the drunken brute. Blue Ruin said, "What I tell Master? We live to die, we live to die!" meaning that we should be killed. I, on the other hand, thought it was a mere dodge to get a very big "dash," or present, from me, and all that we should have to undergo would be detention, until he got an order on Bonga and had it cashed, so I did not despair, as did my attendant. We were marched the whole of that day till late at night, and then I was thrust into one shed, and Blue Ruin into another, in which he cried and bewailed his fate the whole night long. For food I was offered some filthy "chickwanga," a decoction made from fermented manioc, a mixture that I never could stomach, so I declined it, and contented myself with a drink of water. By daylight we were on the move again, and towards sunset arrived at a considerable village, with a quadrangular space in front, a banyan tree at one extremity, and a baobab at the other.

I was again locked up alone; and as I declined the "chickwanga" again, a few half-ripe plantains were given me. The whole night long hammering went on; but about 11 A.M. it ceased, and I was led out. Soon a procession appeared. In front marched some armed men, one with a huge sword of state, others followed with most discordant instruments; but when I saw the chief himself, I almost burst out laughing, his appearance was so ludicrous. He had a tall bell-topper on his woolly head, a scarlet waist-

coat, a sky-blue swallow-tailed coat, and green pantaloons, which had been made for a man half his size. He assumed a most dignified air, and, scowling at me, said, "Ha! ha! white man no kill gorilla. Gorilla kill he." The fool, I thought, was assuredly drunk again. Then he made for a raised daïs, and placed himself on a block of wood, in lieu of a chair; the musicians and sword-bearer ranging themselves around him.

Between the two trees I have mentioned, a strong stockade had been erected. I could see my guns were resting up against the mud walls of a house not far off. "Oh! if I could but get at them, I'd astonish the niggers," I mentally thought, for I had my pockets full of cartridges. Afterwards I heard that the chief, emulous of my success in the sporting line, had that day fired the 8-bore, and had been knocked head over heels, thus the guns were tabooed; so out of the four barrels, three were still loaded, as the natives were afraid to meddle with them after seeing the disaster which had befallen their king.

Three taps of a drum were now given; there was a great surging to and fro of the crowd, which opened up, and some twenty men came forth dragging along a huge gorilla, which they thrust into the stockade, at the same time cleverly released the ropes which bound him, instantly shutting the gates to. Almost immediately afterwards poor Blue Ruin was dragged to the front. He struggled in vain, there were too many for him to contend against, and it would have been better had he husbanded his strength, instead of uselessly expending it. "Oh! master!" cried the poor fellow, "what I say? We live to die, we live to die."

The gate of the stockade was partially opened, and the Kruboy thrust in. I could see all that went on. The *anthropoid* was emaciated, looked sickly in face, and had a large swelling under the left ribs, which, in a man, would represent an enlarged spleen. He was nearly six feet high, had he stood upright, he would have been that fully. His *vis-à-vis*, Blue Ruin, was fully six feet three inches, and modelled like an Achilles or Hercules, but his power was useless, for the poor fellow was half dead with fright, and did nothing but bewail his fate. The ape eyed him for a few minutes, and then crouching somewhat, propelling himself by his feet and fore arms, his knuckles doubled up, the weight resting on them, he advanced on the African. "Look out, Blue Ruin!" I cried, "hit him on the lump under his ribs with all your might." But I might just as well have spoken to a monument, as to the poor frightened creature. The man and ape closed. I shall never forget the horrid sight. In less time than it takes me to tell the tale, my poor boy was torn asunder by the gorilla, and the remains scattered over the enclosure. No sooner was my faithful follower dead than I was seized, and thrown into the compound. I anticipated a similar fate, but I knew that a blow inflicted on an enlarged spleen in man, proves instantly fatal; so I determined to have a fight for dear life. My antagonist was greatly blown by his exertions, and did not attack me at once. This enabled me to swing about my arms, and so get back circulation, which had been impeded in them by having been tied so long together. Now these *anthropoids* rend not only with their fore feet or arms, but by their hind ones

as well. The great thing for me to do would be to avoid the first rush, hit out for the enlarged spleen, and repeat the same tactics. The brute's rush was weak. I dodged under his forearm, as he tried to seize me as he had done Blue Ruin, and with all my might I let him have it right and left below the ribs, at the same time jumping aside. The gorilla staggered forward a pace or two, blood poured from his mouth and nostrils, and almost instantly the giant brute fell dead.

The king and people were paralysed with astonishment, and I did not give them time to recover, but thrusting aside the fastenings of the gate, rushed out. The people fled like sheep, but the chief remained rooted to his seat, so I seized a rifle, gave a few bounds forward, and grasped the sword of state, and with it clove the treacherous villain to the chin. Into the ruck of the savages, right and left, I emptied both barrels as they dispersed in one direction, while I ran off in another, taking my two guns with me. I was not pursued. The death of the king, and the flight of his subjects, had such an effect on those who had the remainder of my followers in charge, that they released them, and also took to their heels. In a couple of days we were reunited, and I shot enough game to keep us alive; so on the ninth day got to my boat, and four days afterwards to Bonga.

We did not delay in preparing a punitive expedition, and returned in force; but the gang had fled, leaving all their goods behind them. The vultures had picked the bones of the chief, the Kruboy, and the ape clean, and we found the remains of

two other natives, probably shot by me when I fired into the ruck of them. We burnt the village, buried the remains of poor Blue Ruin, and collected the skeleton of the *anthropoid.* The king's head I kept as a memento of my wonderful escape.

I heard afterwards that the neighbouring tribes had seized the fugitives from the village when my adventure became known, and had sold them into slavery. So the only thing I had to regret was the death of the Kruboy; but a good "dash" reconciled his relatives to his loss. I was shortly afterwards attacked by the African fever, and had to leave that part of the country, which I have no ambition to revisit.

CHAPTER XIV.

ESCAPE FROM HYDROPHOBIA.

After being relieved at Rajahmundry, I was returning to head-quarters at Vizianagram. My guns I had sent on as the season for shooting was past. We halted for a day at Juggumpett. The weather was sultry and there were only two beds, or rather cots, available in the traveller's bungalow. Dragging these into the verandah, I put our mattrasses on them for my wife and children, whilst I threw some razies on the floor for myself.

During the day there had been some commotion in camp, for a pony lent to one of our native officers by the Maharajah of Vizianagram had been bitten by a jackal, and several of the villagers had suffered also in the same way, but I never gave the matter a serious thought. It was a bright night, for the moon was at the full. At that time I was as hard as nails, having been constantly shooting and rowing, and had acquired a habit of sleeping with one arm over my head. This position stretching the muscles of the back. A very large Sussex spaniel and a pointer I had with me, had made their bed at the further end of the verandah. About 11 P.M. I was awoke with a sensation of a red

hot needle being thrust into my back, near the junction of the neck. With a howl I jumped up and found a jackal standing over me. The pillow I seized and commenced to bolster the brute, in the meanwhile it trying to get at my legs. My wife and children seeing me fighting, as it were, air only, for the jackal being on the further side of me, they could not see it, thought I had gone mad and begun to yell too. This disturbed the dogs who rushed in, rolled over the jackal, and sent him flying, but passing where the servants were asleep, it bit two, a horse-keeper and a grass cutter. My own wound was very superficial as only a drop or two of blood came from it. My dogs, I am glad to say, were not injured. My night shirt and the skin of my back, especially near the junction of the neck, which was well stretched, had saved me, for none of the virus had entered; but it was very different with the two poor natives, who, three parts naked, had nothing to intervene between the poison and their wounds. I at once sent for the native dresser, who washed and cauterised the injuries and bound them up. Early the next morning the jackal again turned up, but this time it was mobbed and killed by the Sepoys. On examination it turned out to be tailless. Both the natives who had been bitten died a few months afterwards in the civil dispensary at Waltair of hydrophobia. Six months after that we were *en route* to Bimlipatam to embark for Burma. It was a pitch dark night, made darker by the shade of the huge banyan and india-rubber trees lining each side of the road we were marching over. Suddenly there was a yell, a scramble, and a bandsman was knocked over, his instrument broken, and the whole column brought to a standstill. I was

on a very valuable Arab, and the beast that had attacked us was a pony of the Maharajah's, lent to a native officer; so, dismounting, I sent my charger to the rear, where the head-quarter staff were grouped together. Imparting the cause of disturbance to the commandant and obtaining his permission to go ahead with a file of men, I opened up our communications. The road and the sides of the road were blocked by camp followers, the relatives of the Sepoys who were accompanying the regiment to wish them good-bye; in fact, there were more followers than fighting men. We had gone but a short distance when there was another rush, and the pony knocked down an old woman and *worried* her, and then retreated, so I ordered bayonets to be fixed, told the people to halt and went ahead. In five minutes the brute was upon us again, but the men were steady, received it on their bayonets, and killed it. We found that it was the identical pony bitten at Juggumpett. He, too, had become mad. What became of the old woman I never heard, as I left the regiment very shortly afterwards.

CHAPTER XV.

AN EXCITING DAY'S SPORT.

THE great object of late years on the part of gun-makers has been to so construct the barrels of the ordinary fowling-piece that they shall throw the greatest number of shots in a given space at a certain distance, and for this purpose there are *chokes* and *modified chokes;* that is, the muzzle is contracted and under the barrel at the breech end is engraved, "Not for ball." This is all very well for sport in a country where no dangerous animals exist, but it is very different in the wilds of India or in Africa. Our forefathers killed as much game as neatly and as far as the best of modern sportsmen. To realise that, one has only to read the diary of Colonel P. Hawker, lately published. Why we should require chokes I don't know. I have ever found that a good cylinder killed quite far enough for me, and it has the further advantage that it will carry ball, if required, fairly true to a distance close upon one hundred yards. The Paradox—an invention of Colonel Fosberry, manufactured by the Messrs. Holland, and also, I believe, by Westley Richards, and somewhat imitated under different names by other makers and would-be

inventors—is a very useful weapon, but it is somewhat heavier than an ordinary gun and as long as a true cylinder fowling-piece, shoots dead up to fifty yards with ball, and fairly well up to one hundred, I am content. There are two top actions, pre-eminent, both good—I allude to Purdey's and Westley Richards', the latter for preference. When I had heavy rifles constructed for shooting big game, Messrs. Westley Richards were the only makers who would construct them on the top-snap action; the others refused, as they said such an action was unsafe; but as I used the rifles made by that eminent firm for years, firing heavy charges of six and seven drachms of black powder, and never found them fail, I can only conclude that they are not only safe, but by far the handiest. From the days of my griffinage I have made a practice of carrying a few bullets in my pocket. In the old muzzle-loading days I had bullets neatly sewn up in thin cloth and well greased. Now, of course I carry a few cartridges loaded with ball in place of shot. In a hot climate a light, serviceable weapon is a desideratum. For stalking antelope and deer a man would be differently armed of course, but for ordinary sport in jungly places, you seldom see your game much further than fifty yards, and often much closer.

Loqua Ghat, in Assam, opposite to Tezpore, is a well-known place for large and small game. My work, and if the truth be told inclination, often took me there, and many a tough encounter have I had there with rhinoceros, buffalo, and tiger. The small-game shooting was also very good; there were the black and kyah partridges, Florikan peacocks, jungle-

fowl, and in the season, in one locality, thousands of snipe—but this I kept to myself; had it become known, men from Tezpore would have been shooting over it constantly, and the sport would have been soon ruined. The ground consisted along the borders of a bheel situated in a natural depression, about a mile from my bungalow, which I occasionally visited, and many a day's sport have I had there amongst the long-bills. Now and then I found a solitary or double snipe there, a rare bird anywhere, especially in the plains. If I went very early, jungle-fowl would be about searching for ants' nests in the open, and amongst the trees peafowl were also to be found. Some time before the adventure I am about to relate occurred, there had been some cultivation, but it had been abandoned as deer and other ruminants took more than their fair share of it; in fact, in one year the cultivators applied for a remission of tax, as they had not saved a bushel of grain out of the fifty or sixty acres under plant. Being in the neighbourhood, I was asked by the Deputy Commissioner to inspect the cultivated area and to report upon it. I found the grain trampled down, the paddy-fields a mass of pits caused by rhinoceros, elephants, buffaloes, and deer. The marvel was, not that these animals had helped themselves to such a, to them, unwonted luxury, but that anybody should have chosen such a spot for cultivation. The taxes were remitted, and the experiment was given up. The land thus left fallow I found swarming with snipe, and taking a few men as beaters, I soon got my old Westley Richards gun, the first breech-loader I ever possessed, at work. I generally carried thirty cartridges in a

belt, and in a side pocket seven (for I believe in odd numbers) ball-cartridges, thinking I might put up a hog-deer or two, but never anticipating such an exciting day's sport as I was lucky enough to come across. My shikarie also carried a lot of extra cartridges in a waterproof bag.

The bheel was an extensive one, probably half a mile across and a mile and a half long. The south and east faces had been cultivated—near the water's edge, and extending a couple of hundred yards, the plain was slightly inundated and covered with rushes and dhoop grass, beyond that commenced the whilom paddy-fields. On the northern and western sides the land ran in a ridge, that on the former face was close to the bheel, but on the latter the interval consisted of patches of long grass and impenetrable bushes of wild roses; just the sort of place of which wading animals like the bubali and rhinoceros are fond. I commenced shooting on the southern face. It was rather early, for snipe lie best during the heat of the day; but they were seldom disturbed, and though they got up rather wild at first, they pitched again within fifty yards of where they rose. So my bag filled rapidly. The walking was good; I scarcely ever sank over my ankles. It was ideal snipe ground. I had beaten over the greater part of the south and east faces when a solitary snipe got up. These birds are double the size of the ordinary scolopax, and are barred on the breast and fly far more slowly, but in my anxiety to kill I clean missed it, but marked it down near a rose-bush close to the water on the north face; leaving the men behind I went alone to bag this rare specimen. I was getting within shot, expecting it to

rise any moment, when I heard a noise in a patch of grass which attracted my attention. It was some large beast; I at once withdrew the shot and inserted ball-cartridges, and advanced cautiously, with both barrels at full cock and ready for any emergency. As I drew near the reeds a tiger bounded out on one side and was promptly met by a bull-buffalo, who charged full pelt from a clump of long grass; the bovine was up to his knees almost in water, the feline on comparatively dry ground. The largest of the wild cats will seldom attack any of the bubali, and only if very hard pressed for food. But here deer abounded; the whole plain was full of the swamp-deer, there were, besides, plenty of wild hog, and *Cervus porcinus* also were plentiful; so no tiger need have been sufficiently hungry to attempt the life of any buffalo, far less that of a very large bull. But that he had been stalking the bovine there was no doubt, and his opponent, from the prompt way he met him, must have been aware of what was coming. At the last moment the tiger's heart failed him, and after bounding forward a few yards and uttering a deep growl or two, finding that he could not intimidate his adversary, turned aside to avoid the collision. On the impulse of the moment I let fly behind his shoulder with the right barrel, with the result that the tiger rolled right over. I then rapidly fired at the buffalo and made a lucky fluke, for the bullet went crashing into his ear and he fell dead! But on turning towards where the tiger ought to have been, lo! he was gone. Reloading, I took up the trail, but the beast had taken refuge in some tall grass. It was an isolated patch and there was not a tree near. It would

have been the act of a fool or a madman to have forced my way in, as I could not see a foot in front of me, and it is not child's play approaching a wounded tiger even in the open, almost certain death in heavy cover. So I beckoned to my shikarie, sent him back to the camp for an elephant, and told the other beaters to get up the few trees scattered beyond, and to watch that nothing sneaked away without being marked. After kicking my heels about in no sweet temper for a couple of hours, only an unreliable elephant with my howdah on it appeared. All the rest, the mahout said, had gone for their churah (green food), not thinking that they would be wanted. My rifles were ready in their racks, the ammunition in the box in front of the howdah. So I lost no time in mounting, and promising the driver the full reward if he kept his animal steady and enabled me to bag the quarry, told him to go straight into the patch of long grass into which I had traced the feline. The mahout was a Mussulman, and as such a fatalist; he had seen me kill much game; very few of these men are cowards, and if they have confidence in the shooting powers of their master they are almost foolhardy. I did not doubt the man, but the question was, How would the elephant behave? He was a big powerful tusker; I had never had a howdah on him, as I prefer koonkies to shoot off, as they are smoother in their paces and more accustomed to wild beasts, but he had often been out and at the death of all kinds of game. Like most others of his peers he was very uncertain; at times he was bold as a lion, and at others would run from a hare; but on this occasion he went into the long

extensive, and we beat it through and through without discovering any signs of our quarry. Yet he must be somewhere near, for the markers declared he had not moved. We had avoided two or three heavy rose-bushes because they were almost impenetrable and such a mass of thorns, that even the pachydermatous hide of an elephant was not proof against them. So bidding the mahout force his way through every brake, we got through a couple, not without many protestations on the part of our gee-gee. But when we came to the third, and the worst of the three, he steadily refused to negotiate it, and when hard pressed became obstinate and commenced to shake himself, and very nearly sent me, the howdah and the guns flying. I was getting savage, and vented my rage on the mahout, who brought his ancus down with all his might on Behemoth's cranium with a whack which could have been heard a quarter of a mile off, and ought to have given the recipient a headache for a week. Still he would not go into the bush; but we were saved all further trouble by the tiger rushing out. The elephant spun round to bolt, but the feline was too quick for him and sprang on to his hind quarters and commenced to clamber up rather too close to the howdah to be pleasant. Our steed went off at full speed—how he did run to be sure; I had no idea he possessed such a nice turn of speed. I was rather upset by this sudden onslaught, and the pace we were going at. The tiger had his head close to the back seat of the howdah and intended going for me, but I am well accustomed to riding elephants, whether at a sedate step or at a gallop. (It is ambling of course, for no elephant can gallop, but they can go



"A TIGER BOUNDED OUT ON ONE SIDE AND WAS PROMPTLY MET BY A BULL-BUFFALO."

at their own pace nearly as fast as an ordinary horse can go his fastest.) It did not take me more than a couple of seconds to turn round over the back of the howdah; with the barrel almost touching the tiger's cranium, I fired, and he fell off all in a heap.

I was rid of the enemy it is true, but my steed was uncontrollable, and continued his mad career through jungle, bush, and long grass towards a quarter which I knew from previous experience to be a mass of nasty, narrow, deep ravines, masked by long grass which effectually concealed all signs of them; and once there, good-bye to one's belongings in this world, for nothing could save us from a broken neck. The mahout did his best; he drew back his ancus with all his might, the point penetrated almost to the bone, but it had not the least effect—the poor frightened beast was beyond being restrained even by the acute pain. As a last resort he hung the driving hook on to one of the rings through which the ropes pass which keep the howdah in its place, and putting his two hands over the elephant's eyes blindfolded him! Just then there was a fearful stumble; I thought our end had come, that we were falling either into a nullah or over a prostrate giant forest tree, but the most unearthly cries convinced me that we had toppled over a rhinoceros, and were in the midst of a lot more. The cowardly steed was transformed in a moment; he did not know which way to run, and pulled up and enabled me to empty my battery of four heavy rifles into as many surrounding rhinoceros, all inclined to resent our intrusion. Two I dropped dead, and the others went away the worse for their visitations. In fact, this immense tusker was

paralysed with funk! So, though I came out snipe-shooting, I wound up by killing a tiger (for we found him stone dead), a buffalo, and two rhinoceros. Meat is always welcome in camp, so being mounted, I made a *détour* and killed three marsh- or swamp-deer (two does and one fine stag), all so rolling in fat that when hit lumps of fat nearly as big as my fist came out of the bullet holes. Going homewards I thought of the solitary snipe, walked it up on the elephant and bagged it. Thus ended an eventful day.



"THE ELEPHANT SPUN ROUND TO BOLT, BUT THE FELINE WAS TOO QUICK FOR HIM, AND SPRANG ON TO HIS HIND QUARTERS."

CHAPTER XVI.

THREE YEARS WITH MURDERERS ON A SOLITARY ISLAND.

I was directed to undertake the construction of a lighthouse in the Bay of Bengal. The site chosen was Table Island, north of the great Coco. When I reached *Haingyie*, a large island at the entrance of the Bassein River, I found that the schooner which should have been there to take me on had gone on two days before, with a load of bricks and twenty-four convicts.

Colonel A. F., the superintendent of lighthouses, had asked me to meet him on Table Island by a certain day, of which only two days remained. I did not know what to do. These seas in the fine weather are smooth enough, but the currents are very strong. A lighter attached to the Alguada Reef Lighthouse, was available. I asked the commander if he would take me. He demurred at first, as he said he had no instruments to take the latitude and longitude (and I found afterwards that if he had had them, he did not know how to use them). I showed him a chart, and said the wind was fair. We had first the Preparis shoal to guide us, and on losing sight of that the Cocos would be visible, and I would take all

responsibilities on my shoulders. After hesitating a little, on my saying I would take the lighter and go alone if he was afraid to accompany me, he assented, though with a very bad grace. We started with a good breeze and were off the shoal by daylight, but there the wind failed us. We both thought we should be to the west instead of to the east of the Preparis, and did all we could to get westward, but signally failed, as in the absence of winds the currents were too strong for us; and it was just as well, as we ascertained afterwards, that we had failed in our endeavour, as there was a barrier of rocks beyond which we should not have been able to weather, and on which we would probably have been wrecked. About 10 A.M. the wind sprang again, and we went on merrily. We sighted Table Island just as we lost all bearings of the reef and got to our destination by 9 P.M., where we found the schooner at anchor. Early next morning I landed, and explored my future abode. There was no fresh water on it. It was very hilly and densely covered with bamboo and tree jungle. Its length and breadth, including Slipper Island, was all but a mile each way. There was nothing to shoot there, cocoa-nuts were few and far between and existed only on the south-east face. It was not an inviting place to live in with life convicts (all murderers, who had escaped hanging by the skin of their teeth) for the space of three years. But I am a bit of a fatalist, and believe that sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. In the afternoon the steamer with the superintendent arrived. After a brief interview, I was told to land all the

bricks and to do the best I could during the six weeks before the breaking out of the monsoon, and then to go back to Haingyie and prepare maps, plans, estimates, &c., &c., for submission to the supreme government. The steamer took the lighter in tow and departed before dark. I soon landed the bricks and sent back the schooner for more. I was then left alone with twenty-four murderers and two Madras boys; the convicts had each a dhaw, I had a gun and a revolver, but no guard. I had no trouble with the convicts, all Burmese and Shans of the very worst character. Whilst they carried the bricks up the hillside, away from the sea spray, I surveyed the island, took cross sections, and fixed upon the highest spot, which I found was on the south face, for erecting the lighthouse. The schooner went backwards and forwards twice before there were indications that the rains were not far off, and on her last trip, I took my people with me and returned to Haingyie. I then took leave to Calcutta, submitted the plans, &c., and then went off for two months to Ootacamund and the west coast. I returned, and this time I made a start from Moulmein, taking with me one hundred life convicts, half being Burmese, Shans, and Karens, and the other half Madrassies. I applied for a military guard, but it was refused me, so I picked up nine men from the streets of Moulmein and enlisted them as burkandazies or policemen, and armed them with old cutlasses. I also took twenty-five free labourers, as bricklayers, &c., and a quantity of material for building sheds for ourselves. The police I found useless as a guard, as the Burmese cared nothing for

them, and I employed them as workmen. I had one European with me, a splendid specimen of a Scotchman, a master quarryman by trade. He could barely read or write, but was thoroughly master of his trade; with a few blows of his hammer he would break a block of stone to the requisite size and shape, whereas our native stonecutters would take twenty hours to do the same. Moreover, he could carry and place in position a stone which four ordinary natives could not move. He was perfectly sober and to be depended upon to carry out his duties. So I placed him on Table Island with the convicts, and took up my own abode on the north end of the Great Coco Island, where there was a natural bay that served as harbour for a boat, and fresh water, which was wanting on the opposite Island. There had formerly been a settlement on the Great Coco, but it had totally failed. The Europeans and Eurasians with one exception died, and the sole survivor was only rescued in time. When the settlers took possession of this isle, they took numerous pigs, both English and Chinese; these soon ran wild and were very numerous when I was there. They were then still parti-coloured, but very large and very fierce, and as they lived almost exclusively on the fallen cocoanuts they were delicious eating, and as fat as butter. As a place of residence the Great Coco is not half bad. It is about seven miles long, and about two in breadth. The shores to the north, east, and south are low, covered densely with cocoa palms to a depth of a quarter to a half mile. The west face has a ridge

with trees, the branches of which all lean to the east, showing the force of the south-west monsoon. This island is a great rendezvous for the edible turtle, which throng to the west face, and would be doubtless as numerous on the east and south faces were it not for the iguana lizards, who dig up their nests and destroy hundreds of thousands of eggs. I used to turn a good many, made an artificial pond for them, and sent them on to Rangoon as opportunity afforded. There was no lack of fish. The Burmese killed as many as we could consume by using torches at night. There were large crayfish, conger eels, and crabs. The islands were infested with the deadly bungarus or banded snake, which was found under stones and rocks on the sea beach, and adders inland. There were a few curlew, thick-kneed plover, a few—very few—snipe, plenty of teal in the fresh water bheel, and thousands of imperial and Nicobar pigeons.

When the last settler left there were a good many fowls and ducks left behind, but not one remained; they had all been destroyed by the big lizards.

The poultry I took over also suffered greatly from the ravages of these monitors. The root of every mangrove had oysters adhering to it; not the little things we are accustomed to, but fellows as large as an ordinary plate, and a couple of bivalves sufficed for a currie for two people. Sponges were washed ashore daily and real pearl oysters existed; but nearly every oyster in the Bay of Bengal has a small pearl in it. I had fully a thousand, but they were all small and all opaque, and I either lost them, thinking them of

covered that all pearls when first extracted are dull and require polishing before they assume the appearance of the gem of commerce. That rare bird the megapod also visited the island, crossing over, I presume, from the Nicobars, where it is resident. The pigs were so numerous, that by erecting a screen and spreading broken cocoa-nuts for them, they came in dozens, and on eight different occasions I killed two at a shot. These were killed and served out as food to the people. For sport I used to roam the jungles, and killed a good many boars—one with tushes nine and three-quarter inches long—and some fine fat sows and sucklings, which are delicious eating. Altogether, whilst I lived on that island, existence was not so bad. I had to take or send breakers of water across daily, and used to go over myself nearly every day, as the work was then of the simplest, consisting of collecting materials and cutting stone, but the tide rip was very dangerous, and once I was carried down and took eight hours to get to my destination, which was barely three miles across in a bee-line. So I built a house in a grove of cocoa-nut palms on Table Island, on the south face, and leaving a tindal and a crew consisting of six free Madrassies and two of the best of the Burmese convicts, together with a month's rations, two muskets, and some ammunition, on the Coco, I crossed over and took up my abode on the lesser Isle; occasionally I used to go back to turn turtle and shoot game for the larder, my only companions being the convicts. I used to sleep out in the jungles on a remote beach with them without fear, and they never took advantage of my defenceless position. I treated them fairly; I told them they could kill me

any moment they choose, as they were all armed and I but seldom, and then only when out shooting, but that they would be no gainers, for there were many who would willingly take my place and treat them far worse than I did. I fed them liberally; each man's rations, including even a little tobacco, were issued daily. Each man had an allotted task, not too heavy and just sufficient to keep him in health, and directly that was completed he had the rest of the day to himself, and as there were no means of escape from Table Island, they wandered where they pleased, supplementing their rations by rats which they caught in traps, and by fish which they caught, sometimes in trawl-nets (of which I had taken a couple), but principally by torchlight. When the high tides set in Slipper Island would be separated by a shallow strait in which thousands of mullets used to come. I tried to catch them by stretching a net across, but the fish, as soon as they discovered what it was, used to leap over it, and I took to shooting them flying! There were many varieties of fish of every kind, and many of these most gorgeous. A common one, no use for food, was the sea porcupine, which inflates itself like a balloon; one extraordinary fish we got, had *three* distant hooks in its tail! The shoots of the bamboo, and a growth near the crown of a palm tree, commonly called a cabbage, when cooked are not only very good eating but nutritious. During my first season everything went perfectly smoothly. We got to know the men and the convicts became used to us. I scarcely had to strike a single man. The Madrassies gave far more trouble than the other

violence, such as dacoity with manslaughter, murder, and the like; but one or two, I may say more, of the men, according to their ideas, had been unjustly punished. To send a man across the Kala Panie, one who is not one of our subjects, to the Andamans for life because he has killed a man in a tribal feud, or to confine another because he has killed the paramour of his young wife, which is no offence according to their ideas and laws, they consider unjust. Look at the case of the man who stabbed the Earl of Mayo. He was an Afghan; he had been a domestic servant of the Deputy Commissioner of Peshawar, had played with his children and bore the best of characters; but because he had slain openly a foe, he was condemned for life to penal servitude, which was to him a thousand times worse than death. To escape that existence he deprived the most popular Viceroy we have had in India of his life, not for revenge or because he owed him any grudge, but simply that he himself might be killed. Another, a strongly-built Burman—a young man whom I trusted and who was the first to rush to warn me when the convicts afterwards mutinied—was a lifer; he had avenged his honour by killing a man who had seduced his wife. Does any one imagine that either he, or any one of his race, considered *that* a crime? I for one think the man was perfectly justified.

We had two or three Shan chiefs who had been concerned in dacoities; awful villains no doubt, but none of these races can refrain from robbery by violence if they see their way to doing it; it is done as much for a lark as for filthy lucre, and they consider the punishment of transportation not only

excessive but cruel. As I said before, I seldom used the cane, but when I had occasion to do so, I let them see that I was not in play. Going up the hill-side, I found one of these Shan chiefs sitting down smoking instead of carrying his allotted task of bricks, so I gave him a cut as I passed. He was up in a moment, drew the dhaw from behind, where he had it stuck, and would doubtless have cut me down in his passion had I given him time to do so. I was slightly above him. I hit out straight from the shoulder, caught him with all my might between the eyes, and sent him rolling down the hill. I did not give him time to get back on his feet, but pinning him to the ground by a foot on the neck, which half-throttled him, I laid into his bare back and all but bare posterior with all my might and gave him an unmerciful thrashing. I then sent for the convict blacksmith and put double irons on the Shan's legs, and gave him a double task a day to do, and he became as meek as a lamb, and was released in a month; but for all that, he was one of those who escaped afterwards. I had brought cats to keep down the rats, but they disappeared one by one, until there was but one left, and she was my sole hope, as she was expecting a litter ere long but a wretched Madrassie, a brute as fat as a pig, killed and ate her.

I had always given out that any man caught killing a cat would get three dozen, and, as the culprit had been caught red-handed, I tied him up and with my own hand I gave him three dozen as hard as I could lay on, on his bare b——t, and put him on half rations. We had no medicines, except such as I had myself procured, and no medical sub-

ordinate or appliances, so to my numerous avocations were added the doctoring and treating of some one hundred and fifty men. A few died each working season. One was a very painful case. The man suffered from inflammation of the bladder and stoppage of urine; had I had a bougie I might have saved him, but hot fomentations and even blistering failed to relieve him, and he died a lingering death. One season I allowed a middle-aged woman and her daughter to accompany us to set up a shop for the sale of petty articles to the convicts (who, in addition to their rations, were allowed a couple of annas a day), and for some time all went well. One day the two women fell out, and the mother immediately swallowed a large piece of opium and died. This is not an unusual occurrence amongst Burmese. They often thus commit suicide on the slightest squabble. As the schooner was going to Moulmein, I sent the girl back in her, as I did not think it right to keep her when alone amongst so many men.

We had been expecting the plates for the iron tower. They were doomed to misfortune. Some had been lost in the Hooghly, the others were sent me in a Government vessel, commanded by D., a Scotchman, whom I knew well when he commanded a steamer on the Irrawadie. In those days he had a fat wife, as Scotch as himself and very jealous of her husband, who was not an Adonis to look at.

She, poor woman, had been dead about a year when D. arrived with his cargo, and he had on board as passengers K. and his wife and the latter's sister. Poor D. was dreadfully smitten, and could do nothing but follow the spinster about

I had fathomed all the sea round and had erected a pair of shears, and showed D. the exact spot where his boats could come, but only at high water. I warned him that if he attempted to land the heavy plates, some of them over a ton in weight, his boats would be wrecked. But his *inamorata* did not like the Cocos; she hated the island, and the vessel worse, and D., to oblige her to get away, would work his boats at all hours. The consequence was that in three days he had not a boat left. He then tried to land the plates on a raft, but that turned a turtle and went adrift; but I saved it, and some twenty plates which had sunk, at the neap tides; and off D. went to Port Blair and reported that the site chosen by me was useless for landing purposes—he got boats there, but even then he managed to sink several. I had to send my schooner, and she brought all that had been landed. The skipper also fished up those in the sea, and we landed all without losing a single boat. When on shore, these plates had to be dragged up a sheer cliff 110 feet high, but we got them all up without breaking one. Had any fallen, they would have been splintered to pieces, as they were only of cast-iron. In her last voyage, to my great annoyance, McG., the commander of the schooner, brought over from Port Blair a European woman. I knew her by character very well; there had already been a good deal of scandal about her. She was a woman under thirty, but, with the exception of being white, I could see no other attractions. She walked quietly into my apartments and told me she had come to spend a month with me. I was very angry; I am afraid I told her to go to the devil. I sent for the

commander and walked into him handsomely, and told him, as he had brought her, he might keep her until the arrival of the mail steamer, as I would have none of her. She found her tongue, treated me to a good deal of Billingsgate, and said I could not appreciate a white woman when I got the chance. I cut her short, handed her over to the quarryman and a writer I then had, and saw no more of her, but sent her back to the Andamans. I afterwards got several letters from her husband, accusing me of having been intimate with her, and wanting blackmail; but I had taken good care not to be left alone with her for a minute, and I told him to go to—— a very hot place. She, in collusion with her husband, had played these tricks before in Port Blair, and had caused great mischief there; but although not then thirty, I was an old bird, not to be caught with chaff, and I knew all about her long before she had the cheek to pay me a visit.

It was my third season. The men had been left at the Andamans during each monsoon and were always (apparently) glad to get back to the Cocos, for they were very differently treated by me there to what they had been by the warders at the convict establishment. I had dug numerous wells on Table Island, but the water was not drinkable; so I got across daily twenty-five breakers of water. To fetch these up the hill, Reid used to march down a party of twenty-five Burmese and Shans and twenty-five Madrassies, varying the party each day, and only telling them off at the last moment. One day the boat was later than usual. We had to unload her the minute she arrived and to put in the empties, to enable her to

return to the Great Coco without delay. Reid told off the men, directed them to go on, and he would follow in a moment. The Burmese took the bamboos and ran down the hill. The Madrassies were following with the empties, and Reid leisurely bringing up the rear, never suspecting an *emeute.* I was bathing in my own hut. The Shans and Burmese, directly they got near, gave a *haroosh* and rushed at the Lascars, who, instead of pushing off into deep water, jumped overboard! The two Burmese who remained tried no doubt to push off, but one man got a bad cut over the head; the other, seeing his comrade's fate, cast his lot in with the mutineers. They seized the boat, jumped into her, and calling out that they were going round to kill me, off they went. The wounded Burman ran over to me, warning me to arm, which I very quickly did. I had four double rifles, a smooth-bore, and a revolver. So giving some of these to the burkandazies, to carry, and armed with one, I ran down to the beach, hoping to see the runaways, for I never believed they would have the temerity to attack me; but they crossed over direct, seized the month's rations which had been sent there but the day before, and taking the two muskets and cartridges, gallantly put to sea and steered for the Tenasserim coast. I was in a precious predicament. The schooner was away. I had no other boat. There was no water fit to drink on Table Island. Now the distance to the mainland was considerable and the boat was not over large, and besides twenty-five breakers of water it had a month's rations for seven men and twenty-six adults. Now Englishmen under similar circumstances would have been useless; they could not have

steered their course; but every Burman knows enough of the stars to guide himself by them at night, and these men made the coast in seven days, and scattered. The schooner arrived four days after the escape of the convicts. I sent her off, after procuring sufficient water to last me for a week, to Rangoon, and at the same time I wrote off to Calcutta for a condensing machine. I reported what I had done to O., the chief engineer—about the most sensible fellow I ever served under, and who never wrote a letter or gave the least trouble as long as he saw a man was not only capable of doing his work but did it. The amount was beyond my own sanctioning, but after our late experience he agreed with me that it would not do to trust to a boat to get water from the larger island. Most of these escaped convicts were captured and sent back to me. But three of the Shan and Karen chiefs got away for a time, and two were never accounted for. I believe they got back to their own states. The man I particularly allude to was a Karen. For his apprehension a reward of Rs. 200 was offered, dead or alive. Sundry peelers had tried to seize him, for he went about pretty openly, but he had invariably proved too much for them, had cut them down and escaped; but for some reason or another he would not leave that locality, though he might have got back to Karennee easily.

But one day two Christian Karens out hunting with some twenty savage dogs came across him, and, solicitous of gaining the reward, called upon him to surrender. He laughed at them and retreated to a bamboo clump, cut down a male reed, pointed one end, and then holding his dalweel or fighting sword

in his right hand and the spear in the other, cried out, "Try and take me." The two men, knowing the convict's desperate character, consulted together. One ran off to the village for help, whilst the other watched the man and surrounded him with the hounds. If he attempted to move the dogs flew at him; and they are a cross between gray and ordinary hounds, they are very powerful and fed on raw meat, are also very savage. So the poor wretch could neither attack nor retreat. The second man soon returned with several villagers, one armed with a flint musket and the other with a cross-bow. The former, calling upon the dacoit to give himself up, cocked his gun, but that individual only laughed, and exposing his chest and arms, and calling their attention to various wart-like excrescences, under which bits of gold and silver had been inserted and the skin allowed to heal over, called out, "Look at me; don't you see that I am invulnerable?" The man with the musket essayed three times to fire, and each time the weapon missed fire. The outlaw was exultant, saying, "Did I not tell you so?" The cross-bowman then fitted an arrow, and saying, "You may be invulnerable as far as a gun is concerned, but I'll see what I can do," let fly. The arrow sped true, and penetrated the man's broad chest, but with a smile he plucked it out, and showing it said, "Why it has only gone in a span! Do you think that will hurt me?" But inward bleeding had set in, for in a few seconds he fell down, and the assailants rushed on and secured him, but he expired before they got to the village. Thus died a valiant villain.

We were generally taken off the island by the 24th May at the latest, for during the monsoon it is almost impossible either to land on these islets or to get off them. I had imported 400 gallon zinc and iron tanks, in which I stored all our grain, and was as careful with it as possible, but during my last season there we were nearly starving. We had grain to last us till the 30th May. We should have been relieved not later than Her Majesty's natal day, but it came and went and not a vestige of the steamer. The schooner was laid up in Rangoon, and though I knew the steamer had gone to Calcutta, I fully expected her back, especially as there were every indications of the rains setting in early. So getting anxious, I put the men on half-rations. I don't think the Burmese and their cognate races minded much, for they redoubled their exertions, caught plenty of fish, &c., dug up wild yams, and were in no way downcast; but the Madrassies cried all day, and swore they had been sent there to starve. Vessels passed us daily. I had Marryat's universal code and all the requisite flags. I hung up "We are starving," and also fired guns and rockets and burnt blue lights; but the ships, although they passed quite closely, and we could see the people on board examining our signals through telescopes, and knew that we were building a lighthouse for the use of all the navies of the world, took no notice of us or our petition, but went on their way. Most of these ships were American, sailing under the German or Hamburg flag, for the *Alabama* had cleared the seas of northern vessels. Neither did they help us, nor did they report our signals on arrival at Rangoon and Bassein, and there we were left to our fate. At last,

when I had but three days' half-rations left, a country vessel laden with rice did pull up. I had fortunately enough money, and bought sufficient provisions to last us a month. Towards the end of June the steamer did arrive. She had to lie fully three or four miles off on the east face; we were on the south-west. So I had to transport all the convicts, free workmen, a lot of sick, all appliances, extra stores, &c., round to the only place where the boats could come. This was no easy task, for the beach was a mass of rocks and the sea beating over it, and there was not a vestige of a road anywhere. There were only two boats, and they could only make two trips during the day, and then were dangerously crowded. It poured from day-light to dark. We were soaking wet. We lit huge fires and took off and dried our garments one by one, but they were soon saturated again. We had nothing to eat; all the things were packed away; but about 3 P.M., being famished, I broke open two or three boxes and managed to find one of Crosse and Blackwell's plum-puddings and some pints of beer; and on this Reid, the third mate of the vessel, and I made our first meal. Just at dark I got the last of the people and stores on a boat, most inconveniently crowded, considering the heavy seas we had to encounter to get to the steamer, which was pitching and rolling about, threatening to part with her cable every moment. We were all drenched of course, but for that we did not care much, but what I regretted most was that some half a dozen of the rats of the island, which I had in cages, intending to send them to Mr. Blyth, the curator of the Calcutta Museum, were all drowned. I let loose on the Great Coco for the use of future

visitors, a nannie-goat, a he-goat, and a couple of kids. I visited the Little Coco on one occasion. It was a miniature Great Coco. I shot a couple of pigs there and some Nicobar pigeons, and saw several puff adders.

At times I sent over twenty thousand young sprouting cocoa-nut trees to the Andamans to be planted, and they throve for awhile, but some years afterwards a fearful storm destroyed the greater part of them. When I left the Island in June, 1866, the whole of the works, with the exception of hoisting the lantern, had been completed, and I was to return in November to finish it, and in the meanwhile I applied to Sir A. Phayre for two months' privilege leave, and three months' general in anticipation. So I got on to a P. and O. steamer and revisited England after eighteen years' absence. In the meanwhile the rules had been altered and no general leave could be taken in extension of privilege, so when my two months were up, the Government telegraphed all over India for me, to go to Assam. The climate there was so bad and the discomforts so great that they could not get any of the numerous executive officers sent there to carry on public works to remain, so as I had served willingly for over thirteen years in Burma, and three in the Bay of Bengal, they transferred me to that tea-growing province. On my return I just missed the direct steamer from Madras to Rangoon, so had to go on to Calcutta. There I called upon T., the garrison engineer, who had been a chum of mine in Burma, and the first thing he said was, "Why you are the very man we want! Here is a telegram from W., the under secretary to Government—'Can you tell us where that fellow P. is? We

want him for Assam and cannot hear of him anywhere.'" So I reported myself, and was directed to proceed to Gowhatty and take charge of the Lower Assam division. I protested at being removed from Burma, and both the chief commissioner and chief engineer also wrote, saying that I was the oldest executive officer in the province, and my services were required to complete the lighthouse on the construction of which I had been so long employed. The reply, to my amazement, was that I had volunteered for service in that remote country, and I wrote back indignantly denying having done so, and requesting permission to return to my legitimate work. But I was told I was wanted more in Assam, than on the lighthouse, which required very little doing to complete it, and reminding me that ten years before, during a temporary visit to Calcutta, I had said to Sir R. S., the secretary to Government in the D. P. W., "If ever you want an officer for Assam, remember me." Applicants for service there must have been very few and far between for a memo. of my wishes to be made and entered in the books of that department, and made use of long after I had forgotten the event. I must own, fond of sport as I am and was, I regretted leaving Burma, where I had spent the best years of my life. Game I knew was abundant in the province I had been transferred to, but the people and country were new and unknown; the language was also quite new, being a mixture of Bengali and Assamese. Everything I possessed—guns, rifles, servants—were all in Rangoon, and when I reached Gowhatty there was not a house to go into, and I should have fared badly had not the

personal assistant to the commissioner placed half his at my disposal.

De B., the chief engineer, I liked very much. He took a sensible view of things, and agreed with me that nothing could be done to open out the country without elephants. But just then there was scarcely one of these useful animals to be got. The Bhootan war had expended not only all the greater part of the Government animals, but most of those requisitioned from the zemindars had died.

The commissariat promised us four elephants. When they came, De B. was absent. I saw at once that the beasts were useless, dying in fact.

Two were in an advanced state of zurbad, and the other two showed incipient signs of it. It is a very catching disease, a form of dropsy. Once an elephant has had it, even if he recovers, he is valueless, as he is sure to be attacked with it again and die. So I took it upon myself to send the two first back at once and reported the state of the others. Now De B., a very clever engineer, knew no more about elephants than he knew of the inhabitants of Jupiter. I had had them under me for thirteen years, and was fairly up in all their ailments. Knowing how essential these animals were to us, and how difficult they were to obtain, he begged me not to return the other two, but I urged that our department would only be debited with their cost, as I did not think they could survive a fortnight, and would not be fit for work, if they recovered, for months. He said he must take time to consider. He then left for Tezpore, and wrote to me thence that, trusting to my knowledge of the creatures, if I was still of opinion that they

were useless, I could return them, but before I got his letter both had succumbed.

He wrote to the secretary to the Government of Bengal, for permission to buy four for my division and two for each of the others; but the sum sanctioned was altogether inadequate. A few years back, a good howdah elephant could be purchased for Rs. 400. Small baggage ones were of very little value, and were often given away by the rich zemindars. But the Bhootan war had changed all that; the road from opposite Gowhatty to Rungeah and beyond to the foot of Dewangiri was almost impassable, owing to the dreadful effluvia from the dead beasts, principally elephants, lying about. The price had risen enormously. As De B. could do nothing with the Government, I asked permission to try, and what with letters and telegrams I worried the chief engineer, Bengal, to such an extent, that he at last telegraphed back, "Purchase what you want at the prices quoted," which was an upset of Rs. 2,000 each. I lost no time in acting, for fear the permission might be withdrawn. I bought from B., a tea-planter, a splendid koonkie for Rs. 2,500, paying the excess myself. I bought two others from T., a tea-planter, for Rs. 4,000, giving Rs. 2,500 for one and Rs. 1,500 for the other, which had been cut by a rhinoceros, and though good for baggage was useless for sport. I picked up another for Rs. 1,700. She was very good also for baggage, but a great coward, so I lent her to the survey department in exchange for Luchmie, a very fast staunch koonkie. Being thus well set up, I soon explored the whole country, and as the jungles swarmed with game, I

combined work and sport. I may here say that I worked these four elephants and two of my own for seven years and did not lose one. My successor, no sportsman, fearing the displeasure of the acting commissioner, who, having quarreled with me, had tried to prevent my using these beasts as heretofore, laid them up, using them only now and then. The country had then been thoroughly opened out, and there was not then the same need for those useful beasts as in former days. They soon sickened, and all were dead within a year or fifteen months after my departure. Although I worked these animals well, I saw to their welfare. I had had them fed before me daily, and took care to have the best of mahouts.

As I divided all Government rewards between them, they were very contented. After my departure, finding this portion of their income cease, they left the Government service and took employment with planters and others, who were fond of sport and treated them liberally. The elephants were handed over to inefficient men, no care was taken of them, and they all died as stated.

The "Dangers and Incidents of Foreign Sport" herein detailed have been taken from diaries carefully kept for many years past. Although written in the first person singular, a few of the tales are not the author's, but were related by men in whose veracity every reliance could be placed. Imperfect as they may be—indeed as they must be, when the narrator is not a practised writer—it is hoped they

trophies are of no value save to the winner. Who can paint the feelings that he enjoys, however, as he sits and contemplates a faded skin, or a pair of branching antlers, or the head of one of the *ferœ naturæ*, which have been won after much toil and discomfort and considerable danger? The true sportsman's memory has drunk so deeply of the details, stirring to itself, but valueless to others, that the mere look of the prize suffices to recall the scene." Thus, kind reader, an old shikarrie ponders over the past, and loves to recall the scenes in which he once took a part, and endeavours to portray them for the benefit of others. May they be favourably received!

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