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Hawkeye.

GAME

BY

HAWKEYE,

(MAJOR GENERAL R. HAMILTON.)

DEDICATED TO ALL HIS

FELLOW SPORTSMEN

IN

INDIA.

SECOND EDITION.

MADRAS:
HIGGINBOTHAM AND CO.
By Appointment in India to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and to the Madras University.
1881.

MADRAS
PRINTED BY HIGGINBOTHAM & CO
165, MOUNT ROAD

PUBLISHERS' PREFACE

(TO THE SECOND EDITION.)

THE object had in view by the author, General R. HAMILTON, in his first publication of this little book, has been fully realized by the passing of an Act in 1879, by the Madras Government, for the preservation of game and acclimatised fish on the Nilgiris, and the promulgation of a notification for the observance of "close seasons" in respect of animals, birds and fish. This must be a matter of much gratification to true sportsmen. The "Nilgiris game Act," the law just referred to, is annexed as an "Addendum" to this volume.

But the interest of the book does not end here. It affords pleasant reading for leisure hours. The tale of the author's reminiscences of sporting incidents and of the habits and peculiarities of game, is told in a simple and flowing style and contains much to amuse and instruct. It is on this account that the publishers have ventured on a second edition fully assured that calls for the book will continue unabated so long as the Nilgiris is the centre of attraction to sportsmen in Southern India.

This edition is simply a reprint of the original. Catch-headings on each page, and a very full table of contents are now given for the first time.

A beautifully executed photographic likeness of the author is also given as a frontispiece.

July, 1881. H. AND CO.

PREFACE.

My main object in publishing this Pamphlet on "Game" is to exhibit the still growing necessity that calls aloud for its "Preservation" by some action or interference on the part of our Legislative Council establishing a protective Law or Act for this special purpose.

All sportsmen repudiate the *idea* of killing game out of season, but they do not alas abstain from the *practice*, and thus it is that a Law or Act is needed. There is no necessity to recapitulate the arguments set forth in the Pamphlet, it is patent to all that something ought to be done, but no one can be found to do that something, and so time will glide on till the cry *too late* will mark the end of it all.

I cannot do better than publish as part of my preface the following appeal from the "Old Stag of the Hills" it will be observed how ready he is to yield up the handsome trophy he bears provided it is taken *legitimately*.

AN APPEAL FROM THE OLD STAG OF THE HILLS.

My dear Mr. Editor,—I am an old stag, but not so old that my antlers have lost their grandeur, my hinds tell me I have as handsome a pair as any on the hills, or rather I had, for I shed them a short time back, and new ones are now sprouting. While in soft horn, I am obliged to avoid the woods as much as possible, for it does hurt so if I hit the growing horn against a tree; besides, I am likely to spoil their shape and then the hinds would have nothing to say to me. We big stags, as a rule, shed our antlers early in the year; and

by the end of next month nearly all of us will have dropped them. The Hills now and during the season will be full of shooters—*sportsmen* few, but *shooters* many. As I have already stated, soft-horned stags avoid the woods, and are therefore more liable to fall a prey to the shooter than in hard horn. I say, "*shooter*" for of the true sportsman I have no fear, as long as I am in soft horn. Why! only last monsoon I had one of the latter looking at me not 40 yards off while I was feeding, I was in an awful fright when I did look up and saw him, for I bolted as hard as I could lay legs to the ground, my instinct being stronger than my reason. We can take pretty good care of ourselves when we are in hard antler, and unless by a fluke, it requires a precious good stalker to get within shot of us. Witness this same chap who looked me over when in velvet; he was after me constantly all last cold season, yet, good stalker as he is, he never got within shot of me though he sighted me on several occasions. I twigging him a precious sight oftener however! Now, Mr. Editor, your paper is read by everybody on the Hills, and I want you to insert a few lines on our behalf, appealing to all sportsmen to spare us when in velvet, Call them *sportsmen*; it may flatter the *shooters*, and induce them to hold their hands. You know as well as I, that no sportsman in the true sense of the word requires to be appealed to on this subject, for we are utterly useless as a trophy. If you, with your powerful pen, would only give it them strong enough, we should soon have these shooters *ashamed to own* that they had killed a soft-horn. I offer my head, when fit, to any stalker who can take it, and my spirit will rest in peace if it knows that my large, wide spreading massive antlers decorate the walls of a true sportsman.

THE OLD STAG OF THE HILLS.

Nothing further need be said beyond mentioning that originally I wrote these reminiscences of sport for the "*South of India Observer*" and have striven to maintain in them a simplicity and truthfulness of description, not always observed in the too florid accounts adopted by many writers on sporting subjects apparently forgetting

the sound old Latin maxim *veritatis simplex oratio est*, (the language of truth is simple.)

I have only to add that no attempt has been made at scientific research or fine writing, it is but a plain unvarnished tale, telling of game and sport, nothing more!! except advocating to the uttermost "THE PRESERVATION OF GAME."

HAWKEYE.

NEILGHERRIES, 1876.

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INTRODUCTORY LETTERS.

I.

Sir,—Touching the preservation of game on these hills, —on which subject I observe a letter or two in your columns lately,—I take up my pen to discuss a few points connected therewith, which may be worthy of attention.

The first point to bring under notice is, which should be established the "*fence months*" when certain descriptions of game are not to be shot, or in any way molested by the sportsman, or indeed by any one. If the subject is to be a matter for legislation, we can have no difficulty in fixing the period on these hills for such purpose; it would however, not be so easy to lay down a law generally for the preservation of game elsewhere in India; the seasons and periods are not so certainly fixed in other parts of the continent as they are observable here. During a very long experience and attention to the habits of birds and beasts in India, I have noticed a great uncertainty as to the times and seasons of breeding; at one time finding young of birds and animals, I may say all the year round. This applies more especially to the game of the plains, but not to the migratory birds. Now we have on the plains the antelope, hares, partridges, and certain kinds of quails, which remain with us all the year round. These appear to breed—if I may use the term—whenever it is convenient, for I have found their young at all seasons; therefore, to fix fence months for the game below would be almost impossible; at any rate to do so with any advantage. In point of fact, there is no necessity for such a measure there. It is, however, very different up on this range of mountains, and something is absolutely required, if the preservation of game is an essential object; and to my mind it is.

It has been found in Canada necessary to legislate for the above object in that country, to prevent the extermination which the uncontrolled and insatiable thirst for sport or slaughter was leading to; and so it is here. The limited area of these mountains would make it an easy matter to reduce the game to such an extent, that it would be worth no one's while to visit the hills for sport: look at Coorg, where the game has almost ceased from the face of the land.

Let us now proceed to consider how the measure of prevention may be carried out. First, what description of game is it desirable to save from indiscriminate and continuous slaughter? It seems to me that the deer tribe alone call for this, the sambur, the ibex, and the jungle-sheep. All these observe the same seasons, or nearly so, for breeding; and during that very period the males of these species of deer are not fit to be killed, (saving the ibex) as the antlers of the sambur and the horns of the jungle sheep are in a state of development, and so the heads are useless as trophies. It happens also that during this period, which embraces the greater portion of the S. W. monsoon, the hinds and does are in calf. The stags generally shed their antlers during April, and the new horn is seldom complete and hard before September. During those months, then, viz., from the end of April to the middle of September, a fence might be safely established, and for that term a fine should be levied on any one killing either male or female of the deer tribe above enumerated; the fine should not be less than fifty Rupees, for each animal, half being given to the informer. I say fifty Rupees, because many a man would, to indulge his craving for slaughter, willingly pay a smaller amount; for instance, on asking a person a few weeks back what sport he had met with, more particularly with reference to a tiger he had been out for, he replied that he had been

unfortunate with the tiger, but had some sport with sambur, and killed three or four stags. On it being hinted that they must have been in soft horn, the "*soft* impeachment" was acknowledged. On pity being expressed thereat, the answer was "Oh! I could not help it;" but it naturally follows, I think, that had each shot involved a fifty Rupee note, my friend would have found that he could have helped it. What say you, friend Editor, the *Observer*, as you profess to be, of all mankind,—that is Neilgherry mankind? Well then, thus much for the prevention, and so far for the remedy!

Let us now look into the other side of the picture: but stop! I have said nothing of the small game. I hesitate to suggest any restriction, except, perhaps, for jungle or peafowl, and the same months of rest might apply to those birds; indeed they almost do so without compulsion of any kind, for few sportsmen care to seek for them during the monsoon. Hares are so numerous, and quails so plentiful, and both difficult enough to get at any time, the cover being generally so thick, that I think we may leave them out of the schedule, and exact no penalties on their account.

Having thus disposed of small game, let us revert to our proposition above. First, as to the damage done by the deer: it is, I believe, most trifling. I have been informed that only one species of cinchona is even touched by the sambur,—the condaminia, I think it is called; coffee and tea never; and as for the trespass on the clearings, there can be no harm in that; yet some declare the mischief done justifies general extermination! but this we cannot admit as an excuse for universal butchery,—nor can we use a milder expression for such unsportsman-like acts!

There is one other question connected with the preser-

vation of game; namely, the value of the animal, as an article of food, for sale to the public. As yet it has been but partially introduced, and hitherto only in the form to suit the native palate, in the shape of what is called at the Cape, Billitong, *i.e.*, strips of flesh dried in the sun.

I think I have now written enough on this subject to start it, or, as you Editors call it, to lead to the ventilation thereof. It is, as you have already observed, important, and ought to receive attention; but I have fears that the Government of the land will not view it at the present day as worthy of legislation, unless it can be proved that it will benefit the public,—oh no, do not for a moment suppose I allude to *the public* as a *people;* no, but to the *public treasury;* then, and then only, will our rulers take the question up. Penalties and licenses to carry arms may produce a trifle; not sufficient however to stir the powers that-be. Nevertheless, lift up your powerful voice, oh Editor!

II.

Sir,—Your flattering reception of my maiden attempt to advocate the protection of game on these beautiful mountains, induces me to resume my pen. I propose now writing more generally on the subject of game at large, taking opportunity of offering such suggestions regarding their preservation as may occur to me in treating of their habits. There is much more to be said on the subject of protection; and in my former letter I did not profess to do more than just agitate the question, in view to others, more competent than myself, (yourself for instance,) taking up the subject in earnest, and bringing it forward in such shape as might tend to official inquiries being instituted; if it is of that importance which I among so many others consider it to be.

It is not possible, in the state of the community up here,

to establish what I may perhaps designate a "Mutual Protection Society" of sportsmen, for the preservation of game; there are too few permanent residents who would interest themselves in the cause, and visitors could scarcely be expected to do so: they alas! come bent on slaughter in general, though there be some, I own with delight, who come for sport, and are good and true sportsmen; but these are few, the others legion. It cannot be otherwise; men get a few months' leave, visit the hills, kill as much as they can, don't care a fiddle-de-dee (you know what so many D's stand for,) about soft or hard horns, hinds or stags, so that there be a good bag, and away they go contented! tell their friends what jolly sport they have had, and, of course, up come another batch of 'slayers; and so the sambur get swept off the face of the land.

I regret to add that in some instances these remarks apply to the more permanent residents on the hills, but they have their excuse, and it cannot be denied, a plausible one; for they naturally say "Oh, if we don't kill when we have the chance, others will; and nothing will be gained by our forbearance." It is this that has caused a deal of disappointment to the true sportsman, who comes here to enjoy "the poetry of sport,"—deer-stalking.

From incessant persecution, the deer here, that is to say within reach of a resident at Ooty—say within a circle of twenty-five miles or so—have become almost nocturnal in their habits, and it is only occasionally now-a-days that a stag is seen on the hill-side after sun-rise; and if so, is surely making for the nearest sholah, except during the present season, when, being in soft horn, they, to avoid injury to their sprouting antlers, often take advantage of the breaks in the weather, and warm themselves on the sunny sides of the woods they haunt. Alas! that I say so, but it is then, at a time when the instinct of the poor animal

causes him to be less cautious in exposing himself, having, I may say, a sort of confidence,—sadly misplaced however,—that his *ignoble* state will then insure his safety from the deadly rifle; it is then the H ——— s *et hoc genus omne, pro pudor* be it said, delight to catch the poor sambur napping, and slay him then and there!!

Well then, as said before, there can be but small prospect of shooters and sportsmen co-operating to preserve; we must look to legislative assistance if this object is to be carried out. Stir up then, oh, Editor, "the powers that-be," enlist the Commissioner—a real sportsman—on our side; work the oracle, and in due time, if the case is well represented, we may hope some measures will be taken for this truly desirable object. It will not be in my time, and so it is scarcely worth my while troubling myself on the matter, but that would be but a selfish reason for not advocating a great future good. It is, (if writing can be called so) a labor of love, affording great pleasure, on a subject very attractive to the heart of a sportsman; a title, I humbly hope, I may lay claim to; though to my shame be it said, I have often committed, in the days of my youth and inexperience, many an unsportsman-like act, of the very description I now so thoroughly condemn.

The palmy days for sport have passed away, though still a fair share remains; and those days may return if reasonable and seasonable restrictions are adopted and enforced. I remember, Sir, in former times, "long, long ago," when a worthy sportsman of note was up here, in the days when Framjee's Hill was occupied by the barracks of the detachment of Native Infantry located here; (he belonged to the corps then on duty;) the abundance of game was remarkable, the present site of the public gardens was an extensive sholah, where sambur, jungle-sheep, sometimes a bear and numbers of jungle-fowl were to be found at any time.

Elk-wood was famous, as its name betokens, and many a deer was killed within sight of the church, which was then being built. My friend above alluded to, mentioned on one occasion, when out near Makoorty Peak, having seen a herd of some 17 or 19 (I forget the exact number) stags, grazing on a hill-side, close to his tent. When shall we see the like of that, eh, my friend Editor? I'll tell you. When sportsmen one and all combine to preserve; then we, or those coming after us, may also hope to see so noble a sight!

This you must take as a preliminary to the subject I propose dealing with in detail, viz., a description of the game on the Hills, their habits, the sport they afford, &c., which may perchance be interesting to many besides sportsmen; and thus induce, peradventure, others to give information on the same subject. My next—if I can conquer my habitual laziness—will accordingly treat of "The Sambur, and how to shoot him."

HAWKEYE.

GAME.

CHAPTER I.

THE SAMBUR.

I FEAR, Mr. Editor, that I have promised more than I can satisfactorily perform, either to your readers or myself. I will, however, do my best, and if I fail, it will not be from want of interest or inclination to deal with the subject; but from a want of ideas and expressions to communicate to others the feelings that render all connected with game and sport so intensely attractive to myself.

Well then, now for the sambur: but I must premise that it be understood my description of the animal and its habits is to be taken as that of a sportsman, not that of a naturalist.

The sambur, we are told by Jerdon, is the Rusa stag, similar to the animal in Bengal, there called the Jerow. He stands, when in his prime, generally about fourteen hands high; some have been killed exceeding this, but not often; of all I have ever measured none did so. He has usually a handsome head, adorned with well-shaped antlers.

In Central India, I am told, these stags run very large, with antlers some forty-four inches in length; good heads on these Hills rarely exceed thirty-eight or forty inches. His neck is thick and massive, with an incipient mane, giving him, as he stands "scenting the tainted gale" on

the mountain side, a most noble appearance indeed, fully entitling him to be designated as "the antlered monarch of the woods." It is difficult to convey the sensation such a sight raises in the breast of the sportsman, be he old or young. The gratification at beholding the noble quarry he is seeking, the eagerness to gain the trophy the stag carries aloft so proudly, the agitating nervous feeling that he may, by some mischance, escape; all this, and much more, stirs the blood, making it course through the veins with a sensation almost too painful to bear. Such were my feelings when first I encountered this noble stag; and yet how oft repeated since! renewed as it were each time, and never failing to produce the same effect. Old warriors, they say, get accustomed to war, and heed "the winged messengers of death" as naught, after a while becoming calm and collected in the midst of danger, and feeling little or no excitement as they watch the progress of the battle. Not so the sportsman; each time he engages in his mimic war, his heart stirs within him, his pulses throb, and he goes through, over and over again, the agony—if I may use the term—of suspense and anxiety that never fails to accompany him in the pursuit. When it does so fail, then has that man's day gone by. But this is a digression; let us return to our sambur.

Notwithstanding his bold and dauntless look and bearing, there is no more timid animal in the world. Ever on the alert, for his enemies are numerous, he takes the greatest precautions against surprise. If leaving his feeding ground to take refuge in a sholah, he will be observed to do so with the greatest care, snuffing the breeze, and perhaps, after entering a wood, returning to the open to see that all is right in the neighbourhood. He often acts in a similar manner when about to bask the open; he will return to the summit of the hill over which he has just passed, and look back over the ground he has crossed, to see that all is safe.

On these occasions he often forms his couch at the stem of one of the rhododendron trees that dot the hill-side here and there in the vicinity of his harbouring wood, or selects the warm side of some isolated rock below the crest of a hill. At such times, and in such places, it is often difficult to distinguish him; and many a disappointment is experienced by the sportsman, seeing his long-looked-for quarry steal over the nearest slope and disappear from his anxious gaze, the stag having all the time been watching the approach of the incautious stalker.

Though timid as above stated, and at times apparently frightened to death at the cry of dogs, at others I have seen him, so to speak, run savagely—or perhaps sulkily is the better term: it seems to occur when the dogs get on too good terms at starting. On these occasions I have seen the stag decline to lay himself out and flee for his life to the utmost of his speed; he appears more inclined to trust to his strength, reserving his powers to injure his pursuers, instead of increasing his exertions to avoid them. A well-known sportsman on these Hills, not very long ago witnessed a case of this kind, and to his horror beheld an old stag send his brace of deer-hounds flying right and left by alternate kicks, the stag apparently not even altering his stride in doing so.

The sight of a grand stag, looking so proud and bold, often brings to my mind the vignette attached to one of Gay's or Æsop's fables (I forget which) of "the stag and the fawn," a picture that delighted me in my childhood, and dwells in my memory still. The fable tells us how the fawn, in its innocence, asks the stag why it is that he, who is so bold and fearless in appearance, and even makes the very earth tremble with his bellowings, yet, at the faintest sound of a hound's tongue, flies as if frightened to death? I forget the stag's reply, but the moral is something to the

effect that boasters are not always the bravest; and so it is with the sambur, the smallest dog creates in him the greatest panic. An instance was mentioned to me, not long ago, of a stag rushing so blindly away from a pack of dogs, that he went clean over a precipice, and was killed on the spot.

The manner of hunting the sambur usually practised on these Hills, is confined to "beating" and "stalking." I will first deal with the former, which is the more generally resorted to.

At all times of the year sambur harbour in the woods, sometimes frequenting remarkably small strips of sholah, most unlikely to afford good cover; at others only to be found in the larger woods or extensive forests, from which there is little chance of getting them to break. It is to be observed, however, that the deer become much attached to particular localities, but from what special cause is not understood; but certain woods are looked upon as certain "finds," though repeatedly disturbed and many deer killed, from them; those that escape return, and apparently bring others with them.

The mode of proceeding usually adopted for a beat is as follows. (We will limit the number of guns to four.) A few beaters are collected; also as many dogs as the four sportsmen can contribute. A shikarrie or two, well acquainted with the haunts of the deer, are selected, and lead the way. Arrived at the wood, the posting of the guns next takes place, and this requires a good deal of caution to ensure sport. Few men are aware that a deer in a sholah is as keenly alive to all the movements of his enemies without, as he would be if in the open. If talking takes place, which never ought to be permitted, he hears! If a man goes up to his post close under the sholah, the deer listens, and knows where he stops. If he goes to wind-

ward, his *noxious* smell betrays his presence; and sooner than face any of these hidden dangers, many a shot is lost by the deer rushing back through the beaters, and breaking covert at an unguarded spot. Each person taking up his post should accordingly avoid a direct or noisy approach to it. With dogs, however, in full chase, the deer sometimes is forced to break within shot, notwithstanding that he is aware of the presence of his enemy, man.

Then comes the moment of excitement! Now, though I do not admire "beating" in general, I do not despise it, or deny that there is sport in the practice; but it is and must be comparative, and of the lesser degree. The moment of excitement! a shout from the beaters proclaims a deer on foot, followed by the hounds giving tongue; a crash through the reeds and bamboos close by sends your heart into your throat; you know not what it may be, stag or hind. The rush comes nearer, then a dead lull succeeds. Now is the time that the experienced sportsman shows his tact and knowledge. He never stirs, but remains quietly prepared, avoiding the slightest movement to signify his presence or alarm the chase, for he is well aware that either the cunning old stag or the cautious hind has stopped at the very edge of the wood, to peep out and see that the coast is clear. Again the cry of the dogs is heard, and the deer, finding it too hot to stay, breaks covert with a sudden rush, oft-times succeeded by as sudden a halt. If the dogs be close at his heels, on he goes, full speed, but ere many strides are taken, flinches and stumbles to the well-aimed shot, still pursuing his course headlong, till, choked by the rising blood, he rolls over dead on the hill side, falling into the thick fern fringing the nearest shola—the haven he vainly sought to reach on leaving his last refuge. Sometimes the deer, on breaking covert, comes to a dead halt, either bewildered by the noise, or forced to take an unaccustomed

line by the pressure of the pack. For one second he stands to gaze! ah, fatal moment! for the next he dies!

This then is "beating." May I call it the *prose* of sport? Let me, before I proceed to describe the *poetry*—"stalking," say a few more words touching the habits of the animal we are so unmercifully slaying on paper. I have omitted to mention one or two distinctive peculiarities.

Of a gregarious nature in general, solitary deer, both hinds and stags, are repeatedly met with. Again, it has very often been noticed, that a large full-grown stag is accompanied by a smaller stag, or brocket; the latter, as aptly described by a sporting friend, seems to be the big one's fag, keeps on the alert while his big brother is grazing, and watches over him when reposing, as if born to that purpose only. He is a dangerous customer to deal with, and as often caused sore disappointment and disgust to the wary stalker.

Let me add a few words to those who speak of this fine animal as an "elk," sometimes degrading him still further by styling the male a "buck." By Saint Hubert! who ever heard of such a thing! such a debasing title to this splendid specimen of the cervines! I tell all good people then that he is not an elk, but a sambur, not a buck but a stag, aye! and a noble stag too!

I may further mention that stags generally shed their antlers in April. Some early birds get rid of them even in January; the exception is not exactly understood, nor the cause of it. These latter, of course, have their antlers fully developed and hard long before the others, who cast their horns in the spring.

The hinds have calves by their sides at the fall and commencement of the year. The rutting season is generally believed to be at the fall of the year, and perhaps during

January; at any rate during that month I saw two stags having a tournament in presence of the softer sex. On this occasion one of the stags left the arena, bellowing with rage or desire, and I was able to follow him in the wood by the noise, and succeeded in bagging him; and a very fine stag he was.

People sometimes talk of these deer "*barking:*" the term is incorrect, they *bell*. It is a peculiar and startling sound, not easily described. It has its modifications; one by which the presence of danger is intimated, another a call when no alarm is exhibited; to the human ear the difference of intonation is not perceptible.

In some instances, these deer may almost be considered exceedingly stupid, and though so alive to danger in general, at times display an inattention to the laws of self-preservation that is quite surprising. On more than one occasion I have come suddenly on a hind returning from her night-tide grazing in a neighbouring swamp, and the way in which the foolish creature would stand and stamp with her foot, staring at me all the time with both eyes and ears, was, to say the least, astonishing. During this scene, I kept aiming at the animal, killing her over and over again in my mind's eye! and thinking all the time what a chance it would be for a slaughterer! On one occasion, fancying a stag might be near at hand, and hoping to prevent the hind giving the bell of alarm, I tried many dodges to get her *to move on*,—threw up my arms, took off and waved my hat, jumped and danced about: the deuce a bit! Instead of quietly making herself scarce, she came on towards me, not being thirty yards distant all the time. At last I had to run at her, and she let me come on some ten paces before she bolted, with one warning bell, into the sholah close by: I have but to remark that these instances have only occurred with females. Are we to put

it down to the natural curiosity prevailing with the softer sex at large?

And now let me attempt to describe *my* idea of *how* to shoot the sambur. I must then, dear reader, take you out with me for a stalk, and show you how it is, or ought to be, done.

We will then suppose ourselves encamped on the Koondahs, some twenty or twenty-five miles from Ooty. You know what lovely scenery there prevails, especially near the ghats. I cannot even attempt to do justice to it. My pen would fail altogether to describe faithfully the grandeur of the mountains, the wonder of the precipices, the beauties of the cascades and waterfalls, and the magnificent forests that trend along the hill-sides almost interminably, or broken here and there into vistas of grassy vallies or rolling swards between the sholahs, where the wild denizens of the wood delight to bask, warmed by the sun and lulled to repose by the pleasant sounds of rustling leaves and falling waters. These spots must be seen; they cannot be pourtrayed by my feeble pen.

Well, at early dawn, or somewhat before, when the morning star first peeps above the eastern heights, we start, a cold and bitter east-wind blowing keenly in our faces, drawing tears from our eyes, and numbing our fingers and feet, as we cross the neighbouring swamp, covered with hoar-frost crackling crisp under our feet. A brave morning indeed; how strong and hearty does one feel! how joyous the sensation that almost makes one skip from sheer lightness of heart! Such is the effect of this charming climate, this climate of altitude so grateful to the toil-worn resident of the arid plains. On we go, and ascend a stiff hill to reach a saddle before we arrive at likely ground for our game. Just as we reach the ridge, to which, from the other side the skirt of a moderately-sized wood creeps up,

we halt and peer across. To our left, a knoll; beyond the crest the tops of the trees of another wood appear; between the two woods an open sky-line. Down we drop on our knees, for, lo! on the line we suddenly spy two pairs of ears and eyes intently gazing at us. A moment more, a fine stag stands on the sky-line,—a perfect picture. With beating heart we scan him over through the glass, and pronounce his head a poor one. The light is barely sufficient to detect clearly the sight of the rifle; we raise it more than once, but with no intent to kill, the stag still at gaze. Presently he moves on, joins the two hinds, and all vanish from our sight. A look from the blood-thirsty shikarrie expresses his contempt of our merciful act; nevertheless we hope for our reward.

The reason these deer watched us so long was probably from our having a bay pony with us, behind which we crouched, and in the uncertain light they did not at first distinguish whether we were friend or foe. Let us proceed.

We descend the side of a very steep hill, cross a burn at the foot, and mount a less precipitous rise surmounting a sloping valley, where the deer love to dwell; but mark, my friend, the wind has shifted, we cannot proceed on this favorite beat. We turn to our right, skirting the corner of a sholah, round which we know there is a long open sward, terminating in a knoll, dotted here and there, and having on one side a clump of rhododendron trees, all in full bloom, their deep rosy clusters blushing more lovely than ever in the bright beams of the morning sun. But, see! there's something moving near the green-wood trees. We all drop to the ground, and bring the glass to bear; but it is not needed, for the next moment a stag and two hinds quietly walk from under the trees on to the open hill. We watch them carefully. The stag carries on his hand-

some head a trophy worthy to be won. They saunter quietly round the crest of the knoll, evidently contemplating a bask in the morning sun. On their disappearance we prepare to start; but, hold? what's this! look! what are those things, looking like logs, lying near the trees to the left; and one here away, some forty or fifty yards nearer? By Jove! they are deer. Again we raise the glass. One, two, three, four, five! all hinds. The shikarrie whispers "Look to the right, where the stag was." By the powers! he is right; three more! but not an antler among the lot. All to in our very path to stalk the stag. What shall we do? But, see! the nearest hind is looking our way; perhaps she has caught the sheen of our telescope, and is alarmed; she looks hard and long. Presently she gets up, stretches herself, and taking another searching look, she walks calmly towards the rest. There is no outward or visible sign, that we can detect, yet one after another they all rise—no alarm, apparently, but in less time than is taken in reading these few lines, the whole herd has passed like shadows, and disappeared in the sholah near at hand.

Now is the time to make tracks, and away we go, walking swiftly but silently, and reach the spot where the deer vanished from our sight. They entered the sholah on the left. The stag, we hope, is down in his couch to the right hand, close to a wood on that side. Strange, that as we pass the point where the deer had disappeared, not a sound is heard. It is marvellous how the large animals of the forest can move so quietly; even the lordly elephant, when aware of danger, moves through the forest noiseless as the velvet-footed cat. We breathe again; thank goodness they have gone.

We creep on, for we have now reached the turning point of the knoll round which we purpose stealing to meet our

stag. Cautiously we advance. By heavens; more deer! Another pair of ears, and, beyond, still another! Again we drop in the grass and watch. They are couched, and though not fifty yards away, know nothing of our presence. The movement of these deer will surely alarm the stag; what can we do? Silently we crawl under the outermost bushes of the wood: they happen to be the myrtle, miscalled the hill-gooseberry. The fruit is ripe; we sit, and watch, and eat; the deer decline to move. We tap our rifle stock; we cluck; they take no notice. At last we resolve to enter the wood, and creep along to out-flank them. We do so in fear and trembling, passing them within twenty paces. There are only two,—tempting shots indeed! and who knows but the stag may be off and away? Perish the thought! We move on without alarming them, and at last emerge from the covert, out of their sight; and now comes the moment of excitement in this phase of sport! Believe me, it makes me positively nervous, even relating the tale.

The hill-side we are now on rapidly falls towards the river below, where the stream rushes over a precipice, forming a grand waterfall, beautiful to behold. The hill-side is covered with a short scrubby rough-leaved plant, about a foot-and-a-half high. Bending low, we circle round the shoulder of the slope, beyond the wood. The quick eye of the stalker catches sight of a hind's ears, at the very spot he hoped for. The stag must be nigh! Down on all-fours we move along, the stalker keenly watching the ears. A short distance gained and the hind detects the movements of our heads. At the same moment the upper tines of the stag's antlers are in sight; he lies to the right of the hind, about 120 yards distant, hidden by an inequality of the ground. Be still, oh beating heart! Be quiet, oh throbbing pulse! Steady, oh shaky hand! or all your toil is vain! onward yet—only a few paces! Be

not alarmed, oh cautious hind! we care not for you. Crouching still lower, we gain ground; the head and neck of our noble quarry are in sight; the hind still gazes intently. Presently she elongates her neck in a most marvellous manner. All still again. On once more we move, when up starts the hind. We know that in another moment she will give the warning bell, and all will vanish. The time for action has arrived! We alter our position; in a second bring the deadly weapon to bear on the stag; quickly draw a steady bead, hugging the rifle with all our might, and fire! The hinds flash across our vision, like the figures in a magic lantern, and the stag? lies weltering in his couch!!

There, dear reader, however imperfect and desultory this sketch of the sambur may be, I think I have redeemed my promise, in showing you *how* to shoot him.

I have not heard that any one has as yet weighed the sambur. It is stated in *The Field* that a large stag in the Highlands weighs some 20 or 24 stone; I think we may safely calculate that the sambur stag will weigh, at least, thirty. The flesh is good eating, if kept sufficiently long. In the winter it keeps good for a fortnight; the head makes savoury pottage, the feet delicious jelly; the liver is not bad, and the steaks are *some* I can tell you; and marrow-pudding is not to be despised; and tongue, well salted, is as good as rein-deer's.



CHAPTER II.

THE IBEX.

I WAS "raised," as the Yankees term it, in one of the inland, or perhaps more properly styled, the middle counties of old England,—it matters not which. But I remember, when almost a child, being taken to the stables at the farm, to see what was, in those days, considered a great curiosity in that part of the country, namely, a goat—and a formidable animal it looked to my young mind. I remember too being told that it came from the Welsh mountains, where numbers of its fellows were to be found in a wild state. What a land of romance was the far distant Wales to the imagination of my youth! and what wonders did I not conceive of the mountains where even goats ran wild! alas! how completely dissipated, when I visited that part of the country in after life.

To one whose ideas of hills had been restricted to a view of the distant Surrey hills, the thought of the mountains in Wales was as of something stupendous, wonderful and appalling; coupled as they were in my juvenile mind with all the adventures I had heard or read of regarding travellers lost in snow, St. Bernard and its dogs, and all the interesting romances connected with such like wonderful tales. These ideas held fast possession of me for many and many a year, till at last the vision was dispelled by a visit to the land itself, after a long twenty years' residence in India—and how disappointing! Snowdon, the far-

famed mountain, what was it? an ordinary hill, looking so small! swallowed up as it were by the surrounding elevations. To my mind Cader Idris is far finer; a bold, craggy mountain, the very spot where wild goats would love to dwell. It became a matter for regret that I had not seen the mountain districts of my native land ere visiting the far east.

My next acquaintance with the wild goat was obtained through that dearly loved old volume (a household Penates,) of Robinson Crusoe, from the print of his triumphal return to his hut, bearing the old mother goat he had slain, on his shoulders, and the little kid following at his heels. Dear old Crusoe! Where is the boy of my time, who has not, as I have done, longed to be a Robinson Crusoe? I fear for the present generation if they love not Crusoe.

My next and actual introduction to a real live mountain goat, happened on these Hills, away at the Neddiwuttum Crags, not far from the public bungalow, at the head of the Goodaloor Pass; and that brings me to the subject of my present theme, the Ibex.

It happened some years ago, about the time when the first small clearing had been made in the present Ouchterlony Valley, then to the eye of the sportsman one of the most magnificent forest-clad glens on these Hills, beautiful in all the varied aspects of light and shade, rock and wood, that the mind can imagine; to give place, alas! to the hideous coffee shrub, with huts and houses, and all the signs of civilized life and cultivation adherent thereto. Why the planters have set their faces and hands so decidedly against the picturesque, I am at a loss to understand. On ridding the land of one lovely object, the forest, why they could not have combined the beautiful with the useful is incomprehensible! A few clumps of trees, a belt of wood

here and there, would have turned an ugly coffee plantation into a park-like, pleasant looking domain, combining wood, water, and cultivation, forming a picture pleasing to every eye, instead of a mutilated landscape, without scarcely one redeeming feature, and painful to look upon. Ah, well! it is remarkable, but so it is, and so it must be. We have to forego the "*dulce*," and accept the "*utile*;" drink our coffee and bless the Ouchterlonys, and all other men devoted to the same line of hard work and never-ceasing toil, and be thankful!

Let us now turn our attention to the ibex, and see what we have to say about this fine specimen of the true wild goat; an animal in great request as an object of the chase; bearing a good trophy, and requiring all the energies and skill of the most ardent sportsman to bring to bag. Let us try to show how this is done; but first we must give some description of the animal and its habits, before we take our readers to the field of exploit, and tell them how to stalk him.

The "Neilgherry Wild Goat," as styled by Jerdon, though I think "Mountain Goat" may be a more appropriate term, is a species of the genus *Capra*, distinctive to Southern India; the only other kind of goat approaching in likeness to it being the Thaar of the Himalayas. But the latter is altogether a different species, though bearing in appearance and the shape of the horns some of the characteristics of the former.

Our mountain goat is a sturdy, I may almost say, a massively formed animal, with short legs, remarkably strong fetlocks, a heavy carcase, short and well-ribbed up, combining strength with an agility wonderful to behold. Of late years they have become scarce, and to meet with a herd exceeding twenty now-a-days is very improbable. They, alike with the sambur, have been persecuted so incea-

santly, that they also will be of the past in a very few years, if no means be taken to insure them some quietude, by adopting "fence" or "rest" months.

Not a great many years ago, ibex could generally be found all along the precipitous rocks forming the line of ghauts skirting the hills from Rungasawmy's Peak to Makoorty, Sispara, and Mailkoondah. Now they are with difficulty found at some more favored spot than others, from which, when disturbed, they depart, and perhaps, are not again seen for months.

Their habits are gregarious, and does are seldom met with separate from the flock or herd, though the males often are. The latter are considerably larger than the females, and as they grow old assume a peculiarly distinctive appearance, by the hair on the back becoming lighter—almost white in some instances, while that on the flanks darkens, causing what is called the saddle to appear, and from that time they become known to shikarries as the saddle-back of the herd,—an object of ambition in the eyes of the true sportsman.

It is a pleasant sight to watch a herd of ibex when undisturbed, the kids frisking here and there on pinnacles or ledges of rocks and beetling cliffs, where there seems scarcely safe foothold for anything much larger than a grasshopper or a fly; the old mothers looking calmly on, or grazing steadily, while the day is young, cropping the soft moss or tender herbs, and sweet short grass springing from the crevices of the craggy precipices in rich abundance.

Then again, to see the caution observed in taking up their resting or abiding places for the day, where they may be warmed by the sun, listening to the roar of many waters, and figuratively, we may say, chewing the cud of contentment, and giving themselves up to the full enjoyment of

their nomadic life and its romantic haunts. Usually before reposing, one of the herd, generally an old doe, may be observed intently gazing below, apparently scanning every spot in the range of her vision, sometimes for half an hour or more before she is satisfied that "all is well;" strange to say, seldom or never looking up to the rocks above. Then, being satisfied on the one side, she observes the same process on the other, eventually calmly lying down, contented with the precautions she has taken that all is safe. Her post as sentinel is generally a prominent one, on the edge and corner perhaps of some ledge, to be well sheltered from the wind, and warmed by the sun, along which the rest of the herd dispose themselves as inclined, fully trusting in the watchful guardian whose manœuvres I have been describing. Should the sentinel be joined by another, or her kid come and lie down by her, they invariably place themselves back to back, or in such a manner that they can keep a look out on either side. A solitary male goes through all this by himself, and wonderfully careful he is, but when with the herd he reposes in security, leaving it to the females to take precautions for their mutual safety.

I have stated that these animals seldom look above them, except when any cause of alarm leads them to do so. I recollect an instance which I will relate, partly to show the advantage of a good colour for a stalker's dress, and to illustrate what I have mentioned above.

I had disturbed a buck ibex accidently one morning, and after watching him a long distance with the glass, observed him take up a position and commence the vigilant process previously mentioned. By this I knew he was prepared to lie down. He was a long time about it, but eventually he was satisfied, and took up his post on a prominent rock, from which, as lying with his back to the mountain, he

held a clear view in front and on both sides. I approached from above—the wind all right, and the ibex reposing comfortably in fancied security. I had to pass a large rock, to clear an intervening impediment and gain a full view of the buck, as I could at first only see his horns. I had taken the precaution to remove my shoes, the grass being very dry and noisy. The crunching of the dry grass, as I moved, attracted the notice of the ibex, and suddenly he looked back and up towards me. He was not more than eighty or ninety yards below. I leaned against the rock, my shikar dress blending with the dark grey of the stone and burnt up grass so completely as to deceive even my lynx-eyed prey. Long, long he looked, till my very knees trembled with anxiety. At last he turned his head, but I knew better than to move being sure he would have another look. He did so, and it proved to be his last, for when he again turned his head away, I quietly subsided, and in another moment the buck died on his rocky bed.

On many other occasions the advantage of a suitable dress has been fully proved. A neutral tint is preferable, as blending better with surrounding objects; the color of withered heather is perhaps the best.

On the higher ranges of the Annamallies, ibex are, I am informed, very numerous; herds of hundreds sometimes being seen. Colonel Hamilton, in his report on those mountains, describes how the native tribes in those regions drive the animals through the numerous passes they frequent, and by erecting barriers with open passages here and there, catch a great many in nooses made of the ground rattan, placed in the openings.

It is difficult to believe what Jerdon states regarding the ibex found near Cochin; their familiarity and tameness, as he describes (vide page 290, Jerdon's Mammals of India,) at the temple, being so utterly opposed to their habits, as

observed by sportsmen; nevertheless, it is or was a fact, for I remember well hearing Colonel Frederick Cotton corroborate what Jerdon now says about the animal frequenting the church referred to, for he (Colonel Cotton) found one on his visit to that locality actually reposing within the porch of the building. Here so impatient are they of the presence of their enemy, man, that the very faintest taint in the air will send them headlong down the steep slopes of the mountain, seeking refuge and safety in precipitate flight.

Although so wary in their habits, these animals are at times not so difficult to stalk as the sambur; with the wind favourable, they can usually be easily approached from above, as already described.

Their conduct also, when suddenly alarmed by the crack of a rifle, is curious. Instead of a speedy and direct flight, as when they see or smell their enemy, they start about from rock to rock, in a most bewildered manner; at times squatting like hares, then springing up, with a shrill whistle, hesitating for a moment which line to take; and all the time affording opportunities to the sportsman to pick and choose his shots. I have heard of some five or more falling in one morning to the deadly breech-loader of the present day. Eheu! Eheu!! that it should be so!!!

Besides their enemy man, they have another very wily poacher to guard against,—the leopard. Wherever ibex are found, there assuredly will the marks of this, their stealthy foe, be detected. From the strong scent attending the ibex, especially the males, the leopard has no difficulty in finding his prey, and, I imagine, many fall victims to his rapacious maw. Some years ago, an officer from Bombay, when out at the Koondahs, witnessed the capture of an ibex by a black panther; he had the good fortune to slay the marauder, and bagged both ibex and cheetah.

To my mind, the pursuit of the ibex is more exciting, if possible, than that of the stag. The peril that attends the adventurer on the crags and fearful precipices, where the quarry resort; the grand and sublime scenery,—the giddy heights and sombre depths; the danger and difficulty of the stalk, all combining in adding to the charms and attractions of the pursuit, and make a man feel proud of his success, when he has killed and brought to bag a fine old saddle-back.

I will not attempt beyond a brief sketch how the animal is to be stalked. Let us suppose ourselves at sunrise on the summit of a rocky ridge, leading down to what may be called a steppe on the mountain side. The ridge falls rapidly; in some places so steep that to descend it in an upright posture is next to impossible; it is a scrambling down one mass of rock over another, now across some scanty scrub or grass, underfoot loose stones, again another wall of rock, and so on, till the first steppe is accomplished; perhaps a mile, or nearly so, from whence you start, a short space of an easier slope, covered with long grass, interspersed with boulders of rocks here and there; and then another descent, perchance worse than the first, the incline being even steeper and the impediments more difficult.

Below this second steppe, the sholahs or belts of jungle from the lower vallies creep up the narrow water-courses, terminating, according to the nature of the ground, either in a point abruptly, or spreading out broadly under a mass of rock, forming the head or termination of the gully. These are the spots the ibex favor.

We will suppose we have seen a saddle-back from the upper ridge, at his early feed. Our first point is to make out whether he be alone or in company. We can discern no others, so we quietly watch the movements of the buck. He tries our patience painfully, for we cannot descend the

face of the mountain in front of him, with any hopes of success. We must wait till he takes up his resting place for the day. Our vigil continues for more than an hour, when, at last, selecting an isolated black rock, our friend disposes himself comfortably, ruminating and basking in the great solitude he loves so well. Now then, we proceed with the stalk.

We carefully descend the spur of the mountain, to reach a knoll covered with long grass, and about one hundred and fifty yards from where the buck lies. We succeed in doing so; and then arises the question—shall we approach round by the right or by the left of the mound? The track to the left looks most used. We select it, and cautiously drag ourselves along through the yielding grass. It so happens, that to our left hand there is a small water-course, with a narrow strip of jungle, leading to a broad sheet of rock, over which the stream trickles down to the continuation of the sholah below; several boulders, of various sizes, are scattered here and there on this slab or sheet of rock.

Just as we clear the point of the sholah, horror of horrors! we spy the form of a doe ibex, lying stretched on the rock, and her kid some ten paces nearer to us, basking at full length in the warm rays of the sun. At the same instant the mother catches sight of the movement in the grass. She is about sixty paces from us. We crouch and watch. After a few moments, the doe gets up, but not as if much alarmed,—only somewhat suspicious. She stretches herself, looks hard at us, and at last walks towards the kid. The mode of communication is, on this occasion, very clearly demonstrated, for she gives her child a smartish butt, *a posteriori*, causing it to spring nimbly on its feet. They both pause for a second or so, broadside on. The thought of "kid and mint-sauce" flashes across our mind for a

moment; but then the saddle-back may still be asleep on his stony couch. No alarm has as yet been communicated, as far as we can see, except to the kid. Mother and infant move slowly away, and pass behind one of the boulders of rocks referred to above. In another second we see three or four more heads appear. Alas! a warning has been given. We have nothing left for it but to scramble on through the grass, till we come in sight of the buck's resting-place. It is away ahead, and to the right. He may still be there! we sight it at last, but the blank rock meets our gaze; the buck also is gone! Presently we see below us the herd, led by the saddle-back, careering far away to distant slopes below, and our chance is gone!

Oh! the weary pull up the face of that steep mountain side! how disappointment, with its leaden weight added to our toil, and made the dragging dreary length of that trying climb longer and longer still! How strong the contrast, when, on a subsequent excursion, we stalked another saddle-back, almost at the same place, and succeeded in winning his trophy; then how joyously we scaled the mountain path! how light our heart and heels! How we recounted to ourselves (preparatory to telling the tale to those awaiting us in camp) the intricacies and difficulties of the stalk; how we had watched for hours, and how a change of intention on the part of our quarry, (by what induced who knows?) led him into danger; and how with "firm hand and eagle eye" we slew him on the spot!

Such is the "stalking the Ibex." Have I so told the tale, as to inspire others with an appreciation of what grand exciting sport it is? If so, my wish is won, and my task is done!

I have not been able to obtain precise information as to the height and size of the ibex. I have seldom had an

opportunity of taking the measurements myself. I am told that the buck averages from 9¼ to 10½ hands, or from 39 to 42 inches; Jerdon says from 32 to 34, but he has evidently under-estimated, for large does have reached 35, and the saddle-back always appears at least half-a-foot taller. The horns of the buck run from 12 to 16. It is a point of honour with sportsmen now-a-days, I hear, to try and obtain as a trophy a 17 *incher!*

The flesh of the saddle-back is rank and unpalatable, but that of the females, young bucks and kids, is excellent; in fact, I know of no meat for the table to equal it.

Of the breeding season there is, as usual, some doubts, kids being seen with the herd during most months of the year.

Jerdon says they now and then take shelter in woods. This is contrary to the observation of most sportsmen, and my own. The only time I have known them to take refuge in the woods, is when wounded; they never do so at any other time, that I am aware of.

Jerdon, in his measurements, gives the tail as six inches long. This also I consider incorrect. The tail is remarkably short, and that on a skin now by me is barely three inches, including the hair at the tip, which is somewhat long.

I have now told you all I know about this fine specimen of a game animal—the "Ibex of the Neilgherries."

CHAPTER III.

THE JUNGLE-SHEEP.

IN wandering over these beautifully wooded mountains in search of game, the sportsman, if new to India, is startled at times by hearing in the deep glens or hanging sholahs, a hoarse discordant roar, repeated at times rapidly, at others at intervals; now near, now distant, sometimes deep and harsh, like that of some ferocious wild beast, at others shrill and more like the bark of a wild dog; this is the voice of the jungle-sheep, or *Muntjak*, a beautiful and graceful specimen of the deer tribe, frequently met with on these Hills, and in the forests and jungles of the plains below.

It is surprising to hear so loud and threatening a sound from so gentle and timid an animal as the little Kakur, or barking deer, as it is also designated. It has been observed, before going to couch, to roar in its peculiar manner for a long time—for what purpose is not known; perhaps to intimidate its enemies.

At a distance it looks a remarkably pretty creature, so elegant and lady-like, so to speak, in its actions, that it seems almost a pity to shoot the poor little thing. On a closer inspection, however, it will be found to have a somewhat repulsive countenance, from two dark lines down each cheek, which, added to a tuft of black hair above the eyes, gives the face of the female rather a ferocious aspect, but not indicative of its character, which is that of excessive

timidity; and so thoroughly frightened does it become, when chased by dogs or men, that instances have been known of its being actually caught uninjured by rushing into the arms of the beaters. At times, however, it does bear out its appearance of ferocity, the buck being armed with long canine teeth in the upper jaw, with which it has been known, when wounded, to lacerate severely and dangerously the dogs that attack it.

Like the roebuck of Europe, it is exceedingly cunning when hunted by dogs; squatting suddenly at the edge of a wood, it lets the hounds run almost over it without moving, then, suddenly rushing back, it breaks away on the opposite side of the sholah, and thus often escapes.

It is a difficult animal to shoot; at any rate I have found it so, for oft-times have I missed the little creature, in its rush from one sholah to another, at lightning speed; and it is decidedly difficult to stalk in the open. When feeding it generally keeps pretty close to a wood, bounding to the cover when aware of any danger; sometimes, when shot at and missed, it rushes away, keeping up a succession of its hoarse cries, as if to intimidate its pursuer.

I have mentioned, in a former chapter, the difficulty of distinguishing the several intonations of the peculiar "bell" of the sambur, and it is the same with this animal; whether the bark or roar be that intimating danger and alarm, or the simple call of one sex to the other, or the mother to its young, is unknown, and quite undistinguishable to the human ear.

These deer are seldom seen except in pairs. Very generally they are solitary; three have been now and then met with, supposed to be the two parents with a young one. They are never in flocks, like the ibex, or spotted deer.

I have before alluded to the extraordinary power of communication of alarm, without any outward or visible sign observable, possessed by animals in their wild state; this is to be noticed in the simultaneous rise of a covey of partridges, or flight of wild fowl; and so it appears with the animal we are treating of. An instance occurred, not long ago, which struck the observer at the time as very curious: three jungle-sheep were grazing outside a small wood, some twenty or thirty yards apart; the stalker was watching his opportunity, when, either by a slant of wind or quickness of vision, his presence was suspected, the animal furthest from the other two caught the alarm, quietly walked down to the next one, appeared to whisper something in its ear, and away *all three* bounded, in their peculiar manner, and disappeared into the sholah. I have heard, indeed I know, of a similar case with elephants, where a large herd, assembled under some high trees during the heat of the day, received this mysterious communication of alarm from a female, some forty yards away, without, apparently, any noise or distinctive action on her part, to give rise to the immediate alarm and dispersion of the herd that instantly took place; it was marvellous! But to return to our deer.

It is curious to observe it, when not alarmed, on changing its ground from one wood to another, or coming out to feed in the evening, how daintily and warily it steps, lifting each leg well above the grass or leaves, and noiselessly as a phantom, moving along, glancing here and there with its bright eye; alive to the slightest noise or movement in its neighbourhood.

The buck jungle-sheep has a small pair of horns, which, like the sambur, are shed yearly. They are neat and pretty, and the head itself, if well preserved, is a fitting ornament for the mantelpiece, or as a stand below a picture-frame.

The general mode of beating for this little animal is the same as that observed with sambur. A wood is surrounded or commanded at various likely spots, and the beaters and dogs sent in, either above or below, according to the nature of the ground, or the vicinity of other woods; and the deer shot as it breaks away.

He is a good shot who can kill a jungle-sheep, at speed, with a single bullet. I have heard of some gentlemen, who take what I conceive to be an unfair advantage against this and other game, namely, in arming their shikarries, and allowing them also to shoot. I take this opportunity of recording a protest against such a practice, and that also of sending out shikarries to shoot game of all kinds for their masters; this cannot be too strongly deprecated. Game is becoming more and more scarce every succeeding season, and it is not fair to the sporting community at large that paid shikarries should be permitted to shoot. Let our sportsmen, by all means, shoot what they can during the season; but let them have what others of their own clan may leave them,—not the leavings of the native shikarrie. I would make no exception whatever as to the description of game; I say, let them not shoot at all; and I call upon all who have permitted the practice, to stop it.

We are not overwhelmed, at any time, with the migratory birds, such as snipe and woodcock; and yet it is a habit of some to send out their shikarries to shoot these birds for the table. Last season, when on a visit at Ootacamund, I fell in with a native shikarrie, in the service of a resident of the place; he had two or three dogs with him, and was quartering a swamp like a falcon, killing the snipe and enjoying the sport vastly, on the very ground where I hoped to have done the same! I now appeal to all whether this ought to be. I, for one, lift up my voice and proclaim aloud against it.

A few years back, I remember a military man, who adopted this style of filling his bag in the woodcock season, one day getting more than he bargained for,—his shikarrie having, in firing at a cock, forgotten apparently the position of his master, in whose thigh he lodged sundry pellets of *grit* shot,—one so near the femoral artery that the gallant officer had to be carried into Ooty, and placed under medical care. Fortunately, no inquest was required, and he got well; but the prevalent feeling, amongst sportsmen, was that "*it served him right.*"

I wish no harm to any one, but a little obliquity of vision on the part of shooting shikarries, or rather shikarries who are allowed to shoot, and some harmless wounds to those who permit it, would really have a wholesome effect, and put a stop to a practice that cannot be too severely condemned. I say no more!

CHAPTER IV.

THE MOUNTAIN ANTELOPE.

THE Mountain Antelope is but little known, and perhaps has not even been heard of by many as one of the game animals frequenting the mountain ranges of Southern India.

Two have been killed on the Hills, during the last ten or twelve years, by a well-known sportsman residing there. The first was given over to the Museum at Ooty, but, being badly preserved, was destroyed by insects; this was a female, the second was a male.

I will attempt, as well as I can, to describe this animal, which, though it can scarcely be new to science, has at any rate not been fully noticed in detail by Jerdon, who may, for what I know, be ignorant of its locality, for I can find nothing in his volume of the Mammals of India descriptive of the animal in question.

Jerdon, in his work, classes the Mountain Antelope with the Capricorns, or, as he calls them, antelope goat; but this I conceive cannot apply to the animal I am dealing with.

On the Pulney Hills, the mountain antelope is not scarce, as it is here. On those mountains, which are so open and undulating, like the downs in England, with little or no wood or sholahs scattered here and there, as on the Neilgherries, the mountain antelope is on

ground suitable to its habits, and can, without difficulty, be met with; though it is quite the contrary in bringing him to bag. Swift of foot, keenly alive to danger, not easily perceived when lying in the grassy hollows, and fleeing away at the least alarm, it requires much patience and woodcraft on the part of the stalker to ensure success.

This animal has all the appearance of a doe antelope of the plains, in color, size and general features; the following points will, however, exhibit distinctive peculiarities, and may afford opportunity for others who may have met with this deer.

The animal in question, which Colonel Hamilton, in his report on the Pulneys, designates the Mountain Antelope, is, as far as I can judge, a true Antelope; in color sandy, or very light rufous; the hair longer and a coarser than the antelope of the plains: and it is provided with the suborbital sinus; has hoof pits; the throat white, and the same color extending along the belly. The fetlocks are furnished with thick tufts of hair, with a bar of white across the front, similar to that of the Nilghie; the ears are much broader than the common antelope, and have tufts of longish hair in the orifice. The horns are smooth, tapering, and exceedingly sharp at the points, four inches in length, and slightly curved forward—only found on the males; tail between six and seven inches long.

In size this animal is about the same as the *Gazella Bennettii*, the Black-tailed or Goat Antelope,—the Chikara of sportsmen. Its flesh is very good.

One specimen of this antelope was, I am informed, shot in the open jungle, in the neighbourhood of Hassanoor. It is some years now since the last was shot on these Hills, and I doubt much if they will again be met with. The two

that were killed, though at an interval of some years, were found on the open hills, not far from Pykarra. None have been seen since the last was shot.

I cannot find any description in Jerdon's Book of Mammals, tallying with the specimen from which I have taken the above notes.

I have now exhausted my theme. There are other animals to write about, no doubt, but not coming really within the object I professed at the outset to deal with. The bison and elephant are only casual visitors during the monsoon, driven up from below by the excessive rain. Of the small game, such as peafowl, hares, woodcock, snipe, &c., there is nothing calling for particular remark.

The woodcock season is one of great persecution to the sambur, and many deer are killed in the beats for woodcock; this is, however, all fair, and I have nothing to say against it; what I do object to is, letting shikarries shoot; and I hope all good men and true will put a stop to this practice.

Of the wild Boar, and the Bear, there is little or nothing to be said. Hog are met with occasionally, the Bear very seldom; Tigers are more numerous than in days of yore. Cheetahs, or more properly Panthers, or Leopards, (I don't know the exact difference between them), are often disturbed, in beating for other game; many have been trapped. The black panther is now and then seen. I have heard of three panthers being seen together, two of the ordinary kind and one black. It is a moot point whether the black is a distinct species or not; Jerdon seems disposed so to class it, and I have been told of a black panther being disturbed from a hollow tree, in which was found two or three cubs, all black. This, if authenticated, would, I think, settle the question.

The Wild Dog too calls for a few remarks. Wherever there is game, whether on the mountains or in the forests below, there will this fearful marauder surely be found. It will perhaps be better to devote separate chapters to this and other poachers that infest the jungles. We can include the Tiger, Leopard and Wild Dog in this category, leaving the biped poacher to be dealt with under our hoped-for game laws.



CHAPTER V.

POACHERS.

ANECDOTES of animals, wild or tame, are often amusing, sometimes instructive, and generally interesting.

In dealing with the four-legged poachers that trouble the game on these Hills, it occurs to me that I may, perhaps, amuse some of your readers by treating the subject anecdotically (if I may coin the term,) bringing in other animals than those I have classed as "poachers:" and as a preliminary to a description of their propensities, begin at the beginning, by taking in hand first the lord of the forest, the "mighty elephant," of whom, however, so much has already been told, that there is scarcely anything left for me to advance as new. Still there are, here and there, sundry events which have come under my observation, connected with its wild and domesticated life, which, perhaps, are not generally known, and may prove of interest. Let us then first of all proceed with

THE ELEPHANT.

There has been a discussion in the *Field* (I think,) regarding the power this animal possesses in drawing water with his trunk, apparently from his stomach, and bathing himself with the contents during the heat of the day; and the question was raised whether the elephant, like the camel, was provided with an extra stomach for storing water for this special purpose. I need scarcely

remark on the absurdity of the notion, for, supposing the animal had such a receptacle for water, he never could withdraw it by the aid of his trunk, as the act of passing the proboscis down the throat would close the valve by which the power of suction is retained: and this puts to flight the faith and interest which in early days attached and attracted us to the well-known anecdote of the tailor and the elephant,—how the latter was insulted by the unfortunate snip pricking the animal's trunk with his needle, and how the noble creature, disdaining any demonstration of his strength on the miserable ninth part of a man, drenched him as he deserved, by bringing, on his return from his bath, his proboscis full of water, and blowing it over the terrified culprit! How we always looked upon this as a noble act of the king-like beast! and yet, alas! it was an impossibility, unless there was water at hand. Of late we have seen a version of the tale to that effect, namely, that the enraged animal resorted to a puddle at hand, and ducked the tailor with muddy water. This is the *new* and the *possible*, the old tale having been proved contrary to nature, as the animal would be unable to breathe, retaining the water at the same time in his proboscis.

With regard to the supposed water with which he sprinkles himself in the heat of the day, the following instance will, I think, set that point at rest.

Many years ago, being at Bezwarrah, a neighbouring Zemindar, a very large landed proprietor, knowing I was fond of shooting, sent an elephant to carry me from the public bungalow to the cover side, where we were to shoot hog, or deer, or, in fact, anything with legs and ears that we might find. On our way, as the sun got hot,—for we had not started very early, and were not expected before ten,—I noticed that my "cover hack"—if I may so debase

my lordly steed,—carried his trunk doubled up in his mouth, and every now and then withdrew it, blowing the watery contents on either flank or under his belly. Being young, and knowing little of the habit of the animal, I innocently enquired of the mahout what it was that made the elephant so wet? Turning to me, with a look of contempt, as good as saying, "what a perfect idiot you must be!" he replied "Ooska pusseena hye,"—it is his sweat. When I arrived at the meet, I found all the cavalcade of elephants much in the same state. The elephant, like the dog, perspires through his mouth.

We had some sports, but not so much as the pomp and circumstance attending the affair led me to expect; but what else could be hoped for when my slightest movement was the signal for chobdars and dars of all kinds rushing here and there, scaring the game so effectually from my post, that I deemed myself fortunate in getting a couple of shots during the day.

An amusing circumstance came under my notice on this occasion. We moved off to beat a small detached hill, where it was confidently believed a tiger was the party in possession, and would assuredly be driven out. I had the post of honor, and the Zemindar's son was placed with me, only one man being allowed to remain with us, besides a shikarrie, who was to look out from a tree and tell us when the tiger was coming. The other man was a stalwart, tall, well-built, but exceedingly fat henchman, armed to the teeth, but principally with an enormous bear-spear, and he stood with a bold front, ready to do his duty to the death, in guarding the young chief from danger. On my expressing surprise at his extreme obesity, and my idea that a more active man would suit the purpose better, I was told, "Oh! no, Raj Ram is kept fat on purpose, so that if a tiger comes, he cannot run away, but must fight him." I

wonder whether our beef-eaters at the Tower were formed on the same principle. Harrison Ainsworth's description of Xit and the two giants, in his "Tower of London," would lead one to think so.

Since the above event, I have seen a great deal more of elephants, wild and tame. When with the Martaban Column, in the last Burmese war, we had one hundred public besides many private elephants with the force. Our first casualty occurred in crossing the Salween.

Half way between Martaban and Moulmein there is a small but beautifully wooded island, on which, and peeping through the foliage, is one of those elegant Burmese pagodas with its Tee of sweet-sounding bells. To this island this convoy of elephants was started, from Moulmein, to break the passage and afford them rest, the river being broad and the current strong. The whole lot, with the exception of one, seemed to have no difficulty in getting across; but this one, either from fright or incapacity, could not, or at any rate would not, swim. With the assistance of his more accomplished mates he, however, got safely over the half-way voyage. It was a grand sight seeing these fine animals, this Elephant Brigade, stemming the tide of the fast flowing Salween, and glad we all were when they reached safely the Martaban shore, which they did, all but the refractory animal which had given so much trouble. This beast, in the most perverse and persistent manner, suicided himself within easy reach of the strand; but die he would, and die he did.

It was curious to see how out of this large herd one or two only became, as it were, selected as leaders by the others. Some two or three, exhibiting greater intelligence and better training than others, were taken from baggage work to assist the artillery in getting the guns through swamps, the beds of rivers, and other ugly places. When returned

to baggage work, they put on an air of superiority, and took the lead of all, as if by right. One, an especial favourite of ours, was dreaded by all the others. If, as on one occasion I observed, he was left in the rear for a time, on starting again for the front, the way in which he passed the others, and the immediate flight out of his path of all in front of him, was very striking to behold.

In assisting with the guns his temper was capricious and amusing; if a heavy gun was to be moved, he was calm and deliberate in his actions, pushed steadily with his forehead, and received the encouragements of the mahout with a placid and gratified air, renewing his efforts till the work was accomplished; but if put to what might be considered an inferior task, his whole manner changed. I saw him, on being coaxed and requested in the kindest language to help a light gun across the river bed at Shoayghеen, after finding out its weight and feeling little or no resistance, deliberately throw it over, nearly crushing the bullocks, and with a kick at it as he turned aside, left it and the struggling bullocks to get through how they could. He would have nothing more to say to it, and his driver wasted all his endearments to induce him to do so in vain.

It is strange how suddenly these wonderfully powerful animals, apparently in full life and courage, die. One of the finest elephants in camp, belonging to General Steel, died soon after we reached Tonghoo, to all appearance without cause. The Burmese seem to be as fond of elephant's flesh as the African savages, for this large animal, who died only in the morning, was cut up and cleared off, all but his bones, when I went to look at him in the evening.

Another instance was on the line of march: the column had passed on, when I came upon an elephant with his driver, in the open plain, the load cast down, and the animal standing quietly waving his trunk gently from side

to side, and to all appearance well, but refusing to stir one step. The mahout reported him "hutte sickman hoa." Leaving directions for him to be brought on slowly, I proceeded on my way, but certainly had not gone a quarter of a mile, before I was overtaken by the mahout to say the elephant was dead.

Referring again to the sagacity of the animal, when trained for military duties, such as dragging guns, carrying tents, &c., it is wonderful to observe how immediately he is sensible of the limit of his strength, or the exertions required being too great for endurance. An amusing instance occurred with one of the elephants trained to drag the eighteen-pounders with General Whitlock's force. So long as the gun and tumbril, with the usual complement of some half-dozen men only, were riding thereon, all went smoothly and pleasantly, but on one occasion, passing some water, a number of men, to save wetting their feet, jumped on to the carriage; the good old huttee soon felt the added weight, and the way in which he swung round and blew the detachment off the gun was a sight to see! Even on good ground, if more than a couple of additional men were on the carriage, the elephant was immediately aware of it, and would not have them there at any price.

I have mentioned how the elephant blows with his trunk when he wishes to intimidate. These animals are impatient of dogs, and I have seen them use the above means to drive them away. There is another peculiar action with the trunk, but what it is indicative of, I am at a loss to say, whether alarm or anger, or a note of defiance, I know not. To effect this the animal appears to stiffen his trunk, and striking it on the ground, rings forth a strange metallic sound, which can be heard some distance off.

We took a fine elephant from the enemy at "Kyoun-gareet," on our way to Tonghoo: this animal was added to

our baggage department. On the morning we left the village where he had been captured, after going a mile or two, he became somewhat excited, turned round, and seemed inclined to bolt. After being somewhat pacified by the mahout, and having looked about him in a wild bewildered manner, he suddenly struck the ground three or four times, bringing out the tones I have described; then, giving one shrill trumpet, he quietly followed the train, and became from that time one of our steadiest and best baggage elephants. I was riding him when what I have above described occurred.

On another occasion I was blown at by a wild elephant, who threw its trunk out from behind the jungle lining the narrow path along which we were running to intercept the herd, and blew his nose so suddenly in the chest and face of the leading man that he fell right back on me. We had cut this elephant off from its companions, and having a young calf to take care of, it had loitered behind the herd.

In this case we noticed what I have previously alluded to—the wonderful and extraordinarily quiet manner in which these gigantic animals noiselessly move through the forest when trying to avoid observation or danger. This animal we in particular noticed crept through the jungle, and almost gained her point, namely, to escape from us in the direction the herd had taken; and though we had been watching for her slightest movement for many minutes, we neither saw nor heard the least sign of her, till she made a rush at us to drive us out of the way: but she did not make good her charge, coming only as far as the bank of the path, within a few feet of us, when a shot turned her and she bolted, and then we found that a young one was with her. Yet both these animals had been moving parallel to us, within a few paces distance, without our

distinguishing a foot-fall, or even the brushing through the bushes, which the movement of such large bodies would naturally create: all was still as death!

It was some years ago that this happened, before the southern part of India was overrun by so many lords and men of high degree, who of late years have come out to those parts for large game; and elephants especially had not been so constantly harried as they since have.

Large herds frequented the Bullarungam range of hills, a very favorite resort at all seasons of the year. I once saw a grand sight on these hills, of some forty or fifty elephants assembled under a high tree, about midday, taking their rest; they were formed in a double line, facing each other, and it was a very imposing sight. I had reached a tolerably thick bush, and stood for some time examining them, and considering how to approach within shot of the larger of the herd, whose heads I could discern at the further end of the line. While watching the huge mass, suddenly two males, facing each other, raised their heads, twining their trunks round in an affectionate manner, the white ivory of their tusks gleaming in the light, as they went through what may I think be called the process of kissing; what with the noise of their breathing, flapping their ears, now and then interspersed with that bubbling sigh so peculiar to this animal, and the sight of such an immense body of flesh, all combined to make me almost forget what I was about.

I have omitted to mention that I was between 50 or 60 yards from the herd, and that one or two females were feeding away from the tree, with here and there a calf or two in attendance. One old female was some 30 yards or so nearer to the bush behind which I was concealed, and when first observed was quietly grazing, and perfectly unalarmed. I suppose I had been some ten minutes

watching the animals, when the shikarrie touched my arm, and pointed to the female I alluded to; she had ceased feeding, and was gazing in our direction, with her ears cocked; suddenly she raised her fore-feet, turned on her heels, as on a pivot, without any noise or signal, that I could detect, when, in the twinkling of an eye, the whole troop were "threes about," rushing down the nearest ravine, roaring, trumpeting, bubbling, and crushing through the jungle, with a noise as if heaven and earth were coming together! Running swiftly to an angle of the nullah through which they were tearing their way, I came right across five or six, headed by a very large female. I was within a few paces, and dropped her in her tracks, firing a second shot behind the ear, to make all sure. To my surprise, up she got, rolled down the ravine, gained her legs, and bid me adieu for evermore!

Such is the little tale I have to tell of these grand animals. My experience in killing them is limited to very few that I have stalked; but many years ago I was at a battue, when between twenty or thirty were slaughtered, after being driven into what was called a "Coopum." Their misery was, however, considerably prolonged, for in those days the system of heavy charges was unknown, though on that occasion I saw two of the captives killed dead by a pea rifle; certainly they were not more than six or eight paces off.

I lately saw by a review in the *Field* of "Faulkner's Elephant Haunts," that he has solved the question as to the possibility of killing the African animal in the same manner as the Indian. It evidently depends on going up close enough, and having the bullet well backed by a good dose of strong powder.

I must add that elephant shooting is not, to my idea, so very attractive a sport, after you have killed a few: a

feeling of pity cannot but arise in the heart of the sportsman, when he sees this, I may say, intelligent and generally harmless leviathan, dead at his feet. Rogues, of course, are not to be spared, they are very dangerous, and once a rogue always a rogue; and like the man-eating tiger, die he must.

Finding that I have still some little episodes of elephant life to relate, I will continue to draw on the records of memory, and tell a few more anecdotes connected with the habits of this stately and majestic animal, which may—as they refer to long-past years—be new, and perhaps interesting and amusing to general readers.

We have not said much concerning this lordly beast in his native wilds, so I propose following him to the haunts he loves to dwell in, and describe his habits when in the solitude of the forest, as far as our limited observations will enable us to do so.

When (and I am speaking of times before the animal in question had been so persecuted as in these latter days,) undisturbed in the enjoyment of his jungle life, the elephant might then be considered as harmless and inoffensive; generally avoiding the presence of man, and seldom molesting the inhabitants of the small villages skirting the margin of the forest-clad hills at the foot of the mountain ranges extending from the Neilgherries to the well-known isolated peak in the Tinnevelly plains,—the landmark of the Indian Ocean, known as "Cape Comorin," though actually some twenty-five miles inland from the town and point of Cape Comorin itself. Of course there are exceptions to the good behaviour above alluded to; for, as Falstaff says of humanity, so we may of elephantity, "there be *Rogues* everywhere;" and I remember one instance, when on a shooting excursion under the range of hills between Courtallum and Shencottah and the passes

into Travancore, proving the contrary, and exhibiting the character of the elephant in very different light; but exceptions prove rules, which equally applies in this case, as in others.

We had been disturbed during the night, by sundry shoutings and discordant yells, in the direction of the village, near which our tent was pitched; and in the morning, on enquiring the cause, we were told that a lad had been killed by an elephant in the neighbouring paddy-fields. It appeared that two boys had, as usual, been sent to a machaum, erected in the fields for the purpose of scaring away elephants, hog, and other wild animals from molesting the crops. During the night an elephant trespassed in the field in question; the lads commenced making a noise and out-cry on hearing the animal moving about in the nearly ripe paddy, when, instead of decamping as usual, the brute, enraged at being disturbed, rushed at the machaum, carried it off, kicking it about as he did so, and rolling it across the field, trampling to death one of the two lads that occupied it; the other fortunately slipped out, on the elephant sweeping away the little thatched platform they were in with his trunk, and he escaped, and came to the village, which led to the uproar already mentioned. This lad declared that the savage elephant had carried the machaum in his trunk nearly across the field, before he set to knocking it to pieces, and that he, having luckily fallen through, thus escaped. It was supposed that the other boy was crushed up in the frame-work by the animal's trunk, and so lost his life.

We sat up at night to try and kill this marauder, but he never came. I believe he was subsequently shot by some native shikarries, who laid wait for him at the top of the ghat, where, in passing what had been a kind of barrier, built in olden times, he actually brushed the parapet on

which the men had laid their matchlocks; and so they killed him.

These animals certainly do immense damage when they invade the cultivation, trampling and destroying as they do, so much more than they devour; especially when the crops are ripening. It was on this account that in former days the great battues, to which I have previously referred, were organised—to rid, if possible, to some extent at any rate, the country of their presence.

I omitted to mention one trait exhibited by a female elephant on that occasion, which struck all those who were present as very curious. She entered the coopum some hours before the herd was driven up, having apparently escaped from the watcher, and taken, as she thought, a safe line of her own. In she came, bustling along with two young ones with her, one some three or four years old, or perhaps more,—the other quite young. Now, the lower part of the coopum was intersected with a range of pits, and the outer fence protected by a V-shaped ditch; the pits were arranged something like the squares of a chess-board, with a narrow path between each, wide enough for a man to pass along. All the pits were covered with light bamboo frames, on which a layer of grass was placed, and the whole made to appear as natural as possible. Down came the old female, somewhat alarmed at hearing voices, and seeing some of us on the coopum wall, but the coast appearing clear in front, she made straight for the pits. Just as she reached them, she pulled up, perhaps suspecting something, and at the same moment down went first one child, then the other, into a pit close by. Taking a look at her lost progeny, uttering a shrill trumpet after gazing all round, she seemed to make up her mind; so carefully feeling the ground before her with her trunk, at times producing that metallic sound I have previously spoken of,

she threaded her way through this treacherous labyrinth, without making a single false step or mistake, reached the barrier, and then tried to essay what elephants cannot do,—that is jump; her hind legs fell into the ditch, and she could not escape, poor thing, and was shot with the rest.

While the murderous slaughter of the herd was going on that same evening, I nearly came to grief. A few of the remnant showing signs of life, and all being huddled together in the centre of the coopum, I stepped down from the wall, and went up to despatch the poor suffering brutes. On firing into the head of a small tusker, there was more life in him than was expected, for he came at me; of course I cut back for the wall: in doing so, however, I forgot all about the pits, and thinking only of escape, I passed the edge of one, when out swept, with a loud snorting puff, the trunk of a large elephant who had fallen therein. Fortunately he missed my legs, and I reached the wall in safety. I was light and active in those by-gone days!! Had he caught me, the sporting reminiscences of "HAWKEYE" would never have seen the type of the *South of India Observer*.

But let us follow a tusker to his resting place for the day, and see if we can stalk him. A man comes early in the morning to tell me an elephant has visited his field during the night, and trodden down all the grain; will I go and shoot him? Off I start, to look at the mischief done, and find it even worse than described; the whole field, of an acre or so, being completely trodden flat, and the heads of the raggee buried in the footprints. Taking up the track, away we go, soon entering heavy forest on undulating ground; in passing through a swampy nullah, surrounded with dense undergrowth, we are startled by the sudden rush of a heavy animal, and fancy we have already come upon the trespasser; but it was only a sambur.

On we go, for a couple of miles or more, and at last find symptoms that our depredator is not very far off. Instead of holding on a straight course, the tracks diverge round a boggy spot full of sweet grass, of which some has been cropped; a little further on he has leant his muddy hide against the stem of a grand old teak-tree, evidently having indulged in a good rub without "blessing the Duke of Argyle;" then again, here is where he has stood in what the shikarrie, with a lively imagination, is pleased to call his "stable."

We continue the pursuit, and having ascended a rise, come on a dense thicket, with some large shady trees close by. The tracker suddenly falls back on me, and points to the right. I peer through the trees and bushes, but can see nothing, though the sound of the animal flapping his fan-like ears is perceptible; an ant-hill, some four feet high, is close by, and I get on to it. The position is constrained, and after waiting some minutes, I feel my knees trembling a little, from excitement and awkward footing; at the same moment a movement of the animal prevents my quitting my vantage ground. The trunk and head appear from behind a clump about 12 or 15 paces off; some seconds pass before I can distinguish the eye; then, trying the temple shot, I fire. For a second no movement occurred, and the smoke prevented my seeing whether he had subsided, as is often the case, noiselessly to the shot; the next, and there was a rush and a rumbling, and away went the tusker, never again to be seen by me.

I had made a mistake in using a single rifle, under the idea that it was a harder hitter than my smooth-bore; and probably I missed the right spot from the unsteadiness of my position, and my having waited so long, and gradually becoming more and more excited thereby.

He was a large animal, with a single tusk. I followed on his line for a mile or so, but gave him up, knowing it to be useless to persist in the chase.

How seldom it is that wounded elephants are brought to bag. I know of very few instances. The grand elephant, with a tusk eight feet long, killed by Sir Victor Brooke, gave him a chase, after being severely hit, and almost knocked down, of close upon nine miles, and it was only by the perseverance and pluck of himself and his companion, that they succeeded in coming up with the animal; who had at last pulled up in some water, where he was despatched, though not till he had received numerous shots—for he died very hard.

This animal too had only one perfect tusk. I imagine that this noble beast suffers severely from tooth-ache. We know that he is so tender-skinned that musquitoes afflict him sorely, and it will be found in many instances, that the ravages of a minute insect are clearly visible on the animal's tusk, especially in the females; like the mites in a cheese, they eat the ivory away, and doubtless cause intense pain. I have heard of one tusker having been killed, the state of whose tooth must really have made him grateful to the "*pain-killer*" who slew him.

In following a herd of elephants it is strange to observe how steadily they keep on one track, moving generally in a single line, and carefully treading in the foot-steps of the leader,—I have often been completely deceived, and come on a large herd where I expected only a solitary tusker,—and thus they at times proceed long distances, until they reach some favourite browsing spot, when they disperse and feed: directly the tracker observes this, he gives notice that the animals are at hand. I have remarked that bison travel much in the same manner, leaving, as it were, only a single trail.

In the *Indian Sporting Review* a writer states that he has repeatedly observed the tusker of a herd take upon himself the duty of protector, and courageously advance, and meet the threatened danger from whatever quarter it might come. I am unable to confirm this, and none of my sportsmen friends can do so either; on the contrary, I can affirm, with them, that it is not so. I remember meeting a large herd, led by a grand old tusker, proceeding to a small piece of water in the heart of the jungle. I fired at him, but he was too far off for a certain shot and he was not only the first to bolt, but he never looked behind him, and left his whole family to take care of themselves in the best way they could; and yet, in appearance, he was just the lordly-looking animal to take up a bold position, and cover the retreat of his many wives and their offspring.

At another time I got into the middle of a herd, and had three shots, causing two to subside; the alarm and panic that seized the whole lot was remarkable, and certainly evinced no indication of self-preservation by any combination under a leader; it was *sauve qui peut* with one and all; but I did observe on the occasion, what has been noticed by others, and has, I think, been recorded in the *Sporting Review*, namely, the assistance given to the wounded. I was very nearly run over by a large elephant that came crashing through some bamboos, and over a slab of rock which I had reached before opening fire; and seeing the large head almost over mine, I fired, I fancy, into the animal's mouth, and so turned it. On looking round for my spare rifle, I saw the bearer of it scuttling up a tree a few paces away. I ran to the stem, and he handed down the weapon. Just then four or five of the herd, with a small tusker in front, passed across me, some forty yards or so off. Taking a shot at the leader, down he went on his knees, struggled a bit, and again was on his legs; but no sooner so, than the other barrel knocked him down

once more. Then occurred the most extraordinary scene: two or three of the females following him, set to and hustled him up, and as he fell over to one side, still half-stunned, they bore him up, and again as he struggled to keep his legs, supported him; and pushing him along, amidst the most infernal din of roaring, and screams, and trumpeting man ever heard; and so actually bore him away with them, and got him safely off! All this happened, as I have attempted to describe; for I could but look on and wonder, my weapons being all discharged.

I will now wind up all I have to say about elephants with what was, in the days I write of, a thrilling tale of the Collector's escape. There can be no harm in mentioning his name, for he has long since passed away, and I believe in this place there are only one or two who can recollect the adventure.

Collector Blackburne will long be remembered by the people of Madura and Tinnevelly. He was the first man in that position who took upon himself to abolish a custom, —a most oppressive one,—that existed in those days, when payment of kist was made in kind, namely, that the ryot might reap his field when the grain was ripe!! You will scarcely believe it when I tell you that, prior to this noble decree, no cultivator could store his grain until the Tahsildar gave permission to reap! The way in which this oppressive power was exercised was far worse, in many cases, than any torture, applied to screw from the unwilling ryot either money, truth, or lies, could be. This one act made our Collector famous; but he proved himself to be no ordinary character by many others, and by his general administrative ability. His name is still regarded with affection, honor, and esteem, by the inhabitants of the districts above-mentioned. He was an eccentric, yet a very good man, and an excellent public servant.

And now to the tale of his wonderful escape from an elephant. At a village called Pooliary, about nine miles from Courtallum—the same where the boy was killed in the machaum—elephants were reported, and it was resolved to form a party to attack them; it being the ambition of every one to kill a huttee in a legitimate sporting manner, independent of coopums, and the butchery system connected therewith.

We were rather a large party, and succeeded in getting within shot of a female elephant, but failed to bag, and were sorely disappointed, especially as we military men had no other chance, having to join our station, Palamcottah, for muster. On our firing at the female, a large tusker, that had been unobserved in a corner of an open spot where the female was found, moved off, trumpeting loudly; it was determined that he should be marked, and the civilians, happily free from the trammels of muster, set their hearts on accounting for this grand old tusker. A week later he was reported, with two females, to be in the jungle, very near the place he was first seen in. Blackburne and his party started accordingly. I think there were four in all, one of them a capital shot: from his account of the adventure I now relate it.

I must first mention that the Collector despising—perhaps unwisely—the ordinary precaution adopted by sportsmen generally in the matter of dress, or whether considering it undignified in his position to do so, I know not; but, strange to say, he was clothed in white!

Immediately on entering the jungle and approaching the spot where the elephants were reported to be, they were greeted by a shrill scream of rage, followed by the crashing of the bamboos and underwood, as the animals moved off. Following them rapidly, the party found that the elephants were moving up a broad path leading to the forest above.

Two of the party started in hot pursuit to the left, to try and head them, the third to the right, and the Collector came following in the rear, on the path. My friend, the good shot, got level with the tusker, who had stopped for a moment to listen, and had the first shot at him. Swinging round, with an eye like a ball of fire, the enraged beast came down the path, and though met by a volley from twelve or fourteen barrels, no effect was visible. Catching sight of a white object advancing up the path he charged furiously at it. The Collector coolly delivered one barrel, and finding it had not stopped or turned the beast, let drive the second in his face, threw the weapon at him, and bolted for a large tree. As my friend described it, the elephant chased him as a dog would a rat, crushing everything before him; and when the tree was reached, whipped round so swiftly that the next moment he had Blackburne in his trunk. Casting him down with some force, the fierce brute proceeded deliberately to kneel upon his victim, at the same time working his tusks in vain attempts to thrust them through his body; whether it was the effect of the shots he had encountered, or the blindness of rage, strange to say, he failed altogether, and apparently knowing this, he suddenly rose, and raising his victim in his trunk far above his head, threw him some thirty feet or so away, and again was in the act of rushing at him, when at this critical moment a young civilian, named Mitchell, seising a gun which had, it is supposed, been dropped by one of the coolies,—all of whom had taken to the trees for refuge,—fired, almost it may be said at random, but fortunately with wonderful effect, causing such pain that the elephant sat down on his haunches, and became so bewildered that leaving his victim, he rushed away through the jungle, roaring with rage and pain. The Collector was saved.

Marvellous indeed was his escape, for scarcely can it be

said that he was even wounded; his clothes were in shreds all down his back and chest, trampled and torn from him in very fragments, but the skin hardly abrased. He was on his legs immediately the tusker fled, and ready and anxious to pursue and finish him; but this was advisedly not permitted.

The elephant was found the following day, about two miles off; the shikarries said he was alive, and that they had to shoot him, but it was believed that this was only to secure the reward for themselves. Some sixteen shots were counted in his head; one had entered the eye from behind and scooped it out,—it was supposed to be the saving shot from Mitchell's gun. The elephant was eleven feet in height, and the measurement of twice round the forefoot was found to correspond exactly with his height.

A great deal has been written about the height of elephants, and Faulkner has stated in his book that he had killed several in India sixteen feet high. This cannot but be a mistake; the large elephant shot by Sir Victor Brooke, with a tusk six feet outside the jaw, which as he walked appeared nearly to touch the ground, was only eleven feet. I have never seen one exceeding ten feet, and he looked a monster. From all I hear, it is very doubtful if any elephant has been killed that fairly measured twelve feet; certainly none exceeding that. We often hear of bison over *twenty* hands, and yet of the numerous bulls killed by two well-known sportsmen in the Annamalies, not one, when properly measured, was found to exceed nineteen hands.

The sequel to the above story of Blackburne's escape is very characteristic of the man. He had a dinner-party on the day of the accident; he left his companions however without mentioning this, and rode off to Courtallum, the rest following later in the evening. My friend, riding up

to the house, to enquire after his chief, found him entertaining his friends, but had never said one word of what had happened to him only a few hours before. That the encounter had, however, not left him quite unscathed, was proved the next day. As usual, he rode down to Cutchery on a somewhat skittish mare, bare-backed, as was his custom, or with simply a blanket instead of a saddle; he sat at his work all day, but when business was closed it was found he could not move out of his chair, and had to be carried home.

I have said he was eccentric, which the following anecdote will prove. When Collector of Madura, he started one day to drive out of his camp, being about to proceed on circuit in the district. There is a river close to Madura, which he had to cross; it was at that time almost dry; and the horse in the buggy, finding the sand heavy, declined to proceed. Finding persuasion useless, the Collector tried what patience would effect, so taking out his office-box, he quietly perused his business papers, and got through no end of work; till a friend, taking an evening ride in that direction, came upon our worthy Collector so employed, and was highly amused, when, on enquiring what was the matter, he was told that it was simply a trial between man and horse, which would be tired first! The Collector won the battle, after some three hours or more, and went on his way rejoicing. This reminds me of a story which, however, has nothing to do with elephants, but which I think I may wind up this long—perhaps wearisomely long, some may think—production; especially as one old resident here was a principal actor in it.

An officer of my old regiment had a horse, so vicious and savage, that he was very properly named the "Tiger." His master one morning having approached him too close, Tiger seized him by the arm, broke from the groom, and

carried his master about the compound, shaking him like a dog would a rat, the poor man shouting with pain, and calling for help. Out rushed gallant ensign with a gun, and running up, said "Shall I shoot him?" "If you do, you shall pay for him," said the owner, though he was, so to speak, in the jaws of a dilemma, for truly he could not be sure what the result would be. Fortunately the weight tired the horse, and he at last let go his hold, and so his master got off, but carried the scar made by the horse's teeth, which nearly met through his arm, to the grave. Strange to say, he eventually cured "Tiger" of all vice.



CHAPTER VI.

A WORD TO SPORTSMEN.

FEAR not, oh! bipeds of a sporting nature! I am not about to attack any of you; indeed, with the exception of the native shikarrie, I have naught against you, for I am happy to hear that what has been written by myself and others, has not been without good effect, and I have even had the pleasure of hearing of apologies being made for the death of a hind, which evidently shows a right spirit, and proves that the labors of those anxious for preserving the game on these Hills have not been in vain. A few words then on this subject, before I proceed with what I have to say anent the quadrupedal poachers that haunt the jungles, and do so much mischief to the game.

What I wish more especially to bring to the notice of sportsmen is the necessity for abstaining generally, or as much as possible, from slaying hinds at all. I admit that at times it cannot well be avoided. Meat is required, not only to feed ourselves, but our pack and our people; and if we wish to keep our coolies in good humour, there is no doubt that it is effected more easily through their stomachs than in any other way. Well then, admitting thus far that hinds at times must suffer, I will still plead their cause: that where the necessity does not prevail, they need not be sacrificed merely to afford the gratification of a neat kill by a long shot.

From late observation, I am satisfied, whether game-laws be introduced or not, and a season set aside as "fence time," that shooting a hind is a cruelty. I am unable to distinctly lay down, as a rule, at what time it may ever be safe to kill one without incurring the above stigma. I suppose there are, amongst the deer here, the same conditions that exist with the red deer of Europe, viz., that there are what are called yield or barren hinds; and if a person could but distinguish a hind of this class, as I am told the game-keepers can at home, with the greatest certainty, then indeed, to kill such would do no harm. But my experience goes to prove that all the year round these unprotected females are always in that state so well described by VAGRANT, *i.e.*, either engaged in maternal cares, or about to be; and as he so justly puts it, who would not be ashamed to kill the poor creature when in that state? As before said, sometimes it must be done; but what I ask is, that all sportsmen should do it as seldom as possible; and when I mention that during a whole twelve-month, every hind I have seen shot, or have killed myself, has been in the state described, I am sure I have said enough to ensure the commiseration and forbearance of all who claim the title of sportsmen.

And now a few words about stags. There should also be some limit in respect to them; if slain indiscriminately, simply because they are stags, and not with an eye to the trophy they yield, it is, I think, a mistake; for if all the young stags are killed down, where and when will you get any grand antlers, "to adorn the halls of your ancestors?"

During the first three or four years of the stag's life, he carries but an indifferent head; but each following season his trophy increases in beauty and value. I therefore recommend a little self-denial in this matter, and when meat is not an absolute demand, spare the brocket (a young

male deer without any tines to his horns), the juvenile stag, whose head is scrubby and shabby, and quite unfit for ornament, or to be gazed on with pride when the tale of the stalk is told.

I know, from experience, how hard it is to hold the trigger hand, when a tempting chance offers, especially in these times, when game is scarce, and shots at good stags few and far between; still it ought to, and must be done, if the shooting on these Hills hereafter is to be worthy of the name of sport, for good stags are even now-a-days very seldom met with. At home stags are only killed when, as it is technically termed, they are "warrantable." We might be guided accordingly, and consider a stag as "warrantable" when his antlers are complete in all their tines; many, however, would even then be but poor trophies. I have now said enough on this subject, and only hope it may receive the consideratiom it deserves.

Let us turn to the poachers, and proceed with our proposed object in dealing with them, viz., relate what we know of their habits, particularly with reference to their ravages and destruction of game, interspersed with such anecdotes regarding the animals to whom this title applies, as we have been able to collect, or have occurred to us in our wanderings over Southern India. The poachers are, first—the "Tiger;" then, the "Leopard;" and last, though not least, the "Wild Dog." We will take them in the above order, and commence with

THE TIGER.

Of late years, tigers are more numerous on these mountains than in former times; or, at any rate, they are oftener seen. This may arise from the increase of inhabitants, travellers, and sportsmen resorting to various parts of the hills that formerly were left unexplored. It may also be attributable to the clearings in the valleys below, having

driven game of all kinds to the summits, and in some degree to the increase of the herds of cattle roaming over the country, affording as they do an easy prey to this universal marauder. Whatever the cause, there can be no doubt that where one tiger was met with many years since, two, or even three, will be found now-a-days. My own experience quite proves this; for, fifteen years ago, when constantly wandering over the same haunts, I have been visiting during my present sojourn here, I fell in with only three tigers in twelve months; and latterly, during a like period, I have come across ten at least, many more having been seen during the same time by a fellow sportsman. Besides those seen, many pass unobserved; the marvellous quickness of this animal's sight enables him to detect the sportsman five times out of six, without the latter being aware of the tiger's presence. It is very rarely indeed that this keen-sighted animal is caught unawares; it does, of course, happen at times, but very seldom, especially in the open.

I have been told of instances where tigers have been killed while asleep, but these occurred in parts of the country where they were seldom disturbed; up here they are peculiarly alive to danger, and, generally speaking, are considered less bold than their *confreres* in the plains below, skulking away from the presence of man in a very ignominious manner.

Man-eaters on these hills are rare. The only case of one that I can call to mind happened some years back at Pykarra, not far from the bungalow. The animal took a fancy to a Todah, in preference to the buffaloes he was tending. Two of the Todah's people were witnesses of the affair, and they described how the tiger behaved like a cat with a mouse, having caught the man, amused himself for some time by letting him go, and then dodging him as the

poor victim tried to escape, before killing him outright, notwithstanding the shouts and wailings of the two spectators.

It is a moot question concerning man-eating tigers, as to what induces them to take to preying on human beings; some affirm that it is only when age overtakes the animal, and he finds himself unable to cope with his ordinary victims, deer or cattle, that he falls upon man, and it is stated, in support of this view, that these man-eaters are mangy and decrepit beasts, *sans* tooth, *sans* hair, and *sans* anything and everything that makes the tiger the formidable creature he is in his prime. This is unquestionably partially true, but man-eaters have also constantly been found to be sleek, lusty, and in their full strength and vigour, quite as often as the reverse; it is not therefore entirely dependent on age and concomitant weakness that the tiger takes to this habit. I think the argument advanced by many observers and naturalists, that the animal, either accidentally or by press of hunger, having once seized a man and found out what an easy capture he has made, and in addition that the flesh is palatable, takes advantage of this acquired knowledge, and thenceforth becomes that dreaded being, a "man-eater," is equally reasonable with the former, and may be accepted, perhaps, as the more probable of the two.

But let us take up the proposed view of this animal's character as a poacher and destroyer of game, before we discuss his homicidal propensities further.

There are divers opinions as to the exact mode by which the tiger takes his prey; popularly he is supposed to lie in ambush, and spring on his victim as it passes his lair, or, watching by a pool, await the arrival of animals in quest of water. These would offer but precarious chances, even to so cunning and stealthy a foe as the tiger, as all wild

animals are so wonderfully cautious in their approaches to such resorts. The tiger too betrays his presence to them by that peculiar smell attaching to him, so that the odds are greatly against our striped friend's success, though, of course, he occasionally is rewarded by catching some unwary, over-thirsty animal, that rushes to the water heedless of consequences; but this will not apply to the tiger on these Hills, where no paucity of water ever occurs to such an extent as to drive the game to any one spot to drink.

That the tiger's principal food is game,—and here very generally that game is the sambur,—there can be little question, but how he takes it is not well known, and perhaps may never have been witnessed by any one; at any rate, in making these remarks, I hope, in case any of your readers can give an instance of such observation of a capture, he will do so,—I have never yet met any one who could. At the same time I may relate what occurred near Kotagherry, to two sportsmen who were on the watch for tigers one evening.

While waiting near a sholah, they heard the grunting of a wild boar, and presently observed the animal approaching, evidently in an excited and angry mood; almost at the same moment a tigress sprang through the air, and alighted on the boar's back; then took place a fierce fight, fast and furious, the boar manfully fighting for his life against his terrific antagonist; while it was going on one of the sportsmen fired at the tigress, and the combatants separated, but the boar was heard to give that peculiar squeal during the battle which only escapes from this indomitable and sturdy animal when mortally wounded; nevertheless, nothing could be found of either hog or tigress on the following day, though there were traces showing that both had been wounded. As this case, however, was a sort of running

fight between these animals, it cannot be quoted as a specimen of the mode in which the tiger usually captures his prey. The feline was supposed to be a tigress, because shortly afterwards, a buffalo having been killed in the neighbourhood, one of the sportsmen alluded to sat over the carcase, and was highly amused seeing four cubs, not bigger than good sized cats, attack the dead buffalo most furiously, at the same time spitting and swearing and fighting one with another, in the fiercest manner imaginable.

I have a theory of my own on this point; let us ventilate it. In the first place, the tiger must have room to spring on his victim in the sholahs on these hills; many are sufficiently clear to afford this, and no doubt he takes advantage of such spots when a chance offers in them; but in general, the woods are dense with under-growth, interspersed with trees so close together, that the spring of a tiger, and the power of his blow, must, I should say, be greatly interfered with. Then again his presence, as beforesaid, is so liable to be detected by the deer, that his chances of capture are remote, but at night the deer are out in the open, and then perhaps, the wind being by chance in his favor, he may succeed; and I am disposed to believe that this is the most likely time for him to do so, though he is in no way restricted as to time or place, for he slays the Todah's buffalo oftener during the day than during the night, and at times close to their habitations.

Sambur are remarkably cautious on entering sholahs, and the faintest taint of the tiger will deter them doing so; only a few days ago a sportsman witnessed a case in point. From a long distance a tiger was observed crossing a ridge of a hill, pass down to the edge of a long but narrow sholah, along the outside of which he prowled up the whole length of it,

and disappeared; sometime after a stag appeared over the crest of the hill, not very far from where the tiger had passed, and immediately gave signs, by cocking his tail and erecting the bristly hair along his back, that he was aware of the enemy's presence; he forthwith retreated, but presently re-appeared, some way below where he had first essayed to pass on to the sholah; again the offensive odour assailed his delicate organs, once more he went back, making yet another attempt, though with the same result, still further down. Meanwhile the watcher of all these manœuvres had gradually approached; the stag at last reached a point where he could no longer scent his foe, but, alas! poor brute! he had only escaped from the frying-pan into the fire; for a deadly shot from the unerring rifle of the keen sportsman on his trail, laid him low.

Now it is this acute sense of smell that the tiger has to contend with, before he can provide his larder with game; and how does he manage it? We cannot give him the credit of the intellect of man, who, on his pursuit of game, is well aware that nothing can be done "down wind;" were it so, not a sambur would be left alive; the tiger would bag them all, just as he pleased,—in fact, he would then be able to kill any deer when he wanted him. Given that point, how does he contrive to kill so many, and keep himself so fat and sleek? No doubt he pounces on many an unwary calf, too young to follow the protecting guidance of its mother, and so left in some secret spot till strong enough to go a-field with its parent. Many of these tender morsels Mr. Tiger treats himself to; but these will not suffice for his voracious maw; he must have stronger meat, and a more lasting supply. We will suppose a tiger requires for himself one sambur in ten days, but when in company with his wife, we may safely say they will require double that, and then again, if accompanied by the family, as was observed on one occasion not very long ago, where the party

amounted to five, all very nearly full grown, what amount of game to satisfy their rapacity would be necessary! truly it is beyond our calculation the extent of mischief such a herd of marauders would perpetrate; but all this does not bring us nearer to the point at issue,—how does the tiger take his prey?

We have so far considered the acuteness on the part of the game to ensure them against total destruction, and I have only one further observation to record, and that is, how constantly the presence of a tiger is indicated by the actions of sambur; if disturbed by him in a shola during the day-time, the deer immediately resort to the open, watching with intense eagerness the wood they have quitted, and generally warning the neighbourhood with loud consecutive "bells." The sportsman readily recognises these sounds, and can safely pronounce on the whereabouts of the tiger; it is on this fact,—of deer giving this warning notice, that I have based one, or rather part of my theory regarding the tiger: let us see how it is borne out.

That the tiger is stealthy and quiet in his movements we all know; that velvet paw of his, so soft and yet so formidable, enables him to thread the woods and forests so noiselessly, that even the sharp-eared deer may often be taken by surprise, and fall a victim to its blow; and but for the tell-tale scent emanating from his striped hide, numbers would be destroyed. That he, when hungry and sharp-set, is always on the prowl, there can be no question, and it is on these occasions that he is supposed to adopt a very wily plan to secure his food.

On a late occasion, when a well-known sportsman killed a fine tiger at Tippacadoo, he was attracted to the spot by the "belling" of sambur, and "call" of the spotted deer: on quietly approaching he perceived the tiger lying down

under some bamboos, watching or listening to the spotted deer, who kept on calling; before any result could be observed a well-planted ball slew the tiger in his couch. It then however occurred to him that it was not at all improbable that this act of the tiger, lying down calmly in sight or hearing of his prey, might be one of his devices to allure the game within reach; we know how proverbial the curiosity of deer is, and how, when uncertain of the object before them, they will at times advance towards it; in the sambur this is constantly the case, and may it not be that the tiger is aware of this propensity, and so, like jacko and the crows, feign sleep or death, to attract the unwary and inquisitive victims? For my part there is, I think, great probability that this is one of Mr. Tiger's dodges.

That he also tries his speed at times, the following instance, communicated by the tiger-killer in question, is good proof. One afternoon on reaching the summit of a high hill commanding a well-known valley for game, he spied three or four sambur in a swamp below; he noticed that they were on the *qui vive*, and could not divine the cause, especially as what appeared to be another, and, from its size, a stag, was lying down in the swamp, not very far from the deer. On turning the glass on this object, to his surprise he saw it was a grand tiger, and while in the very act of looking at him, he saw him gather himself up, and with three or four magnificent bounds, fly through the air, in the direction of the sambur; the latter were, however, too quick for their agile foe, and scampering off, got safe away. The tiger crouched sulkily where they had been, and on the hunter appearing some two or three hundred yards off, he was away like a shot.

Now this, I consider, is very probably the manner in

which the tiger on these hills takes his prey at night, and we can imagine it to be most destructive. Whether I have a right to designate this "royal animal" an arrant "poacher," when he is only engaged in lawful pursuit, which nature has accorded to him, I don't know! but that the rascal kills no end of game, without leave or license, is plain enough, and under that, I dub him "Poacher," and a desperate one too!

I feel somewhat diffident in bringing forward tiger stories as a *finale* to this over-long dissertation on this animal as a poacher, for we know how incredulous the public can be, and how the story of the tiger that had a tail forty feet long, was received by the audience dining with the old Indian Nabob, whose valet kept nudging him to reduce the dimensions, and having done so down to twenty feet, on receiving intimation that even that was too long, turning irascibly on the culprit, shouting with an oath, "What! would you have the tiger with no tail at all?" Even in the face of this, I shall venture to relate a few anecdotes regarding this animal, which may be even new to some of your readers. Although I have trespassed on your's and their patience so long, I yet hope that what I have written (mostly on conjecture) will induce some one better informed to tell us how the tiger takes his prey.

Tigers are not particular as to the state of their food being fresh or otherwise. It was observed on the Annamallies that these animals seldom—indeed never—were found to resort to the carcases of the bison that had been shot, until the effluvia from them was exceedingly strong, indeed, it may be said when in the *highest* state of putrefaction; and, on one occasion, when the tiger had dragged the putrefied carcase some distance, the sportsman was able to follow it up to the spot by the scent, and found the

tiger quietly reposing close to the offensive remnants of the bison. Whether this feature in the character of the tiger is restricted to the Annamallies, or may be attributable to the wide range of forest land extending for miles over hill and dale, through which the tigers there may roam, far distant from the kill to which he is eventually attracted by its decomposition, I cannot say; but we know that whenever he kills game or cattle, if undisturbed, he returns to his prey, until (with or without the help of jackals or vultures) the whole is consumed; and it must then be pretty "high."

In many cases it has been noticed that he makes his lair conveniently near at hand, to prevent the intrusion of any such assistants in the demolition of the carcase; on one occasion I was present, when the noise of the descent of a large number of vultures on a dead buffalo, lying just outside a sholah, caused the tiger who had killed it to put in an appearance at noon-day, and protect his rights to the beef from the feathered tribe; and not one of the birds would go near the body so long as Mr. Stripes was in sight.

In a sholah near Peermund, a regular larder was found, to which a tiger had frequently resorted, and apparently dragged his game there, to devour it at convenience; the large quantity of bones and remnants proving how destructive a poacher his royal highness can be.

It is evident, from a tiger's droppings, that he usually consumes the whole of the animal he slays, even to the very skin, as he voids large quantities of hair; and on these hills it is invariably the hair of the sambur; and so it follows again that he is a poacher of the first magnitude. That he will take a jungle-sheep or an ibex, when he can get them, there can be little doubt. Of the latter—the ibex—there is a case in point; a gentleman having shot an

ibex in the evening, it had fallen or escaped wounded some distance down a rocky hill, in the direction of the forest below, and it being too dark to prosecute the search that evening, it was left till the following morning, when, to the surprise of the sportsman, he found the animal half eaten; and in looking up the traces of the spoiler, found him in the shape of a royal tiger, quietly reposing after his full meal beneath a tree close to the edge of the wood: he paid the penalty of his interference with other men's goods with his life; and a very fine tiger he proved to be.

I omitted in my last to record another instance of craftiness on the part of the tiger in approaching his game, and which, I am told, the natives firmly believe in. It is stated by them that the tiger is often heard to reply to the bell of a sambur or call of a deer, and that he does so with a low muttering growl, or sometimes with a short impatient grunt; at the same time stealing on quietly towards the sound of the deer's call. This answer of his seems to elicit a reply from the deer, and so the tiger, ascertaining with tolerable precision the position of his prey, is guided accordingly, stops his growling, and perchance secures a victim. Whether any shikaree has actually witnessed a capture under these circumstances, I am unable to say; but I have the confirmation of the fact of the tiger replying to the belling of sambur from more than one sportsman up here; and the natives' reason for the tiger adopting this stratagem appears plausible enough.

Many years ago, there was a celebrated "man-eater" in Tinnevelly, of whose career I have something to tell. He commenced his depredations on man and womankind in the jungles near the "Arengowl Pass," and he continued his devastations for more than a twelvemonth, to the

terror of the neighbourhood and all travellers through the pass, where there was considerable traffic. I became acquainted with this scourge at the outset of his homicidal propensities. I was prowling about the skirts of the jungle near the pass in question one evening, for deer, pea-fowl, and the like, when I was shouted to by a native, who on my approaching, told me to be careful and not enter the jungle there, as a tiger had, only a few hours before, taken away his (the native's) companion, while they were tending their charcoal-burning; and that he had only just found the remains of the poor man, more than half eaten, in the thicket close by. On my asking what he had done with them, he naïvely replied that he had burnt them, according to Hindoo custom, by putting them into the charcoal fire; and he added that this was the fifth victim that the tiger had killed.

I left that part of the country shortly after, but returned through that very pass about a year subsequently, when I found the man-eater had become notorious. I was warned that the ghaut was dangerous, and I came down it rifle in hand, with my horse following, hoping, if the tiger did come, that horse-flesh, or even horse-keeper's, might be more attractive than mine; however, he did not show, either having lately killed some one, or perhaps indulging in a siesta—for it was midday;—and we all got safely through the dreaded pass. At the village I heard that he had killed nearly one hundred persons, and that there was a reward of two or three hundred rupees offered for him.

In those days money was money! and such a reward called forth the ingenuity of sundry avaricious natives to gain possession of it. Some tigers were trapped, one or two shot, and as the man-eater had been described as a mangy hairless brute, these captures were in various ways dis-

guised, by shaving, scalding, &c., to make the Collector or his assistants believe that the real Simon Pure had at last been caught. One sly old fellow very nearly succeeded, but that spirit of distrust amongst themselves which enables us to hold possession of India, cropped out, even in such a trivial case, and the crafty old chief of a Poligar was told on, and he only got the usual reward for an ordinary tiger.

People at last got so frightened that they would only proceed through the pass in question in large gangs, usually accompanied by droves of pack bullocks, in hopes that a bullock might pay the penalty instead of one of themselves; but all was of no avail; the tiger on several occasions, rushed through the crowd of bullocks and men, seized a driver, and disappeared in the jungle, which, reaching the very edge of the roadway, afforded great facilities to the dreaded animal; this repeatedly occurred. The tappal-runners also suffered, though accompanied by a man with a horn or tom-tom, and at times by armed men. At last three shikarries resolved to do or die—little they anticipated the result of their resolution—to slay this terror of their world they determined; so, providing themselves with food for three days, they stole up to their posts in the ghaut, to watch for the dreaded enemy night and day. Nothing was seen of the tiger during their long vigil, and they felt very confident that at last he had quitted that part of the country; at any rate, in this assurance they were returning down the pass all together, when suddenly out sprang the tiger, and carried away one of the three, and disappeared with him before his companions' eyes, and they unable to afford the slightest assistance.

This tiger was never caught; he was, from all accounts, a very old and wary animal. That he was aged and weak—

though some attributed his appearance to the supposed deteriorating influence of human flesh—his last act sufficiently proved: he attacked a tappal-runner, who was accompanied by a man with one of those long colloroy horns. The tiger was described as being nearly white; but, although he scratched the runner down the back and arms, he appeared unable to bite him, and the two succeeded in escaping from their assailant, with only trifling wounds. The man-eater of the Arengowl Ghaut was not again seen or heard of from that day.

Tigers have been known to prey on their own tribe, an instance of a leopard half eaten by the side of a kill by a tiger having been observed; and there were evident traces of a struggle having taken place. Whether the tiger ate his enemy out of revenge, or found him fresher and more tasty than the body over which they had fought "deponent sayeth not;" but though strange, it is not uncommon, either with the hairy or the feathered tribes,—birds of prey doing the same, for I shot a falcon in the act of feeding on a kestrel it had struck down. Another instance is known of a tiger having killed a younger tiger over a dead bullock, and partly eaten him.

There is a peculiar and singular distinction in regard to the mode of breaking up their prey, between the tiger and the panther; the former invariably commencing on the hind-quarters of the animal slain, and the latter at the fore-quarter or chest. There is no reason known for this strange difference; but it is a well-established fact, and perfectly recognised by the natives, who will, without hesitation, pronounce which animal is the culprit by observing these particulars.

Tigers are very difficult to stalk, and very few sportsmen have succeeded in bringing to bag any of these animals by a fair stalk; the keenness of his vision, as before alluded

to, renders it almost impossible to approach him without being observed: of course there have been exceptions, but very rarely.

At times the tables are turned, and the tiger has been observed stalking his enemy, man, but quite in ignorance at the time. The first tiger I ever saw, was walking down a path towards me: I could not make out, in the early dawn, what animal it was approaching, so squatted behind some slender-stemmed trees bordering the path; the action caught the quick sight of the animal, who immediately followed suit, and sat down on his tail, and then only I knew that it was a tiger. I would not fire at the animal facing me, knowing the danger in case of only wounding, so there we sat, he some seventy yards off. After peering at me for some time, unable to make me out, and little expecting, I fancy, the presence of man in those wild western ghauts, he at last came crouching towards me, moving along in a serpentine direction, first to the right, then to the left, still with keen gaze trying to find out what I could be. After he had come on some eight or ten paces, I thought it time for action and stood up; immediately I did so, the tiger, clapping his tail between his legs, ignobly rushed into the jungle, and, oh! what a coward I felt myself to be! and yet it was but the old story of the hog-hunter, who, when twitted with riding more steadily than he had been accustomed to over the rotten cotton ground of the Dekhan, excused himself in acknowledging that it was so by making this remarkable confession: "The fact is, my dear fellows, that now-a-days, whenever I am galloping over this infernal ground, I see the faces of my wife and children peeping out of every cranny and hole as I go along."

This, my first tiger I had ever seen, reminds me that oft-times some lady friends have expressed a great desire

to be shown a tiger, and one even went so far as to declare her wish to shoot one: their idea was that nothing could be easier than to go out a few miles with an experienced sportsman, and be shown tigers to any amount. When I tell them that for over nineteen years I wandered through forests, over mountains, and searched hill and dale for all those years, and never set eyes on a tiger till I met the one above referred to, in the Southern Mahratta country, they will see it is not so simple a matter as they imagine. Nevertheless, tigers are often met with when least expected. There was a story prevalent here many years ago, of a Bengal Civilian, I think a Mr. Tod, one of the sinecure Commissioners of those days, for the payment of the Nabob's debts—I dare say "SENEX" will put me right if I am making a mistake—he was out shooting, and sitting watching a wood that was being beaten, when out walked a tiger; the gentleman stole away, and hid himself till the tiger had passed, and then resumed his post, but he had not long been there, before another tiger appeared, and still closer to him. This was too much, so away Mr. T. went, and was not to be persuaded to watch any more that day.

A similar story is told of our present Advocate-General, who when out for woodcock, suddenly observed a tiger coming his way; he too declined further acquaintance, and took himself home, with the remark that "he came to shoot cock, not to be eaten by tigers:" but to return.

Another instance of a tiger unknowingly stalking a man, happened a few years ago, when a sportsman, returning in the dusk, mounted on a dark-colored pony, was followed by a tiger, who, on the side of the hill kept parallel with the rider, evidently mistaking the pony for a sambur,* and so continued along-side some sixty or eighty yards off, waiting an opportunity for a rush, when, on

turning out of the shadow of the hill, he detected the rider, and instantly made off: it was unpleasant while it lasted, for the horseman was unarmed.

The formidable power of the tiger is well-known; to his great strength is added his ponderous weight, and I can well understand how even the large and powerful buffaloes of the Todahs are an easy prey to him. The first time I witnessed a specimen of his strength was on the occasion of a large stag having been killed by a fellow sportsman in the valley behind Dodabet. The stag fell into a stream, and though we mustered all hands, dog-boys and horse-keepers, two sepoys, and our two selves, with dog chains round legs and antlers, all we could do was to get the animal clear of the water, but up the bank we could not raise it; this was in the evening, and the next morning, when we reached the spot, the stag was gone. Taking up the track, it led into the nearest wood, and there we found our game half eaten, with his antlers locked between the stems of two trees, which alone prevented the tiger taking the stag clean away to some more convenient feeding spot. Having eaten so much, we thought it probable Mr. Tiger was taking a snooze close by, and we began prowling on hands and knees through the thick tangled undergrowth of the sholah—a most insane proceeding, but there was no "wife and children" in those days,—nothing came of it, so we took possession of the mangled remains, and went on our way to look for sport elsewhere.

I have heard of another case demonstrative of the great power and activity of the tiger. In escaping from a beat, one was seen to leap clean over a man, apparently without touching him; but the man fell, and on going up, it was found that a blow from that dreaded paw in passing had completely dislocated the man's neck. Another case

happened near Bellary, to a beater, who while watching a ravine on one side, had not observed a tiger coming up another ravine behind him. The tiger seems to have thought this a fine opportunity for a game of leap-frog, for he was seen to put his paws on the beater's back, and in the most elegant and playful manner, bound over him, into the dell below. The state of that man's back was dreadful to look at; he recovered however, and I saw him some time afterwards, fearfully scarred and with a stiff arm, but he joined the beaters as merrily as any of them.

I once saw a buffalo very shortly after it had been struck by a tiger, close to the spot I was encamped at; the animal was still alive and standing up; he had been struck in the shoulder, where the flesh was a mass of pulp, the leg useless; and a bite through the windpipe caused the animal, when it breathed, to swell out all under the skin, till it looked enormous. It died soon after, and I watched over the carcase till dark, but there being no moon, I had to leave the spot; the next morning the buffalo had been dragged down into a ravine, and all the hind-quarters demolished.

Notwithstanding all this, and all that can be said against the tiger as a poacher—cowardly thief, and everything else that is bad,—what a royal beast he is! especially when seen in his glory of full liberty and freedom, wandering over these grand hills! I saw one such sight, on an evening, returning from a distant excursion; on reaching the summit of a hill overlooking a wide expanse of undulating vallies, interspersed with woods and streams, there, in a sunny glade, with the declining rays of the evening sun glancing on his tawny striped skin, was a splendid tiger, walking calmly and quietly along, in all the security of the solitude of the place, little dreaming of the presence of danger or the admiring though anxious

eyes that were fixed upon him! It was one of those sights which retain their hold on the memory so long as life itself lasts. What a beautiful picture it was!!

I think I may now conclude my remarks on the tiger, though I have no doubt there is a good deal more to be said about him, by others who have seen and know more of his habits than I do.

Of the Leopard, the next in order that I promised to deal with, I have so little to tell, that I shall be compelled, I think, to combine my notice of him as a poacher, with that of the Wild Dog. Till then, adieu!



CHAPTER VII.

THE LEOPARD OR PANTHER.

I WILL not attempt to distinguish the one from the other, for I am unable to do so; Naturalists tell us that there is no difficulty in doing so, and that the distinctions are clearly defined; all I can say is, that I fail to see them. As in the tigers, so with the leopards, there is much difference in size; and with the latter, this, no doubt, establishes a variety. But we also often meet with tigers so different in structure, as almost to amount to a variety, for some are short, heavily built, of massive power and weight, and with tail rather short and thick; all the proportions, however, being admirable and handsome. Others again are long, lanky, herring-gutted, long-tailed ill-favored brutes. The difference is supposed to be attributable to locality; but this will scarcely hold good, as both have been observed ranging over the same forests and country. With the leopard or panther, however, size does admit of, not only a distinction, but a variety, though I am unable to trace it. I shall accordingly treat them as one, so far as their poaching propensities are concerned on these hills.

They are very numerous all over the Neilgherries, and on the slopes on the ghauts; at Billicul I was informed that in the course of three years, no less than nine had been trapped there. They are very destructive to cattle, sheep, &c., and are especially partial to dogs.

A very large one was caught in a trap at Sholoor, measuring much about the usual length of a tiger; it was a very handsome and powerful brute. How many more have been taken in the same locality I am not informed, but numbers are trapped and shot about the villages on the hills. It would, I think, be interesting if our Commissioner would inform the public, from time to time, the number of skins presented for the Government reward.

The leopard, like the tiger, is remarkably wary, and difficult to stalk, his keenness of vision being quite equal to that of his larger cousin; and he is less susceptible of being observed by the sportsman, his color and spots so completely blending with the rocks he generally frequents. On one occasion, in stalking a stag, not far from the Avalanche, I approached a mass of rocks near the summit of a hill, from which I disturbed a leopard, who had, I believe, his eye upon the same quarry that I was in pursuit of; it was only by his movement we detected his presence; as he glided away amongst the rocks, like a shadow, it was impossible to make out his form sufficiently clear to risk a shot; and when he paused, which he did but once, his head only was visible, and that, at a couple of hundred yards, was drawing it a little too fine for me. This animal appeared to me as heavy and large as any tigress.

The leopard is continually found near the resorts of ibex, and there is little doubt that he is a successful marauder against those very wary creatures, the strong effluvia of the ibex greatly assisting him in his depredations. The large class of leopards also prey on the sambur, and there is no question that many, especially hinds and calves, fall victims to this midnight prowler. He has proved himself a sad scourge too, to the sports-

man, when beating sholahs for woodcock and other game, as he constantly gratifies his craving for dog's flesh, by carrying off, most probably, the best dog in the pack, and not content with this, often kills two or three others at the same time.

He is not over-shy at night, for he has been known to prowl about Ooty itself, close to the houses, and stray pets have been taken away and no more seen. I lost an excellent dog some years ago, which fell a victim to one of these nocturnal visits of the spotted pard. Colonel Morgan, has, I believe, trapped a great number of leopards in the vicinity of his dwelling-house; and they have become more scarce than heretofore about here, though there was a report that two had very lately been seen near Woodcock Hall.

In alluding to the variety of size of these animals, it may, perhaps, be as well to take them in detail, and notice the difference that has been observed in that respect in those met with on these hills. I have mentioned the large one trapped at Sholoor, and the one I saw at the Avalanche; taking those as the largest type, we may set them down as equally mischievous with the tiger, with, perhaps, the only one exception, that they do not so generally attack the Todah buffaloes, as the tiger does, when he has an opportunity.

The next in order and size is a short but sturdy-looking specimen, with short tail,—a powerful animal. One shot on the crags near Mailkoondah, a very old fellow, was of this description, and quite distinct in appearance from a younger animal shot in the same vicinity; and there is a light-bodied active animal, with very long tail, often taking to trees when disturbed by dogs or beaters, affording a very easy shot, when so situated, to the sportsman.

Another variety is the very small, stumpy, round-bodied little cheetah, which may be said almost to inhabit the trees in the large woods and forests, both on the mountains and below. I shot one of this description some years ago, in the Northern Division, and the very same evening a shikaree brought in for the reward one of the largest leopards I have seen. I could, in examining them, trace no perceptible difference in the formation of the roses-spots on the skin, though there was a marked distinction in colour, the small animal being of a deep rufous red, compared with the larger one.

The tree-leopard is said to pay especial attention to the monkies; being equally nimble, he chases them from branch to branch, or lying hidden along the stems suddenly drops on his unconscious prey. In the Annamallies these leopards are often met with, and on one occasion, on the approach of the sportsman, one having dropped off a tree, the remains of his prey, in the shape of a black monkey, was left hanging on a part of the branch from which the leopard had dropped into the underwood below.

Of the hunting leopard nothing need be said here, as he belongs entirely to the plains, and with regard to him I have only the one observation to make,—that we know exactly how he takes his prey, viz., by his speed, though it is generally supposed, even in his case, that he actually captures the antelope by a spring, because in a short run he usually does so; but in cases where a good buck has tested the cheetah's powers of speed, he often makes a last effort to reach the deer, and then generally strikes the animal on his hind-quarters, bringing the buck quite round by the force of the blow, thus enabling the cheetah to seize his quarry by the throat. So light is this specimen of the leopard that a buck antelope has been known to

struggle on with the cheetah on his back some yards before he fell.

I once saw a large tame leopard pitted against one of those fighting rams; the leopard was one of the ordinary breed, that had been taken when quite young, and had, up to the time in question, never tasted raw flesh, yet, when loosed at the redoubtable ram, he rushed round him, leapt on his back, ran along till he got the ram's mouth and nose into his own mouth, and so held on; in a few seconds the ram would have been stifled, without doubt. I never saw such an exhibition of instinctive ferocity! The ram was quite cowed, and could not be persuaded to show fight at all.

I have omitted to bring in, as a separate species, the black leopard—purposely, I may say, for it has yet to be proved whether they are distinct. The evidence is conflicting, and it is difficult to decide, especially as on one occasion a gentleman saw an old leopard accompanied by two of her offspring, one red, the other black.

Did ever any one see a white leopard, barring the snow leopard of the Himalayas? which, by the way, is not white, but yellow. If not, may we not—though it sounds paradoxical—look upon the *white* as the *Albino* of the common leopard? I throw out the query hap-hazard, and leave it to others better versed in these matters to take it up, if they like. One point has, I believe, been observed, that these,—may I call them "*Betes noir*?"—are more commonly met with on the Neilgherries and in Travancore, than elsewhere.* This fact, if a fact, might lead to the solution of the vexed question. My own opinion is of no value, my observations having been very limited. One thing I may say, and that is, that I have never seen two black leopards in company, nor do I know of any one who has.

* I am told they are numerous in the Malay Peninsula.

Like the black cat of witchcraft notoriety, the black cheetah has a fierce and repulsive look, his light-colored eyes giving him a very devilish expression.

Talking of Travancore, reminds me of my first meeting with a leopard in those parts. I had gone out some ten or twelve miles from cantonments (Quilon) for spotted-deer shooting, and the morning after arrival, while prowling about the low jungle in the undulating ground on the border of the large forest, I saw on the opposite rise, a fine (as we always called them in those days) cheetah; he was soon out of sight in the brushwood, but the village headman who was with me, consoled me by saying "we should be sure to get him;" I did not see how, but not to display ignorance, avoided questioning. I had some success with deer in the evening, and the next morning, on preparing to sally forth, my village friend of the day before appeared, and with much apparent respect, asked whether I wished to see the cheetah of the previous morning? Of course I said, in hot haste, "lead on!" whereupon my guide replied "We have him; for two years have we had a trap set to catch the thief, and we could not succeed; but our good fortune sent you here, and behold! in fear of your presence, the cheetah has entered the trap, and is safe. We shall get a reward from the Dewan, who has been threatening us if we do not send a live cheetah to the Huzzoor for the approaching tamasha." Very flattering, no doubt, but very disappointing; however, making the best of it, we went to the spot, and there indeed was as fine a leopard as I ever saw. The trap was well made and strong, on the plan of the bait being apparently inside the cage, though it is actually railed off, and as the leopard rushes in at the one open end, the action of the door falling and closing behind him, lifts a corresponding door at the opposite end, giving the bait—a calf or a goat—the opportunity of bolting away, which they seldom fail to take advantage of.

This description of live trap is now-a-days in general use; formerly a trap on the figure-of-4 principle, with heavy weights of stone piled on the board above, was often used, smashing the animal it caught as flat as a pancake.

It was in Travancore too that I reached a solitary kind of farmstead in the then partially-cleared jungles in the valley opposite Nagercoil, some fifteen miles or so towards the head of the valley. We found the proprietors in some distress, and when we came to enquire into particulars, found that a few nights before, a leopard had sprung over and into the cattle-pen, had killed some five or six cows, and then found himself trapped, for after several attempts he failed to get out. It was, perhaps, that he then took his revenge by killing the other cows; but this fully corroborates Mr. Blyth's remarks, quoted by Jerdon, at page 99 of his "Mammals of India," regarding the blood-sucking propensity of the leopard when he finds cattle or other animals penned up and helplessly in his power. The leopard in question could not escape, and was shot through a hole made in the wall of the cattle-shed.

Leopards are more pugnacious perhaps than tigers, frequently attacking man when provoked, where the tiger would prefer to escape without molesting any one. About Mangalore, and North Canara, I am informed that they are generally very fierce. A friend there once had a narrow escape:—a leopard, driven out of a jungle, on seeing him posted, immediately charged, and springing through the air, seized the sportsman's cap in his mouth, and vanished from his sight.

Then again, on the other hand, I once nearly trod on a female leopard with her cub close by, and she, instead of attacking me, slunk away: it was curious. I was out on some hills, about 30 miles from Bellary, and in prowling

about with a shot gun, looking for a jungle-cock I had heard crowing, on passing through an opening between some rocks and low jungle, I heard what I thought was the droning or drumming noise of the bush quail, a few paces in front of me: I advanced quietly, when a dog I had with me rushed ahead, and at the same moment I caught sight of what I thought was a wild cat running through the grass, the dog in chase. I moved on a step or two, the droning noise still continuing, but louder, when suddenly, at my very feet, something moved in the grass and disappeared round a bush; just giving me time to see that it was a large leopard; had I been quick I could certainly have killed her, even with shot. It was fortunate she did not spring as I approached, for I was completely off my guard, under the impression that the noise I heard was that of a quail, and not as it proved, the low growling of the cheetah.

That they occasionally outwit themselves, my anecdote about the cattle-shed shows, and sometimes it happens that they take up what I may call a false position for the day, either from being out too late, or from a wish to be near their prey, and thus they often fall victims to their own temerity. I remember one being killed from under a stack of paddy straw, within a few hundred yards of the nearest house in the cantonment (French Rocks); another was disturbed from the hedge of a compound at Coimbatore; and lately we have heard of one killed in the General's compound at Secunderabad.

Many instances are known of their intrusions into houses, attracted by their favorite food—dogs, and some curious and interesting stories of such visits are extant amongst the railway employés on the several lines; but I have gone far enough I think, and will close this scrambling notice of our second poacher on the list, only adding, in conclusion,

my wish that it be understood, in treating the subject of felines, and indeed of all other animals I have written about, I only record what I have heard or seen; the scientific discussion of any question raised I leave to those who have made such their study. The tales I have heard I tell as told to me, and what I have witnessed I describe to the best of my ability; endeavouring, as far as I can, to afford information and amusement to those who think my lucubrations worthy of perusal.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE WILD DOG.

WE now come to the last on my list of poachers, and as beforesaid, not the least by any means, for truly the wild dog is not only a most formidable depredator, but decidedly the most destructive of all others, to game of every description. As a dog he is remarkably handsome, and as fine a specimen of the canine species as any one would wish to see,—strength and speed, combined with endurance, renders him to the deer tribe a persecuting foe, difficult to escape from; and of whom they (especially the sambur) have the uttermost dread, fleeing from him, or more properly *them*—for they seldom hunt singly—with the greatest fear, exerting, in every possible way, their instinct and ingenuity to escape the fangs of their fearful foe.

In former days, these wild dogs were often met with in really formidable numbers, packs of eighteen and twenty having been seen, and I remember long ago a very large pack, headed by two dogs, apparently much larger than the others, being seen sweeping across the hill at the end of the lake, where Col. Woods' house now stands, evidently in pursuit of game, which at that time often harboured in the sholahs, affording ample cover in the vicinity of the Toda Mund, near Sylk's Hotel, and at the back of the Club, before Woodside House was built.

People in those days were alarmed at meeting these dogs, under the idea that they were somewhat akin to the wolves

of Siberia, and would not scruple to attack and devour unarmed men. Certainly they exhibited little or no fear of man; but sportsmen hesitated to shoot at them when in packs, under the above impression—that they were liable to attack, and when once their fire-arms were discharged, they would be at the mercy of the rest, and probably "sup sorrow."

Generally speaking, however, the wild dog has not been known to be the aggressor against mankind, and though not displaying much dread of man, has hitherto refrained from actual attack, for I have never heard of any case proving it otherwise; at the same time, it is well known, and an established fact, that the tiger and leopard are often driven away by these dogs. It is uncertain whether they really attack with intent to kill either the one or the other, but that they have been repeatedly seen following both, there is no question.

The wild dog in appearance bears much similitude in color and figure to the English fox; he is, however, larger, and stands some inches higher, and has no white tip to his tail, which, with his muzzle, is perfectly black. The muscular development all over the body is extraordinary; one that I shot, when skinned was a most perfect specimen of thews and sinews I ever beheld.

The wild dog met with on these Hills now-a-days is shy, and does not often afford a chance to the sportsman to drill a hole through his skin, though I would strongly recommend his destruction whenever opportunity offers, for of all poachers he is indeed the most arrant.

Their mode of taking their game has been observed on several occasions, and from what I have been told, and have myself noticed, may be described as follows: Ever on the move and prowling about the woods and ravines, where the sambur are usually to be found, they start their game;

their first object being to drive it away from the sholahs, in rushing through which the deer have the advantage, as the pack cannot act in concert, are easily unsighted, and unable to press the deer to full speed; but once in the open, they then exert their wonderful powers of speed, perseverance and endurance, driving the sambur headlong down the steeps over the hills, and generally forcing the animal to take soil (*i.e.*, resort to the nearest stream,) where they fall an easy prey; unless a deep pool is available, in which the deer is often able to keep the pack at bay.

A brother sportsman, not long ago, witnessed a chase, where a stag managed to escape from a small pack of five wild dogs. When they first appeared they were observed spread out like a fan, and pressing the stag at his best pace. It may, I think, be assumed that this disposition of the pack is a matter of instinct, so that in case the deer is forced to turn to either flank during the flight, the outer dogs would have the opportunity for a rush to seize him. On the occasion in question, the stag kept on straight, and the ground being very precipitous and intersected with sholahs, he contrived to elude his fierce and hungry enemies. He was observed, on reaching a slab of rock, to double back down its precipitous side into the sholah beneath; this was the first check to the pack, who craned over the spot, and seemed to be bewildered for a time; however, taking up the scent and apparently assured that the deer was below, they too got down after their prey. Meanwhile the deer getting clear of the wood, obtained a good start; only three dogs came out of the sholah and renewed the chase; another wood favored the stag, and on his re-appearance two of the dogs alone followed at a long interval, so it is to be hoped the stag escaped.

At another time, a gentleman saw a pack in chase of a sambur, close to him, and noticed that the dogs,

on their rushes at the deer, attempted to seize the animal at the flank; and we can well understand how easily, with their peculiarly sharp fangs, they are enabled to tear through the flesh and skin, causing the entrails to protrude, and thus soon dispatch their victim. On this occasion, after pulling down the deer, two, if not three, of the pack paid forfeit with their lives, from the rifle of the looker-on.

Usually these dogs are only seen at dawn or dusk. I have only fallen in with them occasionally; once, near the Pykara waterfalls, some years ago, on reaching the crest of a very abrupt slope down by the river, I saw a hind cross within shot, alarmed, but not by me, her gaze being directed below. As she reached the sholah close by, I observed a movement down by the river bank; at the same time the piercing whistling kind of cry, which young sambur make, reached my ears, and then my shikaree as well as myself, saw a number of red animals rush hither and thither in great excitement. We hastened down, guided by the mournful cry of the calf, which ceased as we approached. A hurried shot scattered the pack of dogs, and with the second barrel I broke the leg of one, but he escaped. There were about a dozen in all, and they took refuge in a wood at the water's edge. We searched for the calf, but failed to find a vestige of it, and I know not whether it was killed and eaten before I dispersed its enemies, or eventually escaped.

In the low country, where cover game is plentiful, the wild dogs abound. When at Bandipore, on the road to Mysore, some ten or twelve years ago, at a time when spotted deer were very numerous in those jungles, we constantly saw wild dogs in pursuit of the game, and a deer I had hit they half demolished for me.

A like occurrence happened to me with an antelope, when a wolf joined in the chase with two of my dogs, and

pulled down the deer, which he had nearly half devoured. before I reached the spot.

When at the Avalanche a few months back, I was one morning panting up that terribly steep hill behind the bungalow, and met a hind and fawn bustling down the side of the hill, in a desperate hurry, with all their hair standing on end; and yet, as I was to leeward, and there being nothing to alarm them that I could see, I was puzzled at their behaviour; but the cause was not far off, for on reaching the point from which they had come, I met three wild dogs in chase, and I am sorry to add, made a disgraceful miss at the biggest of the lot.

At the same place one morning, a fellow-sportsman, in wandering over the range of low hills along the course of the river, came upon a track of where a deer had passed at speed down towards the water, and further on descried a wild dog on the bank which, on being fired at, made tracks, followed by three or four others. On going down, there was a hind in a shallow of the stream, her belly torn open, and a calf near its birth, half-eaten, and a portion of the old hind also devoured. The deer was scarcely cold; she had apparently been unable to reach the deep pool a little further down stream, where she might have held her enemies at bay.

The state of the animal, with her flanks all torn, confirms the idea that the attacks of the dogs are confined to that part of the body, which is so vulnerable, the skin being so much more easily torn when the animal is at speed than when not in motion. This is exemplified by the ease with which the spear-blade enters a hog when running away from you, and the difficulty, (unless very sharp) when the animal is down. In the former case it is described as like "putting a hot knife into a pat of butter."

The wild dog is not over particular as to his food being venison. He takes kindly, as we know to our cost, to kid

or goat, and like his distant relation, the fox of Europe, would not, I dare say, object to rob the roost,—thinking, perhaps, as the sick Reynard in Æsop's fables did, that "a chicken too might do him good." Generally, however, he is too shy to approach inhabited buildings.

"VAGRANT" has written some interesting particulars about his "Evangelina." I saw the beast at the People's Park, and a more untameable wretch I never met with, and why so fair a name for such a savage de'il, I know not.

The wild dog does not throw his tongue when in chase, I have heard them make a tremulous kind of whimper, but whether it was a call or not I could not say. They at times bark and howl at night, and I heard one not very long ago at Ooty.

I am doubtful whether the wild dog does much harm to the jungle sheep. The little animal so seldom takes the open for any distance that I question his meeting with success in the chase of this active little deer.

It is a generally accepted opinion, that where the wild dog hunts for any length of time, the deer quit that part of the country, completely driven away by them; at any rate, vast tracts of the most likely ground, with everything to attract deer, and to which they have been known to be partial, have been found deserted, not for a short time only, but for months, and even years. We know that antelope can be driven away from favourite localities by the too frequent use of the hunting cheetah. May it not be so too with the sambur and the wild dogs' incessant depredations? The tiger does not cause it, for where deer resort, there will the tiger be some time or another. I remember once hearing a shikaree, on being questioned how it happened there were so many deer in a jungle from which a tiger had been moved, naïvely reply, "Where there are rats you generally find the cat."

The wild dog has, I believe, hitherto been found to be quite untameable. It is strange how certain varieties of the canine species decline,—if I may so put it,—by domestication. I have never heard of a tame wolf, hyæna,* or wild-dog; yet the fox and the jackal become quite tame and domestic, running about the house and following their master just like a dog, though not displaying any great affection or fidelity to the hand that feeds them.

I have seen the wild dog somewhat bold and saucy in his demeanour. On one occasion, when returning to the Avalanche bungalow, I heard the strange whimpering noise I have alluded to above, and presently saw some five or six wild dogs on the outskirts of a wood. One of them came forward to reconnoitre, and I took a shot at him, and missed; he ran off a short distance, and his companions entered the wood. The bold dog I had fired at only retreated a short distance, and then rushed back, tail erect and barking furiously. Another shot failed to frighten him, but a third throwing the dirt up into his face, he then began to think it dangerous, and decamped, barking for some time after he disappeared. They were all long shots, except the first. I suppose he was some old patriarch of the pack, and considered it his duty to cover the retreat of his family. He looked very handsome in his angry mood, with his black brush cocked over his back, as much as to say "Who's afraid?"

These dogs are seldom met singly; generally they are in packs, though now and then pairs are seen, perhaps only at certain seasons. Their hunting no doubt, is invariably in numbers, it being improbable that a single dog, or even a pair of them, could tackle the larger game.

There is, however, one point on which we may rest assured, and that is, take him in whatever light you will,

* Since writing the above I have heard of a tame hyæna.

he is, beyond all doubt, a most destructive poacher, and the game he destroys is absolutely beyond computation. My parting advice, therefore, to all sportsmen is, kill him whenever you have the chance.

A few words in closing the rambling sketches of the "Poachers" infesting our Hills may not be unseasonable. It is contemplated to introduce "An Act" for the better preservation of the game on the plateau of the Neilgherries. There can be no doubt that such a law is really needed, and when once in force, remember, all good sportsmen, that it depends on yourselves whether it shall be a *dead* or a *living* law; for unless you heartily support it, and check the slaughtering system that hitherto has so grievously prevailed (with very few exceptions) amongst you all, it will do but little good. Respect the close months; keep your eyes on the native shikarries; restrain your own men from shooting at all, reward them for watching your interests, and so assist the Commissioner to the best of your power; and ere long we shall soon be able to hold up our small but *elevated* principality as a model, in this and many other respects, to all India; and then the sportsman's heart will rejoice to know that *slaughter* and *butchery* are no more! "*Vale!*"



CHAPTER IX.

BEARS.

RUM customers, and dangerous! but amusing and interesting, from their queer ways and eccentric habits. Let me try and relate some of their peculiarities, for the amusement of your readers.

I have heard Bruin described as the "Ursine Sloth;" whether that is a correct designation I leave "VAGRANT" to discuss: for my own part, I do not consider the beast properly represents a sloth of any kind, and the heart of many a sportsman, when pursued by a wounded bear, would have rejoiced had his movements partaken of the genus sloth. A bear—and a wounded or enraged one—is not only a savage, but an active, though perhaps clumsy foe, and the way which he scuttles in pursuit of an enemy, and the steam he puts on,—and I may say too, blows off, in fierce "hoo-hoos," and enraged yells, not only astonishes one, but is apt to shake the nerves of even the tried hunter very considerably.

The black bear of Southern India was often found on these Hills in former days; indeed it was seldom that parties beating the woods for sambur failed to turn out hairy old Bruin; and a deal of mischief he did at times with the pack. Of late years, he has only occasionally been found on the inland plateau, but is still to be met with on the slopes and ghauts leading to the jungles below.

A story was extant many years ago of an encounter with a bear by a brawny Scotch chief—if I may so call him,—

one Ross, I think, who being attacked by Bruin, defended himself with such spirit and strength that he actually conquered the beast by sheer force, and succeeded in casting him over a precipice; the man escaped unhurt. "SENEX," I have no doubt, could relate the particulars of this tale better than I can; all I can vouch for is, that it is an "ower-true" one.

It was long my great ambition to kill a bear, and it took me many a year before I succeeded in getting a trophy. On one occasion my hopes were high that the time had at last arrived and success within my grasp; but, alas! the following mournful tale will show how often the best arrangements fail.

A couple of bears were reported to have taken up their abode in a large cave near Tencasse, and not very far from Courtallum. Arrangements being duly made, away we went to smoke them out of their stronghold. Approaching the cave, a tree was pointed out as the dancing saloon of the happy couple, and it bore marks as if often used; the natives declaring at the time that the bears amused themselves in dancing and swinging about on the gnarled stem and pliant branches. It was duly ascertained that Bruin and his wife were at home, and preparations were accordingly made to smoke them out of their comfortable abode.

The cave was large, reaching a long way under a rocky hill, the men said some hundred yards and more;—the consequence was that a good deal of material was required, to cause a sufficient supply of smoke to reach the further end; but seeing large trusses of straw crammed into the mouth of the cave, we remonstrated, but without effect. On being set fire to, a blaze and smoke arose, which very shortly convinced us that no bear could possibly break through; and so it proved. The poor animals came down

to the mouth of the den, and tried to force their way through fire and smoke, but were overpowered by the fierceness of the flames; and then, when too late, the native master of the chase began to clear away the superfluous combustibles, to let the poor beasts have a chance, but they had already been suffocated;—a cruel proceeding truly, but entirely the fault of the head-man, who, because the Collector's Assistant was present, considered it absolutely necessary to use ten times the quantity of straw required for such purpose; the fool! for on enquiry we found that on ordinary occasions an armful of straw, with a few chillies was sufficient to smoke out any animal; but we were young in those days, and trusted to the native shikarees. The bears were brought in the next day; the male a splendid fellow, with such an arm! I should indeed have been sorry to have been embraced by so powerful a brute.

I have only once since attempted to smoke out a bear, and succeeded with a few sticks and dried leaves in bringing him out in about ten minutes. It was a ticklish bit of sport; for to command the cave, I had to lower myself on to a platform of rock not ten feet square, and facing the opening of the den. A gallant band of natives declared they were game to the back-bone, and would stand by me like good ones; but no sooner did they observe the sticks from the fire hustled about by the old bear, than they were off! leaving me and my sepoy alone to deal with Bruin. Out he came in a tearing rage, but the first greeting being a two-ounce ball through the ribs, instead of showing fight, he rushed past me before I could change rifles, and was down over the rocks, and away as hard as he could go for another cave; but his strength gradually gave in, and hastening down, I overtook him just as he was reaching another stronghold, in the mouth of which I struck him down.

It is strange in how many instances bears, like other animals, are killed by a single ball, and at other times the number of bullets it takes to dispose of them.

The scenes that occur in bear-shooting are at times perfectly ludicrous. I remember in the Bandipoor jungles coming suddenly on a black object under a fallen tree. I was about 40 or 50 yards off, and could not make out what it could be,—it was too large for a single bear, but had the appearance of a dead animal much swollen up. Approaching softly, I could at last distinguish two twinkling eyes, but still could not make out the form of the body, for the said eyes appeared to me to be in the middle of the black mass. The eyes were lively enough, but no motion of the body assisted me to distinguish its form or position; however, being satisfied that it was an animal, I let drive with my two-ouncer. The hullabuloo that followed the shot may be conceived but not described. Firing my spare rifle into the black spot, I retreated behind a bamboo clump, and commenced reloading. It was well I took this precaution, for in the midst of unearthly screams and yells, out rushed a large she bear, in a state of ferocity fearful to behold. I held my hand in loading, remaining quiet as a mouse. After looking around and failing to detect me, the old lady returned to her crying child, whose yells still made the forest ring with piteous lamentations; the mother too growling and roaring in concert. She repeated her reconnoissance twice before I could get ready for her, but at last I succeeded in planting a shot in her shoulder; at the same moment the wounded infant sallied forth from under the dead tree, approaching its wounded parent with mournful cries. No sooner did the old one see the young hopeful, than at him she rushed, rolling him over, howling and growling and tearing him about in a most savage manner, increasing his awful yells to a pitch distressing to hear. At last the old lady scrambled away, and I followed

to despatch her; but directly I reached the clump where they had disappeared, out came the young one, charging me so ferociously that I was obliged to shoot him then and there. The report, I fancy, scared the mother, who made tracks, and I never saw her again.

Many instances of bears attributing the injury received from the hunter to their companions have been recorded, and in all cases the scenes have been most absurd. I have not, however, explained how I came to hit the young bear. I suppose the old mother was lying comfortably under the burnt stem of the fallen tree, and that the little fellow was lodged on her side, giving her the appearance I have described; the dark hair of both, and the charred stem of the tree blending together caused the effect as if the body was swollen; and I think the young one was on his back at the time, as I found the shot that had wounded him had entered his belly, passing out of the hind leg, and so missed the body of the mother.

Bears are generally harmless, and certainly commit but little mischief, nevertheless they are eagerly sought after by sportsmen,—the spice of danger in the chase adding a charm to the success.

Twice I had narrow escapes, once from a bear I had thought was killed dead. I was out for an evening stroll with a friend close to camp, when we observed a bear enter some high grass near a small stream fringed with wood. We were at the time on a range of hills about three thousand feet high. On entering the grass, I heard the animal make a kind of sniffing noise, and presently caught sight of something black within a few feet of me;—up rifle, and down fell Bruin. My companion, who was to my right, called out, and I replied saying "here he is, dead." No sooner had I spoke, than up jumped the bear, very groggy and very savage, and rushed at my friend, making a half

circle as he did so, and tumbling over in the long grass every now and then as he came on.

I joined my friend, who waited pretty coolly, and fired when the bear was about ten paces off, and coming straight at him; the bear stumbled at the shot, but, I think, was not touched, for on he came straight at us; my friend slipped behind me, seeing that I had clubbed my rifle and was prepared to let the bear come on; as he reached me, I brought the weapon down with all my force on the animal's head. For a second the beast was stunned, and lay at my feet; the next he was up, and into the grass, and we never saw him again.

The rifle I used had a stock of country wood, made, I think, from the root of the milk-hedge, and, strange to say, was uninjured, but was covered with blood, so I fancy my shot must have been somewhere in the head or neck.

On another occasion I was following, unconsciously, a she bear with two cubs—for I did not know they were in front of me—along a narrow ledge of a rocky hill, on the road from Bunder to Secunderabad; turning a corner of the path circling round the upper scrap of the rock, I came bang on the old mother, who rushed at me incontinently. Hastily firing one barrel, I stepped back, when, oh! horror! my foot slipped off the path, and down I went backwards with no little force, for my hat flew some hundred yards off, and, there I lay helpless on the slope, on my back, my feet close to the bear, and all I could do was to keep the rifle pointed towards her, determined to hold my hand for one last chance should she come down upon me. Growling and swearing—if I may use the expression—there she remained within a foot of my legs, shaking her head, and apparently summing up courage to attack; all the time looking extremely vicious, and yet refraining to take advantage of my helpless position; whether it was the

thought of her family, or the noise made by my sepoy rushing to the rescue that affected her, I know not; but all of a sudden she turned and bolted. On her doing so, I fired my last barrel as I lay, and of course, from my position, sent the ball over her. When I rose from my awkward posture, I felt very thankful for my deliverance.

The bears in Tinnevelly at times go down to the topes of palmyra, and rob the trees of the toddy. I remember a friend of mine falling in with a very drunken old rascal, whose revel in toddy-trees had kept him out late; he was staggering along towards the nearest hill, when he was met by my friend returning from fox hunting, or antelope shooting—I think the former, as he had a spear with him, with which he attempted to assail the bear, but being mounted on a young horse, he had great difficulty in persuading the animal to face the drunken hairy monster, for whenever the rider forced the Arab to go in, up stood old Bruin, making the most hideous noises and uncouth gestures, enough to frighten old Nick himself, let alone a timid Arab colt; the end of it was that the old 'un got the best of it and escaped; but it may well be imagined what an exciting scene it must have been, and how absurd the antics of an intoxicated old blackguard of a Bruin!

I have been told of a tame bear that had been indulged with some cherry brandy, taking up a blacking bottle, and drinking the contents, under the idea that it was more cherry brandy. I saw a tame young bear on board ship get his head into the chatty containing his food, from which he could not extricate himself, and no one could help him, for we were all so perfectly helpless from laughter at the ridiculous attempts he made to rid himself of his earthenware muzzle, that poor Bruin was nearly suffocated. How he danced! and how we roared! and how the rice and congee-water rained down his black hide! and then, when

he took to rolling about the deck, how frightened every body was! It was a sight to see! At last the chatty was broken, and the poor bear released.

The Bears in the Northern Division about Berhampore appear to be of a more savage disposition than the animals down south. I have heard of many sportsmen, and indeed know more than one, who have suffered from their savage attacks. They very often, I am told, come at you without provocation.

As I am not like Bob Acres—fond of a long shot, I for my part do not object to a charge, provided the animal is not a tiger; if well-armed, loaded with shell, and steady, the danger is not so great.

I killed an old bear up in the Northern District, whose life had been often attempted by others without success. Whether he had mauled any of his enemies I cannot say, but the beaters evidently were afraid of him; as it was, however, there was nothing to fear, for soon after I had been posted behind a tree, at the first yell of the beaters, old Bruin came shuffling along, grumbling loudly at being disturbed; he came straight for my post, and as he approached, I tried to hit him in the chest, but aimed too low and caught him above the paw; on he came, telling of his wound in the most violent language "cursing and swearing (in the beasts' tongue) like anything;"—the next shot laid him low, having struck his spine. As I approached, to give him the *coup de grace*, the anger, rage and ferocious attempts to get at me, and the savage roars he uttered at every impotent effort, was a marvellous display of fierce wrath; sufficiently so to alarm and keep the beaters at a distance, even though he was incapable of doing any mischief. I finished him with a ball through his head, and he was carried in triumph to my quarters; the whole detachment—men, women, and children flocked

to the house to see the big bear, that was, as my cook would have it, so like a hairy man.

In skinning the animal we found three bullets, belonging to some disappointed hunters, one split in two, flattened on the skull, embedded in a growth of flesh; this appeared like a match-lock ball—two other larger balls were in his body, lodged under the skin, so he had clearly been in the wars before I fell in with him.

On another occasion I had a very pretty affair in bear hunting, in which a Naique of my detachment exhibited no small degree of pluck; so, as redounding to his credit, I will tell the tale. I used to take out with me any volunteers of the detachment disposed to go, some with their weapons, to protect those doing beater work; of those so armed, a few were selected who could be depended on, to be provided with ball cartridge, others with blank, to accompany the men beating, to prevent the bears breaking back.

Bears were reported in a wooded and rocky hill about five miles off—it was an isolated conical hill, with a spur connecting it with a small jungly mound running out to the maidan, and separate from any other cover, by a wide, well-cultivated plain of some three or four miles in extent. The bears were in the larger hill, which was beaten from the summit of the cone down towards the spur above mentioned—we were posted at the foot of the hill on a cart track separating the hill from the mound, to which latter we were told the animals would be sure to take. Two bears were disturbed, and one contrived to break back, at which I had a long shot, but without effect, though there was a sound like a hit. The other bear meanwhile had quietly stolen across our posts without being seen, and had gone on to the termination of the spur and entered the low jungle. Sending the beaters round, we remained at our

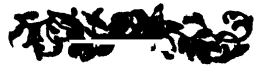
posts awaiting the return of Bruin. Shortly a shot announced a find, another succeeded, and then I saw the smoke from the weapon of the Naique—posted about 80 or 100 yards above me on the track. After firing he stood up, and the bear, catching sight of him came down the path right at him, as he did so running the gamut of bear-music up and down in the most hideous manner conceivable, his mouth wide open, the ivories gleaming white and terrible, the Naique Moonasawmy standing firm and boldly, with his musket at the charge, but unfortunately without bayonet, though, perhaps, I may say—as it turned out, fortunately, for had he wounded the animal, the consequences would probably have been more serious. On came the bear, and when within three paces, up he rose on his hind legs, roaring and striking with his paw at "Moonasawmy," who in return, shouted and prodded away at his enemy, standing his ground like a Briton, and facing his foe manfully; in the meantime I had been rushing up the path to the rescue, and as I approached within some thirty yards, the bear, either seeing me or thinking discretion the better part of valour, and the jungle so close, dropped on his feet and was at the very edge of the jungle when I fired, and fortunately dropped him dead on the spot. The look of surprise on the face of my gallant Naique, as he turned round and saw his fierce foe dead at his feet was worth beholding.

The triumphal procession with this bear to our lines far exceeded in honor and glory that of the former one, though the animal was not nearly so large; but then the sepoy had nothing to do with the first. It was a good bit of sport, and I have no doubt is talked about in the regiment to this day—one thing I felt confident of, and that was, that if the sepoy, like the Naique, could stand the charge of a ferocious bear, he could well be depended on in the field against an enemy. My friend the Naique

I have not heard of lately, but he was all through the mutinies, and I believe in more than one skrimmage.

Bears are often shot by night, and fall an easy prey to the patient watcher; I remember at Bellary an officer killed a great many in this manner, for if not successful the night, he was very often so at early dawn, by being on the spot and meeting them returning from their rambles for food—the animal is fond of all kinds of fruit—the bhear, the corrinda or kullaka, the morwa; and during the season of these fruits, he invariably visits the trees and bushes on which they grow. They are also very partial to both white and black ants, grubs and beetles. On the slopes of these hills the presence of a bear in the neighbourhood is known by the number of stones on the hillside turned over by him in his search for ants, beetles and grubs. I killed one bear at Bandipore whose stomach was crammed full with the large larva of a beetle of the size of my thumb; he was detained late at his meal, from which he was returning when I shot him, within sight of the Bungalow close to the road side.

I think I have said enough about bears for this while; if I could but incite others to tell all they know about them, so much the better for your *Observer*. Meanwhile, I have done my little possible; so adieu!



CHAPTER X.

SNAKES, AND OTHER MATTERS.

COLONEL HENRY SHAKESPEARE has been writing to the *Field* of 20th March, 1869, about snakes, and reading his letters reminds me that I have something to say about them, that may, perhaps, be interesting to your readers; at any rate it will give me the opportunity of recording a few more reminiscences of old times, connected with the dearly-beloved blue mountains,—the days, Sir, in which, had you seen Ooty as it then was, you would lift up your voice and deplore, as I do, the outrages "*footsteps* of civilization" have committed, without one redeeming advantage that I can see; on the contrary, it may be said, and truly, that the original loveliness of the spot has given place to a hideousness that, if not original, is at any rate distinctive and singular in its exceeding ugliness: ask SENEX! I am not, however, going to dwell on this subject, though I may say the *dwellings* contribute in no small degree to the ill-favored features of dear old Ooty.

When the Pioneers opened up the then new ghaut from Mettapollium to Coonoor, the corps being encamped at the head of the ghaut, they were for a few days detained at the river near Mettapollium, trying to make the suspension bridge that had been supplied from Madras, fit the river, or some point on the river fit it, but failed. It was during that time that an officer, Gill, I believe, of Adjunts and

Ellora celebrity, when out shooting in the vicinity of the camp, fell in with a large python, or, as Shakespeare calls it, our udzgur.

If I remember aright, it was on a tree, lying in wait for its prey. It was killed with a charge of shot, which, unfortunately, shattered and damaged the head and neck. It was presented to the late Mr. G. S. Hooper, who was then Subordinate Judge at Coimbatore, in whose house I saw it after it had been stuffed. It was some nineteen feet long, and, I should say, some twenty inches in circumference,—a fine specimen, and formed part of a collection of birds and animals, admirably preserved and set up, which my old friend eventually presented to the Governor in those days, Stephen Rumbold Lushington, whose brother, by the way,—Charles May Lushington, a Member of the Sudder Court, was one of the early advocates for the occupation of these hills as a sanitarium for sick officers and men.

I heard of a snake of the above description having been met with, of nearly double the proportions mentioned, but it was not brought into camp. The size of such reptiles is always deceptive, like the alligator and shark,—seen in the water or on a bank, the proportions often look immense, but are seldom realised on actual capture. A correspondent in the *Field* of the 27th March, 1869, treats with ridicule the idea of a snake with a "head as large as a tiger's;" but seen when in the act of swallowing its prey, we can well imagine the appearance assuming such dimensions.

I have fallen in with the rock snake, both large and comparatively small, several times in my wanderings in this land of the sun. I saw the skin of a good sized one,—twelve feet, I think, that was killed at Courtallum in Tinnevelly, under the following circumstances.

A friend of mine was staying at that charming retreat—the most delightful one in all Southern India to my mind, for the period the season lasts, i.e., from June to September,—when one day the gardener came running in hot haste to announce that a *big* snake had caught a monkey; out rushed my friend, armed with a spear, and there in the garden, at the foot of a large mango tree, he beheld the snake, with the monkey nearly three parts down his gullet, the tail and hind legs only being visible. Striking the snake with the spear as near as possible to what might be his spine, the effect was extraordinary; by a violent re-action of the degluting muscles, if I may so call them, the body of the monkey was ejected with considerable force, and the python then turned his attention to his assailants, and was killed with some difficulty.

The curious part of the story is that the gardener declared most solemnly that he saw the snake take up its position at the stem of the tree, on which the monkies were stealing the fruit; that it raised itself up the stem about half its length, and, as he described it, looked at the monkies; that they raised a wonderful hubbub, chattering and screaming as if frightened out of their lives, skipping about from branch to branch, and all the time one of the monkies—the gardener deliberately asserted—descended the tree, until within reach of its dread foe, and then and there gave herself (brave female) up to the rescue of her bewildered family. Now, was this fascination? It looks like it certainly. The gardener persisted in his tale, and I tell it as it was told me; and what is more, I am disposed to have faith in it.

Dear old Courtallum! shall I apostrophise thee, and tell my readers of all the delights we enjoyed in "the merry, merry days when we were young?" of how we hastened from hot and grilling Palamcottah fort to this oasis in the

desert, where the land flowing—not with milk and honey, but covered with flourishing crops, looked so green and pleasant to the eye, after a forty miles ride on the arid plains of Tinnevelly? how the grateful shade of the tall avenue of glorious peepul trees cooled our brow? how the music of the falling waters greeted the ear and soothed the spirit of the toil-worn traveller? and then the bath beneath that health-giving stream, exhilarating the weary frame, and restoring the feeling ascribed to the giant "refreshed with wine!" Shall I go on to tell of the fair creatures who shared with us the joys of this lovely spot? I think not. It could not interest my present readers; and, alas! of the many companions of those pleasant years, how few there are left who could remember the incidents of those days! Let us return to our snakes.

The rock snakes were somewhat numerous at Courtallum; I remember a very fair-sized one being killed one morning on our return from the bath at the Falls; how we belaboured him with little or no effect! but at last succeeded in killing the harmless reptile, much to the disgust, I think, of a solitary fakir, whose post in front of a small pagoda had been invaded, and his meditations interrupted by our skrimmage with the big snake.

The fakir was one of those devotees who hang about the Hindoo places of worship, subsisting on the charity bestowed by the devout in passing to and fro from the Falls. This man's special peculiarity was that his god had, in the shape of a minute image, fallen into his hand, and that he had clutched it so tight that he could not open his hand again, and that it had been so closed for many, many years. He exhibited his hand, and truly it was closed, for the nails of his fingers had grown right through the back of his hand, and were some inches long on the other side—a repulsive sight indeed! There was a slight opening in the

hand near the thumb, within which could be seen a portion of the image enclosed. For a sight of this, to the Hindoo so holy a relic, the devout and the faithful willingly paid tribute. We barbarians of course ought not to have cast our evil eyes on such a holy thing; but being surrounded by deloyets with silver sticks, and all the pomp and ceremony of belted peons, attaching to the high office of an Assistant Collector, we, having no scruples and less feeling, made the poor wretch exhibit his deformity, in which he gloried so much; and, to our shame be it said, laughed him to scorn, and did not give him a pice. But here we are again, leaving our snakes to prattle about jogees and superstitious devotees.

Resuming then—the handsomest rock snake I ever saw was on the hills near Bellary; beautiful as they generally are, this one was surpassingly so. Perhaps he was dressed in a new skin, but the colors were so marvellously clear and bright, and such rainbow-hues, changing like shot-silk as he writhed and glided about, struck all who saw the creature as wonderfully beautiful; unfortunately the weather being damp the skin could not be preserved.

I have only once seen the rock snake in actual possession of its prey. When marching up to Hyderabad, some twenty-six years ago, I was out shooting, not very far from the bungalow we were to halt at, when on approaching a tolerably large bush on the banks of a nullah, I heard a bark inside, and thinking it was a hare, I ran round to the left, the dogs and dog-boy doing the same to the right; nothing came out, but the dog-boy cried out "a big snake, a big snake, and the dog is biting it!" I cut round, and peeping in, I saw the greyhound biting at the hind-quarters of a hare, enveloped in the fold of a rock snake; the act of the dog alarmed the snake, which gradually unrolled

its coils, and let the hare go, which being crippled by the embrace, the dogs caught easily, and as the snake tried to escape, I shot it; it measured between nine and ten feet long, and was as thick as a man's arm.

Colonel Shakespeare mentions a snake called the *Durnam*—I fancy corresponding with what is called to the south the *Varrea* or *Sârree*—by some it is considered to be the brown whip-snake; the natives have an idea that it is the male cobra; it is a snake however that is not venomous, and takes its prey like the rock snake. It grows to a considerable length, is very rapid in its motions, but, I believe, quite harmless, though I have seen a native who declared that one of these snakes had attacked him and had swarmed over his body, giving him one bite as he quitted him,—the result, the man declared, accounted for the state of his skin, which was shrunk up in a most extraordinary manner, all over his body, face, and hands; it was just as if he had been marked by a curry-comb; in fact, I can liken the wrinkles to the marks made by a curry-comb on the satin coat of a well-groomed racer, as the most appropriate description of the old man's appearance.

But of all places in Southern India for cobras commend me to Bellary. My house was one of the few having a good garden attached to it, which, apparently, held out great attractions to snakes, especially cobras.

Our first intimation of their presence was a startling one. The lady of the house was sitting near a window looking towards the garden, and while working or reading felt something touch her shoulder; it was repeated once or twice before she detected what it was, when, to her horror, she beheld a snake hanging over the open venetian, swaying to and fro, and touching her with its tail, its head fortunately being between the window and the wall: it was soon dispatched. On another occasion, soon after, we

were trying to get some field rats out of their holes, by pouring water down them, when out came a large cobra.

It was strange how keen and watchful a Persian cat that we had at that time became in regard to these snakes; ever on the look-out, she gave us repeated warnings of their presence, and appeared wonderfully pleased when the snake paid the forfeit of his life for his intrusion. One night I was aroused by the cat rushing from her chair with a sort of a purr, and flying through my room out at the door into a verandah, where there happened to be some mats and bamboos for making tatties. It was a moonlight season. I got to the verandah; there was pussy patrolling up and down in front of the *debris*, making a murmuring noise and keeping a sharp look-out to her fore. Feeling quite satisfied that a snake was there I called up the people, and sure enough we killed a cobra, some six feet long. One afternoon we observed the cat in the garden dancing about and springing now and then high up in the air, and, guessing what was the matter, we rushed out to her assistance. As we approached we saw the cobra making off, and being close to the well it got away in some hole in the brickwork and escaped. On the field of battle, we found large flecks of pussy's white coat that the snake had pulled out in his attempts to strike her; fortunately her thick fur prevented her fangs reaching the good cat's skin.

I have known instances of cobras suddenly turning on their pursuers, and when they do so, the pace they come along at is astonishing. The safest plan in such cases is to throw down your hat or handkerchief, which seldom fails to arrest the snake's progress; for, pulling up short, he erects himself for his spring, expanding his hood, and looking the perfect demon that he is.

The largest cobra I ever killed was at the foot of the Pulneys. I am a trifle over six feet high, and when I lifted

the snake as high over my head as my arm could reach, the reptile's head more than touched the ground; which I make out to be some seven feet and a half, or a trifle more. Down south, the *varrea* and cobra run very large.

It was at Bellary that I very nearly came to grief with a cobra. There was in my bath-room a familiar old toad, that had become quite tame, and always came out of the escape hole for the refuse water directly he heard the splashing. One day, not seeing him as usual, and the escape of the water being obstructed, I stooped to look, and saw poor froggy, as I thought, jammed across the hole with his yellow belly towards me. I put my fingers in and laid hold of my friend, and had some difficulty in pulling him out. Imagine my surprise and horror when I found that although I had got hold of the toad, he was encased in the gullet of a cobra! Fortunately he had not gone far down the cobra's throat, so the latter could not turn its head to bite me. To dash it down as hard as I could and rush for a stick did not take long, and the poor toad was avenged. To think of this gives me what the Devonshire people call a "shrim"—a very descriptive word, I think, for that sensation which covers you from head to foot with what is called "*goose's skin.*"

There is a large heavy snake, I believe, even more venomous, if possible, than the cobra. It is a very handsome snake, by some called the Beaver Snake; the natives in some parts down south call it the Looking-glass Snake,—it has large oval patches on its skin, resembling the old-fashioned mirrors that formerly were in very general use; but how the natives came to draw the comparison is more than I can tell,—I daresay Dr. Shortt can do so. This snake is sometimes met with from five to six feet long; is thick and massive, somewhat sluggish, and thereby the more dangerous, as it

will not get out of your way; its bite, is, as I said before, most deadly.

Colonel Shakespeare speaks of the double-headed snake; I have seen these often enough, and very generally the snake-charmers bring them about and exhibit them as curiosities, always declaring that the wonderful *boulversement* of changing its head from one end to the other when it puts on a new skin, is a fact beyond dispute. I remember that eccentric but good-hearted fellow, Fred. Parr, of the Queen's 54th, resolving to solve the mystery, and kept one of these snakes for many months, with some distinguishing mark either on its head or tail; but the perverse brute changed its skin during the night, or at a time when no one was observing it, and so no one was any the wiser on the disputed point. The said snake is, I believe, harmless.

The snakes on these hills, as far as I know, are confined to three or four kinds only. There is the elegant thin little green snake, which glides over the long grass, seldom touching the ground, but passing along from tuft to tuft, eager to escape. It is easily caught, and is perfectly harmless. Then there is a short-mottled green snake, with flat and broad head—I fancy a green viper; it is sluggish and supposed to be venomous—it looks so at any rate—and, notwithstanding its handsome color, is a repulsive reptile. Then there is the dark-brown mottled viper, an ill-favored beast, with all the appearance of venom in its flat and ugly head. I am told it does not belie its looks, being exceedingly poisonous.

On one or two occasions I have come upon a large black snake, basking in the sun, generally in the vicinity of a stream,—I think an emigrant from the low country, and probably either a water-snake or a varrea.

That's all I have to say about snakes—"and quite enough too," I hear some fair reader say, "about such nasty

things." Well, well, I must write about something; and as VAGRANT has selected the lovely, I can only put up with the hideous.

A few words before I close. I see there is a stir being made about the preservation of fish; and why not about Game? What has become of the Commissioner's Draft Act? Burked I suppose, because there is not a sportsman in the Council. Remember how the hills will go to the "demnition bow-wows" if the attraction of sport no longer exists.

Dost thou not know, oh! friend Editor! that that dark diabolical deed, hinted at by VAGRANT—the slaughtering of Sambur, be they stags, hinds or calves, by a Flesher (I thank thee, VAGRANT, for the word) and the meat sold to coolies and villagers, is a fact? and that this Flesher's apron (oh! how I thank thee again, dear VAGRANT) has been donned by other juvenile would-be sportsmen, but who are nothing but shameless Fleshers? Raise up thy voice, mighty Editor, and put to the blush—if any shame is left to them—these despicable slaughterers; and save, oh! save, the game on those dearly-loved Blue Mountains from utter annihilation!

Come forward, ye sportsmen deserving of the proud name; come forward, slay and put down with the mighty weapon of scorn these miserable specimens of *shooting* humanity who dare to aspire to the noble title of sportsmen, but who are but base Fleshers (VAGRANT, I love thee for that word). Spare them not! is the urgent cry of your old friend—HAWKEYE.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SPOTTED 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 the abovementioned beautiful animal 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 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. Whether it be coupled with the indescribable feeling that rejoices the sportsman's heart as he stealthily wanders beneath the arcades of the feathery bamboo jungles, forming as they do, aisles, and glades, and vistas of nature's lovely handiwork, so enchanting to the sportsman's eye, making, as it were, his very inmost soul to rejoice and be glad: or, whatever the fascination may be, whether of scenery or the spirit of sport itself, it exists; and none that I have met, mighty hunters though they be, have ever been ashamed to own the soft impeachment.

What then is the attraction that has so often led me and others to follow with such keenness and ardour the chase of the "Dappled Darlings?" Handsome and beautiful as the buck Axis really is, he cannot be compared to that noble stag, the Sambur; glossy and bright though

his spotted hide may be, he is wanting in that stamp of nobility the latter so truly possesses.

A long and somewhat heavily built carcase, supported by short stout legs, taking him as he creeps ignobly through the brushwood, stealthily avoiding some suspected danger, his appearance is then mean to a degree, though he is only acting as instinct guides him; but there is another side to the picture, affording a complete contrast.

Imagine a forest glade, the graceful bamboo arching overhead, forming a lovely vista, with here and there bright spots and deep shadows—the effect of the sun's rays struggling to penetrate the leafy roof of nature's aisle. Deep in the solitude of the woods see now the dappled herd, and watch the handsome buck, as he roams here and there in the midst of his harem, or, browsing amongst the bushes, exhibits his graceful antlers to the lurking foe, who, by patient woodcraft, has succeeded in approaching his unsuspecting victim. Observe how proudly he holds himself, as some other buck, of less pretensions, dares to approach the ladies of the group; see how he advances, as on tiptoe, all the hair of his body standing on end, and with a thundering rush drives headlong away this bold intruder, and then comes swaggering back! But, hark!—a twig has broken! suddenly the buck wheels round, facing the quarter from whence the sound proceeded: look at him now, and say, is he not a quarry well worth the hunter's notice? With head erect, antlers thrown back, his white throat exposed, his tail raised, his whole body gathered together, prepared to bound away into the deep forest in the twinkling of an eye, he stands a splendid specimen of the cervine tribe. We will not kill him; we look and admire! A doe suddenly gives that *imperceptible signal* to which I have formerly alluded, and the next moment the whole herd has dashed through the bamboo alleys, vanishing from sight,—

a dappled hide now and again gleaming in the sunlight, as its owner scampers away to more distant haunts.

I feel that I have still failed to convey, by my weak and tame description, what it is that attracts us to this particular sport. Adventure there is but little chance of in the pursuit, though it may happen indeed, as it did on one occasion to a friend, when we were together at Bandipore; he, in stalking a herd from one direction, suddenly found a tiger engaged in the same exciting operation from another: my friend, not being good at tigers, prudently left the field to Mr. Stripes the stalker.

A few years ago, Bandipore, on the road to Mysore from the Hills, was the best place for spotted deer that I ever met with. It is sadly changed now-a-days. The deer were exceedingly numerous, and the forest perfection for stalking; but what a life the poor animals led! what with tigers, leopards, wild dogs and shikarries, how they were persecuted! but of all the devils engaged therein there was none to equal the wild dog; the tiger would kill one once in a way, the hunter would shoot a few so long as he remained in the happy hunting grounds; but the wild dog was ever on the track. No rest for the sole of the deer's foot; where the dapples were gathered together in any numbers, so surely there would the wild dog appear—insatiable beasts, one would almost imagine them to have so rapid a digestion that they were ever hungry, or that, like myself, they found the chase of the deer so exceedingly attractive, that life was too short to allow it to be given up for a moment.

The cry or call of the deer is peculiar, resembling a short shrill bark, something like "cop," "cop;" during the night it is often heard. I remember once, when in the Northern Division, I was sitting up in a tree, watching for game in a jungle where stalking was impossible, or at any

rate unprofitable. I had forgotten to pull up the ladder, which was left against the tree. Some deer, in their nocturnal ramble, found this strange thing out, and the way they barked at it was ludicrous. Every time I moved to try and get a sight of them—for they were within the shadow of the tree—they heard the rustling of the leaves, and away they went, cop! cop! Presently they returned, and set to again, and so it went on, for nearly an hour, when they left the spot and returned no more.

It is curious watching the habits of animals at night; the caution they observe on first leaving the jungle to enter a field, or indeed any open space; how perfectly still they remain until quite satisfied that the coast is clear.

The advantage of night-watching is that you are on your ground at the first peep of dawn, and from your elevated post have a good look out over the jungle. I had good sport in this way some ten or twelve years ago—"poaching" some one will say: well, I don't deny it; but what is one to do, when there is no prospect of getting anything in any other way? besides, the real object was, if possible, to get a tiger; but he never showed, and so other game suffered.

In the deep jungle the sudden noises in the still night are very strange and startling, many of them, I believe, made by birds; those by animals are few and far between, and easily detected. The growl of the bear, the grunt and snuffling of hog, the deep "bell" of the sambur, the shrill cry of the spotted deer, the weird yell of the jackal, the hoarse call of the muntjack, the hyæna's frightful howl, and other noises, at times make night in the jungle hideous. But we are leaving our deer; let us hark back, though I have not much more to say about our dapples.

A writer in the *Oriental Sporting Magazine* for May this year, gives a sketch of a group of these deer; it is characteristic, but not quite correct; the attitudes are good

and true, but the antlers are badly drawn, and not so symmetrical as usually found in Southern India. Those depicted are, however, the deer of the Soonderbunds. There is often found great variety in the contour and shape of the horns of the cervines, apparently dependent on locality, which may account for the difference in appearance.

In Bengal they have the hog-deer* also,—quite distinct from the spotted deer, but at the same time bearing much resemblance to it. I am not sure, but I believe the said hog-deer does not exist in Southern India.†

Let me now jot down what I have observed in regard to the habits of the animal I have *written* so much about and *said* so little. We will take a stroll at early dawn, and visit the haunts of a herd of dapples, and watch their movements.

A large tank, the bund of which is shaded by clumps of gigantic bamboos, with here and there large forest trees, throwing a gloomy shade on the still water of this woodland lake, is our first point. The air is still and heavy; all nature seems asleep, hushed by the heavy rain that fell persistently during the night. As we steal lightly along, peering through the jungle, and cautiously threading the tortuous path on which the fresh tracks of deer and hog are clearly visible, we are suddenly startled by the cry of a peacock, roosting in the branches of some tall tree close by; then falls more gently on the ear that peculiar crow of the jungle-cock; still more so the soft cooing whistle of

* *Axis Porcinus.*

† Jerdon, in his *Mammals of India*, page 268, mentions that the hog-deer has been stated to inhabit South Malabar and Ceylon, but the race from the latter country differs somewhat, and is probably distinct. He adds "neither Mr. Blyth nor myself have actually seen specimens from Malabar, though I was resident in North Malabar for some time."

the green pigeon, followed by the deep melodious dove-like voice of the bronze-wing; anon the hoarse and harsh voice of the great horn-bill rings through the forest, and all nature is awake! Ha! ha! did you hear that scream? that prolonged harsh half-roar half-scream, as if some savage and dangerous brute was about to engage in deadly strife with some other denizen of the woods; know you what beast it is that makes so hideous a noise? Ah! I thought not! Strange, but true, it is the timid spotted buck that thus makes the welkin ring with his fearful scream (the first time I heard a spotted buck roar, in the rutting season, I fancied it was a bear in a fearful rage); let us proceed in that direction, we shall surely find a herd.

They are on the move, gradually approaching their daily resting-place; for, if not much disturbed, these deer attach themselves to certain localities, and have their regular trysting-tree or glade, where the hunter is sure to find them. Not far from the tank alluded to, stood a magnificent specimen of the buttress tree; beneath this I had observed in my rambles the couches of a herd of dapples: the scream of the buck was in that direction. A broad belt of bamboo, in massive clumps, leads from the waterside to this noble tree; a sandy nullah runs through the centre of the clump; we creep along its course: presently, on the bank, we hear a rustling, and the next second detect the movement of the dappled hides gliding through the underwood skirting the belt of the bamboos. By all that's good! they are coming right down upon us! so stealthily had we approached, so unsuspected was our presence, that at the very moment when only a few paces from us, *the* buck of the herd (there were many) again uttered that fearful scream—the challenge to do battle with all and any that dared interfere with him, the lord of the harem. Thus moving past, we watched them until one with a

lovely head tempted us—and fell; the buck mingled with the herd—and vanished. The one we bagged was a fine creature, with a very perfect head, the antlers 33 inches long,—they run from that to 36 or 37; and some heads I have seen are very elegant in shape, and form a handsome trophy.

It is seldom that you see small fawns with the herd; they are generally hidden in some bush or brake, and squat like a hare in its form, often startling the sportsman by rushing out almost at his very toes. I have found them at times in between the stems of a bamboo clump.

The flesh of the spotted deer, when in season and of the right age, is most delicious; nothing in the shape of game that I have tasted can excel it; But it must be in season. Once, at Bandipore, I had the satisfaction of supplying a Commander-in-Chief with venison chops; the gratitude of the whole party for their timely feast after a long and wearisome journey, was cheering and flattering to my prowess as a hunter. There is one of that party still amongst us, and though some 14 years have passed, the memory of those delicious chops lingers on his palate still!

In following the spotted deer where they have been much shot at it is wonderful how keen-sighted and alive to danger they become, never stopping to gaze, scarcely to listen,—a snapped twig, a rustle of a leaf, when caused by the footfall of the hunter (how distinguished from that of birds or creeping things this deponent knoweth not) away flees the timid dapple, disappointing—oh! how often!—the careful stalker. I remember once spying the spots of a deer; the animal had its head down and feeding, yet the act of raising the weapon caught its keen eye, and it vanished before I could draw the bead.

How wonderfully too the spotted hide blends with the various lights, shades and objects in their usual haunts;

how plain and staring in the open; how obscure and shadowy in the forest! How often, oh! fellow sportsmen! have you been astonished and vexed at your dulness of vision, on seeing, close to you, the white scuts of a herd of dapples vanishing under your very nose, from ground that you had, you thought, scanned carefully, yet failed to detect so large an object so wonderfully protected in nature's garment. How often have you not suddenly caught sight of spots, just at the very moment when spots caught sight of you, and deprived you of your shot by doubling behind a clump, or disappearing in the water-course just by!

What instinct of self-preservation these game animals are gifted with! Who has not observed (I speak, of course, to sportsmen and naturalists) the extraordinary manner in which any game animal, be it beast or bird, invariably places impediments, or, more properly speaking, I should say takes advantage of every object likely to frustrate the deadly intention of its pursuer. With spotted deer this is specially observable. How repeatedly have I caught sight of an animal's body half exposed beyond an intervening bush, and carefully approached the place under cover of the very bush itself, unseeing and (so believing) unseen! yet, on reaching the cover found that the animal I had spotted had spotted me, and as I advanced had retreated, under protection of the very same bush, and so saved itself.

I once got a very fine buck spotted deer by a piece of luck that does not often happen. I had prowled over my ground for some two or three hours without having seen a head of game, and was in a desponding mood, feeling savage and injured, for my luck had been low for some days, when from a clump of bushy jungle, a few hundred yards ahead, I heard the loud scream of a peacock—

repeated as we approached; so thinking I might as well get him if I could, I changed my rifle for my shot gun, and approaching the cover, crept quietly on hands and knees into the bush close by. The bird of Juno again repeated his discordant cry; with cat-like movement we dragged ourselves through an archway of brambles, and peered beyond; at the same moment a clashing noise attracted my attention to my right, so lying at full length and stretching my neck to peep round the corner of the bush, I beheld, under a similar kind of opening in the jungle, two spotted bucks fighting with great fury. As each drew back to renew the contest, they became hidden from my view, but as they rushed forward, their heads and fore-quarters came within sight. Pushing back my shot gun to my shikarrie, and he doing the same forwards with my rifle, the exchange was effected; dear me, how my heart beat for fear I should lose this chance! how repeatedly I aimed as they advanced their heads but withdrew them too soon for anything like a certain shot! At last the heavier animal of the two (I suppose) had the best of it, and driving, with head down and antlers locked, his opponent bodily before him, he exposed himself sufficiently for me to fire; there was a struggle ere they got free, and both rushed away. Scrambling through the brake, I was glad to see the wounded buck staggering under a tree in an open spot, some thirty yards or so off. Instantly giving him the second barrel, I bagged one of the largest spotted bucks I have ever killed, though his head was not a superior one;—the brow tine had been injured when soft, and so is a blemish, but it marks the head and reminds me of the lucky adventure.

The spotted deer are strictly gregarious, seldom found singly, except, I imagine, in the case of does when engaged in the duties of maternity, and in the bucks in isolated cases, where they have been chased, and so lost their

companions for a time; taken generally, the single cases are remarkably rare.

These deer frequent, I may say, all descriptions of jungle and forest. In the Dandillies, in the vicinity of Dharwar, they are very numerous, ranging the grand forest on the banks of the Kali Nuddi—of which the "OLD FOREST RANGER" has told us, in that spirit-stirring volume of his, wherein he so well relates the various tales of Indian Shikar, carrying with him the hearts of all sportsmen. In that forest, I have been told, spotted deer are to be met with in herds of great numbers. There is no doubt that the bamboo jungle which there prevails, is a more favored haunt than any other; but they are also found in low scrub and thorny tracts far distant from the heavy forest; in fact, I have fallen in with them in most unlikely-looking and unfavourable places for their self-preservation.

I remember, long ago, when near the Cumbum Valley, at the foot of the Pulnies, striking across an open plain, some miles away from the hills, to beat an isolated jungly hill for small game; the brushwood was principally low cactus and horny bushes, the soil stony, the trees the Babool. I walked round this island,—if I may so call it,—and then across it. The underwood was too thick for hare shooting, and I failed to get anything; but hearing a clattering noise ahead, just as I was about to quit the ground for camp, I turned to my guide, who, pointing to footmarks, whispered "*Marne*," *i.e.*, Deer,—and, lo! there, under the babool trees, some forty or fifty paces from us, was a herd of fifteen or twenty deer, huddled together, staring at the intruder,—a splendid buck the most prominent of the lot. I was a youth in those days, with only one gun, no rifle, and very slightly acquainted with the intricacies of woodcraft, paying little attention to the laws of venery in respect to the direction of the wind, the noiseless footfall, the color

of my dress, &c., so when I paid the spot another visit, I effected nothing, though duly provided with ball instead of shot.

Then again, I have found these deer in the low jungle, some ten miles from Quilon, and about as many distant from the forest, on laterite soil, the surrounding country like the downs, the cover sparse, and not affording any great protection, so that it was somewhat easy stalking them.

It is the opinion of a sportsman and naturalist not unknown to your columns, that where sambur and spotted deer inhabit heavy underwood, owing probably to their greater security, and perhaps richer food, they are heavier, better furnished in every way, and darker in color than those of the more open forest. I am not prepared to say how this may be, but in the comparatively open jungle near Quilon, I shot the darkest colored spotted buck I have ever seen; he was as black as a black buck antelope, and the white flecks on the dark ground made his skin as beautiful as remarkable. He did not appear to be a particularly old animal; he certainly was a handsome one, and in his prime, so far as I could judge.

I have killed spotted deer in every direction in Southern India, from Chicacole north to Cape Comorin south, and from Travancore, through Mysore, to Hyderabad, but have never noticed any local distinction as to size and color in these deer. With antelope it is very marked, and when writing about them—which I hope to do in due course—I will point out the localities where the difference in size is clearly perceptible, and I may say, remarkable, or rather, unaccountable, taking into consideration similarity of soil and other conditions.

Regarding the height at which spotted deer are found, I am doubtful whether any strict line can be drawn on this point, though it is quite certain they have never been met

with on the Neilgherries, nor on the Pulnies. I cannot speak with any certainty as to the Shevaroys, though I question if they have ever been seen at Yercaud. It is singular that during two visits to the Ballegerryrungums, I never saw a spotted deer on the plateau near the lower bungalow and pagoda. I was on those hills some fifteen or sixteen years ago, and then there was no trace whatever of them, nor any sign that they had ever been up thus high,—I fancy the pagoda is between 3,000 and 4,000 feet,—yet of late years I have been told that they are now frequently met with there.

Another curious circumstance is, that during the two years I was in the Southern Mahratta country, I never fell in with a spotted deer above the ghauts. I was out a good deal, and beat numerous ranges of hills and jungle and forest; in the valleys meeting with all kinds of game—bison, bear, hog, sambur and jungle-sheep,—but never set eyes on a spotted deer. These ghauts were certainly not more than 2,000 or 2,500 feet above the sea level. I did not have an opportunity of trying the jungle at the foot, so cannot say whether the deer are plentiful below, but I have little doubt that they were. My experience on this matter above the ghauts was not from casual visits of a day or two, but extending over some weeks at a time; and I feel satisfied in my own mind, the spotted deer are not to be found there.

In the Kolapore country there are several kinds of what the natives call *Baiswe*, or as they constantly shout when beating, "*Baker! Baker!*" There is the ordinary jungle sheep, the four-horned deer—very like the common jungle sheep; and another, with large broad ears, and texture of hair and colour exactly like the sambur; this animal is met with in the long grass and low jungle along the ridges of the undulating country to the south, between Belgaum

and Kolapore. I saw one that was killed at Wuttoor, where for a time a detachment from the Kolapore force was stationed. I never had the good fortune to kill one of these animals, though I have seen them more than once when beating; they are stouter and larger than the jungle sheep in general.

I dare say some of the visitors to the Gokawk Falls, can tell us whether the spotted deer are found in that direction, or in the vicinity of Belgaum. I wandered over a range of low hills, a few miles from Belgaum on the Kolapore road, in the direction of Gokawk, but saw nothing except the "*Baikree*," and met with no signs of dapples.

The writer in the *Sporting Review*, to whose sketch of these deer I have referred, states that it is difficult to stalk them when grazing in herds on the outskirts of the Soonderbunds, as there are invariably sentinels on the watch, to give alarm. We do not find this the case down south, that is, I have never noticed any particular deer of the herd on the watch. The wary old does, no doubt, are more on the *qui vive*, and ready enough to take the alarm, but nothing more, that I have observed. When couched, they are all more or less alive to danger, and the silent stalker, often and often, suddenly catches sight of a cluster of ears all agaze at him; the next second sees some score or so white scuts or tails raised aloft and vanishing in the glades.

I have, however, occasionally stalked so quietly on some well known haunt that I have succeeded in slaying a deer in its couch before being either seen or heard: such events have been rare. This, I think, is one of the charms of stalking,—pitting yourself, it may be said, against the wary quarry you seek to kill; undergoing, as I before mentioned, those dreadful agonies of nervous excitement—and yet, without them, what would stalking, what would sport, be?

When a man feels no excitement, even in walking up to the steady point at a covey of partridges, if there be no anxiety, no thrill through the system, no agitation or stirring of the blood—then, I say, let him cast away his weapons; he has no business in the Field; the Forest is no place for him, for he has lost the soul of sport, and can be no sportsman, in the true sense of the name.

I think I must conclude my say about the spotted deer—our friends the dapples! the beauties that they are! Why do we so love to kill them more than other deer? Why do our hearts palpitate, our hands shake, our breath come short, and all the agony of "nerves" overcome us, when on the trail of the spotted Axis? I cannot tell! but as I said at starting,—so it is!

One word at parting with my dapple friends. How well they would grace the parks of noblemen at home! far handsomer and more game-like than the slouching fallow-deer, the Axis would, I consider, be a splendid addition and ornament; and I see no reason why the animal should not thrive, especially in the West of England. I believe H. H. Dhuleep Sing has succeeded in acclimatizing the spotted deer, and has them on his domain; but whether south, north, or west, I know not.

CHAPTER XII.

MIDNIGHT EXPERIENCES.

NO DOUBT you, oh! greedy Editor, will hold me to my rash promise—that I would recount some of the experiences of the dark hours in the deep and silent forest. I will try and not disappoint you, though when I come to consider what I have to say, I fear there will not be that stirring interest, which the title may lead yourself and readers to expect; and some, I know, will exclaim against this kind of sport, as—"Tame, Sir, tame, I guess."

I am trying to recollect on what occasion I first sat up a whole night; I believe it occurred in those happy hunting grounds of which I have recorded so much in my former letters,—the mountains and plains of that land of Palmyras, Tinnevelly. There, I may say, I served the apprenticeship, or, perhaps, more properly, commenced my education, in venery, and gloried in the thought that I might, in time, attain perfection, and become a true, leal, and real sportsman, and *a dead shot!!* neither as yet accomplished!! For the first, I am too greedy and jealous; for the second, I fail disgracefully from too great anxiety. To gratify the former, in those days, all my thoughts were centered in that one object, "sport." Distances were as nothing; discomfort rather enjoyable than otherwise; the one great point being to find that charming spot where game and men were not. In the present day, such a

place scarcely exists. In those times I go back to I knew of many.

This is a long preamble, but you are to blame; for if I send you scrimp measure, you will, like "Oliver Twist" or the "horse leech," cry loudly for "more!" I doubt much if your readers are so hungry for the tedious twaddle of my lengthy egotic* lucubrations and ancient reminiscences, as you, friend Editor, flatteringly try to make me believe. Thus ends this long introduction to the "Midnight Experiences."

My first night-watch happened some time about the year of famine 1833. Tinnevelly was a favored and blessed land in that dreadful time, while the gaunt and fell demon of want stalked through the whole of Southern India, this pleasant spot received its usual supply of heaven's best gift to a dry and thirsty land. The falls of Courtallum, the cataract of Panpanassum, and the cascades of Trickenagoody, all maintained their natural beauty, and afforded to the parched fields the means of increase and plenty.

It was along the range of hills from which these rivers take their rise, and before the rains had set in, that I and a friend were prowling about in search of that land of promise to which I have before alluded, viz., where game abounds and the foot of man is unknown. We were told of elephants and sambur (in those days called "elk"), and other animals, resorting to a small stream, the only one not dry at that season, up in the mountain, about a couple of miles from our camp. We resolved to try a night's watch, there being no other way within our means to get a chance of a shot, two hundred beaters at least being required for a drive, and the result very doubtful, except in *one* point, to wit, that they (the beaters) would never be paid out of an Ensign's purse.

* "*Egotic*"—new word, more expressive than egotistical.

We had two zealous and trusty shikarries, so confiding in their knowledge of the locality, we put the arrangements and ourselves entirely in their hands. They carefully and quietly prepared two ambuscades,—for they really were nothing more, being on the ground, and were simply screens of fresh branches a couple of feet high, placed at the foot of large forest trees; my friend's about five or six hundred yards below mine, where the stream expanded into a tolerably broad and deep pool; my own put above a slab of sheet rock, sloping to the stream, where a small muddy pool with foot-marks of deer and other animals plainly showed it to be a favorite spot.

Around and in front of our "cache" the ground was open, the belt of jungle nearest the water being some sixty yards or more away. It was bright moonlight throughout the night; to those unaccustomed to such vigils, this light is peculiarly deceptive, especially as to distance. I remember a few years back taking a moonlight prowl on these hills for sambur, and coming suddenly at the corner of a wood right on a stag, whose breath I actually felt, as he belled in my face and plunged into the sholah close at hand; at the same moment a hind rushed away in the open, and pulled up on the sky-line of the ridge or shoulder of the hill, and belled away most vociferously! She appeared to me at least a hundred yards off, and I fired one barrel under that impression, and, of course, aimed too high; she took no notice of the shot, except to bell the louder. I tried to do better the next time, but failed, and she allowed me nearly to complete my loading before she made herself scarce: passing the spot at another time, by daylight, I found that she must have been within forty yards.

Well, on the occasion I am describing, the stream was certainly not more than thirty yards off; but as daylight passed away and the moon shone forth, the distance seemed

greatly to increase; objects I had not particularly noticed in taking up my post, assumed the forms of living things; and repeatedly I touched the shikarrie and pointed, but his more experienced eye was not so easily deceived, and he simply shook his head.

You must know that we expected only to see hog or deer, and such-like small fry; it was therefore somewhat exciting, when, after a couple of hours of silent watching, we were startled by hearing the crash of broken boughs, followed by the breaking of smaller branches, indicating the movement of a heavy animal. The shikarrie tremulously whispered "Hattee."

Shortly after, up the opposite slope, close to a large tree on the border of the jungle, out walked what appeared in the moonlight to be the Brobdignag of all elephants; being free of the jungle, he stood fanning himself with his broad ear-flaps, but never advanced a step towards the stream. Presently we heard another, inside the cover, and out came a female below what, I suppose, was the tusker, from his size, and with very little pause came straight down to the small muddy pool; as she approached the shikarrie got very nervous, and it certainly was an anxious moment, for it appeared exactly as if she was coming straight up to our hiding place; but instead of that, she as suddenly turned down the rivulet, her body a good deal concealed by the bank, but her head well exposed, and she kept throwing water over herself with her trunk; she was moving rather rapidly down the stream, and I foolishly got excited, and listened to the urgent solicitations of the shikarrie, and fired.

I am not sure whether she was hit or not; there appeared to be some difficulty in getting out of the stream, and when she reached the tree where the monster tusker had been, she stopped and seemed to lean against it; so

said the shikarrie, and so thought I, but after a while both made tracks, and disappeared in the jungle, and we heard no more of them that night.

Our excitement subsided in course of time, and I betook myself to sleep, leaving the native to watch. I awoke once or twice, but in the small hours fell off so sound, that I did not awake till the birds of the forest had begun to welcome daybreak; the shikarrie, alas! was sound as a top by my side.

When we went to the stream, we found that two sambur had come down to drink while we both were in the land of nod. The native excused himself, saying that, of course, no animal could be expected to come after my shot at the elephant.

I joined my companion; nothing had visited his post, so we descended towards camp.

I forgot to mention that on our way up, the evening before, a spotted buck crossed the path, giving a snap shot to my companion, and with his usual unerring weapon he had struck the animal, but we had no time to spare to track it. We hit the trail, but after a long search without success, and it getting very hot, we went off to camp; an hour or two after the natives brought in the dead buck, and a fine fat fellow he was.

So ended watch the first.

We went after these elephants by day, and got up to them. I did not get a shot, but my friend did, with a result similar to mine by night.

A larky kind of a tiger was reported to be up to all kinds of games at a village a few miles off, so we moved to camp. Tiger said to have sprung in a flock of sheep more than once, and that if we went out as extra shepherds

there was every chance of our getting a shot at our mutton-inclined friend; we did so, but of course (as it always happens) while we were attending to the mutton, Mr. Tiger was looking after beef—a dainty tiger was he—the first kill a heifer, in a cholum field; he had only sucked the blood. I sat over the carcase, my friend watching elsewhere, over another kill, near the village; my post was visited by a herd of swine, and I shot one. Mr. Tiger that very night found two cows tied together, that somehow had been left outside a village a mile or so off; he killed one, sucked its blood, ate a little flesh from the haunch and never touched the other cow!! This is a wonderful story, but it is one of those *facts* that are stranger than *fiction*. We sat up over each kill, but never were favored by a visit from this extraordinary animal—he evidently preferred meat quite fresh!

I only once sat up at night on these Blue Mountains, and do not feel inclined to repeat the experiment; it was precious cold, and the result unsatisfactory.

On more than one occasion, I have watched the whole night through by the side of a stagnant pool,—the only available water on the parched hills near Kolapore; and only once caught a glimpse of the white stockings of a bison, as it passed swiftly by, declining to stop to drink, having, I fancy, detected by its keen faculty of scent, that danger was at hand. At day-break we found the herd a short distance away from the pool, quietly waiting till the coast was clear; hastily pouring into the nearest of the group the contents of our rifles, we drove them all thirsty away, two of their number being wounded, one sorely, for we found by the track he was bleeding on both sides of his body; yet we failed after all to bag him.

Once, when commanding a spot from a tree, just before day-break, we were startled by the loud sonorous bell of a stag in our very ears; he had approached the water from

the rear so noiselessly, that our first intimation of his presence was his loud sounding warning of danger; being under the shade of the tree we could not see him—and only heard him breaking away.

It is remarkable how cautious is the animal we usually consider so bold and impudent that he scruples not to come and howl almost in your verandah, and often carries off a stray chicken even in the day-time, taking little or no notice of you when you meet him in your rides or walks,—I mean the jackal; and yet how singularly timid he appears to be when approaching a kill, far away from the abodes of men, over which you may be watching; this I have repeatedly noticed, and oftentimes seen these animals leave the tempting morsel untouched, though constantly returning to take a last fond look.

We can understand this modest behaviour when a tiger is at hand, but the instances that have come under my observation have happened when royalty was conspicuous for its absence. I lately heard of a case on the hills about Pykarra, where the well-known soubriquet of "lion's provider" seemed to be realized and confirmed. A sportsman was watching the carcase of a buffalo that had been killed by a tiger; it was at eventide, and just as twilight set in a jackal made his appearance from a sholah close by, trotting gently towards the dead buffalo, at the same time keenly looking around to see that all was clear; on being satisfied that all was serene, he lifted up his voice, giving vent to that peculiar long-drawn harsh cry, quite distinct from the ordinary howl, and always supposed to denote the presence of a tiger; this instance is a standing proof of the fact, for in a few seconds, from out of the same sholah, stalked, in all his majesty, a magnificent tiger. I regret to add that from over-caution this fine brute escaped.

I wonder whether the great increase of jackals is

attributable to the absence of the wild dog on the open parts of these hills; formerly jackals were few, and the wild dog numerous, and in large packs; now the dogs are seldom seen in the open, and jackals abound.

I must now take you to a different part of the country, and give you an account of my night shooting in jungles, under the range of hills separating the Vizianagram principality from Purla Kimedy, where I happened to be on service some thirteen years ago.

Before doing so, I may as well mention a few points that should be observed by any one resorting to this mode of shooting. Even in the brightest moonlight it is difficult to see the sight of your weapon. The natives chunam their guns for a foot or so down the barrel. I have found white cloth wound round the muzzle, say for four inches down the barrel, quite sufficient, and very deadly. In aiming be sure that you can see the white bearing on the body of the animal, and that part of its hide is visible, otherwise you are sure to fire over. Mind and have your "muchan" noiseless,—no creaking or rustling; cork mattrass and blankets are the best to avoid this. Do not smoke; teach your man to rouse you with a light touch, and mind you do not start up in a flurry, but gradually raise yourself into your position. It is best to watch the early hours yourself, say from six to ten, and again from three or four, till daylight—the most likely time for animals to pass your post. Keep your powder dry, and hold your weapon straight.



CHAPTER XIII.

VIGIL NEAR BELLARY.

BEFORE taking you up north of the Kistnah and Godavery, I must step aside, to give a little episode of sporting life at Bellary, which includes a vigil connected with the title I have adopted for these reminiscences.

About twelve miles west from Bellary there exists a small village, called Kurgode; in former days a place of some importance, as it is situated at what was then designated the portals or gateway to Beejanugger, the ancient and Holy city now known by the *un*euphonius name of Humpy. This gateway, if I may so call it, consists of a narrow valley passing between arid stony hills, running some two or three hundred feet in height on either side; the hill on the right as you enter being fortified in the usual style of native fortifications,—the walls in tiers up to the summit or citadel—a safe defence against the Pindarries of old; but none whatever to meet the appliances of European warfare.

This valley is about two miles in length. The charitable and holy men of old erected, for the benefit of travellers and devotees, to the great city and the shrines therein, magnificent choultries, at the entrance of the pass, and these grand specimens of solid architecture remain to this day, sound and habitable.

The one I occupied was some thirty yards deep, the pillars numerous, and beautifully carved; the entrance by

a flight of steps flanked by the dragons of mythology—those curiously combined half-lions and half-dragons, so often seen at the steps of Pagodas.

That these places had, in former days, been continually resorted to, there can be little doubt; and we can picture the riot and revelry that prevailed in the days of glory of that magnificent city and its race of kings—all hushed now, all subsided into the quiet of desolation, the habitation of wild beast, and the bats and owls,—emblems of darkness, like the idols around!

To this spot I was induced to pay a visit, it having been told to me, on the very best authority (the man who had killed some half-dozen) that there were a few bears left, but difficult to get, as he had been after them repeatedly for some months, and had, as aforesaid, killed a few. I was *not* exceedingly grateful for this information, as it was only given after the informant's regiment was in orders to march; however, I took advantage of it, and made out my first visit, just to reconnoitre.

The first evening, at dusk, I saw a fine bear reposing in the mouth of his cave, about half-way up the hill. He seemed to be asleep, and allowed me to ascend the ridge of a spur of the hill, commanding the entrance to the cave. Fearing to rouse the animal from its slumbers,—which by the way was foolishness,—I determined to take a shot from where I was—about 100 yards off—and being somewhat to the flank of the cave, all I could see was the animal's head. The ball threw some splinters of rock in Bruin's face; he gave a slight cry, and skedaddled into his cave, before I could deliver the second barrel. That strange feeling that comes over every sportsman when he misses, was strong upon me! Oh, if I could but have it over again, how much better I would do it! how much more careful! how steady would I be!! Is it not so, my brother shikarries? Is it

not always so, when we make a detestable miss? And then the excuses,—the trying to salve the sorely wounded pride in one's shooting: "I could only see his head;" and the ball was uncommonly close, the line excellent; one trifle higher!—Well, after all, one must miss sometimes; and so I trudged home, pondering on these little matters, and feeling deeply dejected:—such a chance! and to miss it!!

Well, and after all, what was it? a bear's life saved; "*tant mieux, pour Monsieur Bruin; et tant pis pour, Monsieur, le chasseur; voila tout!!*" He lives for you or some other more lucky one to bag some day, and so "*Vive la chasse!*"

Have you, friend, Editor,—no, of course you have not, for you are only a sportsman in your editorial capacity, not one in fact, though may-be in spirit—but I was going to ask you what I now ask of brother sportsmen;—have you ever, at times during the night, when possibly sleep has fled, from either too much excitement, or too great an appetite, and the indigestion consequent thereon; have you ever found some well remembered miss or mistake haunt you like a demon, and make you long to have it over again? and how it has harrassed you to think of the trophy lost, because you were such an infernal fool in this or that particular! I have a devil of this kind, that has haunted me for years, and has made many a night hideous with its recollections, and would you believe it my friends? the source of disquiet, the night-mare of my existence, is the loss of a *Spotted Buck!!* Puerile, you will say, but it is one of my earliest misadventures, and it is photoed on my memory in such force that arise it will, as a ghost, and worry me till I feel disposed almost to swear, if not to weep! Such weakness may perchance exist in the minds and memories of others, who can tell us a thrilling tale of

mishap and long repented woe, touching the escape of some nobler denizen of the forest; and I hope my question may lead to some one else taking up his pen and relating some such sad experience—I touch the chord, let others find the words.—"*Revenons.*"

Amongst these rocky hills, there were only two spots where water was to be found; one a lovely dropping well, difficult of access, but very beautiful to look upon—a small cave in the sandstone rock, the water dropping from numerous crevices, forming a lovely veil, through which the green moss and lichens, sparkling with moisture, looked like velvet adorned with pearls. Ferns abounded at the entrance of the well, watered by the rill as it over-flowed and passed down the rock, exhausting itself ere it reached the foot of the dry and arid mountain.

This spot was inaccessible, and probably too near to the haunts of men to be visited by the bears, pea-fowl, and other wild creatures of the place. A better and more convenient supply of water was to be found on the hill at the back of the large choultry. This too was at the best but a scanty supply; but the basin in which the water fell was deep, but accessible from several points, and formed puddles, and in places a continuous stream, so that any animal could approach and quench its thirst without let or hindrance. A short distance beyond, and lower down the hill, was a small grove of the Moa trees, the flower and fruit of which bears are especially fond.

On my first visit the trees were not attractive to Bruin, being neither in flower nor fruit; so we sat over the water so long as the moon favored us; but nothing came. At day-light we wandered amongst the rocks, and spied over the plains below, but our eyes were not greeted by the sight of the hairy-one returning to his happy home.

In prowling about the further end of the valley, we came

on a small square swamy-house, with a flat roof. It commanded three or four paths, and a few trees were close by. Looking in we found a large idol—I think of Pillear, the elephant-god, all smeared over with layers of oil and grease, forming quite a cake, of nearly an inch thick, spread all over the image. On close examination, we found long deep scars and sundry bare places, where the crust appeared to be eaten off, and came to the conclusion that friend Bruin was the culprit, for further search discovered his pugs just outside the door, and evidently fresh. Resolution immediately taken to make the top of the swamy-house our roosting-place for the coming night. A friendly native joined us soon after, and confirmed our idea regarding the bear's special attention to the idol, and he held out hopes that we were likely to get a shot if we watched at night.

Proceeding round the hill, to look for antelope on the plains beyond, we came on two or three pea-fowl, feeding in a field of half grown cholum. Getting a good sight of the bare neck of a young cock, I fired, hoping to catch him in the body; the bird fell over, and on picking him up, we found the bullet had cut its throat. On the villager expressing his surprise, my old shikarrie, Ramasawmy, as he tucked the bird's head under its wing and tied the wings across, coolly said, with a sort of undeniable grunt, "Pooh, my master always does that with birds, to save spoiling the flesh." Was it wrong my being dumb, and so sharing the falsehood with my boasting shikarrie? The truth was *nearly* confirmed as far as shooting was concerned; for very shortly after, I got a shot at an antelope, and over it rolled; hit on the neck I think but on our running up to secure it, away she went, and my other barrel missed: we lost that antelope in a field of high cholum; nevertheless, I think the villager went away believing the mendacious Ramasawmy.

Our vigil this night was a pleasant one, though not fortunate; the roof of the swamy-house formed a capital bed, and after the moon had disappeared, we wrapped ourselves up, and enjoyed a charming night's rest. Bruin was not attracted this night; or, perhaps, found the greasy mixture dyspeptic. A wild cat came softly down the path opposite the little temple, and we watched its stealthy movements for a time. At dawn we again looked over the plains for the returning bears, but none appeared. A careful stalk and shot at a black buck resulted more in our favour than the wounded doe of the day before, and we returned to our choultry home, satisfied with the little sport we had met with, though sore, still sore, on the miss at Bruin's head. I have, I find, mixed up two visits in one. We intended taking another turn in the same direction, but a sudden order for the regiment to proceed to Burmah, to take part in the last war, prevented our repeating our visit to Kurgode.

Bellary, in those days, was not a bad station. Sport was within reach, and those who liked fox-coursing could have it in perfection, barring the holes in the cotton ground, which, however, horses somehow negotiate immensely well, unless they are blundering or runaway brutes. On the plains, for ten or twelve miles in any direction, the ravine deer or black-tailed antelope, were sufficiently abundant; bustard were not uncommon; wolves met with occasionally; and hyenas visited the cantonment often enough. At the Ramandroog all kinds of game could be found with preseverance, and on the nearer part of the range, where the Comarsawmy Pagoda is, game was plentiful. Beejanugger, the city of Ruins, is well worth a visit; and the sportsman will find fair fishing and good pea-fowl shooting on the islands in the Toomboodrah. On one island there is a curious kind of pastime provided for a neighbouring Rajah, from the Nizam's side of the river.

It consists of a granite slide, some thirty feet or so long, at an incline which sends the slider down at a rapidity somewhat astonishing: a piece of wood is the non-conductor, between your head's antipodes and the stone; keep it there and all is well, but, as often happens, let it slip from under you, and, fire and turf, don't you burn, and feel very uncomfortable at the sight of a chair for many days.

CHAPTER XIV.

MIDNIGHT EXPERIENCES.

DURING the year preceding that of the great and awful mutiny, called by the modern historian "The Sepoy War," I was ordered up north, to join my regiment; an outbreak of the Hill tribes in Purla Kimedy and the adjacent tracts having occurred, rendering it necessary that all Officers should be present to meet any emergency that might arise. So, proceeding to Madras, I embarked, and set sail for Vizagapatam, and, in due course, joined my corps at Vizianagram. After some two months or so, I was sent to command a detachment at Palcondah, and it was while so employed at that post, that I may be said to have completed my experiences in midnight shikar; for since then I have only once tried shooting by moonlight.

Before entering into an account of each night-watch, I must describe, as well as I can, the style of country and description of game to be met with in those parts.

Palcondah itself is a thriving village, merging perhaps towards the more dignified title of town. It was, and I believe still is, the head-quarters of the agents for a mercantile firm in Madras, who farm the Palcondah valley. The country around is very fertile; the supply of water constant at all seasons; the vicinity studded with tanks, large and small, affording good wild-fowl and snipe shooting. A few miles from the station, across the small river (a tributary of the Chicacole river, I think), some isolated

hills covered with thick dense brush-wood dotted the plain. In these rocky and jungly fastnesses, bears and hyenas were to be found, and the "fretful porcupine" was occasionally met with; and a few antelope frequented the open plains between these hills. To the rear and north of the town, a range of somewhat loftier mountains were visible; between them and the station again was a lower range, thickly wooded, interspersed with bare rocky promontories jutting out here and there, wherein were caves and crevices, the haunts and dwelling-places of panthers, bears, and such like. Sambur, spotted-deer, jungle-sheep, and the pretty little Memina or mouse deer, were to be found, but seldom stalked, for there were few, if any, glades or open tracks, where the "dun deer" could be surprised, either at "early dawn" or "dewy eve." Now and then a stray shot,—generally a very snap one, *might* be obtained, but so rarely, that it was not worth while wasting the time for such a chance, though I often did so at first, before becoming aware of its futility; if I remember aright, only twice did I get shots—once at a hog as he scuttled into the bush, and another at a leopard disappearing in a thicket. I aimed at where I thought the body ought to have been, but in neither case did the bullet seem to see it. There were, however, a good many pea-fowl about, and now and then a neat shot or two at them compensated for the want of nobler game.

A curious instance of the wonderful innate propensity to lie in the native character, happened to me in these parts. Looking about for game one morning, I came on a field of grain guarded by a native on a machaun, whose shouts had attracted me in that direction. Being, as most sportsmen are or ought to be, of an inquiring mind regarding game of all sorts, I entered into friendly conversation with the faithful watcher, asking what game there was, and had he seen any? "No, never." "What! none at

all?" "Well, there were some pig," (which, like the Irishman's *chronometers*, were only seen "by night, yer honor,") and he was there to drive them away. Then I asked, were there any pea-fowl or jungle-fowl? No, not one; had never seen them, but if I went to some hills,"—pointing to a range some miles away—"there they would be found!" I had a peon with me, who acted as interpreter, and he seemed *positively* to believe his black brother, and spoke in his favor when I asked "Is he telling the truth?" As we turned out of the field, up rose three pea-fowl! Now, what object had that false vagabond in deceiving me? Why should he persist in declaring that the birds were not, when they were, and possibly, seen daily by him? The peon, Sheikh Hoosain, could only say that it was "their custom," and that all the *low black fellows* were, and always would be, liars!! To be charitable, I dismiss the subject by supposing they cannot help it, like Dr. Watta' dogs and bears "for 'tis their nature too!"

Taking another line of country from Palcondah along the Pavarpatoor road, we come to a very different lay of the land: This road leads to the "Galicondah" Hills, or Mountains of the Wind,—which the name signifies,—where an attempt to establish a sanitarium some years ago proved abortive, for the simple reason that the men were sent there before the necessary preparations were complete; and failure followed as a matter of course. Well, along this road the sporting adventures with which I purpose trying to entertain your readers, if they, the adventures, can be so described took place. My trusty peon, the Sheikh Hoosain, before alluded to, had persuaded me to visit a low range of Hills; they scarcely deserve to be called Hills, they were mere undulations covered with bush scrub, extending over two or three hundred acres of land, trending at a very gentle slope down to some marshy spots that in the driest seasons were always moist. A herd or two of

spotted deer lived in the thicker scrub jungle, and some antelope were to be found in the lower and thinner portions of the jungle. On my first visit a leopard was disturbed on the upper portion of the ground, and no spotted-deer seen; but passing through the lower and swampy land, a small herd of five or six antelope came bounding towards me, and I fortunately secured one—a red buck—as they pulled up to gaze; missing a second with the other barrel, as the rest capered lightly away. This ground afforded much amusement and sport during my stay at Palcondah. The sporting sepoys of the detachment had one or two field days there with me, and on one occasion two of the men succeeded in killing a spotted deer in capital style—wounded by one and slain by the other; was there not triumph in the lines of the detachment on the evening of that day's exploit! From this ground I extended my explorations, and hearing that there was some probability of a tiger and other large game, at a place called Wyndowah, I sent out a tent and proceeded there. The village I found was the residence of a petty Zemindar, who held sway over some fourteen or fifteen hamlets round about, and was a bit of a swell in his way. At first all was negative—if I may so express it—there was little or no chance of shots; people all engaged in their fields; and sundry excuses set forth to shew me that my presence was not very welcome and my room more prized than my company. How it was I know not, but either my keen sporting "Bobachee" (a *chef* at cooking game) or the peon, or both, in some way got the ear of the Zemindar, and a great change came over him and his people—yes, there *was* a tiger, who walked through the village *almost* every night; would I sit up for him? there was a very convenient tree just outside the village on the road, and the tiger always came that way. Oh, yes! there was some deer, and a very large sounder of hog; on the latter the tiger was in constant attendance,

and repeatedly killed some of the smaller ones. All this sounded well, and while in the bechobah tent, taking a late breakfast, we heard unmistakeable sounds of the presence of hog. A machaum was accordingly prepared on the tree commanding the tiger's pathway, and to induce him to step aside on his nocturnal rambles, a village porker was deposited in a pit and a cart-wheel placed over the mouth thereof. Piggy grunted a little at first, but during the rest of the night kept quite silent. We had seen the pugs of the tiger on the path clear enough, so there was no doubt as to the fact of one being about. Our night-watch lasted till past one, and just as we were thinking of descending from our perch, my man touched me gently, and pointed to the pit; the moon was very low, and the light not over clear, so at first I could not distinguish what was there; presently my eye detected a movement, and then I descried the gaunt shadowy form of a hungry-looking wolf. He passed rapidly round the pit more than once, like a phantom, evidently a good deal alarmed; I hazarded a shot, as it was no use watching without moonlight, and missed. We then left the spot and returned to the tent. I see recorded in my Journal; not in bed till half-past one o'clock and then slept like a top till near seven; that next day being Sunday, I did not sit up, and the tiger of course walked right past the tree, and was heard by the people close to the tent.

Before relating the result of my night-watches, I think it as well to describe the country round about, and how it was that the people, and especially the village squire, became so anxious that I should get the tiger. After my first three or four night vigils, the moon not being quite at the full, and thus enabling me to get *some* sleep, we generally had a beat in the forenoon of the following day, and on my very first day at this work I fortunately secured the confidence of all in my shooting, a great object I assure

you, and not to be despised. Now the ground at and about this Wyndowah hill may be thus described: the hill itself is a very high Sugar-loaf cone, of considerable breadth at the base, so that, on the lowest computation, it would be five or six miles in circumference. It was clothed to the summit with thick, and in some places, a very scrub jungle; the thickest tangled with creepers and in many places exceedingly dense and inaccessible; the lower slope spreading to the plain becoming, however, thinner, and in some spots bare of scrub; here and there being old clearings formerly under cultivation; at the east end of the hill the village of Wyndowah; to the west another village, both about 500 or 600 yards, or more from the foot of the hill or, more correctly speaking, from the edge of the jungle at the base of the hill. Around, and away on the open ground, on the whole of the northern and eastern sides of the conical hill, were sundry topes of large trees, mostly mango and tamarind, with here and there a giant peepul, raising its lofty head. These topes were of various forms, some irregular, and one—a very favorite one—seen from the side of the hill, looked like the map of Italy. All these lovely topes or groves had a dense undergrowth of thorny and other shrubs, forming a splendid cover and safe haunt for the game about the hills; and what is more, were highly appreciated by all except the tiger. These coverts were difficult to beat, more especially the larger ones, the animals so constantly evaded the beaters and eventually stole away on the unguarded side. Generally a long straggling slip of grassy land, with bushes scattered here and there connected these woods, if I may so call them, with the hill itself; some were within a quarter or half a mile of the mountain, others as much as two miles away—perhaps more. Well, it was arranged by the villagers and my host,—I think very probably to see what I was made of as a shikarrie,—that we should beat a small cover close to

the hill, where hog were fond of resorting. I was posted on the usual run the animals took on making for the hill; I had not been there long before I saw a boar, making straight for me as hard as he could pelt. The Zemindar was posted a little to my right, and he saw the pig coming at its utmost speed; but an intervening knoll shut out the animal from his view for a second or two, and he did not see that the boar had stopped short for a moment; one fatal second, for the next he was dead, and I got the credit of bowling him over at full speed, to the undisguised delight of the hungry beaters; but more yet; and this next piece of luck as fully astonished myself as the previous one had pleased the beaters. We had tried sundry small covers for deer, and were returning towards the tent, when a shout was raised away to my left. At the time I was on a bund of a small dry tank, I suppose about six feet above the level of the bed! turning to see what it was that caused the shout, I observed an antelope making for the bed of the tank, and coming towards me in a succession of those marvellous bounds for which the gazelle tribe are so celebrated. As it came on and got nearly opposite to me, I fired at it on the spring, and to my utter astonishment, saw the animal actually *die in the air;* it turned over as a bird does when shot, and fell to the ground lifeless. More surprising still, the ball had cut along the forehead of the animal between the eyes and the roots of the small horns, about as long as the pen I am writing with and there they were, hanging by the skin, over the poor creature's face; well may my readers exclaim "what a crow!" that was my mental observation at the time, but the beaters did not see it in that light; they took it for granted as my ordinary custom, and exalted me accordingly in their estimation of my shooting. I did not altogether keep up my character subsequently for such deadly shooting, as I lost a few head wounded on after occasions, but my character was establish-

about one o'clock I felt the touch of my watcher, and looking over to where he pointed, I saw the plain between the tree and a tank below alive with wild hog; I may safely say there were at least 50. I could not resist taking a shot as they came close to the machaum, and over rolled a big un; the beast, after a time, got up, and made off for some paddy fields, and he was not found till some days after. It was wrong to fire, as the tiger might have been at hand and in waiting for an opportunity to catch a straggler from the herd. The day following we crossed the river, and proceeded to a hill a few miles off, where a bear was reported: I did not find Mr. Bruin, but a hyæna or "Doomoolgoondy," as the Talingas call it, was disturbed, but not shot at. In returning home to the tent, passing along a narrow path at the foot of our tiger hill, I suddenly saw the whole thicket close to the path agitated and as it were raised up, and at the same time heard the movement of a large body gliding away. Immediately after there was a succession of hisses and spits, as of a very large cat; I felt inclined to fire at the sound, but dreaded the consequences to the half-dozen people with me, *as well as myself*. It was dusk, and hit or not, he might have been in the midst of us. An amusing incident occurred soon after: one of the men following us had picked up, at the villages we passed through during the day, some half-dozen fowls, and was carrying them to the tent, when shortly after passing the tiger spot, all of a sudden we were most completely startled and alarmed at what we thought was the rush of the tiger at us through the underwood. We all started aside, and I jumped across the path in the most agile style. The next moment we all burst out laughing; the fluttering of the fowls' wings had turned all our hearts to water! Again did I sit up, tired though I was with the day's excursion, but still hoping that *virtue*, (i.e., perseverance,) would at last be rewarded; the wolf only put in an

appearance at early dawn, but turned off at a safe distance from us, so I did not get a shot. The moon was now getting too old, so I prepared to return home, taking a few beaters with me to try the most distant cover. A small panther gave me a deal of trouble before I could get a shot at her: at last I succeeded. She did not know where the shot was from, and so came straight at me: I was on a forked stump of a bush about two feet from the ground, and below me squatted my gun-man: just as the cheetah came to the foot of the stump I bowled her over, fortunately, for the next moment would have seen the animal on the man's back. I went home pleased, and thus ended my first trip to Wyndowah.

During the interval nothing particular occurred, beyond my killing a pea-fowl, which proved to be what is called a hen-cock—a hen having the plumage of a cock, except the train and spurs, and the neck somewhat less brilliantly blue. I had a shot too at a porcupine, with ball, and cut 23 quills out of his body, but did not kill him; the ball, I imagine, merely grazed him, rooting out the quills in its passage. Two days before the following full moon, I again visited Wyndowah. My friend the Zemindar greeted me kindly, and told me he had built the machaum in a tree at the further or western end of the hill, the animal having been observed of late to be more on that side. The tree on which the platform was erected was too full of leaf: the first night was cold and drizzly, but with sufficient light to shoot had any animal come. We heard bears kicking up that precious row they know so well how to make. We found the track of a leopard not far off, but saw nothing. The next night a bear came near the tree, but, unfortunately was on the wrong side, and I had to fire in the shadow, and so could not see the white cloth sight of my rifle. Returning home in the morning met a deer alarmed by a wild boar; she pulled up on seeing me, but dashed off

just as I had drawn the bead on her, and so I missed. On a little further saw some more deer; had to take one stern on, for the chance once offered is seldom renewed if not immediately taken advantage of; hit him, and eventually got him, but not till after long tracking and hard work.

The third night: Two hog passed the tree going out to feed, and disappeared in a precious hurry; I suppose were thirsty—let them go! My gun-man took the first watch; about 9 o'clock he touched me, the cow having become very restless and excited, but we could not distinguish anything to cause alarm, which after an hour or so, subsided, and the cow reposed quietly, and so did I! Touched again, and this time, about midnight, a large boar came straight up and right under us. This was too much for me, so I let drive, and broke his shoulder, but he got away in the jungle, and I never bagged him. "Serve you right," I hear some one exclaim, "why don't you, when you go a crabbing, stick to it?"* An hour after, a young hog came tearing by, and towards morning a hyæna showed himself, but at a safe distance. Going towards the tent I fell in with a doe cheetul, but seeing a fawn along side, I held my hand—surely such forbearance will meet its reward! but it didn't!!

The fourth night: Just as I reached the tree at dusk, I saw something moving along the edge of the field close to the jungle, about 300 or 400 yards off; the waning light was just sufficient to admit of my making out very clearly with the aid of the telescope, that it was the long-expected one. There he was, stalking quietly along, looking grand

* This refers to a story of an old fisherman who would never combine crabbing and fishing; however great the temptation might be to catch fish when he had his crabbing net he would doggedly refuse, saying "No; I am crabbing; and when I goes a crabbing, I goes a crabbing, and when I goes a fishing, I goes a fishing."

and majestic; he appeared to me very tall and lanky but still a handsome animal. I stole across the lower end of the field, to try to intercept him; but it soon got too dark to distinguish anything, and the moon not rising till late, I betook myself to my perch on the tree, and watched, but, alas! in vain; I never saw him more. No doubt the keen-sighted brute had seen me, and consequently took a different beat, for I observed a sounder of hog pass down close by the spot where I had last seen him. Nothing came near the tree. In the morning I took a turn round the deer ground. Saw a civet cat, which I missed with the rifle; when near the tent, fell in with some five or six dapples; after considerable exercise of patience, I at last spied a head looking at me over a bush: aiming at the white collar in the neck, I plugged it, and threw her in her tracks; a fine and very fat doe, and the meat was some!

Resolved to have one more watch this moon, and so, for the fifth night. It may perhaps be asked why I did not try a stalk or beat, to get a chance of a shot at this, almost it may be said, a *myth* of a tiger, even though I did see him once. Well, I did suggest it to my native friend, and we had a consultation with the people, but it did not meet approval; the jungle was dense, the hill though apparently a cone, had a long ridge running to the west; each side was at least a couple of miles in length, and to attempt to guard any pass with one gun, or, supposing I lent *one* to the Zemindar, by two guns, was next to impossible; in fact it was such a trusting to chance, that it was unanimously decided that our better plan was to watch at night, and if the tiger did come—wha! wha! he would be shot; if he didn't, the gentleman would get something else: what could be better than that? and then, to conclude the matter, if the beat took place, in all probability the tiger would leave the hill, and then what chance had the

watchers? So it was decided we should mount our machaum, kill what we *could*, and hope the tiger *would* be one of the *could* be's: and so, as above said, for the fifth night. Some excitement was caused on our way to the tree, first of all by seeing two wild hog tearing across from the hill to the open plain on the south side of the hill, we having taken that side as more free of jungle and less likely to disturb the ground; then another hog bolting across the ravine in a flurried manner. Again, when near the tree, and we had dismounted, we proceeded to take post under cover of a thickish bush commanding the spot we had seen the tiger cross the evening before, the horse being sent away to the tents by the same road we had come. We had not been two minutes in our ambush before a pig come scouring down the hill and pulled up within ten paces of the bush. He was in a great state of excitement and terror, sniffing and turning here and there, especially towards the hill, as if some great danger had been escaped. After practising aiming drill at him for some time, thinking how easily I could kill him, he trotted away past the bush; then suddenly catching our wind, the way in which he took to his scrapers, bolting headlong towards the village, was marvellous to behold. Another hog, much in the same state of terror, crossed the field at a further point. From all these demonstrations I was well satisfied that Mr. Stripes had been attempting, if not succeeding, in getting a bit of pork for his supper; I felt pretty certain that he had succeeded, for the alarm would not have been so great had there not been a victim, whose screams most likely had so terrified the rest. I see it recorded in my journal that nothing came near the tree during the night, and I rode home (Sunday morning) somewhat disgusted, and thinking that I might just as well have shot the pig, or both of them, as two had come very close to the bush. And thus ended my second trip

to Wyndowah.* Christmas intervened, and I paid a visit to some friends for a day or two. On my return had a turn after antelope, and find it recorded that I missed *three* barrels at one and *two* at another, then made a good stalk at a third, and found, when too late, that I had forgotten to cock the rifle, and so lost the shot; and further, that I was nervous and shaky. I wonder whether the Christmas festivities had anything to do with it? "Ho! ho!" says one: "Ha! ha!" says another; but what say you, discriminating Editor? perhaps "the less said the better" will be your cautious reply. Well, it is a bygone, so let it be. With the new year came fresh events and more watchings; and so I will proceed to relate the remaining incidents connected with my sojourn in these parts.

In the month of January, 1857, I find recorded that I sat and watched sundry evenings over a ravine not far from Palcondah, for a leopard, and the last evening, soon after I had left the spot, heard the animal in the rocks, so the following day tried to smoke him out, but failed miserably—could not persuade the smoke to go in or the animal to come out. The day before the full moon, I again visited Wyndowah, for a last attempt to bag the tiger. A better, *i.e.*, a less shady tree, about a couple of hundred yards from the other, and more free of foliage, had been selected and a machaum prepared, well elevated and very strongly built. The tree was bare of leaves, or nearly so; was a thorny stemmed tree, bearing a beautiful red flower, very common, and is, I believe, the moochee wood. A path up to the hill led past the spot, and there were the pugs of my friend on the sand, plain and fresh. When we arrived, we were informed that Mr. Tiger had killed a calf the evening before, so we watched, but all in

* I ought here to explain that the ground did not admit of hog-hunting, the cover being so dense and thorny, and the open ground so limited.

vain! Two hog passed down and a jackal was barking a good deal; but no tiger came. Waited till sunrise, and then went round by the deer-ground; got a decent shot and made a disgraceful miss at a buck; but the animal not having seen me, pulled up after running a short distance, and his head and neck being visible over the low jungle, I retrieved my miss by throwing him in his tracks, with a ball through his neck. Outside, in the thin jungle, came on the foot-marks of my tiger; a rum kind of wandering brute he must be. Another night's watch: saw two animals in the field; think they were hog: no tiger came; returned straight to the tent, it being Sunday. Only one night more, as I was expecting some friends. Some little excitement this evening: before the night closed in I saw some thing red in the bushes at the further side of the field; when the animal moved into the field clear of the jungle, my heart leaped to my throat, and an "*at last*" was the whispering mental exclamation to my own self—the long sought tiger at last! and a monster he appeared to be; but imagine my surprise and disgust to see, shortly after, my hopes cast to the ground by the one red animal break into three, and lo! three spotted deer began quietly grazing across the field towards the tree. I watched them patiently; and about nine o'clock they had come close up. I then determined to give them a chance, and as they were gradually coming down to the left, I decided that if they passed on that side, I would leave them alone; if, on the contrary, they passed to the right, I would try my chance for venison: the odds then were clearly in favor of the deer. It was curious to watch these animals on the feed as they came across the field, which they were more than two hours doing. I noticed that the three heads were never down at one and the same time; two would feed, the third would look out; then for ten or fifteen minutes they would stand, watch, and listen, and

so on gradually approaching my tree. Suddenly, and very unexpectedly all three lifted their heads and walked straight across from the left to the right of the tree and stood at gaze. I very nearly lost my shot, for in cocking the rifle, I made the faintest sound imaginable, yet the deer were alive to it, the sound being strange to them; they made two or three bounds, one springing over a bush, and then all stood to listen; the white sight gleamed in the moonlight on the shadowy forms of the dapples, and one of the three deer died on the spot. A pig passed by, but Mr. Tiger did not; and so ended my third and last trip to Wyndowah.

Some friends having joined me, we organized some beats in the hills and jungles round about, but with little result; the only bears we moved were perverse, and would break away on the unguarded side; a jungle-sheep was wounded, and some small game (including a python 9 feet 10 inches long) were bagged. In fishing for small fry in the river a somewhat curious catch was made; at the moment I was throwing my fly, a large black and white king-fisher flew out from the bank of the river, and was caught by the wing, and after some little trouble, the tackle being very fine, was secured. This reminds me of a similar case with a bat; I was fishing late in the evening in the Mysore country, and throwing an artificial white moth, which a bat seized, and the resistance and check was so great that the gut gave way, and the bat got off.

I now come to the last of my midnight experiences. Having paid a visit, with some friends, to a place called Budmahsingby, and met with some little success with deer and small game, and hearing from the villagers that if I came out at the full moon, and tied up some cows or buffaloes, tigers would most assuredly kill them, I resolved to pay the spot a second visit when the moon was favor-

able. This did not occur for some time, and I see little of sport recorded, though not from the want of seeking it; the only exception being the encounter with a bear, and the gallant conduct of one of my men, in standing boldly up to him when charged, which event I duly chronicled in my article on Bears; and so the time came round, and I went once more to Budmahsinghy. The first night I was taken to a place in the depths of the jungle, to watch for deer, two cows being picketted at certain spots the tiger was known to frequent, and should a kill take place I was to watch over the carcase. In going to my tree, I caught sight of a deer for a moment in the jungle: but had no chance of anything but a very snap shot, so did not fire. The midnight vigil was interesting in many respects; perched in a tree in the heart of a thick jungle commanding a small open piece of land, some forty yards square, in which were three or four fruit-bearing trees, of which the deer were very fond. When night set in and all was hushed, the stillness was so complete that the slightest noise was startling: now and then, in the early part of the night, insects were noisy; the shrill thrilling of the ground cricket, the loud booming of the stag or other beetles, then the low murmuring of one species of owl and wild hoot of another; the sudden flitting of the night hawk (Goat-sucker, Fern owl, Ice-bird, or whatever his proper name may be), and his long, incessant and monotonous notes, like throwing a stone on the ice, so well known to all; then on a sudden the loud sonorous bell of the sambur, followed by the sharp ringing kop of the spotted deer; anon the distant squabbling of the angry bears, sometimes the grunting of the wild boar; all these noises, and many others, ever accompanied at intervals by that dreary wailing and prolonged howl of the ever-present jackal, keep the midnight watcher on the alert. Sometimes during the "stilly night" a sound is produced or a noise occurs that it is impossible to define

or describe, and with which you are totally unacquainted. I have thought it probable that these strange noises may be caused at times by falling rocks or trees, and the echoing reverberations therefrom, which resemble at times the rumblings of an earthquake, or some such terrifying and incomprehensible noise; be it what it may, and how produced, I cannot say, yet there is no doubt that sudden sounds occur which are exceedingly strange and startling, causing the watcher to exclaim "what can that be?" Then again, in the first watch, how startled I was, after listening to what I thought was a lizard or mouse moving about in the dry leaves, to hear "kop! kop! kop;" in quick succession at the very foot of the tree in which I was lodged; so stealthily and quietly do these deer move, that they scarcely cause a rustle in the dry and noisy leaves strewing the ground. There were, I think, three of them, and they approached my post three or four times, making incessant calls of alarm, till I moved when they bolted away, but only for a time. I found out the cause of their alarm to be our having left the ladder by which we got into the machaum resting against the tree: we drew it up, disturbing the deer, and they did not return for their coveted fruit, or if they did, they were quiet, and we knew nothing of it. A bear passed by some distance off; I only got a glimpse of him. Towards morning I was awoke by the loud call of a dapple buck; for the life of us, we could not see him; still the call went on close by, and I could swear to the spot, but the animal was not to be seen. At last a very slight movement showed his head; he moved a step forward and the next moment he was rolling over and over in the agonies of death.

On our return to the tent we were informed that one of the cows was dead; but strange to say, the tiger had not killed it,—the animal had killed itself, or died from fright. The cow had been picketted on an open space across a

nullah forming the junction point of two ravines, both coming down from the low hills close by, and forming a promontory corresponding in shape to the letter V the apex of which commanded very favorably the spot where the cow was lying dead, and well open to the moonlight. On the neck of land some twenty feet above the ravine itself, we decided to erect a low screen of bushes, and watch there for the tiger at nightfall. It is difficult to account for the cow's death; we traced the tiger's foot-steps to the corner of the point of the nullah, some 30 or 40 paces off, from which he could see the cow, and there, from the deep impression in the soil, he appeared to have been alarmed, and turned hastily round, for we tracked him up the ravine some distance. Little or no struggle was discernible near the cow; it seemed as if she had made one rush on seeing or becoming aware of the tiger's presence, and had, perhaps, been cast on her back by the jerk on reaching the length of the tether, and so either strangled herself or broke her neck. Leaving instructions for the carcase to be dragged from under the tree into the open space and my little ambush prepared, I returned to the tent.

On a bare lofty tree a vulture had built her nest; the tree was situated about a couple of hundred yards off, and about the same distance from the village. In the nest was one young bird, and I amused myself during some hours each day in watching it and the visits of the hen bird; they were like angels visits, few and far between, and I seldom observed her nursing or brooding over her offspring but she generally kept watch close by. Though the young bird was half grown, I could not find below the tree any signs of bones or debris of any animal that had been brought by the mother to the child; I never could distinguish anything like food in the old bird's beak or talons; I have an idea that the food is swallowed, (these birds having no crop) and then cast up for the young one to

partake of. I never saw more than one bird at the nest—the brown-necked kind; the red turkey-cock-looking vulture never put in an appearance. I regret now that I was not more observant of the habits of both old and young. I seldom detected the old bird at the nest in the early part of the day; her usual visit was at midday, and she very often sailed away towards evening; whether she returned at night I cannot say, I being generally "*up a tree*" myself at that time. The young bird was constantly pruning its downy body, and at times it would sit up on the edge of the nest, but usually it was crouched in its bed.

This place, Budmahsinghy, was reported as extremely feverish at certain seasons; one of my followers came with a long face one morning on our first visit, and prefaced his speech this wise:—"I do not want to alarm anybody, nor "am I afraid myself, but the people here say that the fever "is very bad, and if you take it, your head will swell up "as big as an elephant's, I consider it right to tell the "gentleman what we have heard; not that I am afraid." "Well, well," we said, "we will wait till we get it; you "are a good fellow Cassim, and we know you are not "afraid: all right cut away, and get some news of sport." I suppose we happened to hit on the right season, for none of us or our servants suffered at all; and on this my second visit I sat up four or five nights in the jungle, and felt none the worse for it, except being very tired and longing to bring up the arrears of sleep due after so many night watches. But to our tiger. In the dusk of the evening, I went to the spot, and there, to my disgust, found the villagers had, under some wonderfully mistaken idea, conceived it necessary to put the carcase of the cow on her legs, to give her, they said, a life-like appearance and *deceive* the tiger: this was extreme folly and ruined my chance of seeing Mr Stripes—tigers are so wonderfully cute in such matters and are seldom taken in by such

devices, unless extremely sharp set. However, there was no help for it, so I sat down in my little nest on the look-out. I had not, on this occasion, my trusty Bujoo, the gun-man, with me, he having a slight cough, so a villager was with me. After watching through the early portion of the night, I laid myself down to sleep, warning the man to touch me quietly on the leg if any animal came. How long I had slept, I know not; but in a deep profound slumber I was enjoying "nature's fond restorer, balmly sleep," when all of a sudden I was seized by the thigh, severely gripped, violently shaken, and a hissing noise sounded in my ear. Starting from my dream in all the horrors of the idea that the tiger was on me, I roused myself with a shuddering gasp, and found it was the native, in great terror and excitement, a bear having passed down the nullah to the right, just below him; the fact being, I believe, that he was half asleep also, and so alarmed at seeing Bruin so close to him, grasped me in the frantic manner I have above described. Under the circumstances it was not to be wondered that I missed the big bear and growled a surly oath at the cause thereof. Nothing else came near, and I returned to the tent dejected.

Not being able to stalk, and the flesh of the buck having been all spoiled by the stupid cook hanging it where the beams of the moon could fall on it (by the way, this fact, I believe, is not generally known, but it is one; and I draw attention to it—no meat, not even on the Neilgherries, will keep fresh if hung in the moon-light: it taints in a few hours, and thus tainted is quite unfit for food,) so I resolved to sit up again at the deer-ground. While watching about midnight, a doe cheetul came to the further side of the open space; a longish shot for moon-light, which however fell full and brightly upon her, and I could see her dappled hide clearly; my gun-man, whose cough

was better, was with me and fast asleep. I had to fire through a hole in the screen, the muzzle of the rifle not being six inches above his head, yet he never stirred when I fired; it made noise enough, in that still night, but he awoke not! and was thoroughly astonished when I shook him to come down from the tree and help to drag the deer to the foot of it. I think the above little anecdote shows *how* a native enjoys blackman's fun—"sleep."

The last watch was under some banian trees that were in fruit; the villagers declared that bears would come, but they did not, and what with ants and musquitoes I passed some miserable hours, and at last fairly bolted. And so ends my "Midnight Experiences;" not much in them, after all, but I must say I enjoyed them, though I fear old HAWKEYE stands convicted by his own confession, to be "*an arrant Poacher.*"

Just before I left this part of the country a curious instance of a lucky shot occurred, which I will relate, to fill up this last sheet. I had a beat for bears, with the object of showing our band-master (who had come out with the relieving detachment) what sort of animals they were, and give him a chance of a shot, if possible. It so happened that he was posted on a rock, and as he wished, in a *safe place*, commanding a path much used by the bears, and about two hundred yards from a cluster of rocks from which it was expected Bruin would be driven. I commanded the lower part, and a friend was away on the right. Very shortly after the beat commenced I saw a bear start from the rocks, and come down over a sloping slab leading towards my post; patiently waiting for him, I was astonished to hear a shot, see the ball strike just above me, glance up the rock, and kill the bear as dead as a door-nail! Looking back to see who had fired the shot, I observed the little man from Hanôver—as he pronounced

it—dancing in frantic ecstacy on the rock where I posted him, shouting at the top of his voice, "I have killed the bear! I have killed the bear!" The shikarrie posted with him had persuaded him to fire, and there, on examination, was the blue mark of the ball where it had grazed the rock, and then entered the animal's ear. A lucky shot indeed!! and we all had a hearty laugh with the little man on his good luck.

Now, friend Editor, I wish you and all your readers and subscribers every good that you and they can enjoy; and with many happy returns of jolly Christmas and the New Year, for a time, bid you adieu!

CHAPTER XV.

HOG-DEER AND ANTELOPE.

IN your issue of the 17th February last "SMOOTHBORE" asked for information regarding hog-deer, and whether it was known down south. I do not pretend to be able to reply to his queries on the subject further than to say that to the best of my belief, I never have seen a hog-deer at all, and certainly have never met with it in Southern India. The natives as well as many Europeans, apply the term hog-deer to the little memina, both striped and spotted; also to a very small animal which I have met with and shot in Travancore, and which I believe is the mouse-deer. It is a very pretty little creature, about the size of a wild rabbit, and very rare. I can easily understand why the striped memina is called a hog-deer, its appearance being so very similar to the young of the wild hog. There is also a peculiarity in the form and position of the genitals of the males, being the same as the wild boar, which may have given rise to these animals being looked upon, especially by the natives, as *hog*-deer. In "Williamson's Field-sports in India," written during the last or the beginning of this century, there is a plate descriptive of hunting the hog-deer, which animal, is therein represented as what I think I may very properly designate a dwarf spotted deer. It is spotted like the axis, and is represented as bounding in an ungainly fashion over and through long grass, and has all the appearance of the spotted deer; but at the same time, like the same

dwarfs generally, is ill-proportioned. VAGRANT, I am sure, can give us some authentic information regarding this animal; and in his forthcoming work,—excuse me for a moment while I stir him up a little upon this point.—Oh! VAGRANT! VAGRANT!! two years ago this long-looked for publication was progressing favorably, and hopes were raised that we should enjoy the perusal of your most interesting volume *shortly*. Alas! alas! I visit the publisher and eagerly demand my copy of the work. He, poor man holds up his hands in a deprecatory manner, and in a lamentable tone of voice, cries out "What can I do, sir? waiting for more than a year for corrected copy, but none is sent. Reminders repeatedly are sent, but no response. What *can* I do?" Dear old VAGRANT, if that will not touch your tender heart, what will? A weeping publisher, a crying (out) public for a treat long withheld, and you a deaf adder! not to be charmed! Go to now, despatch copy, and make us all happy. To return I know there will be some information about the hog-deer in VAGRANT'S work, so SMOOTHBORE must wait with patience, unless our "mutual friend" will forestall the lagging volume, and tell us what he knows in the columns of the *S. I. O.*

Yes friend SMOOTHBORE,* I noticed in the *Field* what you mention about the breeding of the spotted deer in the parks at home; that peculiarity regarding dropping the fawns at the unseasonable time of winter will, I imagine, cure itself in the second or third generation. I feel sure I have read somewhere that such is invariably the case; but my memory is like a cullender, and things slip through and are lost for ever for I seldom follow good old Captain Cuttle's advice, and "make a note of it." I often wish I had.

By the way in talking about hog-deer, I dare say YOUNG

* I regret to hear that SMOOTHBORE'S tame ibex is dead.

NIMROD, a writer in the *Oriental Sporting Magazine*, who I see in the number for March, coincides with DEER STALKER and myself on the subject of vultures' "sight *versus* scent," will be able to give us some reliable information on the habits of the animal in question. He is evidently an observant sportsman, and takes notes. If this meets his eye, we may enlist him as a contributor, or at any rate obtain what we seek through the magazine above alluded to. In the same number (March) there is an interesting article regarding antelope, taking the wind completely out of my sails, for it was a subject I long ago threatened to treat you with *in extenso*, but I shall now only be able to touch lightly on it.

I have never heard of a buck antelope's horns, on this side of India, exceeding 26 inches: I saw one pair at Secunderabad 24; and have heard of 26. The longest in my possession are 23; the head was obtained under peculiar circumstances. Two bucks were observed fighting furiously in the Government House Park at Madras; one of the two having had enough of it, was turning away, and so offering his broadside to his adversary, who at the same moment making a rush at lightning speed, transfixed his enemy clean through the body, killing him on the spot. SPHERICAL, the writer of the article, alludes to cases of horns knocked off by bullets or by combat, and how rarely deformed horns are observed, to all which I can lend my experience, and will quote instances confirmatory of his views. I got a shot at a young buck antelope with horns about a foot or fourteen inches long. It was in the Kurnool district, at the season when such very high winds prevail that even the wild animals seek cover from them; but over those interminable plains cover of any description is exceedingly sparse—a few stunted bushes here and there, and the lee side of a cholum field afforded the only protection from the furious blasts of wind on those dreary

maidans. I was travelling at the time from Secunderabad to Madras, and wishing to see the country and search for game and the weather being tolerably cool, I always marched from stage to stage during the day. The game was nearly as scarce as the bushes referred to, and for many days my companion and myself had failed to detect the presence of anything except a flock of Bustard, of which we failed to account for even one. At last my eyes were gladdened by the sight of an antelope; the glass showed two, one reposing, the other grazing. A small group of bushes protected them from the wind, and under cover of which I made a good stalk, the wind too being in my favor. When within a hundred yards, the buck was in the act of licking his flanks, and this seemed to me a grand opportunity, so I let drive; down went the buck, but was on his legs in a twinkling, and after three or four staggers, away he went after his companion, who had bolted at the shot. I forget whether I fired the other barrel, but under the impression that I had hit my quarry through the body, I cut away to my horse and followed the antelope, spear in hand, as hard as I could pelt. As I neared him, he put on more steam, began to bound now and then, turned and stopped to give me a look to see if I was in earnest, and then capered away as gaily and free as if he had never been touched. Returning to the spot where the antelope stood when I fired, I picked up the horn, which the ball had struck right in the centre, wrenching it clean off. The force of the bullet had splintered the horn considerably, but had not penetrated. The following day I succeeded, after a long stalk in getting up to a buck with one very long horn, some 21 or 22 inches. I performed many of the dodges SPHERICAL describes, especially the imitation of the movement of a cooly or ryot, and at last the buck got so disgusted with my perseverance, that he deliberately lay down in a ploughed field, and

allowed me on all fours, as if weeding, to get within easy range. I missed him as he rose, but struck him with the other barrel, and had an exciting chase before I slew him. He took a leap over a fence with three legs, which my horse with four could not accomplish.

SPHERICAL speaks of running wounded antelope down, with or without dogs, and the chase they gave at times is quite remarkable. A buck whose fore-leg I broke near the knee, with nearly half-a-mile start, gave a companion and myself, with two excellent Arab dogs, a run of close on three miles before he was pulled down. I have a pair of horns of a buck I killed much in the same way as SPHERICAL killed his ravine deer, but to this day I have been unable to find any mark of the ball on either horn. He was grazing in the bed of a tank, and was, I fancy, about a hundred yards off. He fell to the shot; on my running up, he kicked about a good deal, so I seized him by the horn, but before I could cut his throat, he died: blood was issuing from his nostrils,—the only sign of injury. For the life of me I could find no wound; but, and assisting to put the animal on my horsekeeper's shoulders I took hold of the other horn, and felt it give. On skinning the animal and cleaning the head, we found a fracture extending from the base of the horn under the eye-socket and across the sinus, and we must conclude that a touch of the bullet on the horn effected this, but no mark of such hit was to be traced at the time.

I noticed two bucks in the Government House compound, who had deprived themselves of their head ornaments in fighting; each had both horns broken off about ten inches or a foot from the roots, and mighty ugly they looked, and much ashamed of themselves, or probably very sore, which gave them a melancholy appearance. I have also seen two doe antelope with horns, one with a loose pair hanging

down the side of her face, the other with the horns stiff pointing forward; they were, I should say, seven or eight inches long, and about as thick as the horns of the doe chikarah or blacktailed ravine deer. I have a good deal to say about these last, whose peculiarities are so well described by SPHERICAL, That incessantly wagging little black tail, and the constant disappointment experienced when in the hope of a steady pot, it suddenly wriggles it rapidly and is off like a shot. Tantalizing little beast! still I love you!

In the Rumnah at Hyderabad, near the Moosah river at Oopal, there were some splendid bucks. It often happens where antelope are numerous, that the rejected bucks—if I may so style them—congregate together without a single doe amongst them, the stronger bucks having taken possession of the does and keeping them to themselves. I have however observed here and there a sly fellow who had induced some fair frail one to elope with him, and generally noticed that they kept wide of the usual haunts of the rest. In riding through the Rumnah one Sunday morning on our return from an expedition we had made, some four or five of us, we came upon one of these large herds of bucks. We estimated them at a hundred head or more, and we were all struck in looking over them, by seeing one head over-topping all the rest by at least a foot. Wherever the bucks moved there appeared the horns eclipsing all the rest, and we all declared that we had never seen so splendid a head. It was not considered a very heinous crime in those days, to poach on His Highness the Nizam's preserves, provided always you were not detected and caught. I repeatedly looked for that grand buck, but never saw him again. He may have been the 24-incher that I saw at Secunderabad; to our ideas at the time he seemed to be some 28 or 30 inches; but the uncertainty in judging length of horns by the eye is too well known to be trusted to; we

are generally deceived, and always, so to speak, on the wrong side, that is, we invariably fancy antlers and such like to be much longer and finer than they eventually prove to be. I do not recollect ever seeing a mutilated or deformed antelope's horn; except broken ones caused by fighting. The sketch of the head drawn by SPHERICAL, is remarkable and not easily accounted for, unless it got a twist in fighting, without breaking, and so took a new direction on after growth, and became stunted from the injury. I have often ascertained the certainty of a hit from the action of the herd with which the wounded animal was keeping pace, the does rushing towards him, then smelling the blood, darting away alarmed, and betraying the fact by their unusual manner. I have known wounded antelope hold by a herd until perfectly exhausted, and then suddenly drop in some uneven ground, and lie *perdu*, and often thus be lost.

I have written much more on this subject than I at first intended, but reading over SPHERICAL'S article led me on. There is a great deal more to be said about wolves, antelope, and bustard, and many anecdotes connected therewith, so perchance, when in the humour, I may give you another long screed about them. It is a fascinating sport, though some look upon antelope-shooting with contempt; there are, however, many of my opinion regarding it who would be glad to be within reach of the Deccan plains or the wide wastes of the Maharatta cotton-soil, where these animals abound, and are, I believe, as fine specimens as are anywhere to be found.

Antelope vary very much in size, according to locality. I have not had an opportunity or means to weigh them, and so cannot state the actual difference in that respect; but that there is considerable variety in bulk and length of horn I am fully satisfied of. I first became acquainted with

these animals in Tinnevelly; that is, I killed my first victim there. I had previously seen a few in Coimbatore, but never had a chance of a shot. On the Tinnevelly plains, at the time I am speaking of, they were very numerous, and within easy reach of Palamcottah Fort. The alluvial soil of that district was, however, dangerous to these graceful animals, especially in the vicinity of the cantonment. Long ridges of hard rocky ground intersect and divide the low plains of soft cotton-soil which there prevails; and whenever a heavy monsoon set in, the villagers used to turn out with their dogs, and occupying the stony slopes or ranges, harry the poor antelope from one line to another, until, perfectly exhausted, they fell and were immediately despatched. Great numbers at such seasons were thus destroyed. I was out one day when some fifteen were killed within three miles of the station, close to what was called the Wolf Hill. Expressing my surprise that so speedy an animal could be apparently caught with such ease,—for they kept as much as they possibly could to the stony ridges, where they invariably out-stripped the dogs. I was told that it entirely depended on keeping the animal in constant motion, giving them no rest, so that they could not chew the cud, and thus, becoming blown out, they often drop down dead. I witnessed one instance: a small herd came clattering by over the stones, running seemingly strong enough, when all of a sudden, over went a young buck, after a stagger or two, just as if he had been shot. My dogs drove one down into the cotton-soil, and caught it in no time. Fortunately for these poor creatures, very heavy monsoons were exceptional.

The antelope in Tinnevelly were full sized, with good horns, and in those days very numerous. On the plains between the town of Tinnevelly and Shermadavy, some ten miles in extent, the herds were very large indeed, and afforded good sport, though often interfering with our

propensity for fox-hunting then predominating. At times we had splendid runs after fawns. It is strange how much a single week's difference in age will save the fawn, and stranger still the instinct of both mother and child as to the powers of endurance of the little one. I remember once laying in the dogs at a fawn that sprung up from behind some stones like a hare; and no sooner had the dogs caught sight and were stretching their utmost to reach the little animal, when in between them and their prey dashed the mother, rushing from side to side so close to the greyhounds that they flung themselves at her, and, of course, her object being gained, she led them a dance over the plain, from which they returned completely exhausted. Immediately the mother interfered, the fawn turned sharp off and vanished: it had squatted and was no more seen. Many such instances have been observed; I once saw a doe knock her fawn down because it would persist in following her when she knew there was danger at hand.

At the time I am writing of, detonating guns or rifles were not very common. I killed my first antelope with a flint rifle belonging to the rifle company that had recently been attached to my regiment. I had followed a herd that had passed over one of the stony ridges I have alluded to; on peering over a rock, I spied the antelope within easy shot on the other side of the slope. Laying the rifle along the rock, I took a deadly shot at the nearest—a young buck—imagine my disgust when the old tinder-box snapped! fortunately the animals were not disturbed, for no less than five times did that flint and steel fail! At last off it went, and away bolted the herd, and the one I had fired at. Fancying that I had missed, I pleaded guilty to having cursed in my heart the inoffensive weapon. Mounting my horse, I proceeded in the direction the herd had taken; and presently saw something looking whiter than any stone, and road towards it, when to my great joy, I

found it to be the young buck, quite dead. I joined the rest of the party at the choultry a proud lad, for was I not the first in the regiment to kill an antelope!

A curious thing occurred, connected with flint rifles, which I will relate, being an eye-witness to what happened. I was out with a brother-officer looking for antelope; we spied a buck some way off and it was my friend's turn to have the shot. I proposed that I should go to some trees away to the right of the buck, so as to intercept him if he came that way. I reached the spot and got up into one of the trees and watched the gallant Captain stalk the buck, who soon becoming alarmed retreated a short distance towards my post, then wheeled round and stood chest on, facing his enemy, who having squatted boor-fashion took a deliberate shot. From my perch in the tree I saw the antelope turn, but instead of coming on as I expected to see him, down he fell, and on my joining my friend, he said, "Look here, I can't make it out; I fired at his chest, and he is hit in the loins." I then told him what I had seen, that the buck had turned to flee and the ball had caught him as he did so, and there can be little doubt that the antelope saw the flash of the powder in the pan, and had very nearly escaped. With our rifles of the present day, throwing up as they do so rapidly, such a thing could seldom happen.

In the northern part of Mysore, in Bellary, and in the Hyderabad territory, also in the northern districts of this Presidency, the antelope are full sized; so too about the Kulladgee plains; but south of Mysore, all along the line of road towards the Hills, they are comparatively small. There used to be a goodly number of them spread over the country some few years back, but now, alas, I am told they have become very scarce, and the few that remain wild to an excess. In olden times, when Montgomery had his

training course at Nunjengode, game was preserved, and during the late Rajah's life-time, shikarries were not permitted to destroy the game; but now-a-days nobody cares; and the land is swept clean of all kinds of game; and certainly on that side of the Mysore country, every description of wild animals and birds is fast disappearing.

Fifteen years ago I was at Sindhully bungalow. I sallied forth at early dawn to see what I could find in the shape of game. I was back at the bungalow at 9 o'clock! I first of all came upon a group of wolves, five or six; a large male was lying down with his head towards me, watching, much in the attitude of a pariah dog when doubtful whether you intend mischief. He was about eighty yards off, and before he could make up *his* mind, I had *mine*, and killed him then and there; the rest ran some distance and I followed and fired at one of them, and missed. The report disturbed a bustard, which flew across and alighted a short distance off to my right: the wolves were to the left. I moved on till getting opposite the bird, I took my shot and bagged it. Proceeding on I came in sight of a buck and three or four doe antelope. After the usual manœuvring I got a capital shot; the ball went close, for the buck sprung in the air as it cut up the dust just beyond him, and away he went; whether it was a case of out of the frying-pan into the fire I know not: but I saw him more than a mile away, tearing along for his very life, having crossed the line the wolves had taken: how it ended I cannot say. Turning towards home, I saw some more antelope grazing among some date bushes; making a good stalk I succeeded in getting a shot and dropped a doe with a ball through her neck. I returned to the bungalow quite satisfied and very "koosh." I have described the above morning's sport just to show the difference between those days and the present. Again, travelling over the same country, only along the road to the Bellary [illegible] instead of

that to the Neilgherries, I came on some antelope near the road-side. Following them they led me to a fine open piece of ground of two or three miles in extent, on which, and not very far apart, I saw some half-a-dozen bustard, nine or ten wolves, and a very large herd of antelope, besides those I had followed. The wolves were, I am sure, up to some dodge, for it was not until I had fired some three or four shots at the bustard (missing every one) that I became aware of their presence, and they then showed in pairs, at intervals of some distance, and I believe were waiting their opportunity at the antelope. I lean to the idea that the wolves hold themselves in relays, each giving the antelope a burst at its utmost speed, and it is well known that the antelope, when thus the pressure is kept up, gets comparatively soon blown. I can well imagine this, but I do not speak from actual experience. I do not think they molest the bustard. I remember in the Hyderabad country, coming on some bustard, and on looking them over with the glass, saw a brace of wolves close to them, and noticed one of the latter rolling in the grass, as if in play; whether a device to get within distance for a rush I can't tell; at any rate I disturbed their plans by stalking the cock bird, which was some distance from the rest, and killing the finest bustard I had ever seen. It was in the cold season, and we all feasted on him, for a week, and he *was* good!

A well known sportsman related to me the following scene, showing how wolves act in concert to circumvent the antelope. A couple of wolves after watching a herd of antelope for some time, separated, when one suddenly appeared on a low range of hills, a short distance from the antelope, and commenced running backwards and forwards along the ridge. As soon as his companion, who in the meantime had been perfectly quiet, saw that the whole attention of the herd was occupied in watching the other's movements,

he made a dash at the deer; in doing so he unfortunately sighted my friend. This entirely upset the manœuvre, both wolves decamping; but there was quite sufficient seen to prove a concerted plan, and it would be very interesting to have been able to have watched the upshot—perhaps the party concerned, if this meets his eye, will tell us the story in a more complete form; and I dare say, he has other adventures to tell of about wolves: or may be, VAGRANT and others can give us some anecdotes about them. I am always throwing out hints, friend Editor, but seldom with any avail; some folks are so shy of writing for the public, so we all suffer from their timidity. Do, please, brother sportsmen, come forward and tell us what you know, have seen, or heard, and do not fear to take a plunge into the sea of print; you will probably rather like it after a few dips—and we shall all be *so* glad.

To return to antelope. Those found about Kolapore in the Southern Mahratta country are, I think, the smallest of any I have met with, more particularly the bucks, and their horns very poor ones; yet it was one of these small bucks, the only one that ever exhibited pugnacity to me, though not the only case I know of: I had wounded him twice, the last shot bringing him down, but when I went up to perform the *coup de grace*, he staggered up on his knees, and putting his horns down, made a fierce lounge at me. I was never, before or since, attacked by an antelope though I have had my trousers ripped up by the animal's hoof when desperately struggling to get away from my grasp. A spotted deer once struck so hard in his violent, struggles that he (a small buck) broke my shikar knife. The other instance of pugnacity in an antelope was a laughable one. An officer in my regiment had wounded an antelope, and on his going up to secure him, the "savage beast," as he called the buck, came at him, and eventually drove the sportsman (?) off and escaped! It

was on the line of march, and I believe he had no ammunition with him, having strolled out with the loaded rifle; but we were all much amused at his description of the attack by the "savage beast," and which ended in his discomfiture. It is the first and only instance I know of in which a poor timid antelope gained a victory over his enemy, man!

There used to be a reward for wolves killed in Mysore—four or five rupees I think; that was when the Government sheep farm was in existence, and the wolves did much damage. In Kolapore I once shot a wolf that was not far from a flock of sheep grazing; on showing the head to the shepherd, he immediately told my shikarrie to choose a sheep from the flock, and told me the death of that wolf was worth twenty sheep to him. I never heard of them attacking men; generally they are exceedingly shy, and any attempt to stalk them immediately raises their suspicion, and they decamp. I once had a wolf travel in my company for more than a mile; who told him that I was unarmed I cannot say, but it was so; he afforded me, and himself too I suppose, a little diversion by running at a pariah dog that came trotting along the road. I suppose the wolf had met with a good meal during the night, for he simply rolled the dog over and over, and then left him. A lot of bandy-men saw the wolf and scared him away just before my people came up with my weapons. I once saw two wolves trotting along parallel with a herd of antelope, one of the two carrying a good-sized fawn in his mouth. I felt certain of getting a crack at him, but he would not let me within range, keeping the fawn to himself all the time. A wolf joined my dogs in a chase after a wounded antelope, and soon killed it, and had eaten a good portion before I reached the spot and disturbed him. Had the wolf courage, he would undoubtedly be no despicable foe; but like the hyæna, he has

no heart. They have been run down and speared at times, but it is no easy matter; the horse must be good and the rider light to ensure success: of course if gorged, they are easily killed; one I remember was run down in some long grass in the dry bed of a tank; he was under disadvantages, not being able to get through the grass, and so was disposed of without much trouble. On open and good ground, like the antelope, he is not often run into. It is dangerous attempting to do so with dogs, for one bite across the loins from his powerful jaws will disable and ruin any greyhound.

I have written enough for this time. I wish I could induce others to be up and doing with the pen, and tell us of deeds with rifle, hound, and spear. We do not aspire to fine writing, or ask it of others; all that is wanted is the plain unvarnished tale of incidents in the field or forest, and anecdotes of the various animals met with, of which so many remain untold. I know one who has had more experience in this way than most others—a good and true sportsman, but sadly shy of pen and print. He has seen—by Jove! I don't know what he has *not* seen; but I can say what he *has* seen would fill a volume. Come forth, thou mighty hunter, and tell thy tales! With this exhortation, I say, *addio pro tem.*

Yes, friend Editor, I think we may congratulate ourselves and the public in having enlisted NAT PANGLOSS as one of the sporting contributors of the *S. I. O.* The account of a morning with the bears indicates a good many other adventures, and told with his graphic pen, will, I am sure, meet with the approbation of all your readers. He mentions his surprise at the second bear not being disabled by the fearful wound he describes; this reminds me of an adventure with a stag, which I will relate, as an instance of how many, and even severe wounds, may at times fail

in bringing an animal to bag, though it did not so happen in this case.

Early one morning I was ascending a hill near the Avalanche, bent on my favourite sport, and somewhat bloodthirsty—not having been very successful of late; when, as I emerged from a small shola, or rather the point of a large wood, through which the path led, I spied on the neighbouring crest, two stags walking down a foot-path which a few hundred yards further on would join that by which I was proceeding. The deer were coming down, and would probably skirt a large swamp and cross to the large wood, a portion of which I had just passed through. A convenient knoll was between us, and as they gradually descended, they would, for a time, be out of sight. I was amused watching the younger stag taking a rise out of his more sedate elder brother. At first the larger animal was leading, evidently wishing to gain his harbour for the day, and perhaps blaming himself for being tempted by some attractive patch of sweet herbage or the presence of fascinating females, to be thus belated, so to speak, in returning home. Not so with his fag: this young fellow had no such compunctions; jauntily he came, every now and then capering to the front, bringing his antlers to the charge, and in mock fight impeding his big friend, who, after repelling the attack, again came hastily on, but ever and anon having to encounter the impudent young skirmisher: and so they gradually descended the hill-side, I at the same time approaching silently and swiftly to intercept them. Reaching the knoll, and gradually clearing the rise, I came in sight of the deer, busily engaged in what was I think, the fiercest attack that the young one had made; their antlers were locked; they were on tolerably level ground; but the weight of the large stag was plainly telling on his pugnacious friend, for he was pushing him bodily back and up the slope. Once more they were free,

but the smaller one, evidently nettled at his repulse, again danced in front and once more assaulted the big one. For some seconds he held his own, during which time I was drawing the bead on the shoulder of what I thought would prove a noble stag with a grand trophy. The shot broke up the fight; the larger stag went limping away disabled in the shoulder. As he went from me, stern on, my next shot caught him high up, crippling the hind leg on the same side. He disappeared in a strip of sholah edging the swamp and leading up to a large hanging wood, affording cover if once reached that would in all probability lose me my stag, so cutting along at my best pace,—which isn't bad for an old one, especially when excited and eager, as I then was,—I reached the end of the strip before the stag. I had seized my spare gun—a muzzle-loader,—and while waiting for the deer to show, I attempted to reload the breech-loader; at that moment I saw the stag's head about forty yards, or less, from me. I had time to repossess myself of the loaded weapon, and took a hasty shot, and I believe, missed. The stag turned back from whence he had come, and I lost him for some time but again caught sight of him under a large tree, evidently bewildered what to do. Taking another shot, which I heard plainly tell, he blundered away, crossed the edge of the swamp into another strip of sholah, tripped over a fallen tree, and down he went. Once down he could not rise again, and was despatched. He had a deal of life in him, and had his head not been caught between two trees, I really believe he would have struggled on to his legs again; yet, strange to say, he had only one sound leg left. The fore and hind legs of the off side were both disabled, and my last shot had fearfully smashed the remaining hind leg near the stifle—how the animal managed to hold on at all was wonderful, for it took me nearly half-an-hour from the first shot fired till I had bagged him. Then

came the disappointment. Had I lost that animal, I should have declared, to the best of my belief, that I had failed to bag one of the finest stags on the hills. In writing lately about the size of horns, I mentioned how apt we are to be deceived, and how certainly we err on the wrong side; so it happened upon this occasion: compared with the plucky little fellow that attacked him, the large stag seemed a monster, and his antlers exceedingly fine. Well, he was in bulk a large beast, and when looking at me while I was trying to load, his antlers appeared grand and graceful. Alas! when brought to account we found them neither very long nor very symmetrical—old and without beading, tips broken off, and the beams not at all massive; and altogether a woeful disappointment. Still there was great excitement in the chase, under the delusion that he would prove to be a grand trophy. Now you see, friend Editor, the advantage of obtaining fresh correspondence. Had not PANGLOSS' pen been enlisted and his remark about wounds appeared, this little episode of shikar would not have been thought of: perhaps some will say "so much the better! it is but a cruel tale after all." Alas! too true; but gentle reader, I would have killed the stag sooner, and tried to do so; but it was not so to be, and the Editor of the *S. I. O.* will, I think, be inclined to say he is glad of it, as it has given me something to write about.

I observe in your last issue an extract from the *Pioneer*, on the Preservation of Birds, in which the writer compliments the style of the sporting contributors in this Presidency, and cannot see the reason why they should excel in that particular line. I am glad to see how well he advocates what we have been so long seeking, and which is now apparently on the threshold of realisation—the preservation of game. It is however useless for him to say that such preservation is not for the express object of

sport; it eventually becomes so: the birds and beasts are not to be exterminated, they are to live and multiply; and so they will. Well, at certain seasons they may be taken by gun or snare or other device, and so the sportsman—*he* of the gun—enters the field, has his enjoyment and his sport, and thanks Lord Mayo that it is so. The article is an excellent one, the reasons sound and strong, and if the Act follows, then will all sportsmen good and true, give three cheers for the *Pioneer*.

In connection with this subject, I have been watching the ground-game up here, to see, if possible, how far we have been correct in fixing the fence months from March till September, and have come to the conclusion that the period proposed will suit well. In March I have observed the quail only just hatched, so they are somewhat early, and I fancy lay their eggs during February. We cannot, however, well fence that month, for it is the best on the Hills for woodcock and snipe. Late in April my dogs caught a spurfowl, it was just fit for the table, being three parts grown and very plump. At the end of May a friend shot a jungle-fowl pullet, not quite full grown, but fit for the table, in good condition. Now I take it that all these birds have hatched late in February or during March; consequently the 31st of that month does not quite meet the true time for preservation, but so nearly as to be of no great importance. Moreover it is, I believe, an acknowledged fact, that birds sitting are almost devoid of scent, and I have noticed in beating covers during March that it is rarely you flush hen jungle-fowl, and the cocks may be killed without doing any harm. I am not quite satisfied as to the breeding-time of hares; I am inclined to the idea that in this country they are something like rabbits, and have young more than once during the year. In May I killed a hare in Ooty weighing six and a half pounds; in June I killed a fine doe hare at Coonoor, weight eight pounds; in the

same month I killed two jack hares, each weighing five pounds—fine leverets in fact: then again, later in the month, the dogs caught a small leveret only about two pounds in weight. So, opining that hares breed during the spring, the proposed close season will answer. Referring to Jerdon's Mammalia for information on this point, I find he is silent as to the time of breeding; but mentions the weight of the common Indian hare as seldom exceeding five pounds. I was not aware till now that there were two species in Southern India—Jerdon says the common Indian hare is met with in Southern Malabar—the blacknaped hare being the only one I have met with. The largest one I have shot on the plains weighed six pounds, after being paunched; I shot it near the Red Hills. Jerdon does not state the weight of this species; I think from five to seven pounds may be about it. One morning, out of five bagged on the plains, one was more than a head longer than the others, but we had no means of weighing it. Generally the females are the largest. Jerdon omits one of the names used in the Teloogoo country, viz.: "Chowrahpilly;" which, being interpreted, means, I believe, Jackass-cat. On these Hills the hares appear to know every hollow tree in the shola, and constantly take refuge in them, or under rocks, when hard pressed by the dogs. The hill mongoose—fortunately not very numerous, does a deal of mischief with the game: I recommend his destruction wherever he is met with. I hope some other sportsman, better acquainted with this subject and the habits of the ground game up here, will take it up and give us the benefit of his experience: I know two or three, who if so disposed, might favor us with reliable information.

I observe in *Land and Water*, of the 28th May, a great outcry being raised at the wanton destruction of small birds of various kinds at home, and the writers loudly call

for protection, and though at the same time there is a demand for certain relaxation of the game laws, still the indiscriminate slaughter and extermination of the feathered tribe is strongly condemned, and whatever may be the result of legislation in regard to the game laws, a season will surely be fixed during which the sale of what we now call game will be illegal. All this agitation is in favor of what I have so strongly and unceasingly advocated—the establishment of a close season in India, and the preservation of birds and animals thereby: what can I say more? except that I hear an Act is in preparation for our Legislative Council, and I have little doubt that the Government of India will take up the matter, and probably frame a general Act suitable for all India.

Since I commenced this, your issue of the 7th has been received, with the article on Ibex-shooting, by the writer of that ilk. I am unable to confirm what he says about his having killed an ibex with a shot through the head, at 200 yards; not that I disparage the shot, or doubt the distance; but he is under a delusion, shared by many others, as to my *nom de plume*, the impression being that "HAWKEYE" is a very famous sportsman, and that no one else could possibly relate so many incidents connected with sport on these Hills. As for IBEX himself, if he is the young man I suspect he is, I believe I have seen him, and that is all; I certainly never saw the ibex's head he alludes to. Giving him all credit, however, for the shot, I will take the opportunity of pointing out how desirable it is in a young sportsman to control his imagination as to time and space. Knowing the Neddiwuttum ground well I cannot give him credit nor do I believe it possible, that a wounded bleeding ibex could take him fifteen miles and not be bagged at the end of it. The longest chase after a wounded animal that I have heard of was that by Sir Victor Brooke and Colonel Douglas

Hamilton, when they followed a wounded elephant nine miles and killed him, the animal having taken refuge in a pool of water. He was the great tusker with only one sound tusk, eight feet long. Now IBEX probably thought he had gone a very long distance after his ibex, and no doubt did; but if we consider the rate at which a man can travel over ibex ground, it would, I think, take him a seven hours' chase; and I cannot believe in a wounded animal with two balls in him, holding on for that length of time. I take the liberty of pointing this out, because it is such a pity that a good bit of shikar should be spoilt in the telling by a miscalculation of time and distance; fancy a wounded ibex taking one from Coonoor to Metapollium before giving in—or rather and then escaping. Besides, it is contrary to their nature, habits and instinct —a wounded ibex invariably lays up, under some bush or rock, squatting close, sometimes allowing the hunter to almost tread on him before bolting away: he may on being disturbed, run a mile or two, but will undoubtedly take refuge again, and so afford several opportunities for the sportsman to bag him. It is different with deer; they hold on, and sometimes do not stop for many miles, unless very severely wounded; but 15 miles for a stricken stag would, to my mind, be a staggerer! Young IBEX, if I may so call him, is a good shot, fond of sport, and meets with adventures which he is anxious to describe to the best of his power; and none will greet him more cordially than myself, or encourage him than you friend Editor, and the readers of the *S. I. O.*; but the bane of sporting reminiscences is the unfortunate propensity for making the events more wonderful than they really are. Usually they are sufficiently interesting and extraordinary, without any decoration in serving them up. I also cannot quite concur in what he says about there being as great sport in loosing as in bagging an animal, because of the boasting of

some. The loss of a wounded animal is, or ought to be, to every sportsman, a cause of grief, especially if one of the deer tribe. There is undoubtedly always great excitement in tracking up, the hope being kept alive that success will follow; but when completely lost and no further help for it, the feeling of most men is one of distress. It is different with tigers and such like; there is of course great disappointment at the want of success in bagging, but still a satisfaction remains that a treacherous beast of prey has possibly been disabled for ever. I hope IBEX will take these remarks in good part. I am not sure that he means to say that the ibex went 15 miles; but it reads so, and he is responsible for what he has written, and a little friendly advice can do him no harm. By the way, 16 years ago I killed and bagged my first ibex at the Neddiwuttum crags; not a saddle-back, but a fine brown buck, with horn fourteen and a half inches long. I had wounded him severely, and on the herd bolting away, he laid up. We disturbed him, and I failed to get a shot: and for a long time we lost him. At last we observed that he had taken up a position some distance off, above a precipice, and was lying down under cover of an overhanging rock. Cautiously approaching, we got within a hundred yards opposite to him, and after due deliberation with the shikarrie, who told me if I hit the animal he would certainly fall over the precipice, but that it was possible to recover him, I determined to take a shot with my heavy rifle, carrying a two-ounce ball. The shot told, the animal rolled over, gaining an impetus by degrees, then struck a rock, was jerked high in the air, met another obstacle as it fell, from which its body bounded over the precipice and in a few seconds we heard the heavy thud below, as it crashed into the deep ravine and sholah at the foot of the mountain. It was a grand sight; but I thought I had lost my trophy: to my surprise, the shikarrie coolly pro-

posed that we should go down, which as I was then new to Ibex ground, I simply fancied impossible: the man knew better, and we succeeded in securing the head and skin of my first Ibex. The truth of the "facilis decensus" was clear in this case; the difficulty was getting back. I had a similar adventure with a stag but, I shall await some other opportunity to relate that exciting event; meanwhile, fare thee well.

In searching through some old journals for the weight of game, I came upon a bit of morning's sport near Bellary, which affords me something to write about; and I know full well, O greedy Editor! that you will rejoice that the "*cacoœthes scribendi*" has seized me whatever the upshot may be; of course I will try to do my best for the sake of the good little journal you struggle so manfully to issue with credit to yourself, and I hope, with pleasure and benefit to your readers; though I know it is up-hill work (no joke, on locality intended) at times to find pabulum for the public—specially in the line that suits me best, for, as I have told you before, I am nearly shut up for want of a new theme on which my pen could run glibly along. So far introductory.

About forty miles from Bellary, looking westward, is situated the range of hills on which the sanitary depôt of Ramandroog is located. I have nothing further to say of the Droog, beyond its being on the same line of hills enclosing the valley of Sundoor, forming a gigantic horse-shoe in shape, as the spot where the morning's sport I am about to relate was met with,—the end of the amphitheatre of hills towards Bellary is about ten miles nearer than the Droog. A somewhat celebrated (in those parts) pagoda prettily situated at the head of the pass leading down to Sundoor, has given its name to this point of the horse-shoe, and the place is called Comarasawmy. It is situated

near a small clear stream on the borders of the jungle, with but a very confined space cleared about it. It is a well-to-do pagoda, being visited by many pilgrims, and at certain seasons by its patron, the Sundoor Zemindar. Fine cocoa-nut trees surround the pagoda, and in the dell close by the sago-palm, with several grand forest-trees form a shady grove, suitable for pic-nics, where we passed many a pleasant day. On our first visit we went to this particular spot to meet a friend coming from the Droog to ascertain the difference of height, and to see if the place was better suited for a sanitarium. The plateau is far more extensive than that at the Droog; but religious objections proved an obstacle not to be overcome. We noticed on our arrival, a gaudy peacock sunning himself on the wall surrounding the temple, and on enquiry found it was a wild bird; that they were not usually molested, and so had become comparatively tame. The Brahmins did not seem offended or hurt at our having in possession a bird (a hen) of the kind, which we had shot on our way through the jungle; but we thought it advisable to keep on the peaceful side, and did not like to cause objections to our visiting the spot by molesting the favored bird. We observed, however, that he, the peacock, was not inclined to encourage impertinent curiosity. Returning home we were rewarded by bringing another brace of peafowl to bag, well beyond the precincts of the temple of refuge. Our temporary home was about three miles from the pagoda, not far from a small village, and pitched under a banyan tree, of extraordinary dimensions; it was in some places fifty yards across, and about eighty or one hundred in length, and walking round under the shade of its outer branches it was 450 paces! Little of the original or parent tree was left; large limbs had decayed and fallen down, others bending low close to the ground giving the interior space a picturesque appearance, and affording pleasant

seats to enjoy the sea-breeze as it swept through the tope, if I may so call it, on its usual evening visit. The climate was, after the intense heat of Bellary, delightful, and to appreciate the one it was necessary to undergo the other; a difference of from 10 to 12 degrees is quite enough; but here generally the *feeling* was that 15 or 20 at least was what we experienced, but the tell-tale thermometer did not always confirm it to that extent: anyhow, it was most enjoyable, the mornings fresh and bracing, exercise being a pleasure instead of a burden; at mid-day a lull and warmth increasing; the afternoon sunny and hot; then generally between four and six a voice would be heard in the stillness of the camp, arousing those courting a siesta with a "here it comes," and for some minutes we could hear the cool health-restoring breeze on its way from the coast, rushing along o'er hill and dale till it reached our glorious old tree, reviving nature, and causing the leaves to rustle their welcome to its pleasant coolness, and awakening to life and song the various birds taking refuge in its branches. Sometimes, though not often, I have known the advent of this welcome visitor delayed till long after dinner; but then, when it did come, it seemed the cooler for its tardiness. How true it is that all things must be judged by comparison! What would the Droog or Comarasawmy be to any one, were it not for hot, hotter, hottest Bellary! This ridge of mountains prove to be so healthy I imagine from the fact of being within reach of the sea-breeze, and while Bellary is at its hottest, these hills afford a most pleasant contrast. There is little jungle surrounding the base, and no malaria to speak of; the broadest part of the plateau is not two miles across, and the jungle is not heavy nor the humidity great, and thus, as far as I know, they have proved remarkably healthy. There is some little difficulty about water; it is good and very pure, but it is only obtainable some way

down the mountain side. When I was there, game, though not abundant, was not scarce,—a curious medley. On the open plateau, not far from the tree, that tantalising little wretch, the chikara, or black-tailed antelope; close by, in the jungle bordering the plain, the (don't howl, dear old VAGRANT) jungle-sheep:—I am obliged to use the term for all do not know the muntjac, though all readers of the *S. I. O.* by this time ought to; and then again, it is safe, because a sheep cannot be called a pig; and so we shall hear no more of its being mistaken for a hog-deer:—the bear and the noble sambur; tigers now and then; leopards often; but I never saw a spotted deer on those hills. Of small game, hares, quail, a few partridges, spurfowl, and pea-fowl; I don't recollect ever seeing jungle-fowl; but I met with a florican up there.

It is a custom of the Reddie, or head-man of the village Korratoor near the banian tree, to assemble the people and have a day or two's shikar on the new moon of their new year occurring some time in the month of March. On the first occasion he did not send me notice; they killed some twenty hares, but no large game. Subsequently I went with him, and had two days' beat. I observe in my journal that "we had a long day of it; saw some sambur, "and baikree but I did not get a shot till late in the "afternoon, when a doe (we call them hinds now) sambur "broke past me. The first shot hit her in the shoulder, "the next through the loins, as she galloped away, and "knocked her over in good style. Soon after I got right "and left at peafowl, and bagged the brace: afterwards "hit another, but lost it. Two friends were out with me; "one had a shot at a baikree, the other at a doe elk" (sambur; but we used, in those days, to use the terms buck, doe, elk and sambur indiscriminately—we know better now) "and a baikree: neither hit. We did not "return till sunset. The beaters killed three or four

hares, a mungoose, and a guana. In going out this "morning, hearing a noise in the jungle, one of the men "ran in and disturbed a cheetah, which had caught a "young baikree. Afterwards we heard that a bullock "had been struck by some animal near a village—they "said a tiger. The next day out again with the Reddie, "had a long unsuccessful beat; tracked a bear across the "portion of burnt jungle, but saw nothing of him. A hog "was shot at and missed. A sambur and calf seen but "not fired at; and all that was bagged was a hare, a "brace of pea-fowl, and a green pigeon." Out till sunset; no great shakes in the shape of sport. The same evening we witnessed a grand sight—the burning of the great ravine, the annual custom after these beats. It was an imposing sight, and when the dense clouds of smoke suddenly burst into a roaring stream of fire, rushing violently along the steep sides of the deep dell, licking up the dry grass and bushes bordering the stream, it was indeed an awful demonstration of the destructive power of this element. The noise too was deafening, and added greatly to the grandeur of the scene.

I will now extract from my journal the morning's sport to which so long a preface has been attached. It occurred on my first visit to the pleasant spot I have attempted to describe. Well on the 18th of March, nineteen years ago, one Tuesday, I find it thus recorded,—'Up early, but 'the village shikarrie had not come, so started without 'him. Went in the same direction as yesterday morning.' On referring back to the 'yesterday,' I see that I came up on the Sunday 16th, and the entry in the diary is as follows:—'Rode up to Korratoor, where the large 'Banian tree is. An easy road up, but not very pretty, 'the jungle and grass being all burnt. The small 'thatched bungalow, of which we have the use, belongs 'to G———m; it is pleasantly situated, under the large

'banian tree, under which a whole regiment might encamp.'
'17th.—Went out to look for game; saw four or five
'baikree, some pea-fowl and two hares. I shot one of the
'latter—a fine red one: killed her with ball as she was
'running past. I was not lucky enough to get a shot at
'a baikree; hope to make it out better to-morrow.' 'Took
'post over a ravine. Changed my position at daylight,
'and saw two baikree; but away they went. I then took
'up a fresh post, and watched for a short time, when two
'or three baikree came playing about, but not within shot.
'One came tolerably near, but having just seen some
'sambur a short distance off, I would not fire. I made
'out with the glass two sambur—buck and doe [such
'entry, in the present day, would be stag and hind]; the
'buck had no horns. They laid down, and I went round
'a hill to try and stalk them, taking off my shoes and
'walking in my socks [I well remember how painful a
'proceeding it was]. I managed to get well round, but
'they had smelt me; and when I showed myself, moved
'off: the buck went clear away, but the doe and another
'I had not before seen, after running a short distance,
'dropped into a walk, when I took a shot and dropped the
'leading one with a ball in the head: a bit of a *crow*, but
'never mind, it bagged the beast. Kassim, [a well-known
'character in our regiment, a sepoy, who nursed us through
'all our illnesses, and a special favorite still in the corps]
'hullauled it, and was very koosh. When we got back to
'the road, we found the shikarries who had marked a
'bear; went to the place and found that Bruin had gone
'into his cave; with a little grass and green boughs we
'soon made such a smoke that he could not stand it, and
'after two or three attempts, at last, out he came. I stood
'in front of the hole, and as he came out, gave him a facer,
'which entered his head near the ear, and knocked him
'over: however, he rolled and turned over, yelling like

'anything, so I gave him No. 2 somewhere in the neck, and 'as he again rolled, gave him the bone-breaker (a heavy 'single rifle), but think I missed him. To my astonish-'ment he sprang over the bushes, and down headlong into 'the ravine and away, at least, a mile before he stopped. 'I saw him gradually getting groggy, and, after loading, 'descended a dreadfully steep hill, and found old Bruin in 'a ravine considerably done. I gave him one ball between 'the shoulders, as I could not see his head; up he jumped 'with a roar, but had not the pluck to come at me. I 'missed him with the next barrel, I think, but with the 'big rifle gave him a finisher through the side: he gave 'a half grunt and half squeal as he received the last shot, 'scrambled two paces further towards his den, and fell 'dead in the entrance: and so I bagged the bear,—a fine 'male. I expected more fight, as when smoked out, they 'generally come forth rife for mischief. Returned to the 'bungalow, koosh as a lord: a precious hard pull up it 'was from the low country. Kassim considerably 'delighted." There's the promised extract; not much; after all, you see, friend Editor; but I am not one of those who go in for monster bags. I am quite contented with a moderate bit of sport, like that just described, and enjoy such far more than a dozen head of even large game driven from their cover, past the posts of a score or more shooters; pitting myself single-handed against the wary quarry, and beating him at his own weapons, so to speak, is what I have always considered real sport and taken great delight in. Of course I have joined in beats and battues, but give me the solitary stalk for sport.

In looking over the journal from which the above extracts is taken, I came upon other jottings down of events which may be interesting to your sporting readers, and will show how I generally followed the system above advocated. I make one extract regarding the death of a

leopard, as amusing, in exhibiting the queer propensity natives having a smattering of English, indulge in by miscalling things. We have all heard of cats and goats having pups, and even the young of birds so called; and only lately a servant, on being asked what was the roast for dinner, told us it was 'pig's kid!' My extract will exhibit another idea of the native mind. 'I had disturbed 'a leopard and cub the previous morning without getting 'a shot; the following morning when I reached the same 'ground, I heard a grunting noise, and at first thought it 'was a pig; but after a little became certain it was a 'tiger. I tried to get round the hill to cut it off (from 'the ravine); heard the low grumbling growl for some 'time, now sounding near, then far; then it ceased for a 'long time. I went down a ravine, where I heard some 'monkies kicking up a dust; could see nothing; looked 'into some caves, and turned back for home: just as I got 'out of the ravine, I heard the noise again; moved quietly 'on, and presently saw the animal in the act of making the 'noise, and to my surprise it was a cheetah, not a tiger. It 'was a good long shot, but stood broadside on; took a 'deliberate aim and dropped her with a ball just behind 'the shoulder, highish up, thereby breaking her spine. I 'ran up and gave her another shot, and then gave her a 'pelt with a heavy stone, which finished her, a fine female 'cheetah. Came home koosh. She is not the one I saw 'yesterday, as that had a cub; this one has no milk, nor 'are its dugs as if used lately. The skin is a very good 'one. I was much amused by the dog-boy, who, after 'examining the animal, turned to me, and said very naively ''I think him girl''! By the way this reminds me to ask whether the panther cub, that was lately shot by Colonel Hadfield, was also black. If so, it would, I think, tend to settle the question as to these animals being a distinct species. Jerdon does not pronounce either way,—Mr.

Elliot considers it a variety, and Mr. Hodgson is inclined to consider it a "distinct species;" *vide* page 100, Jerdon's Mammals of India. The black and the common panthers or leopards have been seen in company together. The black female at Madras, in the People's Park, had a family of spotted—not black, young ones; but then the male put to her was of the common kind—but I will say no more on this subject; it is a point for naturalists to decide; and I am not one!

My next extract will confirm IBEX's statement as to the tenacity of life and endurance of wild animals. I was on a visit to the same Hills where the events above recorded occurred, but at a different season of the year. I had gone up with a friend, to see to the repairs and enlargement of the thatched hut under the grand old tree: it was in December, and we proposed making the hut a more comfortable and roomy dwelling for the next hot season; but "man proposes" &c., &c. By the middle of the expected hot weather, we were all far away, or across the wide seas, holding the fort of Martaban lately taken from the enemy, and we never again have seen that pleasant spot under the banian tree.

Before proceeding further with my extracts, I wish to ask a question. Have any of my readers ever been told that the banian tree—the *Ficus religiosa*—has some repelling or non-conducting property, and is never known to have been struck by lightning? Very heavy thunder storms occurred frequently at Comarasawmy, but the tree, single and conspicuous, was never touched; and I well remember once, when out shooting deer in the cowles (grazing grounds for cattle) near Hosmoor, a violent and exceedingly close storm passed over me; a fine banian tree was at hand, and seeing me hesitate to take refuge under it, my shikarrie said "there is no fear—these banian trees are never struck

by lightning." It may be imagined how completely under the storm we were, when I mention that a stream of fire, in appearance as thick as my arm, seemed to fall within a hundred yards of me; the clap of thunder that accompanied the flash nearly stunned us both. Have any of my sporting friends any experience on this question? or have any of them heard the like saying amongst their native followers? If so, pray let us hear.

The day after we arrived, I see it mentioned in the Journal as follows:—'In the afternoon, about 4 o'clock, received 'khubber that a cheetah had killed a cow; went out and 'found that he had dragged it some distance, and through 'a nullah; sat down opposite the place (in view of the 'kill). At about 7 o'clock heard an animal making a hiss-'ing noise, but could not see it, as it was under the bank 'in the nullah. At one time it made the noise quite close 'to me; it then went away. Ramasawmy (the shikarrie) 'said it was the cheetah alarmed, having smelt us. We 'remained till near 9 o'clock, and then went away. We 'found the next day that the cow had not been touched 'during the night. Next morning—Saturday 6th,—down 'the hill near the water to look for hog returning from the 'cultivation; met a fine boar coming up a ravine; heard 'me and stopped at a bush. I could only see his head; 'fired and hit him: he staggered and nearly fell, but 'managed to get on his legs, and as he went across, I gave 'him No. 2 in the shoulder. He then came down at us, 'and Ramasawmy fired his matchlock, and I think hit 'him in the belly, low down. He came close past me, and 'I saw he was bleeding at the eye, and as he was con-'siderably flabbergasted, I thought I had knocked out his 'eye. He ran round the same bushes, and I fired the 'spare rifle at him, when down he came at us again, but 'did nothing. He then made off, and after loading, we 'lost him for some time, as he had lain down in long grass;

'so we went back and tracked up to him: found him 'very poorly; gave him a shot in the neck, which turned 'him over, but he managed to get on his legs again, 'and away he went, down hill, I sent the other barrel 'at him and hit him behind. Away he went, down 'hill, but pulled up, nearly done; but as he still tried to 'get on, I finished him with the big rifle. The fat and 'ghee bubbling out of the wound quite wonderful; I never 'saw so fat or heavy a hog. There were four fingers of 'fat on him, and it took eight men to carry him up the hill. 'His tusks all broken; the first shot had entered the 'centre of the forehead and glanced off, coming out under 'the eye. C. left for Bellary in the morning; I went down 'in the afternoon and had a tedious ride, my horse having 'lost a shoe. Sorry to leave the hill climate so very 'delightful.'

I will now give you a morning or two of antelope-shooting, just to show how easily a pleasant bit of sport could be obtained within reach of the station. Being on the staff at the time, I had to be back home in time for office, consequently I was in the saddle and far away before the "early village cock" gave notice of the approaching dawn. '8th July, 1851.—Out on the Buddihaul direction. 'Got one shot; missed. 10th—Same road, but went beyond 'the village. Got a shot at a red buck: broke his hind 'leg, but lost him after a long track. Found three others 'and after some time, wounded a buck: hit him low behind 'the shoulder the ball passing out at his hind leg, as he 'stood three quarters face on. Tried to ride him, but the 'ground was so very bad I could not do it. Drove him 'near some sheep, when he was chased by two dogs, and 'I lost him.' I must explain here that, in trying to ride this animal down, I got, at first, sufficiently close to see where he was wounded; but he took across such a honey-combed piece of cotton soil, that, after repeated flounder-

ings of my steed and approximate grief, methought discretion the better part of valour, and so gave up the chase on horseback, but followed in the direction the buck had gone. 'In looking for him came upon a fresh herd. 'Got a good shot, and a black buck fell. Strange to say, 'I could find no outward mark of a wound, but his skull 'was fractured at the foot of the left horn: how I 'cannot ascertain; but I bagged him, which was satis-'factory. I am inclined to think the ball must have hit 'or grased the horn, and the mark obliterated by the mud— 'at any rate we could find no outward sign—and when 'skinned, there was only a bruise at the foot of the horn 'and the skull fractured over the eye. Breakfasted at 'Buddihaul and came on home: got in easily at 12.' I mentioned this incident in a former paper about antelope; but had not at the time my old journal at hand, so wrote from memory, forgetting the previous shots. Buddihaul is about ten miles from Bellary, on the Madras Road. One or two more extracts will, I think, suffice as descriptive of sport about Bellary, and may be considered as the first instalment of the promise previously hinted at, namely, to record my sporting experiences at the several stations I have served at. '2nd August, 1851.—Started at about 'half-past three, a.m., with Ramasawmy (the shikarrie,) 'and Kassim (the sepoy,) by the road past the Brigadier's. 'Went beyond a village called Mooscondrum. Found two 'buck antelope. At first tried to get them driven across 'me but 'twas no go. Then stalked them with the horse. 'After a time got a good but long shot at one. The ball 'struck close to his feet; he was further off than I 'calculated. Afterwards saw a young red buck, very 'shy. Then fell in with two more black friends: one 'with a horn broken. They were joined by a third black 'buck. I tried to get a shot, but failed, so left them. 'Soon after met five does coming towards me. They were

'wild, but I cut them off, and they gave me a long shot. 'I aimed above, and immediately I fired one reared up, fell 'over on her back, up again, and off. I watched her down 'through some bushes, and after loading and proceeding 'in that direction a short distance, Ramasawmy pointed 'out another standing in the bushes. Saw that she also 'was wounded. She laid down, and I got a shot, but the 'ball flew over. She ran a short distance, and laid down 'again. I disturbed her before I had got my caps on. 'Ramasawmy went after the other wounded one, which had 'gone off on my firing. I stuck to this one. She laid up 'again, and after some search, I found her: and as she 'bolted off, knocked her over very nicely. Then joined 'Ramasawmy, and tracked very slowly for a long time. 'Patience was rewarded; we trailed up to her; I saw her 'lying down under some bushes; she was off like mad, so 'I mounted and soon ran her down and finished her. 'Kassim highly pleased: hullalled both and came home 'koosh.' The ball of the rifle had passed through both these 'animals, in at the ribs and out of the hind leg of the first, 'which was standing broadside on, and then into the 'shoulder and out near the neck of the other. Truly that 'double rifle very often takes these freaks. Home by 20 'minutes to 10.' The remark about the rifle is in allusion to several instances of a like nature having occurred with it. Some folks will say that I am given to aim at the brown spot and trust to chance; but it was not so: such lucky shots must now and then take place with animals that herd together.

There is no need to make further extracts; enough has been written to show the kind of sport within reach of the station in those days. At times we fell in with other animals,—wolves and hyænas; foxes too, in plenty; now and then bustard, and here and there the chickarah or black-tailed antelope. We often had some good splits with

the dogs after fawns, but seldom killed. I nearly came to great grief on one occasion; after hitting a black buck and breaking his hind leg, I rode after him, and got a severe fall by the animal throwing himself down right in front of the horse, who putting his feet on the antelope's soft springy body turned a complete somersault. The horse was clean on his back toes up, and remained so for some seconds, being stunned. I was thrown far away, and had time to think, as I flew through the air, whether it would be a twisted neck? fortunately the soil was soft, and I fell on the point of my shoulder. The buck made off in the scrimmage, but he was quite done, so I cut after him on foot, and soon despatched him. The horse had got on his legs again, but was for some time quite bewildered; however he carried me home safely. I have given the extracts from my journal as therein jotted down at the time; they were never intended for publication, so are quite in the rough, and though telling their own plain unvarnished tale, will prove I fear of but little interest to your general readers.

And now, in conclusion, why tarrieth our Game Act? it was promised an early appearance when the Government came up here, but no sign has yet been made. Oh! mighty legislators! let us not call in vain for this long-desired and much required Act. Have you no feeling for your fellow-men who love what Frenchmen call "the spoort," and none whatever for the poor persecuted birds and beasts, whose extermination is all but effected for lack of sympathy and pity? Oh men of power and wisdom! be no longer supine in this affair of life and death. It is but a simple matter to set a-foot,—a close time, *i. e.*, fence months during which the sale of game is illegal; fines and confiscation for the breach thereof; a tax on guns, rifles and dogs; and hereafter any thing further that may be found, from experience, to be necessary. A season of rest

is now the great desideratum, both here and in the plains —let our birds and beasts increase and multiply, which they soon will, if not disturbed during the season that nature provides for such purpose, this subject of protection and preservation has been repeated, *usque ad nauseam*, so I will say no more, but once again ask the Government to be up and doing in a matter so clearly important in every way.

You will remember that I mentioned, in writing about snakes some time ago, having seen a stuffed specimen of a python that was killed by an officer when the Pioneers opened the old ghaut from Mettapollium to Coonoor. I have lately been informed that a gentleman from the hills on a visit to the same line of jungle, fell in with two of these reptiles, and succeeded in killing both. In each case the whereabouts of these treacherous creatures was found out by each seizing and enveloping in their deadly embrace a dog belonging to the sportsman. The pythons were, I understand, some 15 or 16 feet long; both the dogs died. Very fair sport was met with by the party above alluded to; but the exact particulars I have not yet ascertained. The ground down below has, I believe, been left somewhat quiet for the last year or two, and game is more plentiful in consequence.

I think I have now completely exhausted your patience and that of your readers—but hope that some of your other excellent contributors will try and do the same; and so I say for the present "fare thee well."

In NAT PANGLOS' last letter, describing the death of his "first tusker," he puts a question to myself and others, whether we have observed that animals dropping at once to a shot, invariably fall on the side on which they have been hit? this is well known to be the case with elephants, but I was not aware that it is so with other animals;

though now I come to think it over, it very probably is, for I can call to mind numerous instances where I have had to turn the animal over to find where the ball had struck, and one quite recently. I dare say some more observant sportsmen have noticed this peculiarity and will be able to confirm the statement by NAT PANGLOS. With regard to elephants it is well known to be the case, and I remember soon after the death of the celebrated elephant shot Major Rogers in Ceylon, amongst the anecdotes and adventures related of him, was one of a bet he made that he would kill two elephants with one shot, and which bet he won, and he did so in consequence of having observed this peculiarity: he accordingly waited his opportunity, and when the calf of an old cow elephant was standing alongside its mother, by dropping the old one in his unerring style, down she came on her offspring, killing it by her fall, and thus winning the bet. My small experiences in the elephant line confirms what NAT PANGLOS advances. My first tusker was standing in a nullah, looking towards me, about ten or twelve paces off; I was above him; the shot caught him in the hollow above the trunk, and he fell forward; or rather subsided, as he stood, without rolling over, on his side, quite dead. My next shot was at a female, in long grass: I was able to get within five or six paces of her; the result of the shot was the appearance of all four legs sticking up above the grass,—she rolled over, got on her legs again, and to the other barrel she fell—to the side she was hit, both bullets having entered on the same side; the first, failing to reach the brain, had only knocked her over; to the second one she subsided, in the usual quiet manner, falling on her side. NAT PANGLOS' advice to young sportsmen is excellent, and cow elephants ought not to be shot. Generally elephant-shooting is, I understand, forbidden now; for my own part, admitting that the excitement from the spice of

danger attending the sport is alluring, I do not however consider it attractive after you have killed a few; in many instances the poor brute goes down so tamely and helplessly that one feels inclined to be ashamed of the feat. To kill a rogue elephant is of course very different; in such case a man may well feel proud, for the danger is great, and the victory uncertain, for it has been generally observed that the animal when *must* is more difficult to slay than at other times:—the state of excitement apparently causing the wounds to have little or no effect; possibly it may be that similar excitement on the part of the hunter when engaged in such a dangerous attack, may have something to do with it—but enought of elephants.

Touching the question of animals generally falling on the side they are hit, I am inclined to think they do, and the following little incident that comes to my mind may be interesting, and goes far to establish the theory. When last in London, a good many years since, being very fond of pictures, I paid a visit to the Royal Academy: it was the year that Sir Edwin Landseer exhibited his "Dead Lion"—a wonderful study, a grand picture; yet, if I may say so, an ugly one,—a vast canvas desert, and a huge lion lying dead on the sand; nothing more! But there was another picture, by the same artist, also exhibited that year, and it is the one with which I have to do; the title, if I remember aright, was "the chance shot." It represented a hind (red deer) lying dead on a waste of snow, beautifully drawn, but a painful object to look at—there was such an appearance of agony expressed, no surrounding objects to attract the eye; a low mound, covered as with a white pall, and the dead deer at the foot of it, a spot of blood trickling from the wound staining the snow here and there: and yet it was evident that in taking the sketch, the artist had turned the body of the deer over, to show the wound; for there was the animal's tongue

(frozen I suppose) sticking upright, out of the *upper side* of its mouth. Whether this was done on purpose I am unable to say, but as a true representation of a dead deer as it fell, it was faulty in that one particular. As for the drawing, it was perfect. All sportsmen know well the appearance of a dead deer on being turned over, after lying out some time,—the staring, ruffled hair, patches here smooth, and there rough, giving a mottled aspect to the coat, caused by the inequalities or dampness of the spot on which the animal had fallen. All this was rendered to the life, if I may so express it, and the picture was a gem indeed, and greatly admired; but there the fact remained, that it had been turned over, and so in this instance I think I may safely say the deer had fallen on the side on which it was hit. I am pretty well satisfied, in my own mind, that NAT PANGLOSS is right. What he has said, however, now gives rise to another question—do wounded animals, after being hit, generally lie down on the side the ball entered? I have an idea they do, in cases where the bullet has not passed through, be it instinct that pressure of the body against the earth will staunch the blood or relieve the pain, or whatever cause, I do not pretend to decide; but I can assert from experience that in many cases where wounded animals are found dead it will also be found that the wounded side of the carcase is undermost. I raise the question,—let those who have been more observant in this matter tell us whether it be so: at any rate they will, I am sure, confirm my criticism on "the chance shot," that a dead animal's tongue is invariably found protruding from the mouth below, and not above. Bison, I believe, like the elephant, fall to the side they are hit. I remember too one instance where a cow bison had been lying down for some hours after she was hit, and when disturbed, we found she had been lying on her wounded side, bleeding internally, I fancy, as there was

only a small round patch of blood in the centre of the spot where she had couched. But why write more about a matter which, except in elephants, bison and giraffes, and such like, is unimportant? with such large creatures, however, it is as well to know their peculiarity in falling, for when as close as you can be in killing them, it would be awkward, to say the least of it, should they tumble on the shooter! and no warning cry of "stand from under!" No more my friend to-day.

I have attempted to throw together my ideas, in the shape of a draft "Game Act," as a prompter to the authorities in the land to do something in the way of protection; and to invite discussion on the subject, or rather on the proposed provisions of the Act, for the subject itself has been already repeatedly brought forward, duly weighed and considered, and the necessity for the preservation of game fully admitted. I have tried to make out the Act as simple and plain as it well can be; but, of course, in wishing to please or satisfy all, the usual result will be that every one will have something to say against it: so be it! that will be productive of good, and may help to rouse our senators, and something come of it,—my little trifle being the stepping-stone to action and eventual legislation. I leave to the proper framers of the future Act the technicalities, &c., required to make it lawful and right; I only try to exhibit what is required. The Council will decide who are the authorities to carry out the provisions and enforce the penalties. One advantage of the registry certificate of fire-arms will be the ascertaining the number of weapons in the hands of the natives generally. After the mutiny, the "Arms Act" provided for certain scrutiny in this particular, but of late years there has been much, and, to say the least, improper laxity on this important point. On these Hills the natives have a great number of arms, originally granted by Government to

protect their crops from marauding wild hog, now turned against the sambur and other game at all seasons; and they have done no end of mischief in that line. A few years ago, for the sake of a rupee or two, many a report of the whereabouts of a fine stag or fierce boar was brought in by the natives of the several villages around Ooty; now-a-days they prefer to keep the sport to themselves, all owing to their having arms. Fancy a Toda turned sportsman, and a dead shot too! I have heard of such a thing: but they have taken in these days to turbands and umbrellas, so it is not to be wondered at. Alas! for the good old times!

P. S.—I have said nothing about a tax on dogs; that rests with the Municipality, who, I think, are culpable in not having introduced the same both in Ooty and Coonoor. Each dog should be taxed at twelve annas half-yearly: two annas a month; it will be well worth collecting: for I believe you can, in Ooty, count them by hundreds. The tax is easily collected, by being included in the Schedule of the tax on horses and conveyances now levied. In the bazaar, ownership must be acknowledged, or the dog destroyed,—and a very good thing too. Now, Sir Oracle, please to lift up your voice in this matter, which I advocated long long ago. Stir up your municipal citizens and tax your dogs. Fancy Ooty a city; wha! wha! wha! what next? why, according to appearances of this present time of writing, the "Deluge."

THE PROPOSED ACT.

"Whereas, it is expedient to establish certain laws in this Madras Presidency, for the better preservation of animals and birds, coming under the designation of game as hereafter particularised, be it enacted that on and after the 31st day of March 1871, it shall not be lawful to kill, slay, destroy, or capture in any manner whatsoever, between

the aforesaid date and the 30th day of September of that and each succeeding year, any of the undermentioned animals or birds—"to wit":—

1st. OF ANIMALS.—Deer of all kinds, that is to say, the sambur, the spotted deer, the muntjac or jungle sheep, the hog-deer, the ibex, the antelope, and the neilghye; also the hare.

2nd. AND OF BIRDS.—The peafowl, the pheasant, the jungle fowl, the spur-fowl, the partridge, the Neilgherry quail, and sand-grouse, or rock pigeon. And further, it shall not be lawful to offer or expose for sale, between the dates above specified, that is to say, from the 31st of March to the 30th of September inclusive of each and every year, so long as this Act may be in force, any of the animals (or flesh thereof) or birds as above described, and the penalty for any breach of this law shall be a fine not exceeding 10 rupees for the first offence, 20 for the second and so on; but in no case to exceed the sum of Rs. 50; and the informer in each case shall receive half the fine exacted. And the fine may be coupled with confiscation of the game, animal or bird so exposed or offered for sale, alive or dead, to be disposed of as the authority before whom the case may be tried, may direct.

It being also desirable, in connection with this Act, to establish a registry of all fire-arms used for sporting purposes.

Be it further enacted that from the 1st day of January 1871, and each succeeding year, it shall not be lawful for any person, European, East Indian, or Native, to use a gun, rifle, matchlock, musket or any description of fire-arms for the purpose of killing game, without a certificate of Registry, bearing the stamp and signature of the authority nominated by the Government to issue such certificates.

The cost of the said certificate shall be Rs. 10, renewable

at the expiration of each year by endorsement on the original document or issue of a fresh one as may be required, on payment of the said sum of rupees ten for each renewal or fresh issue. The possession of a certificate being sufficient to cover any number of fire-arms the holder may own. And the penalty for any breach of this portion of this Act shall be a fine not exceeding fifty rupees, the informer being rewarded by half the fine exacted. Any repetition of the offence rendering persons so offending liable to confiscation of the fire-arms in his or their possession, in addition to fine.

But certain exceptions to the force of this Act are reasonable and necessary.

For instance, it shall be lawful for any proprietor of coffee, tea, or other plantations, or for any landholder or cultivator to kill or destroy at any season of the year, animals of the description referred to in the Act as game, when actually at the time trespassing and doing mischief to their property or crops, provided always that the flesh of such animals so killed be not exposed or offered for sale.

It shall further be lawful for persons to be in possession of fire-arms kept solely either for the purpose of self-defence, or destruction of ferocious animals and not used or lent or hired for the killing of game animals, as described in this Act; without a certificate of registry, provided that in the case of Natives the declaration to the above effect be supported by not less than two credible witnesses.

Now the objects and reasons for this Act are the saving from extermination the animals and birds enumerated in this Act, useful as food and other purposes, the destruction of which, in the absence of any protective laws, has nearly accomplished their annihilation in many parts of the country; it is therefore considered advisable to establish a

law providing fence or close months during which it shall be illegal to destroy the animals and birds in question.

It is to be understood that nothing in this Act is intended to prohibit the killing or sale of birds of the migratory order, such as water-fowl of all kinds duck, teal, snipe, woodcock, grey and rain quail, florikin and bustards, which may be killed or taken at any time during the year.

The provisions of this Act do not affect in any way the licensed dealers in fire-arms.



CHAPTER XVI.

THE TIGER.

THERE is still, it seems to me, a little explanation required regarding the tigress climbing the tree twice—whether the tree was single and quite upright, and no vantage ground for the animal to spring; in fact, whether it was a straight up-and-down for 30 feet before reaching a branch or other assistance to get to the branches. The size of the tree is mentioned, as about three feet in circumference; which simply makes it more difficult to understand, for a tree of that girth at the foot would taper up so small at 30 feet from the ground as to be scarcely stiff enough to bear the weight of the animal; and the branches could not be very thick; still I do not, for a moment, discredit the fact of the tigress being up a tree, only the account has not been given with such exactness as so remarkable a feat calls for.

I was lately out for a week, and although our party tried every likely and well-known spot for woodcock, we found none. Is it so with others? I got a fine stag while out, or more properly I should say, after my return, for the shikarrie brought in the head some days after I had wounded the animal. It was curious in one respect: after being wounded and sorely crippled in the shoulder, the stag laid up in a small sholah, not 500 yards from where first hit. He allowed us to talk close by, we being under the impression that he had gone through, and though

within a few feet of us he never moved, till the shikarrie, in trying for his track, came bang on him: the result was a hasty shot as he disappeared into the large wood close by. The effect of the last shot was to revive the deer, for on he went through the wood, and away down and "on and on till day was gone." We devoted the whole of next day to the track, and under the impression that he would not go far, confined ourselves to the sholahs round about; but our search was unsuccessful. We had then to leave, but entrusted the shikarrie to follow up, if possible, the traces or the deer, and impressed upon him the idea that struck us too late, that the stag had probably gone on to the river, some two, or nearly three miles off—and sure enough it so turned out—the stag crossed the river and fell dead close to a sholah, where the vultures soon spied him and their presence attracted the attention of the trackers and led to the recovery of the trophy, and a very handsome one it is: length of beam 36¼, and sweep 31¼, very perfect and symmetrical. How many good stags have been lost by falling dead under cover, and so escaping the keen sight of the vulture! and this is a great argument in favor of "Sight *versus* Scent," on which subject DEER STALKER so ably wrote about in your journal last year.

I observe in your last issue that the Municipal Commissioners of Ooty have wisely resolved that stray dogs shall be liable to be killed during a certain period of the year; this is a step in the right direction, but a very short step! why will they continue to be so blind to their own interests in not imposing a tax on the domestic canines,—a measure much called for, and sure to be attended with results most satisfactory to all? It will realise some revenue worth collecting, and it will soon rid the settlement of a grievous nuisance. At Madras, very little effect was ever produced by dog-killing orders issued from year to year, but when the tax was introduced, dogs disappeared and the

dog-killers' occupation was gone. I recommend a trial of a similar tax on the Hills at Ooty and Coonoor. I stated in a former communication the amount, fixing it at 12 annas half-yearly, or two annas a month for each dog. I hope you will advocate the plan; it will be one small step in the right direction for the preservation of game, as it will lead to the destruction of many of the dogs the native shikarries so constantly take out with them. If we could in addition only get the Government to declare a tax on fire-arms, like the ten-shillings license now in force at home, we should indeed gain a great point. I ask whether it might not be compassed on the Hills by a bye-law of the municipalities, sanctioned by Government? this may be worthy of the consideration of our popular Commissioner; anything that will in any way check the depredations committed by the native shikarries on these Hills, is, I trust, a praiseworthy object, and I have done my best, I flatter myself, to incite some action by those who have the power, but alas! do not seem to have the will. I hope for better things hereafter; but enough of the dogs; may the time soon come when we shall cast such physic to them that they shall not survive.

I have to thank VAGRANT for his good news *in re* the preservation of game; but I want to see an actual inauguration of authority, to establish by law real preservation of game; not a gasping effort here and there to meet the exigency so widely acknowledged to exist, but a sound, discriminate Act of the Legislative Council to be put in force, before it be too late for the desired end. The game *must* be preserved sometime or other: I say advisedly *must*, for there is no question as to the necessity—that has been proved on all sides, and now all that is required is the action on the part of Government. I have been told that there would be some check on the matter of fire-arms, introduced in the "forest act," supposed to be under

consideration of the Govenor-General; but, alas! there is still no sign! As KAYE says in his Sepoy War, the cry will, in this matter also, be "too late!" "too late!!"

VAGRANT's remarks on that case of charming the snake, were, I think, somewhat unfortunate, as he did not actually see the effect of the charming music with his own eyes. I have an instance proving exactly the reverse. In the wall of my compound, at Madras, was a large white-ants' nest, some five-feet high, with some eight or ten pinnacles, as usual, on the top and sides, some covered, some open. We knew of a snake having, on several occasions, been seen, and one day the reptile was observed entering the ants' nest. We sent for a conjuror or snake charmer, and directed him to try his art, in inducing the snake to quit his safe refuge. How the man piped and piped! but failed to make the snake dance, or even put in an appearance; and how at last he declared we had been deceived and there was no snake there, I need not dilate on. Calling for pick-axe and mamotie, horse-keepers and gardeners we set to and demolished the white-ants' nest, and in due course of time, for it was a tough job, we reached the bottommost cell, and there, coiled snugly up, lay the cobra, which, on being killed, proved to be nearly four feet long. The failure of the charmer, in this instance was complete.

Has VAGRANT ever noticed the curious and strange fact, exhibiting, in a wild animal, such extraordinary want of instinct of self-preservation, as that shown by the black monkey of the Neilgherries, ("Presbytes jubatus," or the Neilgherry Langar of Jerdon) when chased by dogs? Instead of remaining safe among the branches of the lofty trees, it is constantly in the habit, when so pursued by dogs, of descending from the trees, breaking away from the sholah, crossing open grounds and thus falling an easy victim to its ruthless enemies, or, as often is the case, rushing

about the wood on the ground, and so also being quite at the mercy of the dogs. This has occurred so often, and so many of these monkies have been killed in this manner, so strange when we come to think of it, that it appears quite unaccountable, the natural supposition being that the animal's instinct would prompt him to the refuge of the tree to which he clings on most occasions and to which other varieties of the monkey tribe invariably resort for protection. It may be that the barking of the dogs distract the poor creature and so bewilder it; this might apply to the younger and inexperienced, but I have seen old and full grown ones behave exactly in the same way, and forfeit their lives—why is it? Do the wild dogs know of the peculiarity, and so obtain delicious monkey; but then the wild dog does not bark or yell like a pack of greedy spaniels, greyhounds, and such like, that is to say, we do not know that he does; what then causes this aberration of instinct in these monkies; perhaps, VAGRANT can tell us! Jerdon does not allude to this peculiarity.

The past season has proved a better one for wood-cock, and other migratory birds, than was anticipated: some good bags have been made. Eleven wood-cock, in one day, within reach of Ooty, is the best I have heard of. It would be interesting if some of our sportsmen would give us the yearly bags made, say for the last seven years. Some folk have an idea that the birds yearly decrease: I see no grounds for it, for though scarcer than usual this year at the commencement of the season, they have been over numerous at the close of it. Some suppose the migration of these birds to take place not at once, but at intervals; the early birds in September and October, the late in November and December. This is very doubtful; it is more likely that the birds arrive all or almost all at once, but according to the state of the feeding grounds are met with or not early or late. In their usual resorts in

the Mediterranean Islands, the quail and wood-cock come in shoals, the migration apparently taking place all at once, and as the departure of the migratory birds on these Hills can, as far as our observations extend, almost be calculated to a day, according to the state of the moon, in this present month March may we not reasonably assert that their departure also from whence they come, wherever that may be, is in the same way simultaneous and immediate, the intervals of the flight being dependent only on the greater distance to be travelled—that it is so with the snipe, there can be very little doubt, then why not with the wood-cock ?

Enough for this once : I have been silent for sometime but truly, I have found little food for my pen, and I cannot go on everlastingly on the dried-up old bone "the Preservation of Game."

CHAPTER XVII.

GAME LAWS.

IN the *Field* newspaper, dated, the 25th February, 1871, are two leaders, to one of which I would ask attention of your readers generally, and of sportsmen and employers of shikarries in particular, and to the other that of our noble Baron, the Governor. The first of these articles does not actually apply to the circumstances of the Neilgherries just at present, as it refers to the preservation of fish in Welsh waters, but the tenor of the remarks are so strongly in support of the object so many have in view, viz., the preservation of game on these Hills, and indeed generally in India, that I cannot do better than extract them, though I must confess, the subject has already been nearly written thread-bare.

"In no part of the kingdom has there existed so much difficulty in enforcing the fishery laws as in Wales, for the lower classes of the population are not only engrained poachers and fish destroyers, but are naturally turbulent when they come in contact with law. But what, we may ask, were these laws passed for? The ground upon which they engaged the attention of Parliament was not the private benefit of any one, but that the food of the people might be increased. Various measures have accordingly been promulgated, all keeping that point in view. The poacher who knocks a hare or pheasant on the head in another person's covert commits an offence against the law,

but the poacher who stabs a female fish on the spawning bed commits an offence not only against law, but against the public. It may be only an isolated case, but he is as much a destroyer of the public food as an insensate rick-burner is, and beyond this again *he commits an offence against nature.* We do not kill the calving cow nor the lambing sheep; there is no other animal in creation *which we do not respect in the labours of parturition.* Nature bids its creatures to increase and multiply, and the man who raises his hand against this ordinance in its supremest phase is *worse* than a *criminal—he is a Beast.*"

(The italics are mine). Now, how applicable is all the above to the practice pursued on these Hills, because the Government will not come forward, and establish a law? All the year round, in season or out of season, do men persecute the game, and kill, without discrimination, all and every kind that comes within the range of their weapons; and those who employ shikarries to commit these foul deeds, pay no heed to the fact that it is the breeding season. Now, at this present writing, the game birds on these hills are breeding; some of them have their families around them, and some soon will have: ought we not then, in every way, to do our best to spare and save them *now*, and not bring ourselves under the strong animadversion used in the *Field*, to wit that we are worse than *criminals*—we are *beasts?* Is it then too much to ask sportsmen to refrain from slaughtering the innocent birdies, and to beg that shikarries may, be instructed not to molest the feathered game till after the monsoon, for, if the parent bird is killed, the whole brood will be lost? Why the Government hesitates to put in force a law based on the law of nature, is beyond my comprehension; and this leads me to the second article in the *Field*, from which I will extract a portion, if not the whole, for the edification of our Governor and Council.

"There are a certain set of politicians in the House of Commons and elsewhere, who are in the habit of holding up all American institutions as far superior to our own. To these gentlemen we may commend the fact that almost every State has its restrictive game law, and that these laws, in place of being relaxed, are constantly being made more stringent, and better calculated to encourage the multiplication of game birds and wild animals used for food. Ohio has just amended her game law, and by a resolution of the House enacted that it is unlawful to kill, or even pursue on the public Commons or Highways, or on the premises of another person, any of the smaller singing or insect-eating birds, or for any one, under any circumstances, to kill quail, partridge, grouse or wild turkeys, between the 1st of January, and 1st of October, or to kill prairie chicken or pinnated grouse between 1st February and August 15th."

And so it goes on, and the *Field* quotes the exact words of the enactment, under the impression that it could hardly be expected the intelligent opponent of all game laws would believe that a purely democratic Government *could so far forget itself;* and concludes with the following words:—

"Our American cousins are by no means so verdant as their injudicious friends on this side the Atlantic would have us imagine. When they establish a magnificent central park, they do not allow it to be devoted to rowdy meetings or allow the railings to be pulled down by the supporters of the President's Government; but they pass stringent laws for the purpose of retaining it for its proper object, viz., the healthful recreation of the people. Nor are they so narrow-minded or bigoted as not be able to see that game, like rabbits in England, forms a very important item in the animal food of the people, and is therefore

worthy of protection even on the narrowest economical grounds."

The above appears specially applicable to the measure I have so often and so urgently advocated, viz.: the establishing a game law in India, to protect animals and birds during the breeding season, and which I still maintain, involves little more than the determining the "Fence months" and the imposition of fines and taxes on weapons and dogs. I ask you, friend Editor, whether our local Government is not very much in the same position as any of the States of America? they have their Senate House and their Deputy Governor, or whatever he may be styled. We have our Legislative Council and our Governor; is there any difficulty in following the good example set by the state of Ohio in the matter of game laws, or are we to continue the imbecile, and insane policy of letting *well* alone, till it becomes an evil unremediable? This is my last howl on behalf of the game of India. I am tired of the subject, and I feel sure your readers are so likewise, but I think I may say that for my part, I have done my best for the "Preservation of Game."

A correspondent, I see in your last issue, asks a question about the size of cobras, and mentions having killed one ten feet and ten inches long. The largest I have ever seen was one I killed at the foot of the Pulney Hills; it was very dark-colored, but had the hood and spectacles strongly developed. I cannot give its exact length, but a very near approach to it. When I held it up by the tip of the tail as high as I could stretch my arm above my head, that of the snake was not clear off the ground, and which I calculated to be about 86 inches, as I stand over six feet. I have never met with a cobra of that size since, but have killed many a little over six feet. Mr. Gillespie does not say whether the hood and spectacles of the snake he killed

were present. The natives often declare a snake to be a cobra when these distinguishing marks are absent under the idea that the female cobra is without them—this is an error—both sexes are hooded. I remember at Quilon a cobra being killed in a godown, where some hens were sitting on turkey's eggs; one had just hatched and the cobra took three young turkeys, and swallowed a couple of eggs besides: this was a thick dark-colored snake about five feet long. With reference to your note on Mr. Gillespie's letter, is the *Hamadryad*, or hill cobra, a hooded one? I presume it is, as you call it, a cobra, but I have no book on snakes to refer to.

Enough I think for this once. Only one word more for the hapless game:—Why does not the Press in India take up the question of preservation, and *force* it on the Government? with the exception of yourself, the *Pioneer* and a mild notice by some other paper,—I forget which,—the subject has not been brought forward as its acknowledged importance demands, and I fear greatly never will be till we get a Governor who can appreciate sport in its true sense. But O, Lord Mayo! why, my Lord, art thou deaf to a subject in which, from all I hear, thy soul delights?



CHAPTER XVIII.

SHOOTING IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

THE accompanying sketches of "Shooting" and "Fishing in South Australia," were written some years ago, but have only lately come into my possession; and thinking they may be interesting to your readers in general, I send them for publication in the *S. I. O.* You will observe, in the article on "Shooting," that in those days "Preservation of Game" was as little thought of in the Colonies as in India, and the result has been much the same: the necessity for the introduction of Game Laws being universally acknowledged; but, alas! as far as India is concerned, the Government still makes no sign, and the relentless destroyers (both European and Native shikarries,) remain rampant in the land, caring not for times or seasons, so that they can but fill the game-bag. "Fie on ye!" "Fie on ye!"

John Bull naturally belongs to the sporting portion of the human family. He is, or at least once was, fond of hunting, fishing, and shooting: I say once was, because these railways are spoiling all the good old pastimes, by cutting up the country and filling John's honest old noddle with mercantile schemes, turning his thoughts from foxes, hares, and pheasants, to tariff bills and free trade; shutting them to the view hallo, and opening them to the engine's scream. But, although this reform is going on to the north of the equator, let us be thankful that some suckers

of the parent tree have been planted in the southern hemisphere; and, whilst the old stem is being lopped and fashioned into the shape of the times, these are allowed to flourish in their natural state. On introducing the subject of shooting in South Australia, I must tell my English reader that we do not, at this end of the globe, participate in the many advantages the old countries enjoy in this age of science, and, being somewhat out of the road, the march of improvement has not yet reached our shores, consequently the South Australian fowler is a rude barbarian, who puts his trust in Joe Manton, breeds pointers, and is ignorant of the delights of the *battue*.

We have several kinds of quail in all parts of Australia—on the open plains, in the dense scrub, on the arid sands, and in the swampy marshes; and, as we have no game laws, and do not recognise any rules or regulations with regard to shooting, we pursue our sports at all seasons of the year, and slaughter all descriptions of birds whenever it is most convenient. This practice has its disadvantages, and doubtless the increase of game is considerably lessened by the custom of shooting the hen birds during the time of incubation; but then, after all, it is but fair play to your pointer that, when he finds the birds for his master, he should, at least, have the 'eggs' for himself; and if you have spoilt the hatching, you have, at all events, provided your dog with an omelet; and so it proves that whatever is, is right; and, consoling ourselves with this aphorism, we go on shooting hatching hens, and feeding epicurean pointers, and I dare say shall do so to the end of the chapter. Snipe occasionally visit us, and are found in the swampy flats during the period of their short sojourn in great numbers; they are larger than the English snipe, but otherwise very much resemble it, having the same tantalizing zigzag flight, requiring just as much judgment in taking aim at them, and being just as nice on the table

as their European brothers. The large black-headed bustard (*otis*), or, as it is here called, the 'native turkey,' inhabits the open country. It is a fine bird, but being very shy, is of course approached with difficulty; but then, when shot, it quite fills the game bag, and therefore rewards the fowler for all his trouble. Its flesh is delicious and one packed up and sent as present to a friend is, I believe, considered all over the colony as a very pretty compliment; and a person cultivating the habit of paying delicate attentions to his acquaintances in this way becomes very highly esteemed. There is a smaller bustard found here, called by Gould the 'wanderer.' This kind is about the size of the quail, and is not much prized, as it affords but little sport in the field, and bears no comparison to his big relative in the pleasant flavor of his flesh when brought to table and so is hardly fit to eat, to shoot, or to give away. Dotterel are found in places. Those that I have met with have been so innocent of the world's wiles, or so ignorant of man's murdering propensity, that they have always fallen an easy prey to me; but I cannot say as much for the brown plover. This is a most wary gentleman, never of his own accord coming within range of the gun; and if by accident he gets a charge of shot in his body, he makes the best of it, and flies away to fall down and die, if possible, out of sight; and yet there is an honorable trait in the character of this bird which must not be passed over in silence, especially as it is in direct variance with his natural cautious disposition. It is this:—He is most devotedly attached to his species; and should one out of a flock be winged, and fall alive into the fowler's hands, he soon draws his gallant brethren around him by his cries, and they, heedless of danger, swoop down to their poor wounded relative, and try to entice him away. No O'Sullivan or O'Anything at Donnybrook Fair ever stood up for the 'ould ancient breed' more faithfully than these

poor birds stand up for one another; and the devil take the man who will shoot them when they are displaying such a noble, fearless, and disinterested attachment. We have three kinds of pigeon, besides swarms of parrots and cockatoos, inhabiting our woods; so that any Englishman, with the bump of destructiveness tolerably developed, may blaze away to his heart's content in the forests or on the plains of Australia; and, if not satisfied with that sort of sport, he will find on the rivers and lakes black-swan, pelican, geese, cereopsis, black duck, widgeon, teal, wood-cock, *cum multis*, &c., in countless millions; so that, if his love of eating is at all equal to his love of sport, and he indulges both to excess, he will have his time and digestion pretty well occupied.

The Murray River is the grand depôt for all kinds of game. Every variety of water-fowl dwell on its waters, or frequent the back reaches, swamps, and creeks that take their origin from this stream: the sand hills and pine forests that border its waters abound in quail, pigeon, turkey, plover, &c., and where the dense scrub spreads its almost impenetrable jungle, the 'merak,' or turkey pheasant, is found. This is a bird about the size of a barndoor fowl, or perhaps larger; in shape it somewhat resembles a hen-pheasant; is of a grey colour, with the feathers barred with black. This bird is very shy, very swift of foot, and exceedingly difficult to 'flush;' but when shot, plucked, and ——; but I will say nothing about 'bread-sauce' and 'game flavor,' or my reader will fancy me a regular glutton, whereas the contrary is the case; for, as Sam Weller says, 'I can eat my biled mutton without capers, and I don't care for horse-raddish when I can get beef.' And now, after having given a slight catalogue of the birds we consider game (barring the parrots and cockatoos) in Australia, I will relate the adventures of a day's shooting in the vicinity of the River Murray.

Early one morning in the month of January, my friend M——, two black fellows, and myself, left Mr. E. J. Eyre's station, Moorundee, in a boat, and proceeded down the River. The day was just breaking as we pushed out into the stream. Now, I am not going to give a poetical description of the dawning of the day; but, as I am not what is generally considered an early riser, I cannot help saying that it was something very new to me to witness the landscape step forth from the gloom of night into new-born day, and to hear the voices of many birds ringing through the woods, and greeting the sun as he rose into a cloudless sky. I am a great advocate for lying in bed of a morning. It is the time for contemplation; the mind is refreshed by sleep, the duties of the day have not been entered upon, and the thoughts unruffled can dwell on the happy past, or form plans for the future. It is in bed, in the morning, that you can build your best castles in the air. Once up, and the charm is o'er. Nevertheless, it is worth while rising early to take boat on the River Murray, and see the sun's beams rush over the landscape in a flood of light, and startle the drowsy world into life again. Notwithstanding my philosophical temperament, I was betrayed into exclamations of delight at the prospect; to my friend M——, however, it was no unusual sight. He stoically lit his pipe, and undertook the management of the boat; and, as for the black rascals, they did not care a pin's head for the beauties of the 'opening morn,' and, I believe, heartily despised me for getting into extravagant ecstacies about such an everyday-occurrence as the sun's rising. We pulled down with the current for some distance, and even in spite of the apathy of my companions, I could not help constantly breaking forth into rapturous exclamations, as the broad reaches of the River opened to our view, for which my friend M—— considered me a confounded bore, and I more than half suspect he jabbered as much to the

black-fellows in their abominable jargon. We came, at length, to a landing-place, and, running the boat stem on to a shelving bank, we stepped on shore, and proceeded at once to a large swamp extending for some distance to low sandy hills, covered with scrub and stunted trees. High reeds grew all over it, except where here and there an opening occurred. In these places all kinds of water-fowl crowded together on the water. Our black fellows soon produced two bark canoes, which they dragged out from their places of concealment. These frailest of boats were formed of the bark of the gum-tree, which had been stripped from the trunk and flattened out. A dab of mud on the stern answered all the purposes of caulking, carving, and gilding, and the prow being bent up did for figure-head, cutwater, &c. M——took a black fellow in his canoe, and, launching forth into the reeds, was soon out of sight, leaving me to the tender mercies of my sable Charon. He squatted himself in the canoe, directed me to stand in the middle of it, and then 'punted' it along with his spear. No sooner were we in the reeds, than the ducks rose around us in all directions, making so much noise in their ascent, that I was quite bewildered, and could not for the life of me, compose my fluttered spirits sufficiently to bring my gun to my shoulder, for which unphilosophical conduct my sooty friend held me in the most supreme contempt. Passing through the reeds, and entering on an open piece of water, a cloud of game rose with a whirr and flutter that quite startled me, and I fired off both barrels at a venture: heaven only knows where the shot went, but not a single bird fell. My mortification was not lessened by my savage companion setting up a derisive laugh, and eyeing me with an expression of disgust, that made the ugly face quite hideous. From this time forth he set me down as a regular muff, and gave up all hope of my success in shooting. Having now driven all the ducks away,

we paddled on in peace for some time, and fortunately I collected my scattered senses; and, when we 'flushed' a solitary bird, I brought him down in a style that would have delighted the heart of Colonel Hawker. Finding single birds occasionally, I acquitted myself tolerably, and had, in a short time, a fair show of game in the canoe. My boatman now thought me worthy of a little consideration, and began to look about him. His quick practised eye could discover ducks in the reeds long before my dull civilised vision would detect them; and when he caught sight of a flock of teal, widgeon, or duck, he would try to direct my attention to them by making a clucking noise: and while I was straining my eyeballs to find out where they were, I would generally hear them rise behind my back. This occurred so often, that I verily believed my savage at last thought me a born idiot, and an act of mine very soon confirmed him in this opinion. Being mutually dissatisfied with each other, of course we did not get on very well. I was annoyed and irritated at the dulness of my eyes, and his practice of clucking most perseveringly when his quick sight gave him the advantage over me, by no means mended the matter. This I tried to put a stop to; but not knowing his abominable jargon, I could not, in polite terms, request him to hold his jaw, and so was obliged to have recourse to signs and muttered execrations, which he totally disregarded. At length, in the fulness of my rage, I gave the frail canoe a blow with the butt of my gun, when, lo! it split asunder, and left us floundering in the water, with all my dead birds floating around us. Fortunately, the lagoon here was very shallow; so, saving a ducking, I did not sustain any other damage than having a fine red-hot passion very suddenly cooled. Having gathered together our floating ducks, and scrambled as we best could out of the morass, we gave up duck-shooting for the day; but my friend M——,

unaware of our disaster, was still blazing away in the forest of reeds, without the thought of returning to Moorundee before night entering his brain; so I was obliged to seek some pleasant pastime, and wandered in the scrubby bushes, on the sandhills, in search of any unfortunate creature with wings that would afford me a shot. It was not long before two pretty little crested pigeons fluttered out of a polyganumbush. I fired, and broke the wing of the cock bird. He fell; but soon gaining his legs, ran under the bushes to escape being caught, all the time uttering a low plaintive note, which was answered by his little wife, who would not desert him in his distress, but kept hovering from bush to bush, undaunted by our presence. My blackfellow, with the inhumanity of a fiend, persuaded me to shoot her; and I, like an unfeeling beast, did so, and then despatched her wounded lover. All vain regrets are useless now, but my conscience has so long reproached me for the deed, that I have determined to publish it. After this heartless murder, I was pushing my way through the scrub, when a brace of quail rose up, out of range; however, marking them down, I advanced towards them, and when near the spot where they alighted, I sent my native friend forward to 'flush' them. He passed on too far, and they rose immediately behind his back. The noise they made when taking wing attracted his attention, and, turning quickly round, he was just in time to receive a whole charge of excellent No. 8 shot in his ill-favoured countenance. He staggered, and fell; and I was very much afraid of having the unenviable honour of numbering him with the rest of the game killed by me that day. On going up to him, I was horrified at seeing his face bathed in blood. Luckily he was not dead; and after washing his ugly mug, I found his countenance was not much spoiled, as the rascal had been dreadfully pitted

with the small-pox, so the matter turned out a mere trifle after all.

This little adventure over, I began to feel hungry, and my heart yearned towards the hamper in the boat; but a sense of honour debarred me from touching aught in it until my friend M—— made his appearance. This he soon did; and we proceeded to the river-side, and took lunch. M—— had been more successful in the duck line than myself. My shooting had been of a more varied character than his, but he had bagged a greater number of birds; in fact, he was a much better shot than I was. Of course I was obliged to relate my recent misfortune of having accidently peppered the aborigine, when, to my utter astonishment, M—— immediately abused him for getting in the way of my gun; and, on my expostulating with him for thus treating an injured man, he quietly told me that, if he did not do so, the ignorant brute would consider me in the wrong—a presumptuous notion he did not wish him to entertain; so the poor fellow got a good scolding, and thus the matter dropped. Before luncheon was over, we were joined by many natives, who were about to proceed to the lagoon to catch duck with nets. Wishing to witness this method of procuring wild-fowl, and persuading M—— to accompany me, we joined the wild sportsmen, and directed our steps to the head of the lagoon, where it narrowed into a small creek, on each side of which grew tall gumtrees. On arriving at this point, the blacks suspended a very large net on two trees that drew near the narrowest part of the lagoon. The corners of the net were not fastened to the boughs of the trees, but held in the hands of two natives stationed in the branches, and concealed among them. The other blacks now separated, and passed down on each side of the lagoon, one, however, remaining hid in the reeds near the net. The others arriving at the end of the lagoon, they commenced driving

the wild-fowl up towards the creek; and, as flocks of them came near the net, the man hiding in the reeds threw up a piece of bark into the air high above them, at the same time imitating the cry of the hawk. The ducks, deceived by this, swooped down to avoid it, and, changing their course, were instantly in the meshes of the net, which the two natives in the trees immediately let fall, covering with it a great number of birds. Then commenced a wholesale slaughter of the captured victims. Being just then in a moralising vein, I said to myself, 'How often are we, like these poor ducks, frightened from our path by imaginary evils, and driven unconsciously into real danger!' There was a wildness about the scenery of this land of lagoons, swamps, and morasses, that certainly had its charm; and yet there was no particular feature in the landscape that gave to it its character—low sandhills, reedy marshes, thick jungle, and belts of forest, formed the aspect of the country in all directions; but there was an untrimmed roughness about the scrub, a wild luxuriance about the marshes, and a solemn grandeur about the forest, that insensibly influenced the mind. The total absence of all signs of civilisation left on the face of nature that wild and solitary expression which so charms the eyes of those accustomed to always meet man's handiwork in everything around them.

Having smashed my canoe, pinked my companion, and failed to shine as a crack shot, I began to feel the conceit somewhat taken out of me, and thought it high time to go home; but M——, who was a perfect glutton for sport would not hear of any such proposal, so we went to some snipe ground. The birds, however, were not plentiful—a circumstance, I in secret rejoiced at, as my few attempts to bring down those that rose near me were total failures. Fortunately, I accidentally shot one just in time to save my credit. As it was now getting late, we turned our

steps towards the boat; and I had the satisfaction of escaping from the fangs of a very venomous snake, which I inadvertently stepped on. On arriving at the boat, I felt rather delighted than otherwise that my day's shooting was drawing to its close. Our two blacks also seemed pretty well tired of the sport. My particular sable friend's face had swollen considerably, and his countenance was much improved thereby, for all the harsh lines that gave an ill-natured expression to it were now beautifully blended in the cherub-like expansion of his cheeks, and the fellow actually looked good-tempered and jolly; but this appearance proved deceitful; he was cross-grained, crabbed, and obstinate, and, alas! would not pull a stroke. I tried all my blandishments on him in vain; M——, too, cursed him in every language he was master of without effect: so I was obliged to terminate my day's pleasure with a good long spell at the oar—an occupation that has always been detestable to me.

Thus ended my day's shooting on the Murray. During my tedious and laborious pull up the river, I had ample time to calculate upon the change that the march of improvement would effect on the aspect of the country in a few years; and notwithstanding my utilitarian principles, it grieved me to know that the time was fast approaching when the dark lords of the forest and river would have to leave their domains to the usurping white man; when the wild-fowl would no longer tenant their accustomed haunts; when commerce and civilization would trim and fashion the fair face of nature, so as to reduce its wild luxuriance into their own useful but formal features; and I could not suppress a sigh when I thought of the havoc the axe and the plough would make in every place that now charmed me so much with its simple and solitary grandeur; but, nevertheless, in spite of my sentimentality, Australia will 'advance;' and, although old colonists will feel sad at

finding that at every step she takes she must trample on and deface spots that are endeared to us by old associations, yet we must reflect that rising generations will hereafter benefit by the ample field that will be laid open to the industrious emigrants who must leave the densely populated portions of the globe to erect an empire in this southern land; and somewhat consoled by this moral conclusion, as the boat grounded on the bank near my friend's house with a virtuous flourish, I tossed in my oar, and mentally exclaimed— 'May success and prosperity attend on South Australia!' with which sentiment I close this sketch.

CHAPTER XIX.

FISHING IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

NOTWITHSTANDING the multitude of fish that swarm in the principal rivers of Australia, fishing has not yet become a popular amusement with the settlers, probably because they cannot be considered as a class of persons who seek much for what Europeans call amusement, money-making being the aim of their existence, and their principal recreation the simple and innocent one of 'tobacco smoking.' Any pursuit that does not include one of these objects has but little interest for the Australian. For my own part, as an Australian, I must claim an exception from this rule. I never could smoke with any sort of enjoyment, nor could I by any possibility make money. My object through life has been to search in an indolent sort of way for its amusements, and being too blind to look at the dark side of anything, I have managed somehow or other to scramble through a fair portion of trouble without being much the worse for it. Whenever I could command the use of a horse, a gun, or a fishing-rod, the sports of the field, or rather I should here say the sports of the forest and wilderness, were open to me, and I have followed them eagerly.

I.—THE MURRAY RIVER.

The Murray River takes its rise in the Australian Alps or snowy mountains, a range of heights running in a northerly and southerly direction on the eastern side of the

island of Australia, terminating to the southward somewhere about Ram Head, and extending to the northward nearly as far as Moreton Bay. Rising in these mountains, the River Murray flows to the westward and northward, receiving the waters of the Goulburn, the Murrumbidgee, the Darling, and several smaller streams, until at about 140 degrees longitude it suddenly turns to the southward, and after flowing in this direction about 160 miles, empties itself into Lake Victoria. This river drains the whole of the country between the snowy mountains and Spencer's Gulf, and forms a principal feature of the land. It is broad and deep, measuring 200 yards or more across, and about 40 feet in depth; varying, of course, in different places. Its scenery is singular. To the northward, its banks are clothed with large gum-trees and underwood of the tea-tree, and a variety of handsome shrubs; but as it nears Lake Victoria, and rounds the great bend, where it directs its course nearly due south, fossil cliffs and reedy flats bound its waters. It abounds in fish of several sorts, from the fine firm cod to the dry *toorroo*, or black perch, all of which afford good sport to the Australian angler.

Australian fishing as a science, is as yet in its infancy; the fish too, are as innocent as babes, easily tempted with any kind of bait, and ignorant of the artificial fly, led to their destruction by raw pork or beef, or the tail of a small crayfish that inhabits these waters; not believing in the existence of a hook even when it protrudes ostentatiously from the bait, but placing implicit faith in tempting food and man's integrity. The cod varies in weight from one pound to eighty. A fish of the latter weight could hardly be expected to rise to fly, nor could he well be 'landed' by a 'single gut,' or silk or hair line, however expertly 'played' with. When the object therefore is to hook an eighty pound cod-fish, we resort to measures so

simple, rude, and artless, that I really blush to record them.

A night line of half-inch rope is procured, and attached to it is a hook of about the same thickness, baited with a tolerably sized piece of raw flesh. No foolish anxiety is displayed in hiding the hook in the meat, the fish in this part of the globle being, as I have already said, unsuspicious and confiding in their natures. This line is then tied to a log or dead tree, on the bank of the river, and the hook, weighted, is thrown into the stream. There it is left, and the easy angler goes to bed with the firm belief that a large fish will be dangling at the end of his line in the morning. He is seldom disappointed; but this, as actors say, is quite the 'heavy business,' requiring little skill or study, and falling generally to the lot of the unambitious *pot* sportsmen, who care more for the eating their fish than for catching it.

Those who follow the higher and more scientific line of business, take rod and line, and getting into a boat, take a station in some part of the river where the eddy meets the current at a sudden sinuosity of the stream. Baiting with the tail of a crayfish, they cast their lines, fishing as it is termed, 'deep,' and in a short time a fish is sure to be hooked. When this happens, the best way to play him would be up the stream, or, if he turns down the current, or let him go with a tight line, keeping the strain steady, until he gradually becomes exhausted. I say these methods might be the best, but the South Australian, putting his trust in a thick line and strong rod, pulls his fish into the boat without trifling with him at all.

There are four kinds of fish that can be taken by the rod and line, the cod, the pulyee, the coluboo (carp), and the toorroo, or black perch. They generally run from five to fifteen pounds' weight, are all well flavoured, especially

the cod, and will reward the angler at dinner time for his exertions.

My first day's fishing on the Murray may perhaps afford a good sample of the style of sport to be expected on this river. When my friend Mr. E. J. Eyre was Resident Magistrate on the Murray River, I used occasionally to visit him at his station, Moorundee, situated on the west bank of the river in the midst of a delightful wilderness of game, a paradise for a sportsman; my visit was generally limited to a week, and as my object was sport, no time was lost in pursuing it. The blackfellows, over whom my friend exercised unlimited sway, were famous auxiliaries, and entered enthusiastically into all sorts of schemes for pursuing our game, either in shooting, hunting, or fishing. In fact, the natives of Australia are certainly of the genus 'sportsman,' and often amused me by the excitement they displayed when I was out shooting or fishing with them, if, as was frequently the case, they discovered a flock of ducks or geese among the reeds sooner than I did.

Early one morning a young friend of mine, with two blackfellows and my myself, embarked in a small boat which we stored with crayfish for bait, and provender for luncheon, and pulled down the river to a favourable spot for fishing. The scenery was delightful and varied; long reedy swamps tended to wooded embankments, from which occasionally arose the red fossil cliffs, and at times cliffs, from one hundred to one hundred and fifty feet high, would shoot abruptly from the water, their sides perforated with coves, and covered with owls, cormorants, crows, and hawks. The birds were basking in the sunshine, and seemingly enjoying the greatest possible pleasure with the least possible exertion. Now and then a native dog's head would peer out, or an antipodean fox would be seen

sneaking at the foot of the bank. Here and there, as we passed a swamp, the reeds would be agitated by something approaching the water, and as they opened, a black man or woman, entirely in Nature's garb, would salute us.

The day was fine, as most days are in Australia, especially during the month of February. It was also quite calm, and consequently broiling hot, but without being oppressively so, for the heat here has not the effect of completely prostrating man's energy, for which the heat of India is so celebrated: our black companions quite revelled in it—the hotter the sun's beams became, the higher their spirits rose. As a protection against the sun, they had greased themselves well with some naturally scented pomatum, the odour of which gave a 'gamey' flavour to the air. I however, could have dispensed with it, and found refuge in the clouds of smoke that issued from M——'s pipe.

As we passed the lagoons, we beheld their shallow waters covered with game—the pelican, the swan, goose, duck, teal, widgeon, and other aquatic birds quite swarmed on them; numerous hawks hovered overhead; high up was the Australian eagle; and near the water the fish-hawk flapped his heavy wings. As we passed some dead trees near the bank we saw the blue cranes watching for their prey from the branches: while the nankeen birds gathered in flocks on the high boughs; and brilliantly coloured parroquets swept by us with shrill shrieks.

Having arrived at a part of the stream favourable for sport, we commenced pulling off the tails of the unhappy crayfish and baiting our hooks with them. In a very short time we had eight-and-forty toorroo in the boat. This fish, when caught, makes a singular humming noise, in consequence of which, I fancy, the natives have given it the name of toorroo, as that word somewhat resembles

the sound. For a time our success left us, and we were tantalised with a succession of nibbles which brought us nothing but disappointment and sour temper, and when I surveyed the fish we had caught, I was dissatisfied with their size, the largest not exceeding two pounds in weight.

Feeling a soul above this sort of sport, I cast my line further from the bank, and found a heavy fish immediately hooked. My delight was soon somewhat abated by fears for my friend's line and rod. Both appeared too frail to contend with the lively fish on the hook. However, cheered by the blackfellows, who were in ecstacies, I held on, and soon saw rise to the surface a fine spotted 'pulyee.' How he did flounder and splash about! and how I, abandoning all scruples of conscience of injuring my friend's tackle, did pull away at him, until he lay gasping at the bottom of the boat! He weighed rather more than ten pounds. The pulyee is a singular kind of fish (of course the name I give is the native one), in form it differs from all other fish I have seen; its body is deep and flat, somewhat wedge-shaped towards the tail; its dorsal fin extends in an uninterrupted line to the vent, forming the tail; it is spotted and scaleless; and from its upper lip fleshy protuberances hang down, similar to those of the barbel. To some tastes it is very delicious eating; to me it appears too rich, but as I am of a bilious temperament and capricious in my tastes, my opinion must not influence the gastronomist.

Our success now returned to us, and we soon caught many large fish, both cod and pulyee, until again fortune and the fish left us; and after some time, our patience went too. So we pulled to land, took up our guns, and went a short distance into the wood to shoot some crested pigeons. It was now nearly sunset, and about this time these little birds come down to the river to drink, and then hurry back

to their woodland haunts. They are very swift on the wing, passing so rapidly by you, that it requires a quick shot to bring them down. However, they give warning of their approach by the whistling sound made by their wings, so that if the fowler tarries not in his aim, and holds his gun straight, he may bring down his bird without being a very first-rate shot. M—— bagged some, I also was fortunate, and we soon returned to the boat.

We had now to pull up against the current, but this did not disturb M—— or myself, for the blacks did the pulling, and we were philosophers enough not to feel the troubles of others. Our sable boatmen set to work with vigour for a time, but being naturally given to laziness, they soon slackened their exertions, and began pulling with variations. They caught crabs, pulled out of time, fell backwards, and did as much to retard our progress as to forward it. All this time they kept up an abusive conversation with each other. Their terms of abuse were characteristic and amusing. When one made some mistake, the other would tell him he had thin arms, narrow chest, and weak legs. He would retort, boast of his strength and soon have an opportunity of reproaching his companion—with this savage 'chaffing' and bad pulling we were progressing slowly. For my own part, being of an indolent disposition, and much averse to all bodily exertion, I quite sympathised with my crew, but my friend M——, who spoke their language fluently, and who is somewhat choleric in his disposition, burst out into a torrent of abuse, threatening them with all sorts of disasters if our dinner was kept waiting, a calamity to which I had long before resigned myself. These uncivilised wild men of the woods, however, did not comprehend the sad misfortune of over-roasted meat and cold vegetables, and were stoically indifferent to a faded appetite. They pulled in spite of M——'s abuse, which he accompanied with

violent gesticulation, worse and worse, so that the prospect of even a cold dinner was fast vanishing from my mind.

At length we arrived opposite an avenue of trees, among which were encamped four tribes of natives, who were busy quarrelling with each other, and a precious din they were making. The men were roaring out their passionate orations, and the women were screaming forth invectives. My irritable friend M——, in a most authoritative tone, bellowed out to them, and, gaining their attention, commenced a conversation, which, I fear, was not governed by the strict rules of polite society in the mildest portions of it, he (using the natives' idiom) desired the whole host of them to go and 'eat mud,' recommending such an occupation as a better way of employing their time than squabbling when they ought to be asleep. He questioned their courage, and tauntingly told them (that is, the men) he feared he was addressing a mob of foolish, squalling, garrulous women. The replies he heard to this speech were not very complimentary to him, if one may judge from his conduct; for, seizing his gun, and sputtering forth an oath or two in good down-right English, he desired our black boatman, who had listened to this dialogue in a state of high glee, to pull to the bank, and, as soon as the stem touched the reeds, he in a redhot fury jumped on land.

I followed him, and we were soon in the midst of a multitude of savages, whose countenances, lit up by their fires, displayed a host of evil and savage passions. I thought of Captain Cook's fate, and felt but insecure in the midst of these wild devils. They were all armed with spears, which they flourished above their heads, while they uttered most dreadful yells, and threw their bodies into most grotesque attitudes. Grimace and gesticulation

go a long way in the savage's idea of a warrior. Long harangues, too, are a necessary part of their combats, which, of course, is an evidence of their degraded state; for in civilized society, when a quarrel ensues, the only gesticulation that prefaces it is the necessary one accompanying the act of pulling a man's nose, and the only grimace is that which is made when the feature before mentioned is being pulled. As for long harangues, the short, laconic, little ceremonious notes appointing the place, the hour, and the weapons, can hardly come under the denomination of long harangues. So let us be proud of civilization.

If I dreaded a similar fate to that of Captain Cook, my friend M—— had no such apprehensions, for he at once poured forth upon them such a torrent of abuse, and spat out his anger with such vehemence, that in a short time he completely talked the whole tribes down. He told me afterwards that he had used nothing but insulting epithets. After this, Captain Warner may do what he likes with his secret, for he could not more effectually 'blow up' a town or an army, and thus put an end to warfare, than my friend 'blew up' these blacks and restored tranquillity. When a new war breaks out, instead of sending our regiments into the field well supplied with powder and ball, we had better fill each soldier's mind with 'chaff.'

Tranquillity being restored, we returned to the boat, and arrived at Moorundee in time to find Eyre impatient for his dinner, which he had (under the influence of that Christian sentiment of 'doing as you would be done by') kept back for four hours. Thus ended my day's fishing on the Murray River.

I shall, perhaps, at some future day, speak of the methods the natives adopt in catching fish. It is a singular

fact, that until the Europeans came amongst them, they were unacquainted with the use of a hook.

II.—THE TORRENS RIVER.

I must now descend from the broad River Murray to the narrow River Torrens. The Torrens rises in the lofty range of hills at the back or east of the town of Adelaide, and about five miles distant from the town. After rising in these hills, the Torrens flows through the plains to the Reed Beds near the sea-coast, where, like a bad bushman, it loses itself. It is a river of small dimensions, rather swollen and turbulent in winter but placid and attenuated during the summer months. I said that it loses itself in the Reed Beds, it is a singular circumstance that this river after flowing in the winter months in a large volume of water for several miles, spreads out and inundates a large tract of flat land adjoining the sea-coast, without passing into the ocean, and this accounts for its waters not being filled with a greater variety of fish.

However, there are three sorts of the family of the trout, the salmon, and the cod, all of which display a relish for the common earth-worm; the two first-named are very voracious, but the cod remains at the bottom of the river amongst the prostrate trees, and will not take any bait that is not placed directly before his nose.

The little Torrens trout is quite a pattern to his English brother, being ready to take the bait at all seasons and during all changes of the weather. The English trout has to be coaxed and wheedled to get hooked, and the angler must make his line of certain invisible materials, must dress too in sober grey, or some unassuming color, and, above all things, must keep as much out of sight of his suspicious prize as he possibly can. The Torrens trout, on the contrary, is quite a different sort of fellow. He is ready to take the bait whenever it is thrown into the water,

and the best way of throwing it in is to do it as clumsily as it can be done, that a good loud splash may accompany it, and thus, like a postman's knock, inform the fish you have got something for them. The gallant little trout comes to it directly, and without a particle of vile suspicion swallows hook and worm, and is rewarded with a snug place in the angler's basket. The salmon is much of the same amiable disposition, so that a dish of delicious fish is soon procured; they do not run to any size or weight, a few ounces in weight and nine inches in length being all they attain to; but they are very nice eating, unsurpassed for delicate flavor by any fish in the world.

I said the Australian settler is not generally a sportsman, and in proof of the assertion I may state that three-fourths of the people of Adelaide are ignorant to this day of the fact that these fish are swimming almost past their doors, and may be, caught by hundreds with but little trouble. There are also vast quantities of little crayfish in this river, resembling in every respect (except size) the lobster. These accommodate themselves to our rude methods of fishing, and are caught in great numbers by a piece of flesh at the end of a string. They cling on to the flesh, are raised to surface, and a net is then put under them, into which they fall. They are boiled with salt, and eaten with great relish by all classes.

Thus ends my account of fresh-water fishing in Australia. In the sea there are snapper, rock cod, parrot fish, red mullet, mullet, salmon, whiting, bream, guard-fish, the dog-fish, the shark, and to ambitious fishermen the porpoise and the whale. The snapper is the best for the table; the rock cod and parrot-fish are but poor stuff, in my opinion, 'de gustibus.' They are all, more or less, of confiding natures, and ravenous appetites, decidedly carnivorous, if eating all kinds of raw flesh entitles them to that distinction;

consequently the science of salt-water fishing at this end of the globe is reduced to very simple rules.

There is another fish I have not mentioned, as inhabiting the coast, namely, the barracoota. This innocent creature is lured to the hook by a piece of red cloth, and finds to his sorrow, when hooked, the folly of trusting to outward appearances. I am very glad I have thought of this fish, as it enables me to conclude with a moral. Young ladies, don't snatch too eagerly at a red coat, or you may have the fate of the poor barracoota!



CHAPTER XX.

TRIPS TO THE JUNGLES.

SOME time back NAT PANGLOS called on your contributors in general, and myself in particular, to search the *repertoires* of our memories, and give to the public some more reminiscences of flood and field, to tickle the palates of the epicures in sport. I wonder whether friend PANGLOS has read all that I have written in the pages of the *South of India Observer;* if so, he will, I think, acknowledge that I have exhausted the several subjects, from elephants to antelope, that I have attempted to discuss and dilate on. But I have, since he made his request, looked over some old journals, (unfortunately some very old ones I have not by me) and find that I may perhaps be able to record a few more incidents of jungle life, but fear they will be pronounced "Tame, Sir, tame" as the Yankee said of the scenery on the Rhine. I have been somewhat perplexed as to the nature of my proposed narrative, whether it shall be a bit of forest adventure, or a record of sport met with on the line of march with the regiment; the latter has however been so often described by every author of any work on India, from the clever letters of the Hon. Miss Eden, to the dull, monotonous pages of the author (of this benighted presidency,) "of ten years in India," that I hesitate to repeat so oft-told a tale. There is, however, a slight opening left; few have said anything of the *sport* incident to such travelling, since the days of "Welsh's Reminiscences of Thirty Years in India." I remember

seeing, a good many years ago, a most faithful representation, in panoramic form, of the march of a native regiment of Bengal. They, in the good old days, used to march in grand style, elephants and camels, hackeries and palanquins, and all the paraphernalia of native pomp and circumstances, hereditary to the old Native Bengal Army. Some of the scenes delineated were most absurd, though quite true, and not over exaggerated, as these things generally are. What has become of the sketch, or who was the author, I know not, but it was a capital picture of real Indian camp life, and "Line of March." It may therefore prove of some interest, perhaps, if in describing a march from one station to another, I restrict myself to the sport obtained on the occasion.

In looking over my journal of that period, I find that just before we undertook the march in question, I made two or three excursions, in pursuit of my favorite sport, spotted-deer shooting. I will therefore, I think, as a preliminary to the "On the March," give you first of all an account of my "Trips to the Jungle." I shall combine the three trips in one; but I wish it to be understood that this very tame description of very limited sport, is more intended to exhibit the difficulties and uncertainty of obtaining anything like a good bag on this side of India, compared with the facilities existing in Bengal and elsewhere, of which we read in the *Oriental Sporting Magazine*, and of such tremendous heavy bags, not only of tigers and other ferocious beasts, but of deer, as if they were snipe; take for instance "Sport in Purneah 1871" (July number, page 309). In the list of game bagged, you will find 76 deer and 42 pigs. And a foot-note to this bill of fare says, "Any number of buffalo, deer, pig, and small game "might have been bagged, had not general firing been "prohibited." All that we poor Madrasees can do in such case is to hold up our arms, *a la* Dominie Sampson, and

shout "Prodigious!" Then again it must be remembered that on this side, down south, we don't, because we cannot, go in for battues of the above description. I say "cannot" advisedly, because we have no ground available for driving game, in the style adopted by our Bengal-fellow-sportsmen. In Burmah and Assam they have similar facilities, and we hear now and then of good bags being made; but here we are debarred of such luxuries and surfeits in sport, and must be content with what we can pick up in prowling through the forest, or stalking in the more open glades of the jungle.

We will now proceed to relate what sport we met with, and the result. Our first visit was made when the "cowle"* was undisturbed. We were two guns on the first occasion. It was a pretty spot, where the camp was pitched, an open glade trending down to a tank of no considerable size, but with a fair supply of water; beyond, a slope of deserted cultivated land, near which the dilapidated walls of an abandoned village, partly overgrown with jungle-scrub, were visible; from near the village a ravine, fringed by clumps of graceful bamboo, trended away to the forest. Our tents, pitched beneath some large tamarind trees near a small chuttrum, on a lovely sward, appeared to be the very perfection of a woodland camp; alas! like too many things in this "valley of the shadow," how deceptive! what with eye-flies by day, musquitoes by night, and excessive heat, camp life was indeed a misery and a burthen, especially to the poor lady, one of the party. The first day, on our march to this deserted village, we saw pea-fowl and jungle-fowl; as we came along, C——had a shot, without effect. On the path near the camp, we saw the track of a tiger. The road was through jungle all the way, and it was a pleasant ride. After breakfast I went out to see if I could procure meat—

* Ground reserved for grazing Government cattle.

soon fell in with deer; two were moving about near what appeared to be an overgrown hedge, with some fine trees at one end of it. Not aware that there were others close by, I selected the largest of the two, fired and knocked over a large doe. Both myself and shikarrie were then astonished to hear the half-scream and roar of a buck; it was the first time I had heard this strange noise, and for a moment I did not know what was up, visions of a bear or tiger flashed across my mind, when to my surprise out rushed a grand spotted buck, and two or three other dapples; I missed him clean, as he galloped by me. Saw another herd, but did not go after them. In the evening took a stroll, saw a fine herd of deer with four or five good bucks; they crossed a very narrow glade, taking it in one stride, or nearly so, affording but a poor chance of a hit; however, as the last buck crossed, I took a snap shot, and missed. Returning to camp, in the dusk, disturbed a deer; it stood to listen, and fell a victim to its want of caution—a fat young doe. Saw two more deer, but would not fire; glad of it, as they turned out to be a doe and fawn. C——, in his evening prowl, shot an old sow right through the head, so the camp is full of meat. Next day, Sunday, a day of rest, but not so for the poor pig, the shikarrie having sat up near the water and killed a thirsty young boar. This shikarrie, strange to say, was unacquainted with the roar of the spotted buck; he was more a shikarrie of the plains than of the forest, which may account for it, especially as he had never, up to the time in question, shot a spotted deer.

On Monday we were out early; had not gone far before I saw some deer, could only make out a buck's head and neck, could not see his body, light not very good; fired and missed. This was a blank day. A shot at a buck at speed; the sound of a hit, but the ground so dry impossible to track, and no blood. Again a certain hit, and the buck

but was up and off; two hours tracking, or attempting to do so; no blood. A good shot in the evening, but a malicious branch turned the winged messenger, and the disappointed one returned to camp, tail down. C—— had only seen one deer, and failed to get a shot. The shikarrie killed another small pig.

The next day—our last—for the eye-flies, heat, and musquitoes fairly beat us, was not a great success, the disappointment at the loss of the bucks the previous day still rankling in our mind and ruffling our naturally sweet tempers. We were out early, and immediately came upon deer, but they did not remain. Soon after got a good shot, and knocked over a fine young doe; should have got another shot, but the gun cooly put his head in the way. Went a good long distance, but did not get another shot; saw a buck and doe but could not manage to circumvent them. C—— got a fine doe—his only shot; the shikarrie killed a small pig. During the day, hearing a deer call, the shikarrie who had never shot one, asked permission, as it was our last day, to try his luck. We heard his shot, and on joining him found he had wounded the deer; got on the track and after a while I saw the animal lying down, and as I thought dead, so I did not fire. As I approached, it stole away. We tracked by the blood a short distance, but the ground was so dry we could not carry it on, and after trying a circle, eventually lost the deer. The evening's sport is not much to my credit: I find it recorded had four shots at a herd of four or five, I believe hit two, but am not certain: I saw one go away very sick; they bothered me, and put me off, springing and jumping about: took a *fifth* shot at one of them a long way off—missed I believe. Afterwards saw two bucks, a doe and a fawn, across a ravine; took off my shoes and got up to them very well; but at the last bush a thorn caught my cap; made a noise in falling, which alarmed the deer and

with a cry they were off. Did not get another shot till near home, when quite dark and under the shade of high trees I spied a buck looking at me, could only make out his white neck; drew as good a bead on him as I could, but alas! missed; such a fine buck! Home to the tents, not quite happy. McMaster, in his book, page 43, says "all hits are history," "all misses are mystery." No mystery at all about, *my misses*. Friend Vagrant they are simply disgustingly bad shooting, disgraceful in fact and especially when accompanied by strong language, such as was hurled at that thorn bush and my topee. This ended the first trip.*

In the following month, about the middle of it I determined to brave the eye-flies and musquitoes, and once more visit the same ground. In those days our mode of travelling by night was getting a country cart, filling it pretty well with straw, on which bedding and pillows; and so, pretty free from jolts, we contrived to pass the night comfortably. This kind of carriage in those days rejoiced in the name of a Putt. Having travelled some 26 miles or so, by half past three in the morning, I reached my horse; started in an hour, and rode on, breakfasting *en route*, and reached my destination by noon, having loitered by the way. A great many bullocks had died in the villages hereabouts; one man said some 300; the trees about covered with vultures, found the place looking nice and green, but no water in the tank, and the rain had been very light; the Chuttrum had been cleaned out, and was comfortable enough. At 4½ in the afternoon went out, saw three or four deer and some pig, got a shot at the latter and killed a fine young boar, found the choultry (chuttrum and choultry are synonymous, usually built facing the east, and used as a rest house for travellers,—

* that I have not adhered to my intention of throwing the three trips into one: I found it easier to follow the j

this was a small one, about 12 feet square,) very hot at night, musquitoes on the alert, and very thirsty!! The Company's bullocks, some five or six hundred, are now grazing on this ground and have disturbed the deer very much. Second day out at daybreak; found a large herd of deer, but could not get a shot, saw them two or three times. Went on and found three others, got a good shot at a doe and knocked her over; also got a shot at a pig, which I believe I hit, but lost him. In the evening got a fair shot at a buck, but unfortunately the ball cut a branch just in front of him, and I supposed turned; ought to have waited till he was clear of the bushes: could not sleep at night, the choultry so hot, a little rain fell during the night. Third day, a blank, except two shots at pig, one of which I hit, but we could not track it, the ground so dry and hard; shikarrie very certain as to the hit. Fourth day: another blank, went a long way, no luck; could not get a shot, the deer so shy; evening, tried again, but with the same results; fell in with a jackal, eating part of a pig—perhaps one of those I hit. No rain, but a cool night; slept outside.

Fifth and last day; out for four hours, no shot, got near some deer twice and presented the rifle, but before the bead could be drawn, they were off. Walked the greater part of the time without shoes. In the evening saw a buck, in the midst of a heavy thunderstorm; unfortunately, he saw me, and I could get no shot. I must explain that the ground was so stony and hard that to move without noise was next to impossible. I tried goloshes, and though they enabled me to tread softly for a time, they soon began to squish, squash, every now and then, making a gulp like the dry sucker of a pump, so I took to my stockings, and precious trying work it was, and, as above shown, with no reward. Returning home the following day, fell in with an old sow and a litter of young pigs: so ended trip the second.

On the third and last, I find it recorded that after riding the whole way, between 40 and 50 miles, on going out in the evening to look for deer, found none! The next morning saw some deer, but did not succeed in getting a shot, though the rifle was raised three different times to take aim; but the deer were so shy, they bolted off at the slightest movement: the cattle still grazing on the ground, which accounts for the deer being so disturbed and on the *qui vive*. The musquitoes were at night dreadful, so, being thoroughly disgusted, I resolved to change ground, and go across country, to a spot where the bamboo jungle and green swards formed better ground for stalking than this stony land. Had a charming ride through a pleasant looking country jungle, interspersed with cultivation; passed one large town, with a fort and killahdar attached to it; did not see any game *en route*. After arrival at my destination—a very dilapidated bungalow on an almost deserted road—I went out; the villager somehow lost his way in the jungle. In our wanderings about saw three deer and some hog; got a very indifferent shot at the latter and missed. The man at last hit on some well-known object or line of path, and led us back to the bungalow. It seemed for a time quite a toss-up whether we were or were not to bivouac in the forest. The following morning sallied forth, and had a very long walk without seeing anything till near home, when we fell in with a herd of deer; got a shot, heard the "phut," ran forward, and seeing a deer looking at me some distance off, fired, and dropped her in her tracks, a fine young doe: could find nothing of the other, though the hit was unmistakable. In the evening had a good shot, but somehow missed—cannot say *how!* for I could not wish to have had a better or clearer shot. This is one of the *mysterious misses* which permeate my records of sport; they are not to be accounted for, and sometimes cannot be

explained or excused—there stands the deer broadside *on*, down a vista of bamboo jungle, certainly not over 80 or 90 yards: you draw what you think to be a deadly bead, fire; the deer vanishes; no sound responds to the report of the weapon; you look up the track, not a speck to prove the hit; you feel desperately inclined to turn round and pitch into your gun cooly or shikarrie; you use hard words at the latter for not immediately finding blood: and at last subside, in morose and angry mood, into that unenviable state which only sportsmen who understand these things know! ! Eager to redeem this disgraceful miss, the odds are at the next opportunity you only add another, and another. Then the excuses: "I think the gun did hang fire a little, and now I come to think of it, I don't believe he was broadside on; and I feel sure he was over 100 yards off, and firing low as you generally do in jungle, the ball must have just passed under his belly." With all this balm, still how the thorn of the miss rankles in the flesh: is it not so my brother followers of St. Hubert? The next day a long walk, with no success; saw one buck with soft horns, and soon after some hog, the rifle missed fire one barrel, and the other went off, but missed the hog. Returning home, saw a deer lying down; as I aimed, the deer stood up, and the cap only exploded— very disgusting that! I know nothing more so, and I think my sporting readers will agree with me.

I once had a shot at a black cheetah (VAGRANT will immediately be down upon me and say I mean panther or leopard) one of the great prizes in the sportsman's catalogue. The animal was on a rock, licking itself after passing through the dewy grass: it was early in the morning. I was above, screened by a ridge of rock, everything most favorable, myself calm and steady. Taking a deliberate spot,—certain as could be of the result,—the rifle missed fire!! Then the hurried

leopard being alarmed,—with the other barrel, which, of course, went off, and hit the rock an inch or so below. I turned and smiled at the shikarrie; if he only knew what the sardonic grin meant, he would have shaken in his shoes, for I felt that his life's blood only would satisfy my savage feeling against him, poor innocent man, and everything else living. There is a curious sequel to this little digression. I went down to the rock off which the panther (you see I try to please VAGRANT) had dropped, and gone, as I supposed, into the wood, when, on putting my foot on the rock, out sprang from beneath it, my black friend, and in one bound was into the sholah, too rapidly for me to fire: we watched for him for some time, but saw no more of him. Now comes what I consider extraordinary. The sholah in question was about fifty yards across—certainly not more—we were near the head of it, and being satisfied that the leopard was gone, we made tracks round the upper part of the wood, and were proceeding cautiously along the edge, when almost exactly opposite the spot where the leopard had sprung into the sholah, there stood, in the centre of the wood, a noble stag! I could only see his head and neck, and quickly planting a ball in the centre of the latter, he fell to rise no more. It was a very strange circumstance, that neither my shot, nor the bound of the cheetah into the wood, nor our voices,—though I must say, we spoke very low,—had in any way disturbed him. This successful shot acted as balm, and subdued to some extent the previous disappointment: the only way I can account for the stag's appearance is that he was coming up the sholah, and did not hear the shot or see the leopard. Thus ends this digression.

A traveller came to the bungalow that evening weary and drenched; I had the pleasure of giving him a chop of the spotted deer, which he thoroughly enjoyed, and expressed his surprise that such delicious

be found in India. I forgot to mention above that the rain had been very heavy, which accounts for the miss-fires of my usually trusty old weapon.

Out the next morning: beat a great deal of ground with no luck; disturbed one lot of deer,—no shot. Returning home found a herd on the ground where I killed the doe; I was going carelessly along not thinking it likely I would find any deer there. They ran some distance and pulled up; I guessed them to be 150 yards off, and fired—too high; paced the distance, and found it only 120. In the afternoon started for home, my time being up; on the road got a shot at an antelope; I fancy that the shot only grazed the animal somewhere, as we picked up a lump of hair where it stood. Missed the running shot with the second barrel. And so ends the "Trips to the Jungle."

I have been meditating, after writing all this, whether it would not be better to tear it up, instead of sending it for publication in the *South of India Observer*. One good will perhaps arise,—it will convince NAT PANGLOS and others, that I said truly, when I declared that I had written myself clean out—and for all this twaddle now to be committed to print friend PANGLOS must be held responsible: it is so pleasant to shift blame from one's own to a friend's shoulders, isn't it, oh! sapient Editor? How true it is, what a friendly Editor said to me the other day, on my expressing a difficulty in finding something new to write about; says he, "That's the worst of it with sporting correspondents: they must in time write themselves out, or else be reduced to simple details of how A. B. and C. did this, that and the other, in the field after hog, or in the jungle after tiger and other game."

My example may however incite others to try and exhaust themselves, and I wish they would—there is plenty to be told if they would but come forward and tell it. I

have made in this a sort of promise that I will try and recall something of a sporting nature occurring "On the March." Before doing so however I have to fulfil another promise: a friend passing by the other day called in and noticing in a photo a fine-looking head of a sambur, asked a question about it, "Oh! I said that is the 'Monarch of the Glen.' "Any story about him?" "Well, yes, but it is too long to tell you, I'll write it to the "*South of India Observer*." "Do," he said, and I replied "I would;" and as the old saying has it, "there's no time like the present;" here goes, to tell you how I slew the "Monarch of the Glen." See how one thing leads to another, and how after declaring myself cleaned out and shut up, here I am about to prove how frail human nature is, and how prone to lying, by beginning to tell a tale, of which I would never have thought had it not been for the casual dropping in of a friend.



CHAPTER XXI.

INCIDENTS OF SHIKAR.

WELL, then, let us see what we have to say about this fine stag. Some three years ago, at the close of a short spell of leave, I was out near the Koondahs, at a favorite spot for game especially sambur; one of your readers knows the place well, and I wish that my writing would induce him to tell in the *South of India Observer* the tale of the "Phantom Stag." I am not sure that the said spectre, or ghost, was not the very same stag the death of which I am about to recount,—by the way though, it might have been the grand stag that fell over the precipice; but stop! this won't do; I shall have to tell that tale perchance, and still further prove my untruthfulness, when I declare that I have no more to write about: the fact is, these events crop up so suddenly that I am quite taken by surprise when I come to think how each may yield a little story, perhaps not unacceptable to your sporting readers. Shall I begin with a sketch of the tale of the stag of the sentinel rock, before telling how the monarch died? I think I will, as it occurred prior to the letter event, and therefore should take precedence of it. It was, I think, two years before the death of the Monarch, that I went out for the last morning prowl over the same ground I have above alluded to. It was a long distance from camp, and to get to it early I had to start soon after three o'clock in the morning. We got to the end of the valley, reaching the rock, by about seven o'clock. The

shikarrie ascended to the summit of this promontory, from whence he could spy over the land in every direction; I took post on a stony ridge overlooking an extensive range of ibex ground. I had not been long watching before I saw three or four ibex gradually ascending the ridge from below, feeding as they came slowly along; a large doe first appeared on the ridge, and I was calculating the distance and how I could decrease it safely, when I suddenly saw the shikarrie appear on the sentinel rock, making frantic gestures and extending his arms over his head to indicate that he had seen *such* a stag! I responded by countersigns, pointing to the ibex, but he shook his head and hands as is the custom of the native; so I proceeded to meet him, and he then told me that a grand stag was feeding below near a small sholah under the rock. To steal round, the wind being all right, was the work of a very few minutes, and we approached carefully, creeping along the steep hill-side to the spot where the man had seen the deer, he all the time pointing and making signs that he was close by, so we stole quietly on,—nothing to be seen! and we had the sholah in sight! The blank look of astonishment and disappointment in that poor man's face was a sight to see, turning his hands over and displaying the palms to show how he believed that all was lost. At that moment I saw something like a stick move, at the edge of the sholah, and in a second more saw the stag, half-covered by the scrub, browsing off the bushes above him, and it was the motion of the antlers that had attracted my attention, at the same moment, quite unaware of our presence, the stag moved forward to reach a higher shrub, exposing his shoulder. As I raised the weapon, I heard a sigh of relief from the unhappy shikarrie, who till then had not seen the animal. The next moment the stag received the shot, and as he blundered into the sholah, the second barrel quickly followed: we heard him dashing down through the wood,

and then a lull, presently he moved again, and suddenly appeared some distance below, crossing an open space and descending to what appeared to us an impassable precipice. Firing hurriedly a brace of shots at him with a spare rifle, and having thus emptied both weapons, there he stood, a lovely shot, for some seconds, during which time he appeared to be contemplating what line to take. Suddenly he doubled his hind legs under him (one of his forelegs was crippled at the shoulder,) exactly as the mules are represented in the Cordilleras when sliding down the steep passes; in the same way the deer shot himself down in this marvellous manner between two boulders of rock, and away he went, vanishing in a cloud of dust, where to stop we knew not. Letting ourselves down, holding on by tufts of grass and shrubs we descended to the spot where the stag had made this surprising exit; it was wonderful how he had guided himself, or I may say steered down that precipitous descent, and saved himself from going over the precipice. Following the track, we at last came in sight of our quarry, lying on a broad ledge some fifty or sixty yards below us; directly he observed us, he stood up, and having had a good specimen of what he could do with a broken foreleg, and not knowing what he might still do, and a large forest below, I fired; we heard the hit plainly; the deer merely turned his head. I let drive the other barrel: the stag turned and looked up at us, his back to the precipice, for a few seconds he did not move; suddenly his hair all stood on end; he then reared up his full height, pawed the air with his fore-feet, gradually over-balancing, and fell with a mighty crash over the precipice, striking a boulder of rock, some sixty or seventy feet below, thence rolling over and over through the high fern and brushwood till brought up by the stem of a large rhododendron, outside the forest. To get down was no small difficulty; the shikarrie all the time lamenting in lachrymose terms the

fate of the antlers, I only thinking with wonder of the grand *finale* of the scene, which was indeed such as is seldom witnessed. When we reached the dead deer, we found one antler sadly demolished, the stump and lower tine only uninjured; strange to say the left antler was untouched. And thus fell the noble stag of the sentinel rock. We succeeded in obtaining the shattered pieces of the broken antler, and I have the head well set up, and a grand trophy it is,—a 39 incher!

It will be better understood what a descent we had made in a direct line, when I mention that what took us less than half an hour to get down from where the first shot was fired, occupied us two hours and twenty minutes in returning to the same spot. I did not get back to camp, though riding sharply a great portion of the way, till 3½ P. M. On our return up the valley, we saw the ibex quietly feeding on the side of Cairn Hill; the blood-thirsty shikarrie then and there was most anxious that I should add to my trophy a saddle-back's head; but I was thoroughly done, the day being very hot, so to his great chagrin I declined, and struggled on to where my horse was posted. So ended one of the hardest days, and as exciting a bit of sport as I have ever experienced.

Now for the "Monarch." It will be but a tame tale, after the foregoing. One morning, when proceeding towards the same ground as above described, from some cause or other, a shift of wind perhaps, or some hidden danger we know not of, caused a stag and hind to leave a sholah, and come out into the open glade between two woods. After a time, as we sat watching them, they appeared satisfied that all was right, and gradually moved away, grazing, as they went, towards other cover. In passing through the rhododendrons, dotting the hill-side, the stag following the hind had to roll his head from side

to side, to avoid striking his antlers against the branches, giving him a swaggering gait, as if he didn't care for all the stags on earth, and displaying a grand trophy, causing whispering exclamations of delight from the ever blood-thirsty shikarrie, and stirring in our own bosom a feeling that such a prize was indeed worth gaining: this was the Monarch! I did not see him again for some time; it was of no use trying to stalk him on that morning, everything being against us, so we bided our time. I forget how long it was subsequent to the above mentioned sight of this fine stag, that I was again prowling over the ground near his haunts. I had visited the sentinel rock and was retracing my steps along the ridge commanding the ibex ground before spoken of, when it occurred to me to ask the shikarrie whether we were not near the spot where Deer-Stalker killed the monster stag. "Oh, yes, close by," says the man, and shortly after he pointed out the place, at the same time squatting down suddenly, with a sign that a deer was in sight. We were just below a ridge of the ibex range, and from our feet the side of the hill, down some two hundred yards or so, was nearly perpendicular; from thence a grass knoll to the left led down to some open ground, bordered by sholahs and forests of great extent; to the right of the grass mound a bay was formed by a dip between two sholahs—a few large trees in the midst of brushwood, long grass and fern, with here and there an open space; rhododendron trees to the left, and at the foot of one, the appearance of an empty couch. As we scanned the spot with the telescope, we could see the backs of two deer in the scrub; by and by one couched—a hind. Presently the other deer moved towards her; and then we saw a stag,—a stag, Sir! a mighty stag! such antlers! such marble tips! such beady shafts or beams! so massive and so handsome! words fail me to describe this splendid animal. This was not the "Monarch." We

them for some time, discussing how we were to get at him; the wind was from the right hand (easterly) blowing strong; we could see the grass bending to the breeze; then again, to the left, we noticed the grass on the knoll was waving exactly the reverse way, from an eddy we suppose, and to get down on either side we could not, without being exposed: meanwhile the stag was very restless, wandering about. At one time he came to the edge of the bay, and we hoped he was about to couch under the rhododendron tree; as he then stood we had a capital view of his magnificent proportions, and felt a tingle through our blood, with a nervous sensation of fear that even if we got a shot, we should surely miss. The stag at last set the question at rest by walking slowly into the lower sholah, as we thought; and we shortly after heard him, or another, belling below. Under the impression that the stag had entered the sholah and was harboured for the day (we found out our mistake subsequently), and as it was getting late, we proceeded on our way home. As we approached the spot where we had on a former occasion seen the "Monarch," the shikarrie suggested our trying a small sholah not far from the path, in which there is special good lying, and of which we know the deer to be fond. It is very peculiar in its formation, situated near the summit of one of those high mountain ridges, which intersect the land bordering the valleys, leading away down to the vast forests of the Wynaad, in a cleft of the mountain side, the result probably of a landslip; a small but well-wooded sholah was nestled in the hollow, the opposite side inaccessible, and the head of it the same; the side the deer could break by was passable in two spots only—at the foot of the sholah a small level patch of grass and fern, and beyond a narrow pass, leading down to an extensive and heavy wood below. The shikarrie was to enter the dip from the top, by letting himself down over

the rocks, and so come through the small wood. As I took up my post and peeped over into the dell, there stood a fat and comely hind. She was alarmed, and stood on the pass leading to the great wood below; truly a tempting shot! HAWKEYE was staunch: the hind vanished, the shikarrie had just begun to clap his hands, when out rushed another hind, and stood to gaze and listen on the very self-same spot. Temptation again, but no: a stag or none! Slowly came on the man, the sound of clapping hands getting close to the foot of the wood; another crashing rush, and all was still. Intently on the watch where the hinds had gone, each second wondering why the animal did not appear, I fortunately looked to my right and above, and just caught sight of a stag galloping through the rhododendron-trees sprinkled along the hill-side. Waiting till he was clear of the trees, I took as good and steady an aim with the carbine as I could, heard the ball strike, and saw the stag kick out, and felt sure that my shot had told. After a few strides the stag turned sharp down the hill, bringing himself up at the edge of a dip at the corner of the great wood below. As he hesitated, crippled as he was, to take the leap, a shot from the spare rifle took effect in his neck, and dropped him dead on the spot. Antlers 38½ "spread from tip to tip" length 36.

Thus fell the "Monarch of the Glen," and a splendid stag he was. Now see how this turned out to be a piece of luck—one of "these *happen'd accidents*," for had I gone down to try and kill,—I will call him the Emperor of the Stags—and failed, I should never have killed the "Monarch," for once down, I should have gone home by another line of country. As it was, I paid repeated visits to the Emperor's ground: on the second, the hind alone was there; we watched for hours, no stag appeared: on the third, the hind's couch was bare, so we went down and

explored the spot; came on some well used couches, and to our disgust found that where, as we thought, the stag had entered the sholah, he had only passed through a strip of wood, and followed a path round the grassy knoll; and no doubt, while we imagined he was belling in the sholah below he was actually on the hill-side, hurling defiance at any other stag that dared to approach. Thus was lost the "Emperor," for I never saw him again, and thus ends the "Trips to the Jungle," with its additions, and the promise performed. And now, NAT PANGLOS, it is your turn.

In the early portion of these sketches of sport I have made no apologies for shooting "does," "hinds," "soft horns," &c., they being records of more than twenty years ago, when game was abundant and preservation unthought of, and not required. And now, Farewell!

In looking over some old papers, I found a letter from a well known sportsman, now, alas! no more, from which the extracts I send will, I think, be read with interest, as descriptive of some grand sport with tigers and bears; and showing what an enthusiastic and daring sportsman my friend was. This account was written some years ago, and has never, to my knowledge, appeared in print. It will be observed that there is an instance given of a tiger taking to a tree to avoid the dogs, but as one only out of ten did so, it appears to confirm your remarks on the review of McMaster's book, that it is not the *habit* of tigers to resort to trees. It will be noticed that the measurements of the skins differ, and is accounted for; the large and beautiful tiger killed off the tree, being 9 feet 4 inch, as measured on the spot, whereas the *skin* of the fellow to him was 12 feet 3½ inch, stretched of course to its utmost. I think this goes far to prove the correctness of the statement recorded by Jerdon, at page 98 of his

"Mammals of India," who fixes the length from 10 feet 2, to 10 feet 3 inch, and yet how are we ever to arrive at anything conclusive on this point? My friend's two largest tigers out of ten, and described as monsters, were only 9 feet 4 inch, and the *skin* of a tigress, which means off the body, and stretched to a certain extent, 9 feet 9 inch; but if you turn to the last July number of the *Oriental Sporting Magazine*, page 299, what do we find? out of six tigresses killed, two measured 9 feet 4 inch, one 9 feet 2 inch, one 9 feet, the others 8 feet 10 inch and 8 feet 6 inch Tigers,—one (a youngster) 7 feet 10 inch another 10 feet 3½ inch and the last 11 feet!! and yet our Naturalist says "the "average size of the full grown male tiger is from 9 feet to "9½ feet, in length, but I fancy there is very little doubt "that *occasionally* tigers are killed 10 feet in length, and "perhaps a few inches over that; but the stories of tigers "11 and 12 feet in length, so often heard and repeated, "certainly require confirmation," &c., &c., and after what is said above, I think so too.

[EXTRACT.]

Now then to my sport. I started alone, last month, *en route* to Bokur, and onwards towards Neermul. I began the trip by a *water* feat. I was awoke the first night by a loud splash and a yell near my tent, and it turned out to be a man who had tumbled head over heels into a stone bowey, with deep water, he being unable to swim! It was quite dark: however, to dash out of bed, seize a rope, and rush down into the well, some 20 feet, was, as novelists say "the work of an instant." The drowning man was invisible, but some burning straw being brought up, I discovered just the tip of his nose above water as he was sinking. I threw my rope with the skill of a boatswain, on to the proboscis, and left it there, the consequence was that my blade, though insensible, got hold of it in his struggles, and I hauled him out. Niggers all "ghabra"

of course, so he may thank his stars I was within hearing. The Humane Society dodge of hot blankets and friction recovered my insensible buffer, who came in the course of the day, and lavished blessings on me, for which he was nearly kicked out, as, not recognising him, I took him for a Fakeer! This was adventure No. 1. My next was knocking over a hare with the rifle, off the hattie (at speed). Then I found a fine panther in some sugar-cane. He charged with great fury three times. My first ball carried away his jaw, and stopped,—No. 1 charge. My next was through his chest, stopper No 2. My third through his eye, stopper No. 3. Sharp practice. I then marched on. The first thing I put up was a cheetul; a long unning shot off the hattie, and down he went, with a pill from the double Kennedy. I next put up a big bear; I mounted Dicky, and gave chase over really unrideable ground. Just as I was near bruin, down came my horse, over the big stones in a dry nullah, and bruised me consumedly. The bear got away, though I continued the chase over fearful ground. I marched into Mandha; here I heard of bears in a hill, beat for them and put them up. I gave chase on "Badger" (a colt) to a large female with two cubs; ground so rocky that bruin could go about as fast as the horse. On coming up I was charged; gave the bear a stunner behind the shoulder, but being pursued by her for a long distance, was very nearly caught. I however got out of the scrape and the bed of the watercourse at the same time, and after two more ferocious charges and two pretty spears, slew my antagonist. I captured the cubs. Sundays I never go out, even if there's a kill. On Monday a big tiger was seen, but not by me. I had a run after a bear in the evening, but the ground being one mass of ravines and stones, and Dicky violent, I lost him, after getting several *smellers* on my nose, from boughs of trees. Next day I saw a tiger, but not having made proper

arrangements, and the jungle being dense, he got away. This was the only one I lost, when once seen. My next sport was with bears; two of them came off the hill where I killed the first one. I attacked them on "Nicholas," and after a hard fight, I killed them both. One of the bears was most ferocious, and was said to have killed some people. Finding that though the tigers killed the buffaloes I tied up, I never could get within sight of them, they being "chors," I determined to try a new plan, which was to go on foot on the tiger's track, with only one shikarrie, and then to finish the affair on the elephant, who beat up the nullah about 500 yards behind me. This plan answered, and broke the charm—my first tiger was on the 29th March. I put her up, and my dog Toby gave chase and brought her to bay; as he went in at her, she gave him two nasty wounds, but in the mean time I came up on the elephant, and I, being in a deep nullah, found my face just on a level with the tigress, who was growling some 12 paces off. Had I missed, the position was ticklish, but I didn't. My first ball was a sickener, but she kept up a great fight for some time, receiving eight balls in the head and neck ere she gave up the ghost. *Skin* 9ft. 9 inches. Next day I tried my luck again in the same nullah. I went 500 yards in front of the line, with one dog-boy. Soon came on the Punjahs and followed them up. On arriving at the dead buff, I saw the tiger was there, from the row the kites were making. She, for it was a man-eating tigress, saw me, as I was examining the footmarks, and turned back down the nullah, where she met the line. They yelled to me "*sher*," and just then she returned and walked up to within 20 yards of where I was. My dog-boy, a pluckly chap, said "peela hy," and I was just going to fire, when the crash of the hattie my mahout was bringing up at racing pace, caused the tigress to stop and jump into the nullah some ten paces from me. As my

elephant *was* there, I saw no use in running any useless risk, so mounted him, and after a chase of some hundred yards, came on the old tigress at bay. As she looked towards me I dropped her dead, with a ball from the double. It went clear through the point of her shoulder, and heart, and it seemed odd to see so big a beast fall dead from the slight crack of a rifle. This was a very old tigress, her teeth worn to stumps, and she was grey. This beast is supposed to have killed several people here. Sent her to the tent, and beat on. I had walked on a good way, and reached a tree where one of my markers was posted. This rascal was bawling at the top of his voice to another marker, and disturbing the whole jungle. He did not see me steal up, so I got under his tree and suddenly called him down. I was reasoning with him,—in fact I was whacking him with his own flagstaff, and making a tremendous row, when we were interrupted by a hideous roar close by, and a yell from the line, which was coming up, that a huge tiger was coming towards me. Not seeing the hattie, I called out to them to beat him up to me, as I was at the junction of three nullahs—a capital spot. The tiger however, perhaps thinking he might get what he had seen the cooly catching broke back through the line, and being pursued by some of the small dogs, sprang 10 feet off the ground into a tree. I measured the height afterwards, it was just even with my mahout's head! On coming up I found this magnificent tiger stretched out along the branches, and looking like six tigers. I went up close, and a ball behind the shoulder and two through the point of it, brought him tumbling to the ground, and after some roaring and scuffling, several bullets in the head finished the fray. A beautiful tiger, 9 feet 4 inch long, the skin of course much more. Also shot a cheetah. Next day I marched into Bokur, and beat a fine nullah: saw marks of a tiger, and put up a very large male bear. The ground

being unrideable, I fired and hit him; followed up and shot him through the head, but as he ran on, I had to dismount and finish him as he sat on a hillock, with a shot in the neck. Remember, I *never* shoot bears where there is the least *possibility* for spearing them, and I sacrifice many chances of them in trying to ride them where the ground is impracticable for the horse. This bear had been fighting a tiger, and got fearfully mauled; his chest was full of maggots, and he was all over holes, made by the tiger's claws. He had however, apparently beat off his foe. He was a huge bear. 1st April, Sunday, a man brought news that an enormous tiger had just killed a full grown buffaloe, and was marked. I would not go, however, and got my reward next day. I started on Monday morning early, found the buffaloe partly eaten, and the tiger, a perfect monster, near it. As he got up and ran past with a roar, I put my first ball through his shoulder and broke it: a pretty shot. I then followed up. The huge brute, with a head like a tub, came charging out at me, but I stopped him with a teazer in the chest, and finished him, after some roaring and scuffling, with one in the heart. I do not believe a bigger tiger than this is seen once in ten years. He was very old, nearly white, and his teeth mere stumps. His skin is 12 feet one inch, and five feet broad; he was two feet eight round the neck, and such a forearm! He had eaten a Brinjarry not long before, the villagers said. I will show you his head and skin some day. Returned to breakfast.

Well really, if I go on describing in full this way, I shall never have done, so I must cut it shorter, I again beat the Bokur nullah, I first put up a bear; as he ran past, I shot him with one ball from my Kennedy. I then beat on, after padding the bear, and having rested near the water, when to my astoniahment, up got a tiger, with a roar. After a hard chase, I came up with him. I was in the nullah, and

the bank being some 25 feet high, the tiger had only to hop into the howdah, as he was on the bank. You know, however, how well one can shoot at an object above him; I consequently shot my tiger in less than a minute. Padded *him* on the camel, and beat on. Soon put up a tigress; after awful roarings and rushings about. I bagged her too, my first ball, as usual, through the shoulder. Three days after this I had the great luck to get the well-known man-eater of Bokur, yclept the Lungra Bagh. He had got lamed in this wise; some one hundred villagers went to shoot him, fired at and lamed him, but he rushed in and bagged his man with a composed face, since when no one approached his jungle. He very nearly got my head shikarrie, chasing him for a hundred yards. He eventually, after giving lots of trouble, the jungle being thick, came blundering by my elephant. My first ball high in his shoulder, my second through it and his heart too. It was ridiculous to see this enormous beast go rolling down the hill like a hare, coming with a crash to the bottom. He was the *fellow* of the other big one; I can say no more for him. Skin 12 feet 3½ inches, height from a stick at his foot to one at his shoulder—*no tapes round the corner*—three feet eight inches; round the body, four feet eight inches; round the neck, two feet eight inches. A teazer, eh?

Well, here I am again, after a fresh touch of fever, so I must "cut short." I next moved on to Keenee, where I was requested by the Potail to slay the man-eating tigress, which stopped the roads about there. She had eaten a man only twenty days before, so I went after her, and found her in the very spot she killed her man. She had a tiger with her. I came up to him first, and as he was looking towards me, I dropped him dead with one ball. I then pursued the tigress, and a great fight took place, she charging three times in style; however, I arranged her too.

The wife of the man she killed came up with his family, and wept over the tigress, lavishing curses and abuse on the carcase. Shot a peafowl with ball. Next day shot a hare running about a hundred and twenty yards off, with rifle. After this I marched on, found two bears and tried to spear them. The horse was afraid, and the jungle being thick they escaped me, one badly speared in the back. I then beat the hill again, and was just going to fire at Nilghie when a large bear came charging down straight at me, at an awful pace; seeing that he must get hold of me ere I could mount my horse, I was forced to take my rifle, and just as he came close, I shot him through the chest, and following up the dose, he fell dead a little way off. My fool of a mahout walked off my elephant to camp, and left me in the jungle, in the very haunt of the famous Kobeer man-eater, who has destroyed lots of people. Consequently, as I was equally in danger in riding through the jungle, I began beating for him on foot, and what with the intense heat from eight to 1 p. m., and the rage I was in all the time with the mahout, I was effectually floored on reaching camp, and could not go after a tiger that was marked. Next day I had a slight interval, and as I just then heard of the tiger, I went out, aching in every limb and very seedy, and soon shot him. This beast the villagers all swore was the notorious man-eater, known by his very dark colour and awfully offensive smell. There was balm in that, but from this moment I became worse, delirious from the stroke of the sun, and unable to move, though a tiger actually came close to my palkee and frightened all the people. I was carried into Cantonment, 100 miles; and here I am. My trip was thus curtailed, my bag is not bad though for one man; ten tigers, eight bears, two cheetahs, one hyæna spear, and one panther."

I have been lately looking through a somewhat ancient book entitled *British Field Sports*, by one William Henry

Scott, embracing, as he says on his title-page, shooting, hunting, coursing, racing, cocking and fishing, &c.; also the management of fowling pieces and all other sporting implements. Who William Henry Scott was is more than I can tell, perhaps "VAGRANT" can do so; a man fond of field sports unquestionably, and at the same time a humane and true sportsman. I have stated that his book is, so to speak, an ancient one, though the edition I have by me is dated 1818; but being over half a century old, I think it may be considered a bye-gone work. In proof of his true sportsmanlike feeling, the following short extract from his preface will suffice. "The present writer has long been "labouring to root out, so far as his exertions could extend, "that horrible propension in the human breast, a sense of "sport and delight at witnessing the tortures of brute "animals and he calls as loudly as his weak power will "admit for coadjutors in so just a cause; and still hopes "that British sports may be purified from a stain at once "so disgusting and infamous." He then touches on that *delicate* topic the "game laws," to a certain extent being opposed to them as they then existed. In those days the sale of game was not legal, and the pains and penalties were indeed severe in the extreme. The following passage is amusing at the present day. "A quotation from a "late speech in parliament attributed by the daily papers "to Sir Mark Wood, and highly creditable to the feelings "of the Hon'ble Baronet will be in point here. 'I decid-"'edly approve that the sale of game be legalised. I "'remember an old Act by which a person found at night "'in the pursuit of game is liable to be sent for twelve "'months, to the House of correction as a rogue and a "'vagrant, or to the *army* or *navy* for life.'" No wonder at our worthy author feeling and expressing himself strongly when the law was thus!

But I have not taken up this old book to dilate on the

game laws, which we are now universally of opinion are called for in a mild shape, for actual preservation of game, but to pick out here and there what may be amusing; for instance, the getting rid of Poachers by transferring them to the army and navy *for life!* and also instruction as to the terms of Venery, to which I ask attention of your sporting readers.

Some of the woodcuts embellishing the work are remarkably true, and some clever vignettes at the close of each chapter similar to those illustrating Bewick's work, are good and clever. The following is rather severe on the time-honored Buffon, and at the same time interesting and amusing. "The brains of Buffon, fermented into a hot-bed, "by the heat of his hypothetic enthusiasm, having urged "his fruitful pen to dictate a number of wonderful "transmogriphications: to wit, he tells us with all the "gravity of conviction, that the hound, when transported "into Spain or Barbary, where all animals have fine long "bushy hair, would be converted into the spaniel and "water-dog; the Irish grey-hound conveyed to the north "becomes the great Danish dog, and the bull-dog transported from Britain to Denmark, becomes the little "Danish dog, and so on, &c. Thus then if all races are "covertible by mere force of climate, the smallest French "lap-dog, which a pint mug might contain, transported to "Ireland would in process of time grow up to an Irish "giant of the species, that is to say, to our Irish grey-"hound, which Buffon supposes to be the largest of dogs."

Passing on, we come to the terms of number and sporting phraseology applied to game, "a brace" or a "brace-and-a-half" of partridges or birds; a "covey" of partridges, a "brace" of pheasants, a "leash" of pheasants, a "Ni" or "Nide" (covey) of pheasants; (the word "Ni" or "Nide" is however taken from the French Nid—a nest); a "couple"

or "couple-and-a-half" of snipes, a "wisp" of snipes, a "couple," a "couple-and-a-half" of woodcocks, a "flight" of woodcocks, a "brace," a "brace-and-a-half" of quail, a "bevy" of quail, a "brace," a "pack" of grouse or black game, a "leash" of black game, a "flock" or "gaggle" of wild geese, a "flock" or "team" of wild duck, a "wing" of plover, a "trip" of dotteral, a "shoal" of "coats,"—*cootes* we suppose. The stag is said to be "harboured"; the buck "lodged." The stag or buck roused are "*emprimed*!" Marks by the feet of deer of any kind, the "view" or "slot." The tail of deer, the "single." The wild boar (at rest) "couched," his tail the "wreath." I have made the above quotations on account of the singularity of the terms for the tail of deer and hog; there are many more very curious terms, which our author describes as "sharp" and "natty;" there is no necessity or object in repeating them, though many are very peculiar. My object will however be gained further on when I treat especially of the errors which prevail in designation of the deer tribe generally; meanwhile I will cull a few more anecdotes from our quaint old author. Here for instance is something new to me at any rate. "The ancient clergy of France "made the most of their trade, which has ever been "applied to such important purposes as the endeavour to "monopolize the choicest dainties of game. One of their "celebrated preachers about the year 1216, represented in "a sermon the pheasants, partridges and ortolans in a body "addressing themselves to the clergy, and entreating to be "eaten by them and them only—'That incorporated with "'their glorious bodies, they might be raised to heaven, "'and not go with the impious devourers to the infernal "'regions.' I really admire (says the author) the relish of "their reverences as much as their policy, and can have "no doubt of the effect it must have had upon their humble "and pious

The following may amuse some of our great rifle shots, specially the wonderful title—"Rifle shooting." "We "learn from the *Sporting Magazine* that on October 12th "the ACHROTOMOTARIAN SOCIETY, mustered in great style, "and on the whole made an eminent display of scientific "knowledge of this weapon. The rifles of these gentlemen "who had spared no expense, were in high perfection. "The gold medal was won by Mr. Adams, after a very "animated contest. Rifles now made in England in the "highest perfection were little known among us in the "first American war, when people were amused on this "side of the water by the story of an American woodman "who actually shot an eagle with his rifle *when it was out* "*of sight*—a thing by no means impossible." It should be remembered that the above was written over fifty years ago; what would not our rifles of the present day do?

Here in a little flourish on the delights of sport; "How "after the success which crowns the evening of the sport-"ing day, when society itself is rendered still more "sociable when the hit and miss, so often told, yet have a "relish; when according to the words of an old shot we find "angels in women, venison in mutton, and nectar in wine; "when in short viewing the poorer resources of other "nations, we exult in our better fare, and bless our stars "that we live in such a country." Bravo! old man, say I.

"Speaking of the hare, he observes:—"She is extremely "attached to the places where bred, and where she makes "her seat, and with little of that subtility which she shows "in the course, has often been found on the very form "from which she had been chased but the day before to "the greatest distress and but with a hairbreadth escape "for her life." I have made the foregoing extract to ask my sporting friends what has been their experience in the matter in this country; my own is that having once dis-

Take first the sambur, classing him as the counterpart of the red deer. We have then here, down south, only one specimen of the deer tribe entitled to the designation of a stag, viz., the sambur. He may be called a stag at the same age as the red deer, namely, at five years old. For the first year he is a "nobber" or "nobbler"; when two years old he becomes a "brocket," and when his antlers are fully developed, he becomes a warrantable "stag." The offspring, male or female, is a "calf"; the female for the first year is a "calf," in the second a "brocket's sister," and after that a "hind." So here we have the proper denomination for our grand sambur: a "stag" a "hind," a "calf." Now taking the axis or spotted deer as the representative of the fallow deer. We have on good authority—our quaint old author one,—that they are styled "buck," and "doe," offspring a "fawn." And so with the jungle sheep, or muntjack, corresponding with the roe deer; we have them "buck," "doe" and "fawn." Our Ibex is peculiar to these Hills alone; it is a wild goat, but "he" and "she Ibex" does not sound well, so they are usually styled "buck," "doe," and "kid," the old buck being further distinguished by the term "saddle-back." Now to reiterate, in case I have not been quite clear. Remember then, kind readers, that when in this country you speak of a "stag," you mean a sambur, his consort is a "hind," his offspring a "calf." When you use the word "buck," it is to be coupled with "doe" and "fawn." The same with the jungle sheep, and antelope; and it may be said with all small deer. The Ibex also, except that its offspring is a "kid."

In former days the royal stag-hounds were called also the buck-hounds. This was no misnomer leading to confusion of terms, for in those days the fallow buck was hunted by the hounds as frequently as the red deer. Now-a-days the latter only is the object of the chase. The master of the hounds used to receive £2,000 a year—rather

a good staff appointment that, specially to a congenial mind, fond of the chase!!

One more extract for the consideration of "VAGRANT" and other naturalists, and I have done. Speaking of venison he says, "The fallow deer chiefly are kept in a "sort of domesticated state in parks, and fattened like "other cattle, and from these comes the regular supply of "venison for the table. That a great deal of rank, "unsavoury and flabby venison comes into the market is "no doubt to be attributed to the *absurd* (?) and *mean* (?) "practice of feeding with oil-cake. Perhaps in no other "countries than England and France is the deer domesti- "cated for the purpose of being fattened, and our numbers "of the fallow deer are very considerable. The deer is "probably indigenous to this country, but two of our "varieties of the fallow deer are of foreign origin; the "deep brown, which were procured by King James I., "from Norway, landed in Scotland, and afterwards trans- "ferred to Epping Forest and Enfield Chase; and the "beautiful spotted kind, supposed to have been since "imported from Bengal."

What say you, VAGRANT, to the above? Buffon would, I suppose, set it down to climate, and that the bifurcated antler changing to a palmated one, would as naturally result as the hound in Barbary being from the same cause converted into a water spaniel.

I extract the following passage from a very interesting description of "Lion Shooting in India," by "E. V. S.," in the *Field* of the 23rd of December, 1871, considering it very *apropos* for the present time, when the long-looked-for "Game Laws" are, I am informed, at last in process of incubation—and not indeed till they are sorely wanted. There is no necessity for repeating the arguments *pro.* and *con.*, it is generally admitted that something must be done

in the shape of protection, and the most reasonable form of such a measure at first should be the "fence months;" and, to meet whatever expenses may be incurred, a tax on weapons, and fines for breaches of the Act. Let us not adopt any half measures as to the period of "fence;" I hear of some squeamishes on this point,—that it will not be popular with the visitors of these Hills, if debarred sport from April, or rather May, to September: it may not; but what then? would they, if at home, be allowed liberty to shoot during "fence time?" I trow not; then why here? if they wish for sport, let them come before the season closes. Are we, on their account, still to hear of deeds so repugnant to the feeling of true sportsmen, such as the murder of infant sambur, the slaughter of hinds, and the death of soft-horned stags, because forsooth certain blood-thirsty visitors arrive on the Hills? Let them, if they must have *sport* (St. Hubert save the mark!) go where the game is unprotected; if they come here for change of climate, or for health, there are sufficient amusements, besides shooting, to keep them employed. Do not on their account hesitate as to the proper time or period of protection.

I see, on reference to my journal that snipe remain on these Hills up to nearly the end of April, and that some stags during that month are still in hard horn. I would accordingly suggest that the "fence months" be established and put in force from the 1st of May to the 15th of September; the latter date is, if anything, somewhat too early, as many stags are still in velvet at that time:—the 30th would suit better. I have, however, touched on all these points long ago, in the Code I drew up, as suggestive of what was required; I will only further mention that it will be politic to bring *all* game, *large* and *small*, under the provisions of the Act, saving, of course, dangerous game and *depredators*. Under this last head, wild hog and elephants may be included; also bears, porcupines, &c.,

the latter being vermin. I say *all* game advisedly, for the slightest latitude will be taken advantage of by *shooters*, for should hares and other small fry be excluded, men will go out, and in beating for one kind of game "unprotected," will probably find others of the "protected order;" and who is to hold their hands, unless there be a heavy fine involved? It is therefore safer to make no exception but those above mentioned, and let the law-breakers incur the fine, if they dare to slay protected females or infants, soft-horns or any other game prescribed by the Act. I will say no more on the subject, beyond warning the authorities to be careful "in fixing the fence season," in drawing up the Act sufficiently stringent without being oppressive; and at the same time to establish a tax on arms, and fines on any breach of the Act. I understand that the Bill, as at present framed, is to be applied at first only to these Hills, as an experiment; it is accordingly very necessary that its provisions should be well considered, and made as complete as possible, that its working may be carefully watched, and little or no change required after the first year of probation; and I think we may with confidence leave it to our excellent Commissioner, himself a true sportsman, to recommend to Government the *modus operandi;* but he *ought*, and we hope he *will*, adopt the season above pointed out for the fence months, and thereby secure what is so much desired by all good men and true, the

REAL PRESERVATION OF THE GAME ON THESE HILLS.

The following is the extract alluded to—

Extract from "Lion Shooting in India." *The Field, 23rd December*, 1871.

"I should like, in conclusion, to be allowed the opportunity of protesting against two practices now common amongst Indian sportsmen. (?) The first, is the constant habit of killing does amongst antelope, sambur, cheetul,

gazelle, &c. These people who are not ashamed to confess their sin, excuse themselves by saying "but I wanted meat, you know." I say, far better live for ever on the "eternal mutton and murghi" than destroy game in that reckless and selfish manner. The second is the habit of sending native shikarries to kill dangerous game, in reality for the skin, but done under the pretext of protecting the property (cattle) of "the poor natives." I mention it with shame that Englishmen can do such things, but I have myself noticed the increase of the practice. Of course, no one objects to a real pest in the shape of a tiger being destroyed; but either do it oneself, or else give a fellow countryman the chance, by informing him of the whereabouts of the beast. There have been discussions lately as to whether or no game has been on the increase in India of late years. I think there is no doubt that in Western India all game is much decreasing; as for pig-sticking its palmy days are over.

E. V. S."

To the first count of the above indictment, many of us must plead "guilty," to our shame be it said! To the second we are, to the best of our belief, *not* amenable. We regret to endorse the third point, but it is well known to all, that game in Southern India is sadly on the decrease, and as for pig-sticking, it is never heard of down south. Over forty years ago, I won my first spear within some twenty or twenty-five miles of the most Southern point of India, Cape Comorin: shall I tell you the tale?

CHAPTER XXII.

PRESERVATION OF GAME.

IN the *Friend of India* of the 31st March last, there appears a letter signed "F." on the above subject. It is one that I think ought to be constantly kept before the eyes of the public, until at any rate Government be induced to step in and do something. The complaint is becoming a very general one, and the unrestricted slaughter of game affords good cause for sportsmen at any rate, to interest themselves in the question. "F." appears to think that close months for small game, coupled with license for nets and fire-arms, with a surcharge fine for non-compliance with the rules, will suffice. He enumerates certain of the feathered tribe coming under the designation at home of "Ground Game," such as partridges, bustard, sand-grouse (the rock pigeon of the south), hares, and he might have included pheasants, jungle-fowl, peafowl, spur-fowl, and quail; but the latter being migratory ought not to be taken into account any more than snipe and wild-fowl. The dates he fixes are: for partridges from March 1st to 16th October; for the others from 1st May to 16th October. These dates will not answer as fence-months for all India. Snipe arrive in Mysore in August, but the migratory birds may, in my opinion, be considered fair game as long as you can find them; in fact the fence months need not apply to them.

There can be no question that game of the description

referred to by "F." is rapidly disappearing in most parts of India, and the wholesale destruction that takes place at all times and seasons must end in great scarcity, if not total annihilation. We all know those wandering gipsies—if I may so call them—who make a trade at all times and seasons, of the game birds they so cleverly snare, and come to our houses at Madras and up-country stations with large flat baskets full of partridges and quail; and with pea, jungle, and spur-fowl with their eyes sewn up, sitting on a bundle of twigs, hawking them about for sale from house to house. These birds are now brought from great distances, the rail helping these itinerant poachers to extend their depredations far and wide. Formerly the jungles near Tiagar and Trinomally, Wandiwash, and Ginjee sufficiently supplied the Madras Market, but those spots are, I believe, pretty well exhausted. Now it is clear enough that this system of supply must, in due course of time, absorb the whole race of feathered game. From year's end to year's end there is no cessation; daily supplies appear in the market, and being there, are of course purchased; the only possible respite being failure in capture—which is very rare. Surely these facts call for some prohibition from the "powers that be." If game laws are objectionable—though, by the way, we do not exactly require game laws in their integrity—but if legislation (direct) for the preservation of game does not commend itself to our rulers, then let us have an indirect application by establishing a law to the effect that offering game for sale during certain fixed periods shall be illegal and subject to confiscation and further penalty in the shape of a fine. The supply would speedily cease and the rest sought for would thus be obtained, and birds and animals would then have time for their family duties, and increase and multiply. The introduction of such a law could, I think, be very simply

arranged now we have so many municipal towns. No demand, no supply, is a well-known and acknowledged axiom, and needs no comment; we arrive at what we want by the simplest process, and no one is injured; the poacher of game turns his hand to other work, such as charcoal burning, hewing of wood, or such like, till the seasons come round, when he may again pursue his former trade, if so disposed. This, I think, commends itself as a very feasible plan to prevent indiscriminate slaughter, and gains one object at all events—protection from the Natives for a time; for they net and kill only for gain, and a prohibition of the sale of game puts them out of the market for a given period. What say ye, my masters, shall it be so?

I would, however, go further than "F." proposes, and under the head of the game include the animals as well as birds. Let them breed during the time that the sale of game is unlawful; the open season will thin them again quite fast enough; but there will be no fear of extinction, and that is what we are more interested in than any thing else. My plan, you will observe, meets one of the difficulties and obstacles that has hitherto prevented legislation to meet what is daily becoming a greater necessity; it leaves the planter and cultivator the power to kill animals trespassing and committing depredations on their property; it leaves the sportsman the opportunity of indulging in his pastime, if he chooses, and even the Native shikarrie may kill game, but he cannot sell it; he would accordingly consider it too great a loss of powder and shot, so we may calculate on being safe with him. Here then is the *beginning of preservation*; let it be granted a trial; it will put a stop to what "F." describes in his letter to the *Friend of India*, namely, the wholesale destruction now going on.

Extract from S. I. O. of 28th April, 1870.

If we may judge from the frequency with which letters and articles appear in the Indian papers on the subject of Preservation of Game, and the earnestness with which these letters and articles are written, we should say that Government will not much longer delay doing something towards complying with the demands so frequently and earnestly made. Although "Sport" in the abstract cannot perhaps rank in the eyes of Government with such questions as customs, abkarries, opium, public works, railways, and the like, it is a question of great importance nevertheless. Anything tending to make the people contented is of importance; and we would rather not guess what the consequences will be, if in addition to the many causes of discontent now pressing upon the Anglo-Indian, the means of healthy recreation in the field and the jungle should be taken from him. From one end of India to the other the cry is heard "the game is being extirpated."

It was the excitement of the chase—the delights of horse, dog and gun, that made the Englishman in India in days gone—in the days of Empire-building—contented with his lot in India; that as much as anything, made him *the* "Anglo-Indian." In these days of railroads, canals and telegraphs, life in India is and will be in strong contrast to that of the pagoda-tree and John Company; but the restlessness now so painfully evident among all classes of Europeans in India to get out of the country as soon as possible, should make the Government more keenly alive than ever to the necessity of availing itself of all possible means to induce men to become permanent settlers; and the "Preservation of Game" is one of those means.

The opinions and sentiments held and set forth by HAWKEYE in his letters published in our columns, are held by a large class of influential men in India, and they must

have weight in inducing the Government to put a stop to the wholesale destruction of game now going on. We are convinced that the time has arrived for legislation. The measure proposed by HAWKEYE in our last issue is well worthy of consideration and support, as being the first step in the right direction, and admirably suited to the requirements of the plains. It will probably be found necessary hereafter to make the law more stringent in order to keep natives and others within proper bounds, especially upon these Hills, where the slaughter of every description of game goes on so ruthlessly, and the produce of the gun or rifle is (as is currently reported) frequently sold or turned to account as part payment of wages.

"This beginning of preservation," to use HAWKEYE'S words is however, the essential point on which we would advocate early action, and we hope soon to hear of some short Act being introduced in Council to meet what is generally viewed as an urgent want. We also hope to see the Press generally take up this subject and endeavour to induce the Government of India to be more earnest on the question; at all events insist on a trial of the simple plan proposed, which at any rate will prevent wholesale destruction at all times and seasons.

I am glad to see that the object for which I drew my pen in the above cause has to a certain extent been realized, by bringing into the field your able correspondent "Grooved Bore." It is not my intention to argue on the statements he has made, but merely to point out that when condemning what he considers my plan or scheme, and pronouncing it impracticable, he overlooked what I stated in my second communication on the subject, namely, that I had only made suggestions in view to the question being agitated and thoroughly ventilated. I quite agree with G. B. that it will be absolutely necessary to prevent

the "*Oi polloi*" enjoying the privilege of shooting to the extent they now do; and this can be more easily accomplished by allowing no one the use of fire-arms for sporting purposes except by license, and the arms tax should be sufficiently heavy to prevent Natives obtaining a license on too easy terms. Your correspondent "Sambur" suggested a gold mohur and I think that a reasonable sum, but all this will be duly provided for, when we have shown sufficient cause for the question being taken up on public grounds by the authorities. If we can but induce the Commissioner to represent to Government the necessity for legislation on this particular object, the rest will follow in due course. It will then no doubt be ascertained under formal and official inquiry what injury is sustained by the cultivators and tillers of the land; what benefit will be derived from the introduction of game laws; and the whole question duly considered on its merits. It is generally admitted to be of importance, both in the interest of proprietors of houses and property on the hills, as well as to the visitors resorting to them; let this be acknowledged and affirmed by all who have a voice in the matter, and I do not see how the Commissioner can avoid taking it up. Once that is done we shall not have written in vain; it will then be thoroughly investigated and whatever the result, we shall have the satisfaction of having done our best in behalf of all interested.

On one point I must however be somewhat at issue with G. B., viz., in respect to "Fence" months and fines for shooting game during them. No real preservation can be effected without a cessation of persecution for a given period; it is so observed all the world over, and must be established here for any real benefit to the game. As for information not being forthcoming in cases such as G. B. adverts to, only let it be known that half the fine of 50 Rs. goes to the informer, and I am satisfied that the diffi-

culty will not be the suppression of evidence, but rather to distinguish the real from the false accusations that may be brought forward; why G. B.'s own special pet shikarrie would be the first to have him up for a breach of the law, for the sake of the reward, that he would get! Whatever the law may eventually be decided on, if any should be passed, one fundamental clause in my humble opinion, *must* be the establishing a "Fence" and a heavy fine.

EXTINCTION OF GAME IN INDIA.

For that is what it is coming to at last—especially on the Neilgherries, though relatively to all India. The Press however has awoke at last and I was very glad to see the articles on the subject of Game preservation in the *Friend of India*, the *Pioneer*, and the *Oriental Sporting Magazine*.

Let us all hope that the ever powerful Press will prove itself in earnest on the resuscitation of this important subject and not allow it to pass unheeded away or be choked off by a timid Government, as the last attempt was. In 1868, I took up my pen to advocate the preservation of game being satisfied of the then existing emergency for legislation on this matter, if so obvious then, how much more so now—yet nothing has been done to check the indiscriminate slaughter of every kind of game on these Hills and elsewhere. It is a shameful and disgraceful state of things—shameful on the part of the Government—disgraceful to those who ought to know better—there is no occasion to dilate on the subject, all that can possibly be said has been urged on the Powers that be and the public, but alas in vain!! and so it will be unless the Legislature will take the question in hand and provide a law to meet the *evil*, and *sin* of *extermination*. The want is not a Game Law in the full sense of that term, but a simple Act whereby a protection will be afforded and extinction prevented—three points only are required to meet this

desirable object. "Fence months—illegality of sale of game during such period and a Gun tax or license to shoot with certain pains and penalties for breach of the law." I drew up a proposed Act published in *South of India Observer* 27th October, 1870. I am inclined to think that even that, short and concise though it is, was perhaps too elaborate, but the draft Act sent up by the Madras Government to the Government of India was a thousand times more so, and I firmly believe that was the cause of its failure—the machinery was too complicated—I would ask attention to my remarks on "Game Laws" published in the *South of India Observer* 13th April, 1871, and now reprinted in support of a "*Game Act*," the special desire of every true sportsman and certainly of every humane person.

In further advocacy of this very important measure I am about to publish in a Pamphlet form the series of letters I wrote for the *South of India Observer* on game and its preservation, and indite this as a sort of preface to the work. That it is now as well timed as it was then, there is sufficient proof extant; for I am told that the sad havoc and slaughter of game of every description and at all seasons is still rampant; terms are wanting to express the disgust with which all sportsmen, and men of right feeling hear of stags in velvet and hinds in milk or in calf, being butchered by these unprincipled slaughterers but so it will be until they are brought within the pale of the law, they go out with the determination to kill every head of any kind of game they may fall in with. Only lately a party killed two stags in soft horn and a hind, the latter ten to one in calf, and they failed to bag the only legitimate game at this season of the year to wit *a panther*—Fie upon you all, how fully do you come under the sentence pronounced by the writer in the *Field*, "you are worse than *criminals* ye are *beasts*."

But it is with pleasure that I record how a brighter side of the above sad picture exists and an example set, that is worthy of the highest encomium. The Planters and residents of Kotagherry and its vicinity have, I am informed, established a mutual protection society for the preservation of game and under the law for trespass have succeeded in preventing molestation of game during the breeding season by the Natives, the result has been most favorable and game is on the increase, all praise is due to these honorable and true sportsmen.

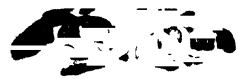
And why should not the same forbearance exist elsewhere, during "the season of grace" as Lord Napier in his elegance of elocution has happily called it in his minute on the Game Act—what pride can there be in killing a hornless stag—a harmless hind, or half a dozen ibex before breakfast, *in the breeding season.*

I have said enough for this once—if I have raised the "blush of shame" on the cheek of the elderly, or youthful slayer of the soft-horn stag or nursing hind I shall not have written in vain—Pray do not in future lay yourselves open to the obloquy of being called "*worse than criminals.*"

It is my firm belief, that what I have in former days called the "Poetry of Sport," "Stalking" is a thing of the past—Alas "the pity of it."

OCTOBER, 1875. HAWKEYE.

FINIS.



APPENDIX.

(REVIEWS.)

NOTES ON JERDON'S MAMMALS OF INDIA.*

FIRST NOTICE.

WE proceed to notice the foregoing work as we promised in our last issue.

In assuming the position of a Reviewer of this interesting little volume, we wish it to be understood that in a scientific point of view we do not presume to attempt to write a critique on the contents, but rather to recommend the perusal of the volume itself, by all those interested in natural history, and capable themselves of drawing their own conclusions as to its merits. On our part we look with favor on any work that contributes to our knowledge of the habits of the Fauna of this land of the sun, and we hail with pleasure this attempt on the part of our esteemed correspondent VAGRANT to test and confirm the observations made by our own (Madras) celebrated Naturalist, Dr. Jerdon. It is in this view, that our author has, evidently with much painstaking and labor, gathered here, there, and everywhere, notes descriptive of the habits and peculiarities of a great variety of animals large and small, and in almost every instance thoroughly established the

* *Notes on Jerdon's Mammals of India.* By Colonel
1871: Higginbotham & Co.,

correctness of the descriptive details recorded in the work by Jerdon, on which he (the author of the Notes) has now published his remarks. We observe very few instances where any difference of opinion exists, and such as do are not of any special importance. The mode employed to corroborate the views of others seems to us exceedingly well judged; it is effected by no formal scientific details of the several points of resemblance, such as color of hair, number of vertebræ, ribs, molars, and such like, but by anecdotes descriptive of habits and character, gathered from personal adventures and observations, told in a lively popular style, which will make the perusal of the book especially pleasant to all who have a love for, and enjoy field sports. The first part of the book, extending to 164 pages, is thus devoted to anecdotes of the chase, habits of game and other animals, and general observations, supported by extracts from notable naturalists. Interspersed with the above are tales of personal adventures, amusing and instructive; many curious facts picked up during the mutiny will be perused with interest; for instance, the chapter on camels, page 72, in which a short account of the celebrated Camel Corps is brought to notice. The diversity of the tales that are told will be better understood when we mention that the sporting experiences of the author embraces, as the index shows, acquaintance with almost every wild animal under the sun (of India), from the elephant to the shrew—and from Leviathan, the whale, to Lutra, the otter!!

In the second part of the volume the author says he has been induced by a friend, in whose opinion he has great confidence, to add the "descriptions" taken from Jerdon, "of such animals as may not be generally known, or regarding which there may be a doubt:" this leads to the bringing forward the names and specifications of some of the fauna already treated on in the first part of the book;

it does not however, in the slightest degree render Part II less attractive or interesting.

We believe that the author has extracted copiously from the letters published in the *South of India Observer*, under the signature of HAWKEYE. We cannot help thinking that Colonel McMaster would have done well to have included the very interesting letters of his own, under the signature of VAGRANT, which, from time to time were published in the same paper. We do not object to the extracts, especially as he tells us at page 212 that without HAWKEYE's notes, his own Memoranda would never have grown into a book; we must therefore say no more, but be content with what we have; and we may safely add that all those who provide themselves with a copy of this very interesting book, will, we are sure, also be content and satisfied that their money has not been ill-spent.

With one or two remarks we will conclude this our first notice of the notes. We observe, at page 137, an extract from H. B. R's letter, who writes from Kamptee, in 1847, on the subject of antelope's horns; it is therein stated that a pair of horns measuring 25½ inches, *weighed* 11*lbs.* 4*oz.*, can this, as to the weight, be correct? we cannot imagine it possible that any antelope's horns *off the skull*, and the socket empty, could weigh half that mentioned: is it an error? we suppose not, for further on it states that another buck's horns, only 24½ inches length, weighed 11*lbs.* 11*oz!* We never have weighed antelope's horns; but off the head, and no bone in the horn, they have generally *felt* exceedingly light, for it must be remembered the horn itself is hollow close up to the point. The author of the Notes will perhaps be able to enlighten us on this point. At pages 258-59, additional length is mentioned, but nothing said about the weight.

We have only one remark to make, and that is a personal

one: we cannot but think our valued friend VAGRANT depreciates his own work far too much—and we are quite unable to concur in his own estimate of his labor. We may add that the book is neatly bound, well got up, in clear type, with very few errors of the press, and in the phrase of the day is a very readable work. Need we say more?

SECOND NOTICE.

Having now carefully perused the above little brochure, we proceed to make some further remarks on the contents, though we must acknowledge that we experience some difficulty in selecting salient points of attack, for the author disarms us so completely by his modest preface, that we hesitate to unsheath the blade of criticism, and run him through and through, after what he says of himself as an "unscientific sportsman," and that the information contained in his rough jottings down cannot be worthy of the notice of a Naturalist; but when he proceeds to ask pardon for having formed different ideas on certain points from those of the eminent Naturalist on whose work he has grafted these notes, we are compelled to stab him, for it is by comparing information gathered not only by "unlettered sportsman," as well as the scientific Naturalist, that the knowledge of the habits and peculiarities of the several animals brought to notice can be established and confirmed, and the rough notes of a pains-taking observer of Natural History, like our author, are as valuable in their way as the most elaborate details of the more scientific pursuers of the same theme, it being we believe, the principal object in all such pursuits to obtain if possible undoubtable and thoroughly reliable proofs of the habits and character of certain animals, regarding which personal observations have not completely confirmed, in all minute particulars, the observations hitherto recorded. Taking these notes in this light, we repeat, they are valuable and of importance.

The author says in his preface, that he has avoided the fascinating theme of field-sports as much as possible: we do not quite understand why, but are glad the book itself does not corroborate the statement, for we find, from numerous extracts, a considerable portion of the volume devoted to that "fascinating theme." We presume the author means that he has not indulged, or let his pen run riot on his own reminiscences of sporting adventures: the more's the pity, for where he has so far gratified his pen, to illustrate or confirm what others have said, he has done so in such good style that we cannot but wish that he had done so more. We do not intend to scan over with critic's eye all the elaborate details this book contains, commencing with the elegant *Entellus*, (we suppose our author is a worshipper of the Darwinian theory, or, at any rate, this is a sign of it) and ending with the scaly *Ant-eater* or *Pangolin*. We could not do so if we wished, and feel quite satisfied that no one would read what we write were we to do so. No, our object is to touch on certain questions, points of dispute, which the contents of this volume do not set at rest, and on which more information is required.

For instance, Article 34, page 46,—*The Jackal.* Now, here we have a question which is still undecided, namely, the cry of "Bhalu," or "Kole," or "Phēēall," (we adopt VAGRANT'S spelling) truly described as a sound the most unearthly and melancholy man need hear. It is so, and yet positive proof as to the animal that makes it is not forthcoming; and our author, instead of bringing more light on the subject, makes even darkness blacker, by suggesting (page 50). "May it not be some signal, or call, or caterwaul of a tiger in person." To the latter proposition, we say decidedly, no! and we may add that as far as our opinion is worth anything, the cry is that of a jackal,—in what state of body or mind we are not at liberty to disclose, because we don't know. At page 143 of Jerdon's

Mammals, that gentleman gives us his version of the tale, and yet it is not satisfactory nor conclusive, because he has to rely on others for the information he quotes. The general evidence goes however to prove that the cry proceeds from a jackal. Our own experience confirms this, and we have heard the noise close under our bed-room window on these Hills, on more than one occasion, sometimes preceded by the ordinary howl of the jackal. Once we heard the cry after a tiger had been killed, but are quite unable to say, whether the dead tiger and the living Phēēall had been intimate friends. We have heard also of a sportsman going up to take post to watch for a tiger, hearing this cry, and shortly seeing a jackal, and immediately after out walked the tiger. VAGRANT will say all this is as much in favour of his theory as against it. With reference to the following passage: "Evidently his "cry is different from what it is at other times, which "indicates danger being near, as whenever that cry is "heard the voice of no other jackal is, nor is that particu-"lar call ever heard in any part of the country where there "are not large beasts of prey," (Page 143-4, Art. 136, *Canis Aureus* Jerdon's work). We can only say that we have heard the cry in the open country, far away from any haunts of tiger or other large beasts of prey. On one occasion, when after antelope, our shikarrie would have it that a hyæna was making the noise. We went in the direction and came on two jackals; but the wail had ceased. Our shikarrie *told* us that native folk had *told* him that the cry proceeded from either jackal or hyæna, when suffering from sore eyes!! We tell the tale as *told* to us.

The next question is connected with the wild dog, and the reputed fact, so declared by the natives, that a pack of them have been known to destroy the royal tiger. At page 148, Jerdon's Mammals, Mr. Elliot says, "the circumstance of their attacking in a body, and killing the

tiger is universally believed by the natives." Now whence this universal belief unless some grounds existed? These dogs have been seen in pursuit of the tiger, and a pack of twenty of these ferocious animals may be considered as a match even for royalty. Whatever the object,—destruction or simply driving away,—the fact remains, that they chase the tiger, and why not perchance kill him? In the *Field* of the 17th June, a writer declares his unbelief that such can be possible; and this brings us to the question regarding tigers climbing trees, not that the point is taken up in the Notes, but simply because if it were the natural habit of the animal he would set the largest and fiercest pack of wild dogs at defiance. We know that tigers can and do climb trees; but it is sufficiently proved that it is not their general custom to do so: having admitted thus far, we will say no more.

Passing over much that affords food for comment, but which, if noticed, would stretch this article to an interminable length, we proceed to pick up little crumbs here and there for discussion. We observe a slight difference of opinion on the subject of the "bell" of the sambur. Our author, at page 108, says he has heard the *roaring* of a stag, and describes the call of a hind as a "faint grunting low." He further speaks of another cry,—a sharp and ringing snort,—a signal of alarm. To this DEER-STALKER takes exception, as recorded at page 254, and we think justly so. Our own experience is that we have never heard a stag-sambur exactly roar like the red-deer: the difference between the bell of a hind and that of a stag being, in the latter case, a deeper, fuller and more ringing sound than that of the hind. We have heard a hind continue belling in a variety of notes, some of them amounting to a half squeal, as if suffering from sore-throat, which made us smile at the time. We do not pretend to interpret them, but we never heard her bell resemble a "faint grunting

low." It is a question not yet settled, what distinctive sound is conveyed by particular intonations of the bell: to the human ear the distinctions are not clearly perceptible. In commenting on these and other points connected with these "Notes," our object is to draw forth the opinions of other observers; and we know many, who, if so disposed, could give us interesting particulars of them.

We notice that our author will not even trust his own pen to describe the scenery of these beautiful mountains, but quotes at length from Dr. Benza, pages 103 to 108. We are not at all satisfied in our our own mind that VAGRANT'S pen would not have given a description equal, if not superior, to what he has extracted from the Doctor's work; at any rate there would have been the charm of originality and novelty about it, which we should have preferred.

THIRD NOTICE.

We must now proceed to take up here and there a few more subjects for observation. We are glad to note, in several places, pages 114-15, 125, 128, &c., &c., reference made to the necessity for introducing game laws, or something equivalent for the protection of our birds and animals. This question has been urged, off and on, continuously, by various writers in the *South of India Observer*, and elsewhere; we are glad to hear some hopes may be entertained that the Government will find leisure during the next session of the Legislative Council to turn its attention to this very important subject.

We have a few words to say about the Indian fox. Neither Jerdon nor McMaster notice one peculiarity in their description of this elegant little animal, namely, the distinctive mark on the brush about two inches from the root of the tail, where the hair is shorter and darker in

color, forming what may be described as a notch on the brush. We remember a very old friend, devoted to fox-coursing, who always would have it that the scent of that particular spot was exactly that of violets; it is not an unpleasant scent at all, but the imagination requires lifting up considerably, to arrive at the odour of violets. We have known instances of the pluck and stamina of these little animals. On one occasion, a ragged looking little varmint crossed in front of the line, the dogs viewing from the slips, so there was no lay in; it was a course of incessant doubles turns and wrenches; and after fifteen minutes, the little vixen had the best of it, and escaped; that these foxes rob birds' nests there can be little doubt, for a tame one we know of, whatever his humour, could never withstand the temptation of an egg.

Adverting to the remarks at pages 88 and 89, regarding the tenacity of life exhibited by the sambur, we can fully corroborate what is stated in the extracts: having in former days repeatedly witnessed similar cases, but of late years, whether it be from heavier metal and charges being used, or the superiority of the weapons of the present day, we cannot say, but such cases of numerous wounds failing to kill are more rare.

Of the four-horned antelope, page 126, we once had a tame specimen; the anterior horns were not well developed, but assumed the appearance described in the notes, as a knob or corneous tips; but they did not fall off: on the contrary, were quite firm; and had the little animal not come to the untimely end of all pets, would probably have developed into regular horns. This animal was most particular in keeping his upper horns ready for war. Finding a convenient slab of stone, he was constantly sharpening the tips, till they became like needles; but he was a gentle thing, and seldom, except in play, made use

of his formidable weapons. The natives in the Southern Mahratta country called this, and many other small deer found in those parts, though quite distinct in color, size, and habits, "Baikrie" or "Baikur!"

We quite concur in the author's remarks at page 143, that great confusion is caused by Indian sportsmen and others, using native terms, &c., and we commend the passage to the attention of all writers on sporting subjects.

Thus far we have reviewed the first part of the Notes. We have only one additional remark to make, and that is, that notwithstanding the author's opinion of "the detestable mode of poaching" referred to at page 114, we, and we believe our general readers also, would have preferred a well-told description of "Low-belling."

There is less work for the reviewer in Part II. of the Notes, for, as before mentioned, in our first notice, this portion of the book merely contains additional notes connected with the detailed descriptions of many animals already brought forward in Part I.

The remarks about the Indian otter, at page 176, are interesting; so is the escape of the spaniel from the jaws of the crocodile, page 178. We fail, however, to see that the "tale is most vilely told."

Our author's little speculation to establish a Game-preserving Company on the Chilka lake rather startles us. One season would about settle the question! and we would prophecy that the proprietors' money would very shortly be made "ducks and drakes" of. There is no need to enter into particulars,—difficulties on account of climate and the early decomposition of the slain,—the faintest taint being fatal,—the distances to be travelled over when the game near at hand has been disposed off; and many other drawbacks would, we fear, result as above described.

The seasons vary also, and the birds do not always resort at the same periods to the lake in question: we speak from late experience on this point. One word more: whenever there be suspicion of fishiness in any wild fowl, remove the back of the bird before roasting; we found the Brahminy duck most delicious eating when so treated. At page 167 of Jerdon's game birds, there is an amusing legend regarding this bird (the *Casarca Rutila,*) or Ruddy Shieldrake. The only approval we can record of our author's plan, is that contained in the concluding paragraph, at page 182, where he says "if it be successful, it would be one step towards a remedy for the greatest want of our Indian sportsmen—the institution of game laws."

On the subject of tigers taking their prey (page 199): we are not quite prepared to admit that the instance detailed sets altogether at rest the question as to how the tiger takes *game.* A stalk was not long ago observed by a sportsman where a brace of tigers were acting in concert, and a herd of sambur, some five or six, watching the result. One tiger attempted to drive a sambur past a rock, where No. 2 was lying in ambush; it was a failure, the deer headed for a small wood, and baffled his pursuers. At page 202, VAGRANT gives us a specimen of his own power of description, and as before said, we can only wish that he had given us more, and not trusted so much to the extracts, interesting and amusing though they be, to fill up his volume.

With the above, we conclude our review, if it can justly so be called, of the "Notes on Jerdons's Mammals." We prefaced our first notice to the effect that we did not attempt to criticise scientifically the work in question; we leave that to those concerned, and who are better qualified.

We have heard some express an opinion that it is presumption on the part of the author to take upon himself

to criticise the work of so eminent a naturalist as Jerdon; we believe this to arise from a misapprehension of the title of the work, as they will find on perusal of the author's preface and the contents of the book, that he had no such idea, far from it, indeed, for he depreciates his own attempt to afford any information, to such an extent that on this point, we are at issue with him, and when he describes himself as an unlettered sportsman, egotistical, untrained pen-man, &c., we get angry, and are disposed to say something harsh; our best plan however will be to ignore his bashfulness and tell him, in conclusion, as Alonzo says, in the *Tempest*, "you cram these words into "mine ears against the stomach of my sense."

THE PROPOSED GAME ACT.

THE following review of the Game Law, now under consideration of the Supreme Government, by our old friend and Correspondent HAWKEYE, will surely be read with interest, and we trust will meet with the attention it deserves coming as it does from the most zealous and experienced Sportsman in Southern India.

The long-looked-for action on the part of Government, for the Preservation of Game, has, at last, been made public. The whole of the papers on the subject have been placed at our disposal, and we accordingly publish them *in extenso*, for the information of our readers. In doing so, however, we reserve to ourselves the privilege of reviewing, in detail, the provisions of the proposed Act, and we propose to do so as early as possible, so that the opinions we may express, and the views we entertain, may meet the eyes of our Legislators, before the Act comes into force, if it ever does,—we make this latter reservation advisedly, as we do not as yet consider that the accordance of the Government of India to the project, is a matter of certainty at all, though we must, at the same time, record the hope that we may be deceived on this point.

The Councillors, one and all, acknowledge the difficulty that exists in framing an Act, suitable for the circumstances of this country; and even for the limited district of these Hills, are not quite satisfied that they can meet the object

in view, in such a manner as to avoid vexation and complaint on the part of the planters and cultivators residing on these mountains. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged very generally that such an Act, though oppressive here and there, is, at the same time a necessity, if the game is to be preserved, and not swept off the face of the land, as is now in rapid progress. Accepting this view, then, as to the propriety of Government in taking the subject in question in hand, the next point is to see how it can be effected with the greatest advantage to the many, and as little detriment to the few as possible. We are then to take the Law as now proposed as applicable for the present to the Neilgherry Hills only.

The Act resolves itself on two points—the fixing of a close season for the preservation of game during such period, and the necessity for taxing all persons who wish to kill and capture game during the open season by forcing them to take out a license for that purpose. These are the novelties to be introduced into this hitherto land of liberty as a sporting region; they are both reasonable and sound. It must at the same time be remembered that this liberty of sport has been so abused, that the penalties now to be enforced have been brought about by an indiscriminate and wanton slaughter, approaching extinction, that has prevailed for so many years, and for which some remedy is now absolutely required. The above are the two points on which preservation hinges. Let us now proceed to review the Act and the Minutes.

We would propose to add to the game described in para. 2, antelope and spurfowl. Partridges are not indigenous to the Hills, but some few have been introduced, and if unmolested will acclimatise; they will accordingly come under the provision of para. 5.

Para. 6 contemplates the introduction of the license to

shoot; this is most advisable, and the only suggestion to its provisions that we have to make is that the license remain in force for twenty-four months, instead of twelve. It would be inconsistent to charge a casual resident of three or four months only, the same as a permanent resident, for it must be borne in mind that by establishing a fence of five months, we actually only license the holder of a certificate to shoot for seven months in the year, or fourteen months in the twenty-four; under these circumstances the tax falls heavy.

Para. 8 ought to be made applicable to all districts of Southern India at once, so far as winged game is concerned. No game ought to be killed anywhere during the breeding season.

Paras. 9 to 14 are the penal clauses of the Act. We have little to say on them. Provision is not made for rewards being offered to detectors of breaches of the Act; this may be questionable, knowing as we do how vindictive the Natives are, bearing out the opinion of Lord Napier in his Minute, that "the poacher would escape, but "the inoffensive peasantry might easily be made the victims "of false accusations in respect to killing or secreting "game, and would have to pay black-mail to the Govern-"ment Game-keeper." Very true, my Lord, but it suggests itself that these results need not be apprehended if due care be taken in the selection of the Government agents. We have great faith in the well-known principle of setting a thief to catch a thief, and we would accordingly advocate the entertaining, as watchers and keepers, a few of the well-known native shikarries hanging about the place, who have no permanent employment, and would, we conceive, be but too glad of a situation with regular monthly pay. These men know all the haunts of the animals, are well acquainted with the inhabitants on the

Hills, are shrewd men, and capable of understanding the intention of the Game Act, and if sufficiently paid, and at times rewarded for good service, would prove of great assistance to the officer appointed to carry out the provisions of the Game Act. We would not advocate any expensive establishment at first; the principal—and indeed the only object immediately required being the enforcing and maintaining the observance of the "close time," and subordinate to that, the possession of a license to shoot during the open season. We shall, further on, discuss the question of preservation of certain animals, in reviewing the Minutes of the Members of Government; we now continue our observations on the Act, and we come to the most important clause in that document—

Para. 15.—"Nothing contained in this Act shall be held to "prevent the proprietor of any land, or any person with his "permission, from killing, capturing or pursuing game on "his land, without a license, provided always that such pro- "prietor or other person shall not in any way, or by any "means, drive, entice or otherwise attract game to his "land."

We presume that the foregoing is what is designated in the letter to the Government of India, as the "permissive" portion of the Act. We consider it open to grave objections; it is difficult to understand why this exception in the matter of taking out a license to shoot is made in favor of landholders; on what principle is it established? and why should such permission and reservation in their particular favor be granted? It is impossible to calculate the abuse and latitude that this clause in the Act will give rise to; the object is not appreciable, it is not in accordance with the custom of other countries, no proprietor of the largest estates in our native land has any such exemption, he cannot shoot his own pheasants, hares or other game,

without a license, why then is the proprietor of an estate on these Hills to be allowed this indulgence in the matter of protected game? A combination on the part of neighbours, all of whom can, under the Act, permit the game on their estates to be killed by other persons, will set at defiance the power of the Act; they will not take out a license, but the game will be slaughtered all the same. The clause is faulty also in not specifying the period during which the said proprietor, or person with his permission, may kill game; as it stands, there is no limit stated, and advantage would be taken of the omission, to the detriment of the animals to be protected. The words "except during the close season," should be inserted.

Of the remaining clauses of the Act, from 16 to 21, there is no need to take special notice. The Act, if approved by the Government of India, will, before being passed as a law, be subject to the scrutiny of a committee, and the details of the machinery of the Act well weighted and considered; the few suggestions we make in this article may then perchance meet any attention they may deserve.

There are, however, some further observations on the Minutes attached to the Act worthy of consideration, and which we now proceed to make taking the documents in the order they stand.

First, the short Minute by the Hon'ble A. J. Arbuthnot. It is to be regretted that the rough draft Act therein referred to by that gentleman, is not with the printed papers, for the sake of comparison, and more especially as it was drawn up by the late Mr. Breeks—the best judge of what would be required for the preservation of game on these Hills. Mr. Arbuthnot questions the expediency of a tax on guns, or a certificate allowing persons to shoot game. We cannot concur with our honorable friend on this point. We require some control over the numerous native shikar-

who may be said to infest these Hills, and we can see no such remedy except by a tax of some description, and and we prefer the license, as the least oppressive for the special reason that it affects only those who can afford to pay for the luxury of sport. The native can give up his gun, or at any rate his shooting—we will not defile the word "sport" by applying it to him,—and thereby avoid the tax, and the game will be preserved. The object of the Act will be defeated without some such protection from the indiscriminate slaughter in which the Native indulges. It is not a heavy penalty, if modified as we have proposed, and it ought in all conscience to be enforced during the experimental trial of the Game Act, for it must be remembered that the Act has to be put on its trial, and should for the first year or two be considered tentative only.

The Hon'ble Mr. SIM starts his Minute with an acknowledgment of the difficulties attending the introduction of game laws for India; at the same time this gentleman declares that such a law has now become a necessity, unless annihilation and extinction is to be tolerated. We quite agree with him, that the *sale*, equally with the capture, and destruction, of protected game, should be prohibited during the close time, and as before said we would apply this close time to the plains as well as the Hills, to prevent the destruction of the ground game, such as partridges, hares and quail, which is now being carried to such an extent during the breeding season, that extermination must shortly follow—we need only to refer to the markets in the large towns, and the itinerant sellers of game, who hawk it about even on these Hills, to convince our rulers that the work of destruction is incessantly going on: the lamentable result is too well known by the scarcity of game in many places where a few years ago it was abundant.

We now come to the elaborate and exhaustive Minute of

Lord NAPIER. To attempt a full, and extensive criticism of his Lordship's arguments would, if taken para. by para. extend this article to a degree sufficient to exhaust the patience of our readers, and prove of little benefit in advocacy of the matter at issue, namely, the introduction of a protective act for certain kinds of game. It is clear that the Baron is averse generally to the game laws, but is at the same time constrained to admit, under the existing state of things in this Presidency, at any rate, that some protective measure has become absolute—and that the time has at last arrived for action on the part of Government, to put in force some kind of law to meet the exigency that has arisen.

His Lordship's Minute is a remarkably interesting one embracing as it does the whole question, and reviewing in detail every point bearing on the expediency, or otherwise, of such a law being adopted. Written in language bordering here and there on the poetical, and in terms so elegantly expressed by this Master of Rhetoric, we are unconsciously carried away on the stream of eloquence, and feel ourselves disposed to admit the cogency and force of his arguments, simply because they are so admirably set before us, as to entice us to acquiescence.

We will not, however, allow our late Governor to have it all his own way, bewitching though his style may be—there are certain statements in the Minute requiring investigation as to their fallibility, and we propose taking these up in succession, as they occur in the document. Passing over therefore the first six paras. of the Minute, we arrive at the question to be discussed, viz., Game Law or no Game Law? Preservation or extinction? It is useless to disguise, or attempt to disguise, the fact that a "Game Act," will prove to be what his lordship evidently abhors—a "Game Law." He describes in para. 7 the

difficulties and dangers attending such laws; in para. 8 his strong belief that a general Game Law, is not to be thought of; and then in para. 9 qualifies the term, and uses that of "Protective Regulations," and then proceeds to discuss the expediency of them, eventually pronouncing after all in favor of a Game Act of some sort. My Lord, let us for once call a spade a spade!

With his colleagues, we consider that the late Governor has lost sight of the main point connected with the Game Act, namely, that of its experimental nature. The rights of proprietors and land-holders, the damage done to estates of coffee tea, or cereal crops, are all taken into serious consideration, we suppose under the expectancy of claims to compensation being produced, but in reality scarcely bearing on the point at issue at all—for it has yet to be proved, what as yet has not been done, that the damage by game is of such a nature as to call for any protective clause whatever in the proposed Act. On Tea, Coffee and Cinchona Estates, there is no actual destruction; in the grain fields the usual deterrent measures, such as a few lines of bark stretched round the crop, with here and there a scare-crow in the grain, is quite sufficient to prevent depredation by deer of any kind: until, as above remarked, complaints arise from these supposed causes, and satisfactorily proved to exist, the Government need not demur in their protective experiment. In para. 10 the features of the law are expressed,—the restriction of area of animals to be protected, and the character, the latter to be flexible and discretionary: exactly so; that is what we advocate, and what all experiments should be.

Para. 11 provides for the institution of the "close season," with certain reservations, to wit, that every planter should be able to kill the deer in his coffee garden, and the ryot the deer in his crop. Not only so, but his lord-

ship declares any prohibition of such right "would not be tolerable;" moreover that "absolute liberty must be left "to all proprietors and occupiers to destroy every descrip- "tion of wild animal on their own ground in all seasons," and he further declares,—nor "would this be enough," for reasons previously given. We differ altogether from the Baron; not only would it be "enough" it would be a great deal too much; if resolved on it would be providing that "proverbial thoroughfare" for the coach-and-four to gallop through, and which is supposed, rightly or wrongly, to be characteristic of all laws in all nations. As for limiting the pursuit of an animal, say "to the distance of one mile, in Government waste or forest," the idea is absurd,—we are sorry my lord, to use so strong a term, but just contemplate it for a moment: who is to mark the distance, and who is to know whence the mile begins, or where it ends? is the blood-thirsty planter, as he tracks the wounded animal by the gory trail, when he arrives at a certain point to cry "hold! enough!" and so let the poor beast go to die a lingering and miserable death? or is each planter to have a keeper or watcher, to accompany him in the chase, and on a mile being achieved, to shout out, as the keepers do on the Moors, "Boundary?" We might we think have been justified in using the word "Nonsense!" to such a proviso. We quite agree in what is said in the same para. regarding the proposed law being "imperfect" under the provisions stated, and that it would be "an Act for regulating the right of shooting on Government land;" against this we contend and protest. The law must be applicable to all, and especially in providing what his Lordship justly calls a "Season of Grace."

In para. 12 the flying game (our noble friend means ground game) is spoken of as insignificant in quantity,—the greater reason for protection, in our opinion—the migratory birds of course being excluded from the benefit

of the Act. His Lordship's remarks on the game to be protected, in the several clauses of this para., are sound, reasonable, and we believe generally correct; the uncertainty of the breeding season is quite so.

Para. 13 considers the period and duration of the close season, with reference to the period of breeding in the female, the state of the male in regard to horns, and the convenience of sportsmen. The latter we conceive quite uncalled for; true sportsmen will make the proper season suit them. They will not take advantage of the open months, if stags be still in velvet or the hinds in calf. The prohibition should be complete as far as it can be fixed, without the special convenience of any one being consulted. The season proposed appears unobjectionable, and as it so happens falls in with the opportunity acceptable to sundry visitors to the Hills. The protection of the "magnificent" animal, the bison, must be approved of by most men; at the same time it is not perhaps generally known that sportsmen are the culprits that have necessitated the protection now contemplated. Very few bison are ever killed by Natives; prejudice and absence of reward are in themselves sufficient reasons for this, but with the European sportsman it is different, and indiscriminate slaughter often occurs, the principal object being the possession of a trophy, large or small; and thus these noble animals are persecuted and slain in large numbers, we fear at times very wantonly. In not exempting completely the female of the sambur, his Lordship states that the course he recommends is consistent with the practice followed elsewhere, and states that in the Parks of England and forests of Scotland, does and hinds are annually thinned. True! but it is over-looked that the thinning on the Hills has been already effected, and to such an extent that it is our firm impression, that total prohibition is necessary during the first two years of the Act, to restore the number of deer to

the proper proportions; immunity from molestation alone can effect this, and therefore we urge it for consideration.

The remaining paragraphs of this comprehensive Minute are devoted to the discussion of the expedients for the protection of game, and the machinery for working out the provisions of the Act. We leave these for the consideration of the Council, and we now draw our remarks to a conclusion, trusting that what we have said may tend to elucidate in some respects the kind of law required.

In Mr. SIM's Minute he declares that it will possibly be necessary for the Government to possess the power of closing portions of State property, as reserves or breeding grounds. We are of opinion that at present these powers are unnecessary. It may come to pass that landed proprietors may hereafter wish to preserve game on their estates,—we know of some who already try to do so,—and then the restriction may be provided by the "expansive" nature of the Act, and the laws affecting trespass.

We now close this article with the hope that Government will soon be in possession of power from the Government of India to introduce a Game Act for this Presidency, and although we feel that the license or certificate system will prove to be the thews and sinews of the law, we are not blind to the fact that the "season of grace" (or fence months) is the beauty of the Act, remembering as we do the good old proverb, that "half a loaf is better than no bread," and therewithal to be content.

S. I. O., 4th July, 1872.

A CORRECTION.

Felices errore Suo,
LUCAN I, 454.

"Happy in their mistake."

IN the *Oriental Sporting Magazine* for August, page 368, we notice the following paragraph :—

"In the high regions we write from this month, commonly called "Ootty" (*which we have some difficulty in doing from the cold,*) there is not much in the shape of sport to relate, but we were very sorry to learn that the great sportsman and shikarrie, HAWKEYE, has been obliged to leave for England, his health having failed him after many years of toil, but he has left an immortal name behind him as a thorough gentleman sportsman, as a keen observer, and a well-known happy scribe on whatever sporting subject he handled. We hope to be able to report favourably of him on his arrival in England."

The writer of this has fallen into a very common mistake regarding the identity of the renowned HAWKEYE, who we are happy to say is still in India, and we trust that both we and our readers may have the satisfaction of reading many more of his sporting reminiscences. "The great sportsman and shikarrie," who is alluded to in the above para., and who has recently left these hills for England, on account of failing health, is Colonel DOUGLAS HAMILTON,

than whom, a truer, friend, a more kindly gentleman, a keener observer of nature, and a more enthusiastic sportsman, it has never been our good fortune to know. The regret at his departure is universal, and we can truly say with Hamlet,

> "He was a man, take him for all in all,
> I shall not look upon his like again."

We hear that he has arrived safe and well in England and we heartily wish him a speedy restoration to health and a life of quiet ease in the land of his birth.

We may truly state that he has legitimately shot more game on these hills, than ony other sportsman, and a sight of the trophies that adorned the walls of his house, of the sketches of incidents of the chase, and the relations thereof, was a rich treat and one never again to be experienced. There may be, we do not deny, men who have bagged more heads of game, but these are they who go in for indiscriminate slaughter, whether of hinds or of stags, or of any other beasts, small or big, that come within the range of their guns, and are known as "*fleshers*" and "*shooters.*" He was as much superior to these as Prospero was to Caliban.

Now that the Government is here, we take this opportunity of once more bringing to their notice the necessity and advisability of framing some stringent law for the preservation of game. Many times and oft we have strenuously advocated some movement in this matter, and we cannot understand why our rulers are so lethargic. It may be, perhaps, that there are no sportsmen among them; if such be the case, we can understand their not being personally interested; but there are true sportsmen in the country who are interested, and who are grievously hurt at hearing constantly of the wilful destruction and slaughter of the game on these hills.

Our valued correspondent, HAWKEYE, drew up and communicated a code of laws on this subject, which we published some time ago, but, so far as we can see at present, without any effect.

Perhaps, if our worthy Commissioner would take up the matter, and impress upon the Government the advisability of at once moving in the business, something might yet be done. Let him obtain a copy of HAWKEYE'S "code of laws," lay it before those in office, and impress upon them, with the eloquence of a NESTOR, the absolute necessity of taking some steps to stop the destruction of game, and we feel convinced that his appeal will not be in vain.

S. I. O., 31*st August*, 1871.

ADDENDUM

[TO SECOND EDITION.]

SINCE the publication of the first edition of this little volume, the Government of Madras have passed a law for the protection of Game and acclimatised Fish on the Nilgiris. The Act has now been in operation for more than two years and seems to have had the desired effect in preventing the injudicious and indiscriminate destruction of wild animals out of season, and the ensurement of good game and fair bags to the true shikarrie. The returns of the shooting season of 1880-81 of really good trophies of large game bagged and passed through the hands of the Taxidermist are as follows:—head of stag sambur, 26; bull bison, 4; black ibex, 7; muntjac, 9; tigers, 5; leopards, 3; and bears, 3. This may be taken approximately as one-half of the total killed.

At first the Government declared the fence months to be for all kinds of game from 15th April to 15th September inclusive in each year; but they have more recently notified, under Section 3 of the Act, that the close season shall be for large game, including

all game other than hares and feathered game, from 1st June to 31st October inclusive, and for small game, hares and feathered game, from the 1st March to the 30th September inclusive. During these periods it is declared to be not lawful to shoot at, kill, capture, pursue or sell or attempt to kill, capture or sell large and small game respectively.

Prior to the introduction of the Act certain gentlemen at Ootocamund formed themselves into a voluntary Association for the purpose of strictly observing a close season and for urging on Government the necessity of passing a game law. It is due mainly to the efforts of this Association that Government took action in this matter, and the result has been the promulgation of the following enactment which came into force on the 6th of May 1879:—

MADRAS ACT No. II of 1879.

PASSED BY THE GOVERNOR OF FORT ST. GEORGE IN COUNCIL.

[*Received the assent of the Governor on the 12th February 1879, and of the Governor-General on the 24th March 1879.*]

An Act to provide for the protection of Game and Acclimatised Fish in the District of the Nilgiris in the Madras Presidency.

WHEREAS it is expedient to provide for the protection of wild animals and birds used for food and of acclimatised fish, and to prohibit the killing, capturing and selling game and acclimatised fish in the district known as the Nilgiris, as described in the Schedule hereto appended, under certain conditions; It is hereby enacted as follows:—

Preamble.

1. This Act may be called "The Nilgiris Game and

Title and local extent.

Fish Preservation Act, 1879;" and it shall come into operation in the district aforesaid, or such parts thereof, and from such dates as the Governor in Council may from time to time declare by notification in the *Fort St. George Gazette*.

Interpretation-clause —"Game."

2. In this Act the word "game" shall include bison, sambur, ibex, jungle sheep, deer of all descriptions, hares, jungle-fowl, pea-fowl, partridge, quail, and spur-fowl, or such birds or animals as the Governor in Council may deem fit to specify by notification from time to time in the *Fort. St. George Gazette*.

Power to fix close season.

3. The Governor in Council may, by notification in the *Fort St. George Gazette*, from time to time, fix a season or seasons of the year during which it shall not be lawful for any person to shoot at, kill, capture, pursue or sell, or attempt to kill, capture or sell game, as may be specified in such notification within the district aforesaid.

Proviso as to private lands.

Provided that nothing in this Act contained shall preclude proprietors or occupiers of land from adopting such measures on such land as may be necessary for the protection of crops or produce growing thereon.

Protection of animal, bird or fish not indigenous.

4. Whenever any animal, bird or fish useful for food, not indigenous to the district aforesaid, is introduced into it with the approval of the Government with a view to becoming acclimatised or being propagated therein, it shall be lawful for the Governor in Council from time to time, by notification in the *Fort St. George Gazette*, to prohibit altogether, or to regulate in such manner and for such period not

exceeding three years as may be declared in such notification, the pursuit, killing or capture of such animal, bird or fish.

Power to prescribe rules for the regulation and control of fishing.

5. It shall be lawful for the Governor in Council, by notification in the *Fort St. George Gazette*, from time to time to make rules for the regulation and control of fishing in any stream or lake within the said district; and such rules may, with the view to protect acclimatised fish which may be believed to be there or may be hereafter introduced therein, prohibit or regulate the poisoning of the waters of any stream or lake, the throwing of any deleterious matter therein, the use of fixed engines for the capture of fish in any stream, and the use of nets of a mesh below a certain size to be defined in such rules for the capture of fish in such stream or lake.

Power of Government officer or police.

6. Any Government officer or servant or policeman producing his certificate of office, or wearing the prescribed distinctive dress or badge of his department, may require any person whom he finds committing any offence against Sections 3, 4 or 5 of this Act, to give his name and address, or, if there is reason to doubt the accuracy of the name and address so given, to accompany him to the nearest police-station.

Penalties for shooting, &c., during close season and for breach of fishing rules.

7. Every person convicted before a Magistrate of any offence against Sections 3, 4 or 5 of this Act shall be liable for a first offence to a penalty not exceeding rupees fifty and to the forfeiture to Government, at the discretion of the Magistrate, of the game, birds or fishes taken, and of all guns, engines, implements, nets and dogs used in or for the purpose of aiding

the commission of such offence, and, in default of payment of fine, to simple imprisonment for a period not exceeding one month, and for every second and subsequent offence to a penalty not exceeding rupees one hundred and the same liability to forfeiture, and in default of payment to simple imprisonment for a period not exceeding two months.

Procedure under this Act.

8. The provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure relating to the summoning and examination of persons accused and witnesses and to the levying of penalties shall be applied to proceedings under this Act.

Appropriation of fees, fines, &c.

9. All fees, fines and forfeitures realised under this Act shall be paid into the public treasury.

Award to informer.

But it shall be competent to the convicting Magistrate to award such portion of the fine or of the proceeds of the forfeiture as he may think fit, not exceeding one-half the amount of full fine authorised to be imposed by this Act in any case under this Act, to the person or persons on whose information the conviction is obtained.

SCHEDULE REFERRED TO IN THE PREAMBLE.

The Nilgiri District shall for the purpose of this Act be held to be bounded by—

The north bank of the Bhavani River from Attipadi in the Attipadi Valley to the junction of the Moyar River.

The west and south banks of the Moyar River from its junction with the Bhavani to the point in the Mudumullah District nearest to Gudalur.

A line carried thence to the head of the Pandy River (Ouchterlony Valley).

The east bank of the Pandy River to where it falls near the Karkur Pass into Malabar Payenghaut.

A line along the south crest of the Ouchterlony Valley and across the western slopes of the Nilgiri and Mukurti Peaks and Sisapara Ranges to Wallaghaut.

A line thence along the west crest of the Silent Valley (Malabar) Range.

N.B.—The district shall include the entire tract known as the Silent Valley.

A line from the south end of the above-named range to the Bhavani River at Attipadi in the valley of the same name.

