LEAVES FROM THE DIARIES OF
A SOLDIER AND SPORTSMAN



A SHOT FROM THE SADDLE.

LEAVES FROM THE DIARIES OF A SOLDIER AND SPORTSMAN DURING TWENTY YEARS' SERVICE IN INDIA AFGHANISTAN EGYPT AND OTHER COUNTRIES 1865-1885

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS, INCLUDING SOME OF THE AUTHOR'S SKETCHES

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PREFACE

IT has fallen to my lot during almost forty years of military service—chiefly in India—besides taking a part in sundry campaigns, to enjoy somewhat unusual opportunities of sport, especially with big game, and, living in close contact with natives, I have been able to learn something of their character and habits, and of their attitude towards ourselves and one another. I venture therefore to think that some record of my experiences may prove not uninteresting to those who cannot share the same.

The narrative presented in the following pages is drawn from the journals I have kept, the items being strung together in the order of their occurrence, without any attempt at scientific method; and, as it seems to me that the best I can do is to set things before my readers as I myself saw them, I have depended throughout upon my own recollections and impressions, and have as seldom as possible sought information in books. There may, in consequence, be occasional inaccuracy as to historical details which I have to mention, but I am not essaying the part of an historian.

Something of what I have to tell will doubtless not be new to those who, like myself, have sojourned long in the East; it is not, however, to such that I address myself, but to those of my countrymen who must be content to view our great dependency through the eyes of others.

Various incidents of the Egyptian campaign of 1882, here related, have already seen the light in an article written more than twenty years ago for *Blackwood's Magazine*, but it seems improbable that this should be in the recollection of the present generation of readers.

As to the orthography of Indian names, I have not adopted the "Hunterian Method," which, necessary though it may be for official purposes, is better adapted for Volapük than for the English language. Any prejudice I may once have entertained in its favour was effectually dispelled on hearing a traveller speak of "My rat," when he meant the well-known town Meerut, now officially disguised under the pseudonym of "Mirat."

Necessary limitations of space compel me to confine myself to the first half of my life as a soldier, and to omit, with other particulars of the subsequent twenty years, what appear to myself the most interesting of all my experiences, when wandering in Koordistan and Persia.

This preface would not be complete without an acknowledgment of the valuable assistance I have received

from my brother, the Rev. Father Gerard, who has not only read through the proofs, and made some useful suggestions for the improvement of the book, but has enhanced its value by furnishing it with an excellent Index.

MONTAGU G. GERARD.

ROCHSOLES, LANARKSHIRE,
25th May 1903.

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CHAPTER I

GIBRALTAR—1864-1866

GIBRALTAR, more popularly known as "Gib.," or "The Rock," was perhaps one of the most favoured stations in the early sixties, and gunners desirous of qualifying for Horse Artillery, by three years' foreign service, almost invariably endeavoured to put in their time there.

Besides that obsolete numerical, a Brigade of Artillery (ours, the old 1st, mustered 1100 strong), we had six line regiments quartered within the two and a half miles, from the casemates at the north to Europa Barracks at the south; everyone was an honorary member of every other Mess, and the whole garrison pulled thoroughly well together.

Guard duty, if irksome, had the compensating advantage of leave being open all the year round, and we gunners, who had but one officer's guard, "The Ragged Staff," enjoyed all the benefits of this arrangement, without the attendant drawback of having two captains and seven subalterns on this duty one day in every six.

In those days, and probably now also, things were kept up very much on a war footing. Sentries on the North Front mounted guard with loaded rifles; gates on the land side were closed from sunset to sunrise; no civilian was allowed in the streets after 12 P.M. without a lantern, and

a pass from the town major; and only one door on the harbour side was allowed to be opened up to midnight, and then only under stringent regulations.

Ships passing the flagstaff at Europa Point had to show their colours up to sunset, and it was the joy of the guard on duty at this battery to blaze off under any shadow of an excuse—first shot across the bows, second astern, and third at the rigging of any boat omitting this compliment. If the ships were inward-bound, they had the additional mortification of being boarded when they anchored in harbour, and made to pay for the ammunition.

This custom, which was similarly exercised at Tarifa and Ceuta by Spain, was eventually abolished, after an English brig had been accidentally sunk.

The Moorish Castle, where a good many of the gunners are quartered, is a capital place, when once you get there, but a pretty stiff pull up from the Mess-house in the square, some 300 feet below; and there is said to be an order still extant, "That not more than one officer in uniform is to ride on the same donkey."

There is a charming view from the gardens there, and, in the summer, one escapes the smelly heat of the town beneath. The picturesque old tower, all pitted with cannon-shot, conceals, according to tradition, a large treasure, bricked up by the Moors before surrendering to Charles V., and some attempts at excavation were permitted in my time. The expense, owing to the hardness of the masonry, and the certainty that Government would claim everything found, however, checked researches. At one time attempts were in fashion to reach the bottom of St Martin's Cave, where, it is said, General O'Hara's sword still lies at the furthermost point yet reached. In my recollection, at least three parties claimed to have beaten the record, one lot having gone ahead for

four hours; but the uttermost attainable point still remains a mystery. The air seems to be perfectly pure and clear, so far as men have yet penetrated. In fact, some of the numerous side passages lead one on long after the main roads have closed, and explorers had to use a ball of twine to secure their return. Tradition has it that the cave crosses the straits into Africa, and that the apes—introduced to the Rock by a former governor—had come across by this route.

One year also there was a craze for climbing the back of the Rock, between the Signal Station and O'Hara's Tower, and the ascent and descent to Catalan Bay, 1,400 feet, was, I think, made in four hours.

In the great siege, it is said, a party of about a hundred Spaniards scaled the cliffs by night, and hoisted their flag at the Signal Station, but as they were unsupported, the position, next morning, was stormed by our grenadiers, the survivors being thrown over the precipice.

There was a story of an English "globe trotter," out for an evening ride beyond the Spanish lines, who, afraid of being locked out for the night, as first gunfire had gone, attempted to gallop through the sentries, instead of riding round by their main guard. One Spanish sentry shouted at him ineffectually, but managed to lay hold of his bridle as he passed, and the idiot cobbed him over the head with his hunting-crop. However, the Spaniard hung on, some of the guard doubled up, he was made prisoner, and marched off to Algeciras, 8 miles. There he was promptly tried by Court-martial, and sentenced to be shot, for striking a sentry on duty, and the Governor of Gib. had all the bother in the world to obtain a reprieve until diplomatic representations could take effect.

In my time the Spaniards were uncommonly civil to

us, and we used to ride, shoot, and receive their hospitality to an extent that would be impossible in our more densely-inhabited land.

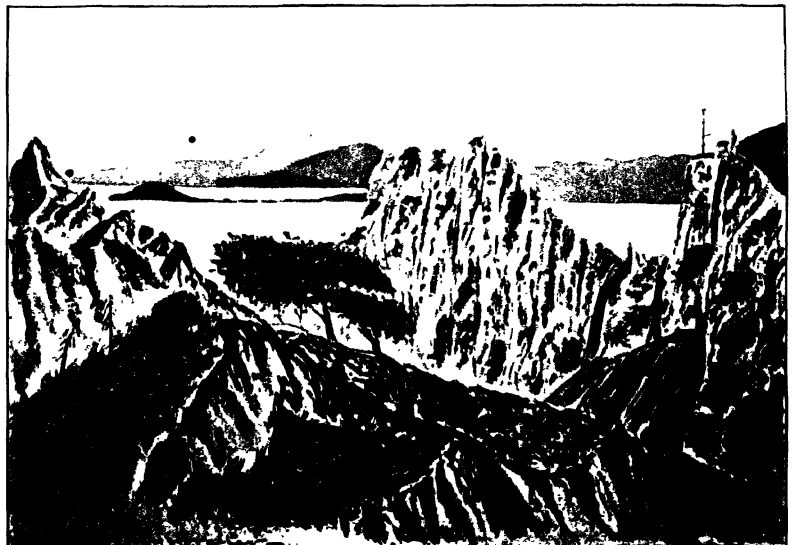
Every year the Captain-General of the province asked for a list of British officers wanting game-licenses, and these were given without payment, and guaranteed the holder against all molestation. This was a courtesy which it would be vain to look for from our Revenue Department.

The Calpe hounds were also entirely dependent on the good-will of the peasants, and in those days one seldom met with any incivility. As the country was wild and but scantily cultivated, little, if any damage was done to the farmers. There was practically no jumping, but a deal of scrambling, the fox being chiefly hustled about amongst scrub jungle on hill-sides, or through ravines.

A couple of Spaniards followed with picks and spades, as earth stopping was not practised, and the only chance of that greatest of all rarities, "a kill," was by digging-out. The whole was a jolly day's outing, but precious poor so far as hunting went; and when once you ran into the *sōtos* of the cork wood—deep, tangled marshy brakes, with gigantic brambles festooning the trees—you were pretty sure to be there for the day. Once, when the greater portion of the pack had been rioting in the same patch for an unconscionable time, I asked the huntsman what he supposed they were on.

Well, sir," he replied, "it's some of them pore puppies led away by one of them there nick-numonses; they smells that sweet they does! . . ." I fancy that what he dignified by the name of ichneumon was a mere pole-cat.

Owing to some international difficulties as to the surrender of deserters, one could not take a soldier servant into Spain, and we had to make shift to carry our guns slung on the back when off shooting, and to



VIEW FROM NEAR THE ROCK GUN, GIBRALTAR.

From a drawing by the Author.] [*To face page* 4

picket and feed our horses at the *ventas*, where little but shelter was to be had for love or money.

For the very enjoyable, but rough, riding tours further afield, to Ronda or Grenada, you carried your little all in saddle-bags, or, if luxuriously inclined, chartered a baggage mule.

The *ventas* (inns) were often simply long barns, used at one end for people, and at the other for animals. You were lucky if you got a raised *adobe* platform on which to lie, and of privacy there was none. The gift of a little tobacco earned more civility than mere money, and to be allowed to buy a feed for your horse, you had to lift your hat and address the raggedest hanger-on as "Señor." "Vaya usted con Dios," to the muleteers one met, always ensured a kindly reply, and whilst the offer of a cigarette was gratefully accepted, the proffer of a nip from your flask was invariably declined, even on the coldest day. *Aguardiente*, reeking of aniseed, was the only procurable spirit, and smelt so strong that only the badness of the water occasionally forced us to take it medicinally. At some of the larger villages, *Vino blanco* and *Vino tinto* (both rough country wines) were obtainable, and the only food to be had for love or money was soup—usually uneatable for garlic—eggs, or very fair omelettes, and chocolate. One could generally buy bread, coarse but palatable, and in the autumn grapes and other fruits were to be had for the picking, round most of the farms.

The Calpe hounds, to which I have already alluded, were a subscription pack of twenty to twenty-five couple, and met throughout the winter on Tuesdays and Fridays. We had an English huntsman, whilst two officers of the garrison acted as whips, and another officer was annually elected Master. The kennels were on the North Front, with a good sea-breeze, but there was a heavy mortality in summer-time, and all drafts had to come from England.

I believe that, now, want of support and local friction have made the pack dependent on a wealthy native.

Shooting, also, in the vicinity of the Rock, was more an excuse for a day's outing, amidst wild and charming surroundings, than productive of any tangible results. Red-legged partridge, a very few hares and rabbits, and some roe deer in the depths of the cork wood, were the only indigenous species. Cock, snipe, and wild fowl came in in the winter, and throughout the autumn there was always a sprinkling of quail, whilst occasionally, when these were delayed in their migration to Africa by south-west winds, we got what was termed an *entrada*, and might find a plentiful supply for perhaps only a few hours. In the big marshes at Casa Vieja—50 miles off, about half-way to Cadiz—there was fair snipe-shooting, and quantities of duck and geese in the winter; whilst at Bocca Leone, some 18 miles north beyond the cork wood, I have seen over a hundred partridges in the day, but too wild to lie to a dog, and beaters being unprocurable, we never got a chance save at an odd bird.

In the spring of 1866 some officers of the Rifles, who had had Cashmere experience, made a ten days' trip to the Sierra Nevada about Malaga, and saw some thirty ibex. I do not think that it was generally known previously to this that any still existed.

As there was practically no game preservation, all species, whether migratory or otherwise, were terribly persecuted, and as wild as hawks; and when we started for a day's sport, it was quite a toss-up whether on arrival we should find the ground in the possession of another party.

I may best indicate the character of our sport by a few statistics recorded in my contemporary journal. With three guns, and sleeping out for a couple of nights, we got six partridges, thirteen quail, five pigeon, three "various." Two guns for two days—fourteen partridges, two quail, one

rabbit, two pigeon. One day—three cock, two snipe, one quail, one plover, one "various."

There was an extraordinary shooting accident during the winter of 1865. Two officers of the 15th had driven out to the first river, for snipe, on an "outside car" (the only style of vehicle to be got for hire on the Rock), and at the "Marsh," met two of the 86th who had come by boat across the bay. It turned out a terrible day, with torrents of rain, so they gave up. The sea having got up considerably, all four started on their return journey on the car, which had a led horse and a postillion to help them through the sand.

Not far north of Campo is a small stream spanned by an old Roman steep-pitched bridge, 200 or 300 yards from the beach, but seldom used, as the bar at the mouth of the rivulet is usually absolutely dry. The driver of the car never thought it necessary to make the detour by the road, and before the party, who were muffled up against the drenching rain, had fully realised that the stream was in full flood, they were into it, and the water catching the step of the car, overturned it, and, encumbered as they were with wraps, they could not gain their legs, and they as well as the vehicle were swept out to sea. Of the six men and two horses, only Captain H—— of the 15th, the postilion and the led horse, who broke his traces, escaped alive; and the two former were only rescued, dead beat, by a Spanish *carabinero*, who chanced to be passing, and who rode into the water to their assistance. It was said that one of the officers who had come by boat, on being offered a lift back on the car, gladly accepted it, saying he had an uncomfortable presentiment of being drowned that day.

We got far better sport on the Moorish coast, and out of ten days' leave, could get about six of shooting.

Local steamers ran to Tangiers twice weekly, doing the journey in about four hours going, and three hours

returning, thanks to the strong current setting in from the Atlantic.

As was first discovered, I believe, by a French privateer sunk off Ceuta reappearing a few days later near Tangiers, there is a strong under-current running out from the Mediterranean, thus affording the curious paradox of water running up and down hill at the same time. Anyhow, sailing ships never attempted to beat seawards through the "Gut" during westerly winds, and numbers often anchored for some days off Gib., waiting for more favourable weather. There is an old tradition that, a century and a half ago, when the Rock was threatened with a siege, a ship with the plague on board attempted to come into harbour, and a frigate was sent out with orders to sink her, if necessary with all hands. Aided by this persuasion she managed, in the teeth of a strong head-wind, to prove the possibility of beating through.

In my days there was no pier at Tangiers—the ancient Mole having been blown up by the English when we evacuated the place at the end of the seventeenth century—and not even small boats could get alongside dry land. Passengers landed cock-a-stride of brawny Moors, who waded in waist-deep, and ladies were carried ashore shoulder-high in chairs.

The solitary hotel of those days, Vincent's, in the centre of the town, extemporised out of an old Moorish house, was provided with only the bare necessaries of life, but, as usual with a French landlord, the *cuisine* was very fair.

A room near the citadel gateway is pointed out as the quarters of the great Duke of Marlborough in the days of his early soldiering. The streets are narrow, irregular, and dirty, and the prison, where malefactors are herded together like wild beasts in mere cellars, seemed a perfect *inferno*.

Justice there, though rough and ready, was, judging by

the tranquillity of the country, pretty effective. We saw one prisoner flogged through the streets at the tail of a horse, and every now and then his escort halted, and he had to proclaim that he was being punished for stealing that animal. I was told the poor wretch was beaten down to the sea, there ducked by the soldiers to refresh him, and then flogged back till he dropped, alive or dead, no one seemed to know or care.

Great numbers of Jews, restricted to a certain quarter, and allowed no headgear save a skull-cap, pervaded the town, and their decidedly handsome women were very much *en évidence*, and valued money considerably more than reputation.

To go into the interior, we had to apply through the Consulate for a soldier, who was paid a dollar a day, and accompanied travellers just to show that they were under the Sultan's protection. Woe betide the tribe within whose limits anyone came to grief; they were held absolutely responsible for whatever accident might happen.

Moorish soldiers, who in those days wore no uniform, formed a sort of hereditary caste, and being naturally in a chronic state of arrears of pay, had, on the whole, a somewhat hard life of it.

An offending tribe gave a grand chance of wiping off some of their old dues, and after the more portable property had been annexed in the name of the Government, some of the more hungry troops were given free quarters on the offenders, as the expression was, "to eat up the tribe," which they literally did. The system, from a traveller's point of view, worked well, and the tribesmen met with were most solicitous for his welfare.

On one occasion, when moving our quarters from one valley to another, several Moors who had been accompanying us as beaters wished us *salam* when we came to the watershed. On being asked through the interpreter

why they would not see us on to our destination, they replied, as if it was the most natural thing in the world, that they had a quarrel on hand with these neighbours, and might get shot if found on their ground, but that we were perfectly safe.

The only case I ever heard of, of a sportsman running any risk, was when a party were shooting wild pig on the Riff coast near Ceuta. Late in the afternoon the top-most gun spotted a *Kabyle*, with a long matchlock, evidently ignorant of his presence, stalking from the rear one of his friends below. He watched with some curiosity until the Moor, who was some 80 yards off, took up a position behind a rock, and began to blow up his match and take aim at his comrade, when, thinking it time to intervene, he gave him both barrels of B.B. in the rear. The man was so astonished that he dropped his matchlock and rolled down hill, speedily disappearing in the thick scrub.

Through Monsieur Vincent's help, an interpreter could easily be hired, and baggage mules for the bedding, stores and cooking utensils, which had to be taken with us; and for a couple of guns and a soldier servant, three baggage animals usually sufficed.

The Moorish soldier was mounted, and we generally walked, shooting our way. The useful Monsieur Vincent had a farm about 15 miles south-west of Tangiers, situated on a palmetto-covered plateau, with lovely springs of water below, overlooking some large marshes at "Shaf el Akab," a couple of miles from the coast, and 6 or 8 south of Cape Espartel. This we used to hire for a mere trifle, and as it at least contained bedsteads, tables, and chairs, it was a great convenience.

The climate there was simply perfect in the winter, though occasionally there was a gale and broken weather. We had as a rule bright, clear, sunny days, sufficiently

cold in the early mornings to make it difficult to cap your gun (we were in the days of muzzle-loaders), whilst by luncheon time, at one of the fresh clear springs, generally shaded by a fig- or olive-tree, it was a toss up whether it was preferable to lie down in the sun or the shade.

Wild borage (very useful for claret-cup) and watercress existed at the springs below the farm, whilst mushrooms in abundance were found in November, and they formed a pleasant variety to our somewhat scant *cuisine*.

On one occasion, after eating a certain quantity of mushrooms, my friend and I simultaneously remarked that they seemed singularly flavourless that day. On calling up our servant, he explained that "those" we had sent back in the morning were such "nasty black things" that he threw them away, and had substituted some nice "white ones" he had found growing near; however, no ill consequences ensued.

A sheep only cost a dollar, though, after all, there was not much of him; and on one occasion, one of the party put it to the vote whether we should not have one *per diem*, so as to have daily fresh kidneys for breakfast.

I give no details of the sport, which, however interesting to ourselves at the time, would be less so now to my readers, I will only note that some pig-sticking has, I believe, been managed in later years, not far south of Tangiers.

On the western coast, near Mogador, the Moors occasionally ride down partridges, chasing a covey at full gallop across the undulating, sandy stretches of ground met with in the neighbourhood of the sea, until, after three or four flights, the birds skulk in some of the low thorn clumps, where the men dismounting kill them with sticks.

Picnics to the lovely cork woods were a great feature

in the summer, and a most enjoyable change from the glaring heat of the Rock. We generally sent out provisions on a baggage mule, and cantered out early with a feed of barley for each horse, which was simply picketed under a tree for the day.

The "Convent" was a favourite rendezvous. On one occasion, before starting homewards, we were larking our horses over some small jumps there, and one of my brother officers (no light weight) came a cropper with a hired hack, which, though apparently none the worse at the time, died that night after his return. Mr Montegriffo, the owner of the hireling, thereafter used to inform his customers, on every possible occasion, that he never hired horses to midshipmen, officers of marine, or Mr C——.

The first-named of this proscribed class certainly tried livery stable-keepers pretty sorely, and to see a dozen of them start flogging hard, racing against each other down the narrow and crowded main street, beat the finish of an ordinary race hollow in point of excitement.

When cantering on the beach beyond the lines, Spanish pedestrians never troubled to move for an officer of the garrison, but when they caught sight of a "midshipman's ride," they turned and ran for the deep sand, knowing it was a case of dear life.

At the Calpe Hunt steeple-chases, held just under the Queen of Spain's chair, there was as a *finale* a hack-chase of a sovereign ($5) sweep. On one occasion this was won by a sporting middy on one of Montegriffo's hacks, a fairly good haul of about fifteen pounds. Mr Montegriffo, who witnessed this, instantly claimed the money, threatening proceedings as soon as they returned to Gib.; so the boy, with great promptitude, rode down to the beach at Campo, hired a fisherman to row him on board his ship, and turned the horse loose to shift

for itself; and I think it was three days before it was recovered.

At a cricket-match played between an eleven of a man-of-war in harbour, and one from a regiment of the garrison, there was considerable excitement, as the finish was a very close affair. The former team had nine wickets down, but only required half a dozen runs to win, and upon one of the sailors who was "in" making a good hit, the impartial blue-jacket, who was umpiring at that end, was seen waving his bat wildly overhead and shouting, "Run, Jack, run like blazes." Upon this, the "Tommy" who was his co-umpire promptly gave the batsman as "run out," and the latter, to keep up the spirit of the thing, threw his bat down and offered to fight the soldier. The termination of the match was therefore unique, whilst the term of "the impartial umpire" was long a standard joke in the garrison.

There were some lovely-looking streams in the hills, to the north of Castellar, but I never heard of any trout in any water thereabouts. From May to July one could get a day's fishing in some of the rivulets, particularly near the mill in the cork wood, but I never caught anything but small barbel or dace, and these only with worm or paste. Though I have seen fish rising occasionally, I did not get half a dozen with fly in as many hours' actual casting. I see it noted one day that we saw eight or nine snakes in the water, one bright-green one swimming, with head out, at a great pace.

Beguiled with the story that sea-trout were to be found at the mouth of the Guadiana, I once set out to make an attempt upon them. Having painfully and laboriously reached the spot and set to work, I had scarcely wetted my line when a pair of carbineers appeared, made a prisoner of me, and marched me off to

their colonel. He was very civil, and, after a few questions, released me, and I went back to my fishing. But this remained the only noteworthy capture of the day.

In January 1866, we had great excitement over Prim's revolt, and for a week or ten days were deprived of our overland post. Proclamations of the ambitious General were posted everywhere, even in the streets of Gib., and it was not until the 22nd we heard of his flight into Portugal. One officer who was at Malaga at the time of the outbreak, told an amusing story. Seeing a considerable crowd and some ferment in the streets, he asked a lounger, lazily smoking his cigarette, if there was a bull-fight on. "No es nada, Señor," replied the Spaniard; "un pronunciamiento, no mas" ("it's nothing at all, sir, only a revolution").

Every August, the small town of St Roque was enlivened by the annual bull-fights, which lasted three or four days, and the whole place was *en fête*.

The most interesting thing was to see the arrival of the drove of about a score of bulls, from the upper mountains, wild, savage-looking customers with long spreading horns. They were driven in by mounted herdsmen with blunt lances, and it was decidedly advisable to keep clear of their way. The contractor who supplied these had four or five trained oxen, which formed round his horse, and allowed him to ride safely into the midst of them, when he wanted to separate any from the crowd. I remember seeing a notice posted up, that the young bull "Aguardiente" would be let loose in the streets of St Roque at 9 A.M. the next morning, when the more enterprising spirits of the population distinguished themselves by baiting it as it appeared, and being chevied over walls and into houses in all directions. As we had started somewhat late, we had rather a push to get our horses safely inside M'Rae's

doorway, before the streets were given over to the use of the bull.

Like almost every other man I ever spoke to on the subject, I went "just for once to see what it was like," thinking I should never care to go to a second bull-fight; but we got so interested by the marvellous nerve and pluck shown, by the *chūlos* especially, as to forget the cruelty, and all performances were fully patronised, not only by our officers, but often by ladies also. The bull ring is in the regular style of a Roman amphitheatre, with a sanded arena, 60 or 70 yards in diameter, enclosed by a 6- or 7-foot wooden barrier. From this rise some twenty or thirty tiers of masonry steps, of about 20 by 30 inches wide, on which spectators sit, almost on the toes of those on the row above them. The narrow entrances, on the principle of the Vomitoria of the Roman Colosseum, are few in number, and situated about half-way up the tiers of steps; and the only distinction as to prices of seats for the public is between *sol* and *sombra* (sun or shade), the whole place being open to the sky, and at 4 P.M. pretty grilling on the sunny side.

The *coup d'œil* of the parterre, brilliant in sunshine, and packed with peasants in gala dress, and women in bright but harmoniously-blended coloured robes, with the constant play of their fans, forms the most brilliant scenic effect conceivable.

Six bulls are usually killed in an afternoon, and the real blot of the whole performance are the broken-down horses, with their right eyes bandaged, some twenty or more of which are often killed in an afternoon.

The *picadores*, whose lances have a big boss a few inches from the point, to prevent their penetrating, and can never stop a determined charge, are sheathed in armour up to the waist, and once they are down are as helpless as a crab on dry land.

The splendid way in which the *chūlos* (some twelve or fifteen of whom are in the ring) risk themselves to save their comrades and attract the bull's attack, is decidedly the most interesting part of the whole performance.

There is a step along the barrier, 2 or 3 feet from the ground, to enable them when pressed to vault over, and here and there screens in front of it, sufficient for a man to step behind, but too narrow for the bull to follow, and behind these the *picadores* are generally dragged. The performances of sticking the *banderillas* into the withers, and of the *matador* giving the *coup de grâce* with a rapier, difficult as they are esteemed, do not compare in interest with the play of these *chūlos*, who, with their bright-coloured scarves, seem like a swarm of gaudy butterflies around the victim. I cite a single instance of their marvellous address. I saw one *toreador* step lightly between the horns of a charging bull, and hop over the animal in his blind career.

Occasionally, at the close of the *fête*, they had rather an amusing parody of the performance. In this case a young bull with balls on his horns was turned in, and any of the spectators who liked might descend into the arena to display his prowess. No blood was shed, and damages were confined to a few *gamins* being tossed or trampled on, and an odd donkey acting as a *picador's* horse being rolled over.

We had an unpleasant outbreak of cholera in August 1865, both its introduction and progress exhibiting several curious features. The 19th Regiment came to Gib., and were there disembarked to await a sailing transport for the Cape. Previously to their departure from Malta, a ship with cholera on board had arrived there from Alexandria, but had been kept in strict quarantine, and no case had occurred anywhere on the island. A

day or two after their arrival, and quite six or seven since their departure from Malta, a "suspicious" death occurred in their camp, which was on the Algeciras side of the bay, outside the Land Port.

I remember some medical officers, who had been on board, assembled to investigate the matter, discussing it an hour or two later at Mess, and only one of them, with Indian experience, seemed convinced that it really was a case of cholera. Anyhow, the camp was moved as far as the limited space of the North Front permitted, to the Mediterranean shore towards Catalan Bay, where there was fresh ground and a different water-supply.

Two more cases shortly afterwards occurring removed all doubt, and the epidemic set in steadily, first raging on the North Front; then following up with a couple of cases in the casemates in the two barrack-rooms on either side of the main roadway, as if it had walked in by it; then gradually working southwards through the town, occasionally sparing the entire side of one of the narrow lanes, and finally dying away at Europa Point, some three months after it had first broken out. The curious feature was, that, in the short space of 3 miles, it was never universally prevalent throughout, and houses and troops in the centre and south were unaffected, weeks after it was raging in the north; whilst when those living at the casemates and in the town had got rid of it, it was prevalent about Rosia and the south barracks. Most of the civilian inhabitants managed to clear out before the quarantine cordon was put on, and this simplified matters considerably. I forget what the death-rate averaged—I think about forty a day—but we soon had to give up bands or firing parties for military funerals, as these depressed the soldiers, and eventually, during the worst of the time in September, the subaltern on duty from each regiment, and a small escort, paraded at hospital at 6 A.M. daily to bury

any of their men, as quietly as possible, who had died during the night. The convicts—who numbered about a thousand, and were men of extra bad character, and lodged in the hulks—suffered the most, and, I believe, lost 14 or 15 per cent. of their number. We were put in strict quarantine by Spain, as well as by every Southern port, and all exit from the North Front was hermetically closed by Spanish sentries. After several days' starvation, so far as fresh supplies were concerned, an arrangement at last was come to with the Spanish authorities, and rather a quaint market was opened in the middle of the neutral ground.

Two lines of ropes kept buyers and sellers 40 yards apart, and you had to shout out and make your bargain across the intermediate space. When terms were arranged, the seller carried his basket, consisting of fruit, vegetables, or fish, midway between the ropes, and retired back to his side. The purchaser then went forward, deposited his money on the ground, and walked off with his purchase, whilst to complete the transaction a *guardia civilia* then advanced, took the coins in a pair of tongs, dipped them in vinegar, and handed them over to the seller. This somewhat mediæval arrangement seemed to work smoothly, and laughable as the precautions appeared, they proved efficacious, as not a single case of cholera occurred in that part of Spain.

We were thus isolated for thirteen weeks, and though the first of us were allowed to land at Tangiers on the 7th of November, an old notice in the Gib. *Chronicle* runs: "In the event of the removal of the cordon, the hounds will meet at St Roque on Tuesday, 14th November, and Friday, 17th, at the first *venta*"; so we were not really released till about the middle of that month.

Early in September the wing of one regiment under orders for the Mauritius was to have embarked on a

Tuesday, but on the previous Sunday a case of cholera occurred in the Engineers' barracks next to them. They were accordingly hurried on board, but when loading their baggage the following day, one of the fatigue party was attacked. He was removed to hospital, and no further case occurring, the ship, as soon as all was ready, unmoored, and anchored in the bay a mile or so out, with no further communication with the shore. At the end of three days they signalled "All well," and were ordered to proceed on their voyage. Nine days out, I think, cholera appeared, and nearly fifty men died.

A remedy that appeared tolerably efficacious was a wine-glass of gin and bitters, equal parts. At all events, if taken in time, it was probably a preventive, and less nauseous than chlorodyne.

Owing to the exceedingly cramped ground on the North Front, field-days were little more than a march past, and even these were discontinued during the summer, when, on account of the heat, troops wore white, with serge overalls and straw forage-caps covered with white. It was found at Malta that the infantry, who wore peaks to their caps, suffered severely from ophthalmia, whereas the gunners, whose eyes were unprotected, escaped unscathed.

The chief work of the artillery consisted in mounting and dismounting heavy guns, of which 68-pounders of 112 cwt. were about the biggest we had in battery. I do not think we had above a dozen rifled guns, 110-pounder Armstrongs of 82 cwt.—thought wonderful pieces at that time.

On one occasion, the Khedive of Egypt, passing through in his yacht, came to witness our practice with these as a great curiosity. Our sighting shot at 2500 yards blew up the buoy, which was moored as target, and, as luck would have it, a white squall coming on, the range boat was unable to place another, so he went away much

impressed. On another occasion, at 2200 yards, in ten shots we sank three targets, and certainly both they and the 40-pounders were very pretty shooting guns.

At ordinary practice with the old smooth bores, we were often much interrupted by sailing ships drifting into the way, and we had occasionally to suspend firing for an hour or so.

One day, when we had only two more rounds to fire, a full-rigged ship got becalmed between us and the target, so we had to kick our heels until she had drifted clear. It was getting late, and our men were anxious for their dinners, so at length our captain thought that he would risk it. The fuse was, however, somewhat short, and the shell burst dangerously near the vessel, on board which we saw considerable commotion; signals of distress were hung out, and a boat put off for the shore. My commanding officer thereupon mounted his horse, anxious to get in the first explanation to our colonel, but on arrival at the brigade office found himself forestalled by a sea-faring man, who was enquiring for the officer commanding the artillery. Upon asking what he wanted, he said that he had come to excuse himself, as it was not his fault that he had got in the way.

Our captain promptly assured him that he would make it all right for him, and that he need say nothing further on the subject, so as soon as the skipper had cleared out, he slipped off without reporting this little incident.

The officers of the garrison had a charming bathing place at a little-used creek, Rosia Bay, where one could dive into 40 feet of water, and where large parties assembled on hot summer afternoons.

It was also very exhilarating bathing off Europa Point on a rough day, when you had to take a header into one of the big rollers just as it broke on the rocks, and get

carried out clear of them by the ebb. It was popularly supposed to be 100 fathoms deep at this point, and easy as it was to get in, it was rather difficult to emerge again without being dashed up, to the detriment of your elbows and shins.

On one occasion the appearance of a school of porpoises amongst us caused a perfect panic, conjuring up as it did visions of sharks, and we accomplished our return to the shore in record time. There were a certain number of sharks off the slaughter-houses at Catalan Bay, but they were very seldom seen on the northern side of the Rock. Nevertheless, a sailor of the U.S. corvette, the *Kearsage*, was taken down by one at a bathing parade in Algeciras Bay. This vessel, which had sunk the celebrated *Alabama*, was at Gib. shortly after the fight, and her officers, who were a rougher lot than any I have since met, received a good deal of hospitality. Contrary to the accounts which appeared in the English papers of the splendid shooting made during the hour and a half's duel, the officers assured us that they had only been thrice touched, once only seriously in the rudder post, and then by a blind shell. They only claimed to have twice hit the hull of their antagonist, the second of these, from an 11-inch Dahlgren gun, sinking her outright.

In the winter of 1864 we had visits both from a French regiment, whose steamer had damaged her machinery, and from a contingent of Austrian officers, delayed from a somewhat similar cause, both *en route* to join the ill-fated Emperor Maximilian in Mexico.

They dined frequently at various Messes, but the latter were far and away the more appreciated, and were voted a "real good sort." As many as could hire hacks came out with the hounds, and rode right well, whilst at after-dinner feats of strength or skill they more than held their own.

All of our senior officers then were Crimean men, and having been myself at a French military school, I was inclined to ascribe to national antipathy the very disparaging stories they told of the behaviour of our allies throughout that war, to which, as a young sub., I eagerly listened on all possible occasions. The events of the German campaign half a dozen years later, however, proved that their criticisms were more than justified.

Talking of Crimean reminiscences, thirty years later, the then Russian Governor-General of Turkestan asked me most warmly after our 77th Foot (I think), whom he quite regarded as an old acquaintance, and I was ashamed to be obliged to confess that they now had disappeared under a territorial designation. As he expressed it, he had often had to meet them, and knew and respected their colours; for whenever they saw them advancing, they felt there would be wigs on the green, and he seemed to cherish a chivalrous admiration for his old opponents.

There was but little yachting, or even boating, at Gib. in those days, and only two or three cutters of a few tons were kept by any one of the garrison. A melancholy story attached to one of these. Captain C—— of the 100th Regiment, a keen yachtsman, had given the man in charge of his craft leave for the day, and persuaded a couple of his brother officers to accompany him for a sail. Whilst they were running free, one of their caps was blown into the sea, and C——, who was steering, leaning over to pick it up, overbalanced and fell overboard. His friends, profoundly ignorant of how to handle a boat, lost their heads, and ran to such a distance before they managed to lie to, that poor C——, who had been swimming strongly and shouting out directions what to do, failed to reach the boat, and was drowned.

CHAPTER II

CENTRAL PROVINCES—1866-1868

HAVING with some difficulty obtained a transfer to Field Artillery, I found myself posted to the 14th brigade (May 1866) in India, and was ordered to join the C/14th at Kamptee forthwith.

Whilst the army list showed this station to be in the Madras Presidency, by the map it appeared to be very much nearer Bombay, and the Staff at Gib. candidly avowed their ignorance of the correct destination. Eventually, on 1st June, I sailed for Bombay by the P. & O. *Massilia*, a 10-knot paddle steamer of 1640 tons and 400 h.p., considered rather a good ship in those days. Though pokey and stuffy in comparison with the boats of modern times, things were done far more liberally then than in these days of competition, and if fares were high —first class, Southampton to Bombay, being about £95—all liquor was free, champagne being given twice a week, and ships carried both a brass and a string band, which played daily, forenoons and evenings. Meal hours differed somewhat: lunch was at 11.30, and dinner at 4. On reaching Egypt, after an eight-day voyage, we heard that the boat from Marseilles with the mails was delayed, so we had to wait three days at Cairo. It is impossible to conceive anything more different from the palatial hotels of that city nowadays than the pot-houses they were at the period I speak of.

The Hôtel Orient, at which we got quarters, can only be described as a beastly hole, and this was the more surprising as, owing to the construction of the Canal, and Ismail Pasha's loans, money seemed no object, and prices were exorbitant—even Arab drivers and shop-keepers looking askance on anyone who did not produce gold in payment. Instead of the easy drive of nowadays, across the Bridge to the Pyramids, we had to cross with our donkeys by boat, and it took from 3 A.M. to noon to accomplish the trip there and back again. There was a line of rail then direct to Suez, by which we reached it in four hours, sailing by the *Malta*, a screw steamer of 1942 tons and 500 h.p., on the 13th June: she was infested by ants, and rolled badly when we got into the monsoon.

Captain Sherard Osborn, R.N., was one of the passengers, and I remember his pointing out a spot on the African side where, in previous years, when making a chart of the coast, they found an inland lake of volcanic origin, cut off from the sea by a wide sand-bank. They dragged their boat across to explore this, and found it was teeming with sharks which, they supposed, had entered at an unusually high tide, and these followed them, and even snapped at their oars, being apparently starving.

After a rough monsoon crossing we anchored at Bombay, twenty-five days from leaving Gib. No Europeans lived then in the "Fort," hotels were all at Byculla, and the town was generally rather in a state of collapse, after the over-speculation caused by the boom in cotton, due to the then recent American Civil War.

There was an amusing story then going about of a rich young native merchant bringing a charge against S——, the genial head of the Bombay Police, for abusing and horse-whipping him—a cross-summons being out from that functionary against the complainant for furious driving. Young Bombay in giving his evidence stated that

when driving into the Fort, he had passed S—— sahib, and immediately afterwards heard him calling, "'Stop! stop!' but not knowing he meant me, I kept on; but when I heard him shout 'Stop, you soor!' (pig), then I knew he meant me, and I pulled up."

A score of years previously this class had been kept in pretty good order by the old "Smashing Brigade," composed of youngsters up on language leave or pleasure, at the Presidency town, who rejoiced in a regular organisation and order book, extracts from which read, for instance, thus, "The Brigade will parade in double column of buggies at close interval at ———." "The advance guard will move off at 11 P.M., securing the police in ——— Road, and overturning their sentry-boxes on the top of them. Objective of the expedition: to storm Ranchunder Shroff's (money-lender's) bungalow and duck him in the pond."

The walls of the Fort, since demolished, then existed, and considerably circumscribed the principal business quarter. A curious commentary on the ways of a century back is shown by an old order that the officer on guard at the Main Gate (Bombay) "is not to deal in fish."

In June 1866, the Great Indian Punjaub Railway was open only a short distance up the Nerbudda Valley beyond Bhosawal, but with the impetus caused by the high price of cotton, it had been extended to Budnaira in Berar, on the way to Nagpore. Reaching this place on a Saturday, I had to wait at the *dâk* bungalow (which was constructed chiefly of matting) until the Monday, before I could get on by a construction train, and the day of rest was made hideous by the railway people coming up for a big drink, which culminated in a free fight of a very rough-and-tumble description.

Eventually I proceeded by a contractor's engine as far

as the Wurdah river, whence, hiring carts for my baggage, and a palanquin having been sent to meet me, I accomplished the remaining 60 miles in three days, attempting a little shooting on the way, with scant success.

Our garrison consisted then of one British Infantry battalion, one Madras Cavalry, and two infantry regiments, a horse- and a field-battery of the old Madras Artillery, and a third one of the old Royal Artillery.

Equipment and armament all totally differed one from another, and great jealousy and some friction existed between the two as yet imperfectly amalgamated Services.

About this time, on the first of the old Honourable East India Company batteries going home to Canterbury, a large crowd was found assembled there to meet them, who exhibited little enthusiasm, and soon dispersed with an injured air. It transpired subsequently that the out-going battery had spread the report that a "black" battery was coming to relieve them.

Prejudice apart, from what I saw of the old Madras Artillery, they were not up to the standard of the Royal Artillery, either in smartness or discipline.

As soldiers there practically lived in white clothing, and seldom donned cloth tunics, in some corps in which the fitting-on of new kit was perfunctorily performed, the turn-out was occasionally decidedly comical. At one inspection of a battery whose commanding officer was a bit slack, the inspecting officer, pausing aghast in front of a gunner whose tunic fitted like a blouse, and the length of whose hair reminded one of a volunteer bandsman, turned to his brigade major with the query, "Good God! C——, what the deuce does this man remind you of?" "Well, sir," remarked C——, screwing his glass into his eye and measuring the man up and down, "I think he looks d——d like one of my aunts."

At the General's inspection, some months after I joined,

the three batteries were timed at "removing" a disabled gun, the C/E, with one of only 6 cwt. taking fifteen and a half minutes, the F/20, with one of 10 cwt., twenty-two minutes, whilst the old Royal Artillery battery, the C/14, with a gun of 13½ cwt., did it under the ten minutes.

There were no stables at this station, and troop horses —ours being chiefly stud and country-bred—were picketed out in all weathers, and did just as well as in the costly lines of nowadays. They were fairly shaded from the sun by rows of *neem* trees, and the only precaution that seemed necessary was to strip them when heavy rain began, and keep their blankets dry, the stable picket giving them a rub down, and clothing them up as soon as the downpour ceased.

All commanding officers in those days could flog native followers at their discretion, and I remember the battery sergeant-major bringing one up to our captain at morning stables: "Please, sir, this ghorawallah (groom)——" "Give him a dozen!" broke in the officer. "But, beg pardon, sir," resumed the non-commissioned officer, "this ghorawallah wants three days' leave."

There is the time-honoured story of the sergeant-major complaining of the laziness of this class of men. "They goes to their ghurkos (houses), and they sit on their pitcheys (haunches), and they smokes their hubble-bubbles, and they don't care one kooch fikar (no thought) for nobody!"

Up to the present day the Tommies' barrack-room vernacular remains the same, just a word of Hindustani thrown in here and there to leaven the whole, such as the prisoner's explanation when charged with beating a native follower:

"I told him to look jeldi (quickly) with that there beer, and he said 'Abiy, Abiy' (presently), so I maroed (hit) him over the head with a lakri (stick)"; and the

usual exhortation of the baggage-guard to cart-drivers: "Come, now, you just look jeldi with them there byles (bullocks)."

Owing to the presence of Madras regiments, all the servants locally procurable in the bazaar were from that Presidency, and spoke English, a great convenience to newcomers. As is currently said, new arrivals are importuned to engage them by the specious protestation: "I very good Christian, Sahib: eat beef, drink brandy, curse and swear, same like master," which, according to their ideas, comprise the salient outward signs of Christianity.

Calling at the bungalow of a friend, who happened at the moment to be in his tub, and who was enlivening his splashes with singing some fragments of a hunting-song, "Is your Sahib at home?" we enquired from his servant. "Ha, Sahib." "What is he doing?" "Nimaz-parta (reciting his prayers)," gravely responded the domestic.

Their language is peculiar, as they invariably introduce the participle on all occasions, such as "done doing," "done going," "done telling," down to "done deading," to intimate that a favourite dog had died.

Some subalterns occasionally wasted a good deal of time and ingenuity in teaching their dependents our English tongue.

One carefully drilled his boy to reply to any enquiry as to whether the Sahib was at home, with, "You be blowed!" and it was not till the latter had had his head punched two or three times that he sadly realised that "his face had been blackened," as our Aryan brother puts it; and another taught his "butler" a regular catechism, of which I can only recollect: "*Q.* What is the first duty of a good butler?" *A.* "Never to make harkat." *Q.* "What's harkat?" *A.* "Asking for money."

A servant of one of my brother officers who had got

a day's leave in order to get married, returned in the evening rather down on his luck, and explained that his *fiancée* was a Christian, and the "Padre Sahib" refused to marry them, so he wanted one day's more leave to become a Christian.

A petition I saw soon after my arrival, which was sent by a discharged servant, asking for money on the score of his wife's death, wound up with the touching P.S.: "Please send money quick, as she won't kip."

Despite the monsoon, one had a good deal of work—riding-school or mounted drill from 5 to 6 A.M.; stables, 6.30 to 7.30; orderly room, 8 A.M.; attending breakfasts, or pay, 8.30; one's own tea and bath, 9 A.M.; sword drill, trumpet-calls, etc., 10.30 to 11, then one's own breakfast, 12 o'clock. Stables or foot-parade, 5.30 to 6.30 P.M., after which evening ride, dinner at Mess, and early turn in; so that Sundays and Thursdays, the invariable brigade holiday throughout India, were the only days one could get out into the country.

Some of the veterinary surgeons of those days had apparently begun life as common farriers, and were as different as possible from the educated gentlemen one meets nowadays in that branch of the Service. "Old J——," a rubicund vet. of the Madras Cavalry, was wont to become somewhat noisy, if amusing, when in his cups. One night an official of the Educational Department, who was a University man, and ranked rather high as an inspector of something or other, in an after-dinner argument at Mess, with very questionable taste sneered at the view taken by J——, and hinted that a veterinary surgeon was scarcely qualified to express an opinion on such a subject. "Oh, well," said J——, "I may be a horse doctor, but I'd a•d—d sight sooner be that than a —— usher," and the *sobriquet* of the "Bally Usher,"

stuck to the wretched man, so long at least as he remained in those parts.

For a fancy-dress ball at Christmas time, one of the guests returned to his bungalow after Mess, and attired himself in the garb of Old Gaul, preparatory to repairing to the festive scene. His faithful "bearer," who had never seen a kilt before, watched his master in astonishment, and evidently thought his sahib had dined too cheerfully, and was scarce responsible for his actions. When, therefore, a friend drove round to pick him up in his dog-cart, and the Scotchman proceeded to start just as he was, his perturbed servant rushed out into the verandah, with a pair of trousers over his arm, and imploringly called out after him: "Sahib, Sahib, pantalona bulgaya!" ("Sahib, Sahib, you've forgotten your trousers!").

On one of my first evenings I saw three snakes—one of which was killed inside the Mess-house, the other two crossing the road—when riding, whilst in the succeeding six months I do not think I saw another half-dozen altogether.

A well-known gunner, when field-officer of the day, had a terrible experience. Cantering round the guards at midnight, on one of those inky-black nights of an Indian monsoon, he lost his way and fell down a disused dry well 20 feet deep. Though he escaped with a shaking, his horse was killed, and as there were several cobras inside who hissed at him whenever he moved, he had to pass the night sitting on the dead body of his charger. It was not till the next morning that he was missed, nor was it till noon that he was found and rescued.

A very charming brother officer who had an amusingly abstracted way of taking things, often gave the idea by his replies that he was thinking aloud. Once when a Mess

guest, and asked where he would like to sit at dinner, he dreamily answered, "Between two hard-drinking officers of the mounted branch." This same absent-minded man got bowled over, horse and all, by the Horse Artillery coming at a gallop through our battery intervals, a theatrical effect rather admired at that time. Our commanding officer, who had not noticed the accident, on seeing him on foot, enquired "Why the devil he had dismounted without orders?" "Please, sir, my horse has broken his leg." "Then shoot him," said the irate Major. "Please, sir, I've nothing to shoot him with," was the naïve reply.

At one field-day, being charged by cavalry, who as usual wheeled off on nearing the battery, one non-commissioned officer of theirs, with great swagger, brought his horse round within a yard of one of the guns, when as he passed, the No. 2 (as the numbering then was) gave him a dab with the sponge-head, all covered with the greasy residue of black powder, up the side of his face, and despite discipline, there ensued an unchecked roar of laughter.

There was little sport to be got in the immediate neighbourhood. A brother subaltern and myself had a few couple of Persian and Polygar dogs—coarse greyhounds—with which we had occasional runs, with jackals or foxes. There were also a few very wild antelope, after which we toiled weekly, but as an express rifle was then unknown, and the weapons we used had a 3-foot trajectory within sporting ranges, success was not commensurate with our exertions.

I recollect, on one occasion, after several hours vainly following a herd of twenty to thirty antelope, as I was nearing the grove of trees where I was to meet my friend and our horses, like a "griffin" as I was I thought I would chance a shot into the brown of them; so putting up the

150-yard sight of my twelve-bore, as they were quite out of range, I gave further elevation by aiming a couple of feet up the stem of a shady tree beyond the herd, and loosed off both barrels. Of course they bounded away untouched, but a dismal wailing arose from under this tree where it seems a party of travellers had been busy cooking their food, and my two bullets had ricocheted through them. Greatly taken aback, I was on the point of paying up to silence their clamours, when my friend, a far older hand, attracted by the shots, arrived upon the scene, and on hearing how matters stood, turned fiercely upon them, asking "What the deuce they meant by getting in the way"; and they were so taken aback by finding the case put in this form, that they slunk off without further hints at *baksheesh.*

One day, when walking, rifle in hand, through a *dāll* field, waist-high, on the chance of an antelope, I started a hare, which 100 yards further on began squealing piteously. On my running forwards, a huge brown owl flapped up—the hare, which was so mauled or confused that it could not escape, having apparently been seized by the back as it passed.

At this time, so serious was the question of prices in the Central Provinces—in which newly-started Free Trade allowed a ring of native dealers to charge whatever prices they chose (e.g. *gram*, a kind of pea used for forage, which had formerly sold at eighty pounds per rupee, was now at ten pounds, and other things in the same proportion)—that in October '66 we had two outbreaks, when the Sepoys began looting the *sudder* bazaar at Kamptee; but they dispersed on hearing the alarm guns, knowing that the British troops were getting under arms. As an instance of how well the enlightened native understands Free Trade, the annual contract for grain for the Government animals had as usual been tendered for

and assigned to the lowest offerer, who had to deposit, I think, Rs.40,000 as security. However, when the stipulated date of delivery came round, the man appeared, with the story that though he had purchased the necessary grain in the districts, the *sowcar* B——, who for many years previously had had a monopoly, had bought up all local transport, so that he could not bring in his supplies.

The contract then had to be put up again, and was taken by B——, the only man in a position to tender, at an advance of something like 100 per cent. on the former bargain, and it was currently reported in the bazaar that the original tenderer was merely an agent of B——'s, the forfeit of Rs.40,000 being a mere bagatelle in comparison with the enhanced price of a lakh or two of rupees thus obtained.

It was generally believed by the natives that Free Trade was introduced as a punishment for the Mutiny, as under the old *nerrick* system, when local magistrates fixed the bazaar prices according to the harvest, all food was so much cheaper for the poor.

There was a good story at this period of a remote tract between Guzerat and Sind, the Thur and Parkur district, as it was officially designated, but which was known to the natives as "Colonel T. Sahib ki illaka"—"T.'s kingdom," the said initial belonging to an old Deputy-Commissioner who administered his province rather by common-sense than by law. On the Governor of Bombay making a tour through the country, a notice was published that anyone wishing to complain might appear before him. Several Bunias, whose "corner" in food had been frustrated by the Commissioner's action, at once came forward to complain to His Excellency, when "T." promptly placed them under a police guard, and keeping them one day's march in rear of the Governor's camp, did not release them until this dignitary had left his district.

The methods of the "King of Thur and Parkur," as he was often styled by the natives, showed a fine disregard for law when opposed to justice, and he was credited with having torn up usurers' bonds, and cow-hided the holders when any very pronounced instance of sharp practice had come before him. These unconstitutional proceedings so endeared him to the bulk of the inhabitants that he kept a district the size of Yorkshire quiet throughout the Mutiny, without the aid of a single British bayonet. Even the Bunias, whose rapacity he checked when they had fully felt the weight of his hand, either from respect, or from the conviction that it was useless to fight against him, submitted quietly to the existing order of things. Arbitrary and despotic rule, if justly administered, is far better suited to Oriental character than our slow and tedious legal formalities.

The great O——, in pre-Mutiny days, when Resident of Baroda, I think, had to adjudicate in an important suit between two wealthy natives. The litigant, who had the weaker case, on the eve of judgment being pronounced, sent a bribe of 50,000 rupees to him. O—— kept the sum, decided the case against the sender, and built a racquet-court and a swimming-bath for the cantonment with the money. There is a characteristic anecdote of how he obtained the great ascendancy which he enjoyed over the Bheels. Out shooting, the beaters in a body declined to enter in a dense clump of thorns in which a savage tigress was supposed to be. Upon their refusal, O——, with the remark that "He never asked anyone to do what he would not do himself," handed his rifle to a Bheel, whose spear he took, and entered the thicket alone, the animal sneaking out at the opposite side.

A young officer, who was decidedly careless over money matters, finding himself sued by a Parsee shopkeeper

for an amount which he was convinced was enormously exaggerated, was recommended to employ a native *vakil* (lawyer) in his defence. The latter, on being apprised of the nature of the claim, named a very moderate figure at which he could successfully defend the case, but with the stipulation that the defendant was on no account to interfere with his line of defence. On the case coming into Court, the pleader, to his client's horror, admitted the receipt of all the articles charged for, but in reply produced half a dozen witnesses who swore to having witnessed their delivery and seen them invariably paid for in cash on the spot.

Another officer, summoned for assault and battery, to which there had been no eye-witnesses, finding three or four of these produced by the complainant, ordered his own servants to attend on his side, and by simple force of numbers scored a complete acquittal.

There was a typical story how, during a scarcity of grass at Cannanore, the bazaar cow-keepers used to open the gates of compound gardens, and drive their cattle in at nights, the ridiculously inadequate fines imposed by the cantonment magistrate, in the rare instances when they were caught, proving no deterrent.

At last one well-known major, whose flower-garden had been frequently devastated by these nocturnal raids, shot one of the intruders, but was promptly summoned, and had to pay up the value of the cow, some thirty or forty rupees. Emboldened by this legal victory, his tormentors recommenced their visits, but this time the owner, who had men on watch, sallying forth, gave the cow-herd both barrels of small shot, whilst some of his servants who were lying in wait raised the cry of "Chor, Chor!" ("Stop, thief!"), and away scoured the injured man to the bazaar, hotly pursued by them.

As, native-wise, he was fully convinced that a trumped-

up charge of robbery would be preferred against him if identified, he never ventured to complain, and had to remain in seclusion until he had picked out the pellets.

On one occasion, at a *Gymkhana* at Ahmedabad, we had a race for police *sowars'* horses, half-way round the course, with a field of twelve to fourteen starters. Immediately after the start, one of the competitors, whether by accident or as a happy thought, turned sharp off the track, which was there unenclosed, and made straight across the loop of the course for the grand stand. All the rest of the field, with one solitary exception, apparently imagining that their friend was stealing a march upon them, turned and followed suit, and the lot charged down, riding over a crowd of natives, who were chiefly squatted on their hunkers, gaping in the opposite direction, till one after another their mounts tumbled over the ropes, many of the riders landing on their heads in front of the stand, whilst the solitary horseman who had sufficient sense to keep to the course won at his leisure.

So different are their ideas from ours, that I recollect, some years later, at a fair in the Multan district, when there was a camel race, four laps round the race course, one man, whose animal bolted at a corner, managed to pull up, and joined in again at the following round, nor could anyone apparently understand why he was disqualified on this account.

The simplicity of their ideas is often very amusing. At a cantonment in one of the Central Provinces, an *ayah* (native nurse) out airing her mistress's child, perched it on the parapet of a bridge, whilst she stopped to gossip with some friends, and the infant falling over was killed. The magistrate before whom she had to appear inflicted some slight punishment for what was mere carelessness. The following day, however, a large crowd

assembled on the parade-ground, and after waiting till dusk, dispersed with rather a disappointed air. One officer who took the trouble to ask what they had come to see, learned that, according to bazaar rumour, the magistrate had sentenced the *ayah* to be torn to pieces by the station pack of hounds, and that they had come to see the *tamasha.*

On another occasion, a native, armed with the outer sheet of the *Field,* whose heading he exhibited as being an official *Parwana,* went round the country requisitioning carts in the name of the Government, but letting the owners off for a rupee or two a-piece. He reaped quite a harvest for a week or ten days before he was accidentally detected.

The process of reasoning of some cantonment magistrates seems peculiar. A friend, who usually kept a few rupees for casual expenses, in a drawer of his writing-desk, thought that there was occasional leakage therefrom. One forenoon, looking into the drawer, he found it completely empty, although he felt sure he had left several rupees in it. At luncheon, accordingly, he told his butler, whom he suspected, to go to the drawer of his desk and bring him five rupees. This the man did, and upon being questioned declared he had found them therein. On his being charged before the magistrate, the latter acquitted him, on the ground that there was no proof that he had stolen any money.

A very popular subaltern of the Royal Horse Artillery was killed this year, 1867, by a panther, near Chikulda (a sort of sanatorium about 80 miles north of Kamptee). Late one afternoon he and a friend, B—— of the police, heard of a "kill," and proceeded to beat for the animal, posting themselves on either side of a deep ravine. The panther appeared amongst some bushes on a slope above S——, who, from a fork in a tree, fired, but overbalanced

himself and fell some 8 or 9 feet to the ground. The panther charged, but was turned by a shot from B—— across the ravine. Poor S—— scrambled up again, but, probably confused by his fall, he forgot to reload the empty barrel, and again firing without effect, the panther charged and dragged him off his perch, badly mauling him on the shoulder. A policeman, who was in the tree above, shouted for assistance, whereupon the brute left S—— and deliberately sprang up after him. The native broke the butt of his pistol over the panther's head, but the beast got him by the leg, and they both fell to the ground. Meanwhile, two Polygar dogs of S——'s came up, and between them and some Bheels with spears, the animal was finished off. Both the wounded men died.

It was not until September that the high maize-fields, locally called *barjaree* and *cholum*, were sufficiently cut to permit of the Nagpore Hunt commencing operations. The notice of these meets was circulated by the Hunt Captain on Mondays, stating where the club tents would be pitched, usually from Wednesday evening until Sunday morning, and members had to enter their names, stating on what days they would be present, so as to permit of the necessary messing arrangements being made. One either got three days' leave from Wednesday to Sunday, or more generally went for a single night, or for even the day's sport, when distances, which varied from 8 to 18 or 20 miles, permitted. The country was "bad riding," though, taken all in all, a most picturesque one, the real curse to sport being the "black cotton soil," simply riddled with fissures, much resembling rabbit-burrows set up on end.

Some of the thickly-wooded, isolated rocky hills might hold almost any wild animal, which, under the persuasion of a line of sixty to a hundred beaters—who get the munificent pay of 1½ or 2 annas a day, according to a

kill or none—had to break for another range, or the depths of some broken ravines a mile or so distant.

On one occasion, two *sambhur* stags turned out, and were speared comparatively easily, whilst on another, two bears appeared, and though they were speedily overtaken, not a horse would close within spear's-length, till at last one sportsman, who had come out on a hired bazaar *tattoo* (pony), just to see the fun, caught them up, and his diminutive mount making no fuss, he took both first spears.

We seldom killed more than two or three boars a day, nor, as a rule, did we see either any great number of hog, nor any particularly heavy animals. Once, when we were dismounted in a hollow, some hundred yards from the foot of the hill, an old boar trotted out past us, and the very moment he heard the horses in pursuit he deliberately stopped, turned back and charged, being killed on the spot.

During the summer months in this dry, arid country, wild pig have to travel long distances for their food—I have been assured by native *shikarris* sometimes as much as 40 miles to and fro in a night, so they are considerably smaller and lighter, but have the legs of the cane-fed boar of Bengal.

However, every now and then one meets rather an exceptional customer. An extract or two from my diary will give the best notion of our sport.

Friday, 14th December. — Meet, Warree; present, C., Th., T., and self; sent on horses, etc., on 13th; delayed by brigade parade in morning. Started on battery nag, 8 A.M., changing at Seetabuldee, and reaching hunt tent at 10 A.M. (17 miles). Began 10.30, first beating *cholum* field, blank, then the *bheer* (grass kept to stack). C. and Th. were at a gap in the hill, T. and self at the point. A large boar broke north-west through the gap. First spear taken by Th. in ¼ mile. Cantering

after them, I descried them signalling for assistance, and found they had both smashed their spears, but Th.'s remaining fixed had brought the boar up in a bush, and we finished him off without difficulty. A fine boar, 36 inches high, 7½ tushes, and terribly fat. Returned and finished beat, two *neilghye* (blue cows) breaking unmolested. *Tiffin* (lunch); fed horses, beat hill to south, blank, and about 4 P.M., the small hill at end of Range.

A sounder of three large and a dozen small broke at once; one ridden and killed by C., on "Lamplighter," after one cropper.

The rest of us laid into the largest, which took back along foot of hill. Ground rocky, long grass, thorny scrub, and cross *nullas*. Had difficulty in riding him off the hill, but after three-quarters of a mile, on crossing a strip of plough, I speared, and turned him over within fifteen yards of a wet *nulla* with thick covert, and as he charged got him again through and through; but he made good his charge, knocking my foot out of my stirrup and cutting "Bedouin" in near hind, but Th. and T. coming up finished him. He was 31 inches high.

Back to tents, and started for Kamptee, 5 P.M., riding in by 7.30. Total, three pig—36 inches, 31 inches, 30 inches.

22nd December.—Meet, Mahajeree, Pu., Pe., C., and self. Sent on horses, 4 A.M., rode out 7.30, reaching Rajah's garden at 9 A.M., where we breakfasted and ate guavas, starting 10.30 for the *bheer*, through which we rode in line with the beaters. Before going 200 yards a boar broke away to the right, going on to lovely ground; Pe. on "Rasseldar" had a long lead, but overshot, and Pu. and I had a race for the spear, which fell to him on "Bandit," after each of us had had a touch. Pu., about 200 yards further on, gave the death-blow. He was scarce a fighting boar, and did not charge. Height, 32 inches; age, 7 years; tushes, 5½ inches. We then returned to the *bheer*, and heard that seven hog had gone forwards. Just as we reached the end of hill, pig were signalled (by flagmen posted in trees) to the left; we cantered on in great uncertainty, looking out for them for quite half a mile, when I rode on to seven large and a dozen small ones in high *cholum*. At first thought they were village pig. However, on calling up the others they broke, C. spearing one


GDAdams

before they had gone 100 yards, but eventually lost him. I laid into one with Pu., and got the spear, when he stopped in a bush. Two other boar appearing, Pu. rode them, eventually coming to grief in the guava trees in the Rajah's garden. After his departure the boar came out, stood at bay, and was killed—31 inches, tushes small. Pe. had meanwhile killed one of 29 inches. A very large boar was said to have broken back just as we left the *bheer* after the sounder. It was by now time for *tiffin* and to feed the horses. Then we beat the *sendbund* (date-grove), only seeing a sow, and rode back to cantonments by 4.30. Total, three boar—32 inches, 31 inches, 29 inches.

26th January.—Meet, Kopa; present, C. R., Th., and self. Rode out 7.30 with the others, our horses preceding us at 6 A.M. Just after breakfast a native came with the news of a boar, 5 feet high, by his account, in a *dall* field across the river. We rode thither, and flushed him at once; he broke a short way, doubled back, routed various *syces* and beaters, jinked about the *dall*, and for some time was anybody's pig. P. at length got the spear. He showed little fight, though we gave him a dozen spears before he fell, as the crops prevented our getting full speed on, and we often caught our spears on the stalks—30 inches, but tushes small.

We then proceeded to the usual post, the tamarind trees, and the *bheer* was beaten up. After about twenty minutes a sounder of three large and a dozen small broke, and were allowed the usual law to the *nulla*, before we rode them. The biggest kept to the right, being killed by Th. (1st spear) and C. and P. I had crossed the *nulla* too much to the left, and having no chance, rode the sounder, and passing through it, run the largest straight for the Warkee Corries, and after one fall at *nulla*, overhauled him on the dead plain, when he turned, charged, and passed under my spear. As I wheeled, he again charged from a distance of three spear-lengths; I again went too high, but luckily the pace again saved the horse. The third charge I stopped, catching him about the eye, and at the fourth killed him dead, breaking my spear, and losing the head, which I never afterwards recovered. Thirty inches, tushes 4; a very lanky pig. Th.'s, 31 inches, tushes 3½. Back to trees; *tiffin*, and fed horses.

Three hog were reported to have broken back, so we

beat the *bheer* down stream, being posted at south-east corner; they again broke back, and a false alarm sent us round by the tamarinds, where on a third beat they nearly broke again; a minute afterwards they broke to the south, across the rocky hill. We had a weary gallop over this, but never sighted them, and home by 6 P.M. Total, three boar—31 inches, 30 inches, 30 inches.

One day, at a beat at this same covert, which was composed of *babool* (acacia), jungle, and long grass, R., of the gunners, rode a boar, who threw him out in a castor-oil field, and doubled back for the *bheer*. R. caught him up just as he regained this, but going a drop down a bank, burst his girths, and lost the reins in his fall. The boar dived into the jungle, closely followed by R.'s little Arab, who literally hunted him through, and drove the pig out at the other side, though so badly cut with thorns that he was laid up for a long time afterwards.

Six of us went out on *February* 10*th* to 20*th* on ten days' leave, beginning at Kookie, 22 miles south-east, and working down to Girhur, 50 miles south, and as we were well mounted, had the most extravagant hopes of a record score, but were sadly disappointed. The jungles were everywhere too big, and we only made a wretched bag for a march of 120 miles, but had one or two sporting experiences.

At one village, Baila, we were told that a huge boar was quartered in their gardens; he had been there four years, had killed or wounded at different times five men, done some thousands of rupees' worth of damage, and having been fired at and wounded several times, with no further result than souring his temper, he was considered a veritable *shaitan* (devil).

We were posted within 400 yards of our tents, and the beat began in some onion-beds. Almost at once a huge boar slowly cantered down towards us, and smashing through the walls of a *pān* garden, like a sheet of paper, squatted down calmly in the centre, the owners scuttling out like rabbits when a ferret is down their burrow. These *pān* gardens (betel-nut) are walled round and covered over with thick matting, the interior being one mass of creepers, trained up on narrow rows of sticks, much as are peas with us. It was impossible to ride, and dangerous to send in beaters, so after all our dogs had been set upon him, and ignominiously chased out again, he was treated to several



SHIKAR CAMP.

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charges of shot, commencing with No. 8, and increasing up to B.B., when at length he bolted, and was speared before he had run a hundred yards, but lay up in a thick bear-fruit hedge, where after some hole-and-corner business, during which he badly cut one horse, we finally had to dismount and spear him on foot—a task which, thanks to his being done by the great heat, proved far easier than anticipated.

The villagers greeted his death with great rejoicings, and brought his body in procession, with much tom-toming, to our tents. A couple of months later I was in at the death of my first tiger, an unusually big one; and as I viewed him somewhat disappointedly on the ground, I could not help remarking, "Why, he is not as big as the Baila boar." He was certainly, if not the tallest, the heaviest pig I ever saw—height, 37½ inches; girth, 54 inches; length, 76 inches; above the knee, 14 inches; tushes, 9¾ inches.

On the 25th we had been pig-sticking, whilst our camp marched ahead to a village named Girhur, and after we gave up beating, we dispersed to shoot our way to the tents. I had my two Polygar dogs with me, and about sunset they got away in the jungle, chasing a deer that crossed the track. After vainly waiting and calling for them, I had to push on to reach camp before dark. I sent back at dawn next day to our preceding halting-place, where one of the dogs was found; and as the jungle they had been lost in was infested with panthers, I gave up all hope of ever seeing the other. However, he reappeared at my bungalow at Kamptee within thirty-six hours of his being lost, nearly fifty miles as the crow flies, or quite a hundred if he had retraced his steps by the route he had already traversed.

The hill at Girhur, crowned by the ruins of a Mahratta fort, is about 500 feet high, a mile and a half in circumference at the base, and densely wooded from top to bottom. With a line of 150 beaters, whole droves of wild pig were on foot, and could be seen all day trotting along the rocky paths high above, whilst numbers of peacocks, flashing six feet of blue and gold in the brilliant sunshine, came rocketting down, and a herd of *neilghye*—one bull being wounded, ridden and bagged—added variety to the scene. With the exception, however, of one boar who broke, and was speared, not a pig was got out all day. As we were essaying a last beat, I saw what I took to be

a panther, stealing down in the centre of the horse-shoe formed by the beaters, and some of us taking our rifles, were walking up, when a tiger charged back, upsetting one man, who got off with a slight scratch; and as the rest of his neighbours took headers into any handy thorn-bush, like frogs into a marsh, the large drove of perhaps a hundred pig enclosed escaped back in the general confusion. This terminated the proceedings, as the beaters not unnaturally declined trying another drive, so some of us with our rifles explored the hill, which was far too large to offer the slightest prospect of success.

Having had poor sport, it was put to the vote whether we should hunt on the Sunday, and negatived, those voting against it, however, going out for partridges instead—which seems putting rather a fine point on it.

We never got anything like the bags made in Bengal, or the Multra and Kadir, countries of the North-West Provinces. For the season the record of the hunt was—

14th	Dec.	Warree	.	17	miles,	4	spears,	3	boar,	36,	31,	30.
22nd	,,	Mahajerre	.	10	,,	4	,,	3	,,	32,	31,	29.
2nd	Jan.	Warree	.	17	,,	5	,,	2	,,	29,	27.	
9th	,,	Seetagondee	.	9	,,	6	,,	blank.				
16th	,,	Kopa	.	9	,,	7	,,	blank.				
26th	,,	Kopa	.	9	,,	4	,,	3	boar,	31,	30,	30.
6th	Feb.	Mahadoola	.	15	,,	5	,,	4	,,	32,	31,	28, 26.
13th	,,	Seongaon	.	30	,,	6	,,	6	,,	31,	30,	26, 26, 25, 25.
19th	,,	Kookie	.	22	,,	6	,,	2	,,	30,	30.	
23rd	,,	Baila	.	40	,,	6	,,	1	,,	37½.		
25th	,,	Girhur	.	50	,,	6	,,	1	,,	32.		
6th	Mar.	Mahedoola	.	15	,,	4	,,	2	,,	33½, 26.		
15th	,,	Seetagondee	.	9	,,	3	,,	1	,,	28.		

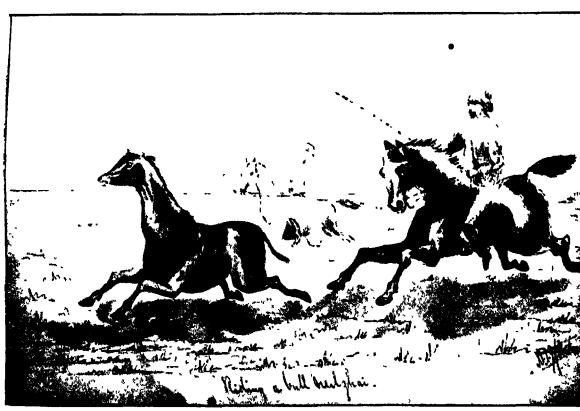
In the autumn three or four of us made some ridiculously unsuccessful attempts to ride down unwounded black buck, our greyhounds on one occasion doing the first part of the running, and one man with a fresh horse managing to nick in and take it up after the first couple of miles, yet I think we never even distressed the antelope.

On one occasion at Warree, at the end of a beat, when no pig had been seen, I wounded a bull *neilghye*—rather far back—with a 12-bore conical bullet; and though he



BEARS.

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AFTER A BULL NEILGHYE.

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was distressed and bleeding freely, five of us rode him for 3 miles over very stony ground, and had to give it up, one horse being laid up for weeks from the effects. Yet on other occasions I have seen an unwounded bull speared in less than half that distance.

Having with C—— engaged *shikarris* since January, and obtaining the regulation sixty days' privilege leave, we, together with K—— (all gunners), found ourselves on the 1st April '67 at our first camp, the tents being pitched in a lovely grove of mangoes, near the village of Nagri, 14 miles south of Hinginghat, and about 75 from Kamptee. As this was the first of some twenty hot weathers I spent after big game, a few details may perhaps be pardoned.

It being prior to the days of Kabul tents, we had one 18-foot square hill tent for ourselves—though as a rule we dined and slept outside—and a smaller one for the servants. These, and our other stores and belongings, were carried on sixteen baggage bullocks engaged for the trip, our camp-beds, with a couple of coolies each, bringing our spare guns and sundry trifles, preceded the rest of our kit, and were up at the next camping-ground almost as soon as we arrived ourselves.

C. and I had two personal servants between us, denominated in the vernacular "boot rails" (*anglice*, butler), also a cook, a *dhobi* (washerman), 2 gunbearers, 2 dog boys, 4 horsekeepers, 4 grass-cutters, 1 *nalbund* (farrier), besides the two *shikarris*.

We each had a couple of Arab horses, and two couple of Polygar dogs, which proved of the greatest service with tigers. K., who only joined us at the last moment, had his own servants, and a couple of nags. The two *shikarris*, "Bowani Singh," and Luximon, a Rajpoot, and a Brinjarra—who, however, always hunted in couples—received 18 rupees a month between them, besides the Government rewards for game killed, which were Rs.50 for a tiger, half that for a panther, and something still smaller for a bear, hyena, or wolf.

By the Central Provinces *Gazette* for 1868, the wild beasts destroyed in the year ending 30th June 1868, in those Provinces were:—

Tigers	391
Panthers and leopards	563
Bears	384
Wolves	274
Hyenas	371
	1983

Of the 391 tigers, six were reputed man-eaters, for each of which 100 rupees was paid, the total amount of rewards coming to Rs.28,273.

In the last statistics I have seen—those for 1901—it is, perhaps, interesting to note that 1859 deaths from wild beasts occurred in the preceding year, for 1171 of which tigers were responsible, no less than 162 of these occurring in the Chanda district of the Central Provinces, and one man-eater at Hazaribagh, Bengal, was still at large with a reward of Rs.250 on him. Wolves killed 403 persons, 166 of these in Rohilkhand. The above fades into insignificance when compared with the mortality from snakes, which for the preceding year amounted to 22,810 deaths, one half of these occurring in Bengal alone. Whilst 18,896 cattle were killed by wild beasts, the loss of only 9123 is ascribed to snakes; 14,301 wild animals were destroyed, and Rs.96,952 were paid in rewards.

The two worthy *shikarris*—and excellent men they were—were as unlike one another in character as they differed in caste, and whilst the first-named relied entirely on his knowledge of the jungle and woodcraft, the other was a tracker, pure and simple, and, as he used to say, "if there's one *guz* (yard) of sand in the jungle, and the tiger treads upon it, I'll show him to you." Neither of the pair ever carried a gun of any description, an old spear being their only weapon.

Our batteries were scarcely up to the modern standard, C. having only Muzzle-Loaders—a 14-bore polygroove rifle with 2½ drams being his most formidable piece of ordnance—K. boasting of a 10-bore Pin-Fire Breech-Loader with 4 drams, and I of a 12-bore M.-L. rifle with 4 drams and a 2¼ oz. Calvert shell, besides which we used our ordinary smooth-bore B.-L.'s with ball, as second guns.

On an average we marched three days a week, striking tents at dawn, or sallying forth for bears or deer, accordingly as we were marching or halting, never commencing to beat for tigers before 10 or 11 A.M., and usually working on till the evening; then a tub, dined in the open, arrayed in pyjamas and sleeping-suits for coolness, and before dinner was well over we were generally nodding off to sleep, having been some sixteen hours on our legs or in the saddle, and throwing ourselves on our beds, put well out clear of trees, slept *à la belle étoile* till daybreak.

The *modus operandi* for tigers is comparatively simple. The villagers, whose wood-cutters or cattle-herds are in constant touch with them, can, if they choose, give tolerably accurate information of their probable whereabouts—during the summer months, at least—when water and shade are comparatively scarce.

A bull buffalo calf (*haila*) can be bought anywhere for 3 or 4 rupees, and from half a dozen to a dozen of these are tied up by your *shikarris* at likely spots, where there is both water and sufficient covert to induce a tiger, when he has killed, to lie up and guard the remainder of the carcass from vultures and jackals.

When he thus locates himself by the *gara* (or kill), beaters are collected, and delaying till shortly before noon, when the great heat renders a tiger comparatively helpless —as he cannot stand the sun—guns are posted, and the hundred or so villagers advance in a body.

As a general rule, the tiger stalks or trots out a quarter of a mile ahead of the line, and is dropped on the spot.

One very seldom, indeed, finds a tiger when beating at haphazard for deer or whatever else may turn up, as they so largely use the dusty cart-tracks, in their nocturnal wanderings, that one has, in default of a kill, at least their trail to go by.

At the outset we had a bad accident. When we were riding a big boar in some fairly open jungle, the pig, doubling off me through a large thorn-bush, charged K.'s horse broadside on, and though received with a good spear in the withers, snapped the bamboo shaft like a piece of matchwood, and bowled the horse head over heels on to the top of his rider. K., who did not regain consciousness till evening, had to be carried on to the next camp on one of our cots, which chanced to pass, and never fully

recovered the use of his right arm, and to this must be attributed the fatal accident he had three weeks later on.

On the *5th April*, when beating some deep ravines on the right bank of the Wurdah river, which swarmed with hog and peafowl, we walked on to four cheetahs (hunting leopards), two of which we shot (6 feet 10 inches, and 6 feet 8 inches in length), and had a vain gallop with spears after a third one, which broke across three-quarters of a mile of open. Marching westwards, the country entirely changed from the flat, well-cultivated ground interspersed with dense coverts of thorns and date-groves that is found south of the great cotton centre of Hingunghat, into one of low stony hills, sometimes crowned with bold basalt rocks, and the whole dotted over with stunted trees, the vast majority of which are leafless at this season.

It is only along the banks of the perennial streams that any extent of green meets the eye, and only around the scattered and, as a rule, wretched, villages, that one sees any trace of cultivation.

All the rest of the country is covered with grass, waist-high when not burned or grazed down, and after seven months of a scorching sun and no rain, bleached into a dirty yellow ochre tint, whilst the hot wind laden with dust imparts a copper-coloured haze to all surroundings. We had marched seventy-two miles since leaving Hingunghat, and got on to the *11th April*, only bagging a couple of boar, speared, besides two leopards, a hyena, two bull *neilghye*, a couple of antelope, and some small game, before we got our first *gara*. This was at Pandecourra, a fine large village, with ruins of temples and stone-built houses, as well as a brick fort with casemates and an inner keep. We had been out stalking since early morning, and after a nine o'clock breakfast we started for the scene of the kill, a couple of miles distant, beside a lovely *nuddee* (stream), with pools of water, thick copses of green *jāman* (willow-bushes), and some very fine *ḳairai* trees along the banks. Old Bhowani pointed out a troop of lungoor monkeys, watching the river-bed from aloft with great attention, and added, that the fact of none of them being on the ground indicated the presence of the tiger. C. and K. had been posted on the right bank, and I had only just crossed to the far side, with a beautiful strip of *jāman* covert



. . . "LIFE."

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in between us, when C. fired, and I heard the tiger's "Woof, Woof!" as he dashed off down stream.

Just then I caught the shouts of the beaters, so scrambled hastily into a small tree, catching a glimpse of the tiger a couple of hundred yards off. I was intently watching the bushes in front when I heard a twig snap behind me, and caught one fleeting glimpse as he vanished over the high bank in my rear, with tongue lolling out, and evidently distressed by the sun.

I did not understand at the time how the tiger had failed to see me, as he must have been within a dozen paces, and rather above me.

We were all much disgusted, and both C. and I had evidently fallen very much in our *shikarris'* opinion, but getting old Luximon on to the *pug* (footprints), we started after our quarry, through some low and open thorn jungle, across which he was heading for another bend of the river. In about half a mile we sighted, when, slipping Rover and Ranger, we ran after him. He sauntered along unconcernedly, at a slow pace, occasionally looking back over his shoulder at us, and appearing as he stalked along as big as an ox. At about 100 yards C. fired a shot, of which he took not the slightest notice, and as we got within 70 yards of him, still strolling away from us, C. and I fired simultaneously, and through the smoke, instead of seeing him charging, as seemed probable, we saw him rear up, seize a sapling, and roll over on his back, tearing this in his death-agony, while the dogs most pluckily seized him as he struggled on the ground.

C.'s No. 14-bore ball had broken the near hind just above the hock, whilst my shell, by a mere fluke, as I aimed generally at him, had burst in the neck behind the left ear, fracturing the skull. Length, 10 feet 1 inch; skin, pegged out, 11 feet 10 inches. The natives, who profess to age them by the lobes of the liver, made him out to be fifteen years old. He had an old scar on the right shoulder, and had lost the right eye—probably caused by the horn of a bison or buffalo—which accounts for his not seeing me.

From the 12th to the 22nd, changing camp five times, but marching only thirty-two miles in all, though we passed much good covert, and spent six days in beating, a panther, two stag *cheetal* (spotted deer), a couple of blue bulls, and some smaller game alone rewarded our

exertions, and all of these were shot out stalking, and nothing was even fired at in a single beat.

One night, during full moon, some of our servants awoke C. with news of a *neilghye* standing under a tree near at hand. He accordingly sallied out in his pyjamas, got to within 20 yards, and gave both barrels into what proved to be a village buffalo bull. On some of our horsekeepers, who were Mussulmans, attempting to *hallal* it (*i.e.* cut its throat to make it lawful), it struggled to its legs and lumbered into our camp, where it fell dead within 20 yards of my bed without awaking me.

On *17th April* all of us started at 4 A.M. to the hills, to wait for bears. No *gara* again, though the villagers swear to three tigers; out at 10 A.M. to beat amongst the gorges, and in five beats saw four hog, a *sambhur*, a bear, and four *cheetal*, but no one got a shot.

After a march over terribly stony hills, where in the space of half a mile we counted forty-three broken axle-trees of country carts, we reached the village of Syikerry, on a good stream of water, with shady trees on the banks, and a well-built fort in the centre.

Having a *gara* there on the *22nd April*, we proceeded as usual to beat about 11 A.M., but in the first drive, the tigress, as she proved to be, broke round our flank, re-entering the *nulla* higher up. We then pushed on for about three-quarters of a mile to post again, but finding by the track in the sandy *nulla* that she was still ahead of us, went on for another half-mile before taking our stands, which we had to do hurriedly, as we could hear the shouts of the beaters advancing, and had not time to get into trees. We were perhaps 80 to 100 yards apart, and though the valley was very open, with scattered trees and waist-high grass, there was just sufficient undergrowth to prevent our seeing one another. I had scarce taken my place on the main *nulla* when the tigress appeared about 100 yards to my front and stood panting underneath a shady tree.

Had I been alone I should have fired, but dreaded the reproaches of my companions in case I missed, when it was certain that she must approach closer. After some minutes—she apparently suspecting something, as she had been staring so hard in my direction, I was almost afraid to wink—she turned off towards K. Two shots followed just as I lost sight, then I heard a "Woof, Woof!" got a glimpse of her racing back in the opposite direction,

and heard K. call, "Come here, G." Running forwards, I soon perceived K. walking, without rifle or helmet, towards a shady tree, and fancying he was merely done by the sun, was proceeding more leisurely, when, just then, I realised that K.'s gunbearer, who had been shouting something unintelligible from a tree above, was warning me that "the *bagh* (tiger) was close by." Almost simultaneously I spotted her, crouched in the grass seven or eight paces off, but with her back towards me, apparently watching K. An easy shot at the back of her head, and she sank down with scarce a quiver, and so little did I think anything had gone wrong, that my first words to K. were chaffingly thanking him for letting me have a shot at his tiger. In reply he said, "Why, the brute's *puckeraoed* (seized) me." I then noticed that his clothes were torn and speckled with blood in half a dozen places. He made light of his wounds, merely deploring that he would lose a fortnight's sport, and said he had seen the tigress the whole time whilst waiting opposite, and that when she left the *nulla* and headed straight for him, fearing she might run into him in the grass, he fired at, and missed her at 50 yards end on. She then passed him at full speed a few paces off, and he shot her through, though too far back, with a spherical bullet. She continued on a few lengths, then turned, charged, and before he could cock his second gun, which was leaning against a tree alongside, he felt himself knocked down, and twice rolled over, when, being suddenly released, he had called to me.

K.'s second gun, which was dented in two places near the breech, was, when I picked it up, still at half-cock, and we found he was clawed in the left arm and shoulder, and bitten in the small of back, in the fork—which seemed the worst wound of all—right knee and left calf. His sun-pad over the spine, belt, *shikar*-knife, and a pistol which he carried, had apparently greatly deadened the worst of the wounds; but the shock must have been great, as a small glass flask in his breast-pocket was broken into a dozen pieces. She was a small tigress of 7 feet 10 inches. We got him back to the tent on a *charpoy* (camp-bedstead), and after dressing his wounds as well as our limited ideas of surgery permitted, we resolved, despite his protests, on taking him back to cantonments. Having rigged up his camp-bed into an extempore litter, C. started, at sunset,

with him, and, impressing bearers at each village, reached the railway in about thirty-six hours, and Nagpore that day, where K., who seemed all right, was installed in the doctor's house.

As no immediate danger was anticipated, and C. could do no more, he rejoined me in camp a couple of days later. It was not until three weeks subsequently that we got a post out from cantonments, and learned to our surprise that poor K. had died three days after the accident, from no assignable cause but "shock to the system."

In ignorance of this sad event, we continued our shoot, seeing and bagging several bears, whose pursuit generally entailed much climbing and a great deal of running, in attempts to head them, or in stern chases after them. Some of the isolated conical hills were crowned with rocky scarps twenty feet high, giving them quite a fort-like appearance, and at the salient angle of these, there was often quite a chaos of overturned basalt columns, piled upon one another in wild confusion, and affording an impenetrable retreat to bears and panthers. Gaining the top of these before dawn, and catching the wild animals on their return, was one's sole chance of bagging anything. The first couple of bears I got, sauntered up to the foot of my hill about sunrise, and delayed so long in a belt of scrub jungle on the slope, that, fearing they had turned off, I ran down to see, and met them within twenty paces, just as I entered the bushes. Number one, who reared up with a grunt, fell dead to my first barrel, whilst I hit number two through the body, as she turned to bolt. Wheeling round, she seized her dying mate by the neck, and began banging his head up and down, howling dismally, and giving me time to reload my M.-L. rifle. Just as I finished this, realising that her companion was dead, she relinquished her grip and bolted, and after a stern chase of quite half a mile, I eventually dropped her. Walking up carelessly, she sprang to her feet and nearly got hold of me, but a lucky shot fired from the hip singed her face and finished her. Lengths, 6 feet 8 inches and 6 feet. Both with one of these, and subsequently with a particularly fat cub, we tried to feed our dogs, but they, though nowise particular as a rule, refused to touch bear-flesh, either in the form of soup or of well-cooked steaks. This seems the more surprising, as the

Indian black bear is a purely vegetable feeder, and lives much on jungle fruit and honey.

We passed a week in this camp at Abkoree, as, though we did not get a *gara*, the villagers were so positive that at least three tigers were about, one of whom rejoiced in the nickname of "Jungi" (warlike), and another in that of "Kala Moo" (blackface), that we stayed on, hunting for bears in the early mornings, and fishing by day. After waiting till the *27th April*, we then started to beat at all hazards, beginning with a small triangle of waist-high grass of a few acres in extent, some four miles from the tents, where all the surrounding undercovert had been recently burned down.

After posting us, old Bhowani, striking across a corner of this patch, walked on to a tigress asleep, who snarled at him, but slunk off into a small deep *nulla*, almost a fissure in the rocky ground, above which I was standing on a knoll. He called out to me, "Sahib, bagh hy" ("here's a tiger"), with as much unconcern as if it were a deer, and bringing up C., posted him in a tree to cover the other side.

As soon as the beat began, the tigress trotted out, but my companion, firing too soon, missed, and sent her off at a gallop, she charging a tree in which a coolie was perched, and springing about 10 feet up at him; but just as he gave a yell of dismay, she passed on.

After wasting an hour by trying towards the water for her, Luximon hit off her track, heading across some open tree jungle with no underwood or grass. The heat was so awful that we picked her up within half a mile, and soon doubled up to within 70 or 80 yards, as the slow trot she was pursuing, when first sighted, soon degenerated into a walk, and she loafed along with her tongue lolling out as she occasionally glanced back at us. I fired, evidently hitting, when she roared, but probably intimidated by the seventy or eighty beaters at our heels, cantered on a few strides and crouched behind a tree. As soon as I had reloaded, we advanced, "right incline," to outflank her, when she again slunk off, but receiving three barrels from us, which made her reel, she again crouched behind a tree 100 yards further on, and apparently so hard hit, that we thought it was practically over, and C. did not even reload the rifle he had just fired. We now walked up to within 50 yards, and, in our inexperience, downhill from her, and, standing on either side of a small tree, agreed to

fire alternately. I noticed at the time that both the *shikarris* and beaters, who had hitherto followed close at our heels, now remained behind, only our two gunbearers sticking to us. At C.'s first shot, when I saw dust fly at the point of her near shoulder, she sprang to her feet, and keeping her head low, charged absolutely silently, almost the only tiger I ever knew to do so. She took my first and C.'s second barrel with only a wince, and was within

The villagers regarded her as something so out of the common, that they subsequently ate her.

On returning to camp, *en route* killing two gazelle (*chikara*) with one bullet, we found that the "Jungi" tiger had killed a cow and calf close to our tents in the early afternoon, but on proceeding thither, after an hour's fruitless tracking we decided to leave it till the morning.

On the *28th April* we revisited the spot early, and as all around yesterday's tracks had been obliterated, by the villagers dragging *cummals* (blankets), we could clearly see that the cow had been carried bodily, with only one leg touching the ground, for 100 yards, and then dragged for another quarter of a mile to the edge of the water. We had two beats along the stream after breakfast, without result, and whilst L. took up his *pug* along a side *nulla*, old B. led us to the triangle of grass where we had found on the preceding day. Here we were shortly joined by L., who had carried the track to the same place, and it



A CRITICAL MOMENT.

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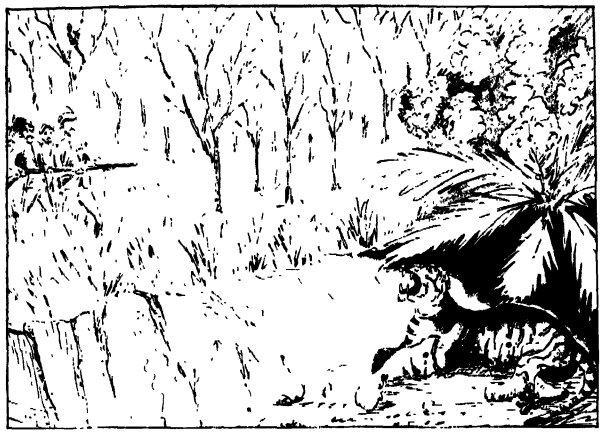
was an excellent illustration of how they by their different methods arrived at the same result. C. was now posted on the eastern side of the grass triangle, and I, 200 yards distant at its apex, where the enclosing *nullas* joined, whilst the beaters lined off and advanced from the foot of the stony hill which formed the base. At the very outset of the beat, the tiger turned up opposite C., who had two shots, and wounded him in the hind leg, when he galloped towards the beaters, who swarmed up trees, and shortly afterwards fired the grass, which burned slowly in consequence of a sharp shower the preceding night.

A small tiger presently trotted out a couple of hundred yards from us, and made for the river, and as the fire crept onwards the beaters shouted that the big tiger had entered the deep western *nulla*. We accordingly proceeded thither, C. posting in a tree about 50 yards back from his supposed *locale*, whilst I went 100 yards lower down to a small open in the *crevasse*, where I got into a stunted thorn-bush, with my feet about my own height from the ground.

The beaters, who were collected in the nearer trees now yelled and stoned the spot without result, until three of our dogs, who had discovered his whereabouts, entered the fissure, but promptly emerged like rockets closely followed by the tiger, roaring furiously. It formed a most striking scene. The dogs, who had momentarily bolted, now turned, and from fifteen or twenty paces off bayed the tiger, who stood roaring as if his heart would break, presently turning his attention from them to the beaters who crowded the surrounding trees. The wild, desolate waste on the one side was a mass of smoking embers, with here and there a tree blazing furiously, whilst on the other a deep thunder-cloud was creeping up, the whole being set off by a crimson sunset, and our quarry, with tail erect, in the centre, stood roaring defiance to all comers. Just as he seemed on the point of charging at a small tree crowded with men, C. fired, and after swaying about for a second, the tiger recovered himself, and bounded back to his stronghold. My comrade, who thought him mortally wounded, called to me to come and finish him off, so, half-cocking my rifle, I was bending over to choose my footing preparatory to a jump down, when I saw the tiger's whiskers not ten paces from me, as he stealthily emerged from the narrow part of the *nulla*. Some gnarled roots on the bank partially covered his head, and gave me time to draw myself up and

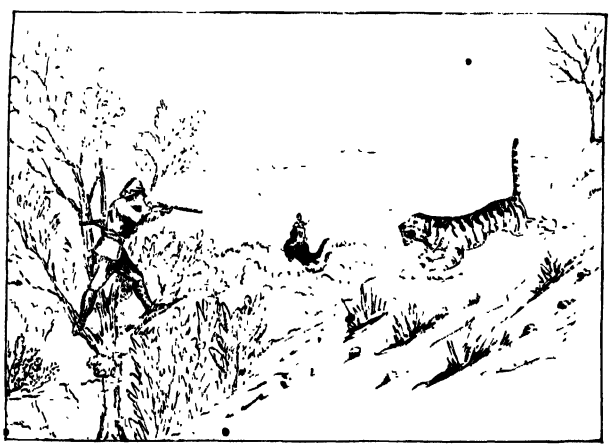
full-cock my rifle, before, slowly emerging, he glanced right and left, and then up, when a peculiar greenish tinge flashed into his eyes as he realised me, and at once charged with a roar. He was within a few feet, and apparently in the act of springing, when I fired. Reeling backwards, he reared up to his full height, wildly pawing the air in unpleasant proximity to my face, but fell all in a heap to my second barrel, one of my shells having burst in his mouth. Length, 9 feet 8 inches; age, 14 years. This was the one who rejoiced in the name of "Jungi" (lit. "warlike one"), and the glare of his eyes as he spotted me remained long impressed upon my memory.

At Gonse a cattle-herd ran in whilst we were at breakfast, to say that one of his herd had been clawed by, but had escaped from, a tiger; so we hurried out, leaving our *shikarris* to collect beaters and follow. As the herdsman was guiding us to the spot, he suddenly pointed out the tiger about 400 yards off, stalking another of his lot, a white cow grazing somewhat apart. The tiger got within fifty yards without doing much crouching, broke into a



TIGER AT BAY.

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THE CHARGE OF THE WARLIKE ONE.

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clumsy gallop, and though apparently going no great pace, bowled her over before she had bolted a dozen lengths. The rest of the herd, after dispersing in confusion, returned in a body, staring at their assailant from forty yards off with bovine stupidity, then suddenly realising that something was wrong, they galloped off, with tails erect, across a dry water-course, when, seemingly forgetting all about it, they at once quieted down and resumed grazing.

He was shot without incident, within 400 yards of where he had killed the cow, and proved to be a 9-foot 4-inch tiger.

On another occasion, after beating till about four in the afternoon, we separated to try for spotted deer on our way to camp, and I soon got a fair stag. Sending the two villagers with me to get a cart for its conveyance, I followed them leisurely. It was about half an hour before sunset when we hit off the cart-track to our village, where, above the footprints of the men who preceded us, were those of a big tiger following them, or at least going in the same direction. We carried these to a small river with some nice *jāman* covert, into which the tiger's track turned.

Getting on the bank above the bushes, we pelted them with stones, without result, so leaving my gunbearer up above, I descended to hunt for tracks along the water's-edge.

Suddenly looking up, there was the tiger's head staring full at me from the entrance of a small grassy *nullā* on the opposite bank, and separated from me by a shallow pool of water, a dozen yards in width. It flashed across me that the first backward step might induce him to charge, and that it was a case of "in for a penny, in for a pound," so I took a quick shot into his face, and sprang aside. Nothing, however, followed, not even a growl, and the head had disappeared, making me wonder if it was not all imagination. As, however, it was now sunset, I was glad to retire unmolested and leave further investigation till the morrow. Returning at sunrise with our dogs, we found the tiger stone-dead in a narrow sort of drain, and his skin already somewhat the worse for the delay. He taped 9 feet 2 inches. The shell had caught him under the chin, as he raised his head to look over the grass, and had burst in the back of the throat, breaking the spinal cord.

At Surda, on *12th May*, we had three tigers on foot,

but bungled matters, and only bagged one, who was, however, a reputed man-eater, a male of 9 feet. He broke early in the beat, was missed by C. at 100 yards, charged to the shot, and was again let off at 30 paces, but, not seeing his man, turned away. On following—as we thought it was unsafe to use beaters—after we had sighted him three times, and sent some desultory long shots after him, he was eventually burned out of a patch of grass, and accompanied by a tigress, trotted past me at 60 or 80 yards, as I was hunting for a tree in which to post myself. I let the tigress, who led, pass unfired at, and took four shots to finish off the bigger one, who fell about 100 yards from where I first hit him.

Whilst searching for Number Two, C. suddenly pointed to a dry thorn-bush within fifteen paces, saying, "What a curious effect of light and shade! it looks just like a tiger, but cannot be one"; and as even our lynx-eyed *shikarris* were of this opinion, one of them heaved in a stone, when, with a roar, away went a big tiger, and being defiladed by the bush, was out of sight before we could use a rifle.

On the 18*th May* we found, on visiting a buffalo tied up, that it had been killed by a tiger, who, however, had been driven off by a pack of wild dogs, whose *pug* were distinctly visible over those of the slayer, and our *shikarris* at once declared that we should not find him anywhere near.

The result justified their experience, as it was not till the third or fourth beat, and late in the afternoon, that we eventually shot him, quite four miles from the scene of the kill.

Almost the last tiger obtained we accidentally walked on to, lying in running water under an overhanging *jāman* bush, and shot her within 15 yards. This was a medium-sized tigress of 8 feet 1 inch. We gave up on 28*th May*, riding back about 100 miles into Kamptee, having marched 368 miles in all, and made a bag of ten tigers, 4 panthers, 2 leopards, 7 bears, 9 cheetal (spotted deer), 5 neilghye (blue bull), 5 antelopes, 1 hyena, 12 various, and 4 boar, speared.

Contrary to accepted ideas on the subject, one has far harder work than one ever experiences when shooting at home—when you are seldom eight hours in the open



SHIKAR TENT AND NEILGHYL.

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', including a drive in a comfortable waggonette, and nch with every luxury. In the jungle, on the contrary, e sportsman is twelve or fourteen hours in the saddle, on his own legs, rarely back till sunset, and though to ɔd after the sparrows, gets up from his *al fresco* couch ith them. It is the most healthy life possible, and the rofuse perspiration, in which one is continually bathed, as all the effects of a Turkish bath.

The bugbear of the sun is an absolute myth, so long as 'ou taste nothing stronger than tea up to sunset. As a ɔandid man of my acquaintance used to say: "One cannot ɔoth drink and go out in the sun, and for my part I prefer drinking"; and as any stick is good enough to beat a dog with, the sun serves as a useful excuse to explain away want of grit, or self-indulgence.

It is, of course, necessary to have a good helmet, and a quilted pad on your back is also advisable, but with these, any fairly abstemious Englishman can face the sun as well as any ordinary native.

CHAPTER III

GUZERAT—1868

EARLY in June I found myself transferred to a battery of the same brigade, quartered at Ahmedabad in the Western Presidency, where I joined by rail a week later. The trouble and delay of getting a simple railway warrant from the Staff office at Bombay, was at that time bad enough, but a short time previously, when there were separate departments for the British and Indian Services, it was far more complicated. A man I knew, wishing to ascertain the address of a friend belonging to a native regiment, inadvertently applied to a clerk in the former section, "Oh," said the fat baboo, with a pitying smile on his face, "in this office we have nothing to do with those black regiments."

The style of country in Guzerat, the so-called "Garden of India," differs as much from that of the Central Provinces as does Kent from Ross-shire, and the garrison of what was then the headquarters of the northern division of Bombay was composed in defiance of all theory as to the relative proportions of the three arms. Besides the staffs of the division, and of the artillery brigade, we had but two batteries of field-artillery and two regiments of Bombay Infantry, no cavalry of any description, and, despite the lessons of the Mutiny, not a British rifle to escort our twelve guns.

This district—which is dead flat, and rejoices in a climate often compared to that of the west coast of Africa

—is beautifully wooded, and, unlike the rest of India, the well-cultivated fields are enclosed by cactus (not prickly-pear) hedges. The trees, not only around the villages, but dotted all through the hedgerows, are chiefly mango, tamarind, and banian, of magnificent proportions, and the first and third named are evergreens. An immense number of temples, mosques, tombs and wells—chiefly disused, and many ruinous—are met with on all sides. Animal life abounds—wild hog, antelope, neilghye, pea-fowl and lungoor monkeys being most *en évidence*, whilst in winter the small game shooting—wild-fowl, snipe and quail, supplemented by the indigenous species—would be hard to beat.

Though the magnificent remains of Shah Alum's tomb, and others attest former Mahomedan domination—the spot is still pointed out where Emperor Akbar, in 1575, by his splendid audacity in charging 10,000 men with 300 of his body-guard, decisively defeated a serious rising—this part of the country is now essentially Hindoo and Brahmin-ridden.

A story illustrative of this was current in my time. A robbery had taken place in one of our post-offices, under circumstances which made it pretty certain that it must be the work of one of the fifteen or sixteen *employés* of the office, all of whom were Hindoos. After an English inspector had failed to elucidate matters, an old Brahmin volunteered to unravel the mystery, and at his suggestion all the *personnel* were assembled at sundown at a disused temple half-buried in jungle, which at that hour had a weird and ghostly appearance. After working upon their religious fears, the venerable Brahmin directed all to enter the temple one by one, where they would find a stick lying before the idol, which they were to grasp in both hands and carry three times round the god, reciting certain specified incantations; the innocent had nothing to fear

but the stick would freeze on to the hands of the culprit, thus manifesting his guilt.

The old man made each one as he emerged from the obscurity, approach him, and to the first few who passed merely said, "Go in peace," till when the sixth or seventh approached, he denounced him as the thief, the accused at once confessing.

The stick on the altar was freely anointed with oil of sandal-wood, and the culprit's credulity sufficed to prevent his touching it, fearful lest it should hang on as threatened, and by the absence of the scent from his hands he gave himself away.

Like most of the unwarlike races of India, the well-to-do classes are highly educated, and much resemble the Bengali baboo in character.

An English lady reformer of uncertain age, who came here to deliver a lecture on prison discipline, zenana education, or some kindred topic, told the audience at its conclusion that she would be happy to answer any questions put to her, upon which a fat baboo came to the front with, "How old are you?" "Oh no," she replied, "I don't mean questions of that sort—only ones connected with the subject of the lecture." "Are you forty?" continued the baboo, nowise abashed. "No, I won't answer such a question," was the reply. "Are you fifty?" continued her tormentor. "Oh no, I told you I won't answer such questions." "Are you sixty?" "Oh no, no, no, I'm not sixty," the lady responded, precipitately.

Another baboo, attending the reception of a local clergyman who rather encouraged their visits, was somewhat mystified at being introduced to an elderly spinster, a new arrival, as "Miss So-and-So." By way of delicately asking whether he had caught her designation correctly, in a pause of the conversation he pointed across at her with his finger and the query, "But is she a virgin?"

It was customary to ask to dinner anybody calling on our Mess, and one young civilian who had been so invited made himself so very much at home, and talked so loudly, "old fellowing," amongst others, a colonel who was seated opposite, that the latter gradually getting more and more exasperated, finally leaned forward and said, very quietly but audibly, "My good sir, if I were you, I shouldn't make quite such a noise, for fear that some fellow at the other end of the table might say you are a blanked fool."

There was a good example of taking time by the forelock, when one middle-aged major, appropriately nicknamed the "Brandy Bottle," proposed to a young lady. "Oh, but I thought you were married?" replied the damsel. "Yes, but I expect to hear of my wife's death by next mail," he pleaded.

A worthy old honorary captain, employed in the arsenal at Ahmedabad, upon being asked where his wife, then at home, was staying, replied that he really was not sure, as he had given her "*a carte de visite* to go where she pleased."

Though there was excellent pig-sticking to be had on all sides, there was a sad lack of spears. The only regular beats near at hand were the Katwara, Perana, and Vinjool *bheers*, but runs were mostly obtained by boar being marked down in hedges or isolated fields of crops by *wagrys*, as the *shikarris* are locally termed. In addition to a couple of rupees for each rideable boar thus shown, the *wagrys* received an extra rupee for each estimated year of age (*e.g.* a 31-inch boar was a 5-year old) of the pig, if killed, up to a total of 9 rupees, which sufficed to excite pretty keen competition. The hedges, often too big altogether for any horse to attempt, but sufficiently open below for a pig to smash through, and, above all, the deep lanes, gave the boar every advantage, of which they thoroughly understood how to

avail themselves. Occasionally, when pressed up the side of a hedgerow, which they invariably hugged, they would smash through the side at right angles, when at the pace you were going you had to fly the cross-fence ahead of you, pull round, and jump into the field which your quarry had entered, and then seeing no signs of him, jump back again into the original enclosure, where, after having negotiated three fences, you descried him legging it back with a clear gain of 100 yards' start. It was, in fact almost impossible to kill a pig single-handed amongst the smaller *khets*. We seldom mustered more than a couple of spears, and in the four meets in June only bagged half a dozen boar. Thanks to the long delay in the burst of the monsoon, we eventually managed to assemble five spears for the final meet of the season at Dongerwao, 25 miles north of cantonments, where, though we failed to find a particularly large boar, reputed to have killed several natives, still the numbers of hog we saw amply repaid us for a very hot trip; but we were, owing to various causes, reduced to one hunter apiece, and had even to hack out on riding camels. I transcribe one day as typical of the style of sport:—

Thursday, 11th July 1867.—Started at 7 A.M. with twenty-nine followers; Luximon, the hunt *shikarri*, had placed a number of *chakoos* (flagmen in trees) most judiciously, and they were of the greatest use throughout the day. Gaps had also been cut in many of the cactus hedges, which were too high and thick for a deer to clear, or for an elephant to force his way through.

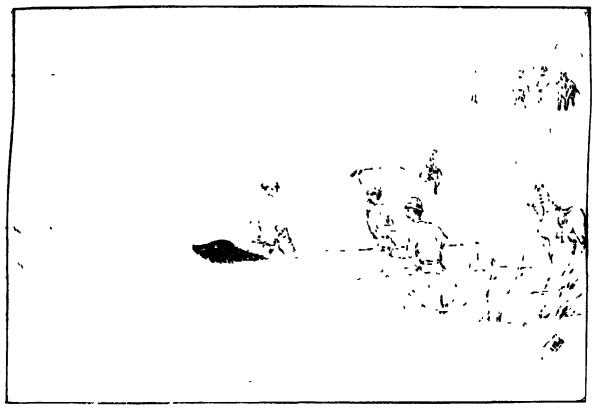
We were first taken to a small hill where two large hog had been marked down, but being aroused and both proving to be sows, they were permitted to retire into private life. We were then conducted a little further on into a perfect labyrinth of hedges, and a splendid boar arose and stood regarding us, with a surly air of surprise. It was not until B. and Sn. had jumped an intervening double, that the boar, after a leisurely survey of us, dived off to the

right into a narrow lane just as T., S. and self entered it. We rattled him down this, and I all but speared, but bursting through the further side of the lane, and crossing an open, showing an unexpected turn of speed, he gained some *babool* jungle beyond. Here for a brief space he was, unsighted, but as *chakoos* steadily pointed out his line, he was caught and got first spear in the quarters when charging T., and taking the point, without apparent effect, in the head, he missed his rip, but caught and held on like grim death to the horse's tail, which he followed up for 60 or 70 yards. He received two or three more spears ere falling. Height, 33 inches; aged as eight years; tushes, 7 inches. A couple of old matchlock bullets were cut out of his quarters.

After a rest for our horses, we proceeded to another "mark down" in cactus, a quarter-mile distant, B., S., and T. on the right, S. and self on left of some dense hedges, and at once a sounder of three big and various smaller hog broke to our side. As on overhauling them all the larger proved to be sows, we pulled up, all except B., who pressed on to the hill, lost sight, picked up a fresh boar, which he rode, speared, and dropping his spear, lost. The rest of us, meanwhile, rode on slowly to the ridge, when a *chakoo* signalled pig in some *babool* bushes. On entering these slowly, we came upon a sounder of a couple of dozen big ones, wallowing in a tank, and the sight absolutely demoralised us, as it became a case of "every man his own pig." At first, along with T., I rode three or four for half a mile, when they dived under an impassable hedge, and we separated, looking for a way out of it. T., S., and S. all rode and lost hog on their own account, finally reuniting and riding a fresh boar, but lost him also. T.'s galloway was so done that he had to be led home. I was meanwhile cantering down the hedge, in search of a practicable place, when a small boar trotted across my front, a quarter-mile off towards a rising knoll. On galloping up to the spot, no signs of him, but in the hollow below, in a nearly dry tank, stood a boar as big as our friend of the forenoon. Letting out over most lovely ground in the direction of Kurree, I soon overhauled him, as he was done up with the heat, and though my nag was a bit shy of closing, the boar, who seemed very cross at being hustled on so hot a day, turned in upon us, when I caught him low down behind the shoulder. It was a case of first spear and last spear, as a few strides further and he

dropped dead. Height, 34 inches; tushes, 7 inches—a welter! Returning slowly, and quite done up, I chanced upon another hog, and rode it, but my nag coming down and rolling over me, I thought we both had had enough of it for the day. B. had meantime speared, but lost another boar, and we regained the tents at dusk, thoroughly done up. All our nags were too cooked to hunt again on the 12th, when three black buck and 45 brace of small game, including the first *florican* of the season, composed our bag.

On the 13th, warned by our ill success, we worked more together, and bagged three good boar by noon, but our horses were now sufficiently stale, so leaving them to follow us, we started on our camels shortly before sunset, getting into cantonments about midnight—only a couple of days before the burst of the monsoon.



A WELCOME.

[*To face page 66.*



AT BAY.

[*To face page 60.*

CHAPTER IV

ABYSSINIA AND GUZERAT

BEING appointed to the transport train of the Abyssinian expedition, I was, from October to December, 1867, at or near Bombay, undergoing my first experience of how thoroughly our cast-iron regulations and hide-bound offices manage to hamper all practical work.

We were supposed to be organised into divisions of 2,000 animals each, with a British captain and two subalterns, ten British and twenty native non-commissioned officers or soldiers as "inspectors," and 400 drivers, besides a proportion of *mūccudums* (overseers), *nālbunds* (farriers), and other artificers. It was all very pretty on paper, and absolutely went to pieces in practice. By the original order issued, a native non-commissioned officer was to rank above a British private, and my first experience of how admirably this worked was a Bombay *hāvildar* (sergeant) complaining to me that on his giving an order to a "Tommy," the latter had *gāllied* (abused) and kicked him. On ordering the latter before me, he explained: "This man began jabbering to me, and I only called him a black soor (pig), and gave him a kick."

As the *kāla pāni* (sea) had then great terrors for the Hindoo imagination, it was only entirely destitute natives who would enlist at any price for the present expedition, and as all sepoys and followers have to provide their own food in India, and are only paid monthly in arrears, it was

absolutely necessary, in order to keep our drivers together at all, to advance them a small subsistence allowance. As dozens of them, after a week or two, bolted, there was a monthly loss of three or four hundred rupees of money so advanced. When our first pay-bill went in, the whole of this was disallowed by the pay examiners, "as by Regulations pay should only be issued in arrears." All representations of the exceptional nature of the circumstances were vain, and my captain was left about £40 out of pocket. For subsequent months he was told to return all deserters as "discharged" on the dates they disappeared, and he then had to draw their entire pay (about treble what had really been advanced) for the periods they had served. So an officer was forced either to lose £30 to £40 himself, or overdraw double that amount of Government money, the pay examiners being supremely indifferent so long as Regulations were adhered to. Of course this surplus was treated as a "litter fund" for the public benefit.

As a final instance of the ways of official common-sense, I may cite that when we applied for our pack-saddles—an obvious necessity, not only for the purpose of fitting them on, but because it was evident that the majority of both men and animals were absolutely untrained to the work—we were informed that these must remain in charge of the Commissariat up to the port of debarkation, "because they would travel so much better in the crates" wherein they were packed. The result was that after some thousand beasts had been eating their heads off for a couple of months at Coorla and Tanna, they were eventually landed, unequipped and unbroken, at Annesley Bay—where the process had to be begun—with the distilled water alone required for camp use costing 10,000 rupees a day.

Being perforce unable even to practise loading drill, beyond "stables" and attempts to instil some rudimentary

ideas of discipline into the minds of our drivers, we had but little save some very fair snipe-shooting to occupy the time until embarkation—which for a couple of months, we were constantly assured, would probably be the following week.

Whilst encamped at Coorla, a most lovely spot, with a foaming stream fed by the overflow of the Vehar lake water-works, I experienced my first touch of Indian fever, in consequence of bathing in a most tempting rocky pool just underneath our tents. The sensation is as curious as it is unpleasant. I had eaten breakfast with an excellent appetite, and was writing in my tent, when I was seized with a strange shivering fit, and my hand began to dance about, till the pen traced incoherent strokes and dashes upon the paper. Throwing myself, booted and spurred as I was, upon the bed, and dragging my blanket and cloak over me, I shivered, despite the heat of the day, until the frail cot fairly rattled. The paroxysm passed away as suddenly as it had come, after what appeared to be a quarter, and may well have been the whole of an hour. This was succeeded by a dry, burning sensation, in which I tossed about in a sort of nightmare for what seemed to be several days, but which proved to have been only six hours. Whilst I continued all right but a little "muzzy" in the interval, I was again similarly attacked upon the second and fourth days at precisely the same hour, 10 A.M., and a rigorous course of quinine alone enabled me to shake off the fever.

As is too commonly the case in India, the prettiest spots are the most unhealthy, and so many of our men died from fever at Coorla that we were eventually marched to Tanna, whence we moved to embark at Bombay in sailing transports, in the month of December.

Throughout the district around Bombay there are many native Christians, whose numbers must have

formerly been even still greater, if we are to judge by the number of the ruined Portuguese churches scattered about. They probably have merged into the Hindoo population, as there is a great tendency amongst both those of our own creed and of the Mahomedan to imbibe ideas, especially as to caste, from the surrounding majority.

One hot day, when riding near Coorla, I asked a villager for a drink of water out of his *lotah*, but the man objected that this would spoil his caste. "But to what caste do you belong?" I enquired. "To the Christian caste," he replied.

As a curious commentary on the ways of living two or three generations back, a house near Coorla, formerly called "Billy Banian's Castle," was pointed out to me built exactly on the confines of the Bombay and Thama jurisdictions. The *bunia* in question made a *spécialité* of smuggling on homeward-bound ships officers who were so deeply in debt that they would be arrested if attempting to leave the country openly.

At that period, also, "griffins" arriving in India used to get into such terrible scrapes, that they had to be sent up country in charge of a senior officer and delivered over to their regiments. One major, who, unknown to the authorities, was an inveterate practical joker, had been assigned this duty, and the day before introducing those under his charge to the first big military station, informed them that, owing to the heat, it was the regulation that officers should have their heads shaved; and as he set the example of having his own pate operated upon, all his juniors guilelessly followed suit. The next day, when got up for about the first time in their lives in full uniform, with belts and sashes all awry, they visited the general, accompanied by their mentor, he in the entrance-hall pulled a wig out of his pocket and put it on —marching them in with their heads as bare as billiard-

balls, and looking uncomfortably conscious that they had been utterly sold.

The passage to Aden, now five days by P. and O., took us four weeks, we being seventy hours becalmed in mid-ocean, with our bowsprit pointing back towards India. As my tub on board was limited to having buckets of water sluiced over me when decks were swabbed in the morning, I took the opportunity of indulging in a header overboard on the first day we were stationary; but as about ten minutes after I had emerged, a huge shark sailed up alongside, it was the last time I ventured on such a proceeding. Though the only officer with the transport, I had a very pleasant time, and under the tuition of the boatswain, had some very fair sport, throwing a harpoon or the "grains" from the dolphin-striker of the ship.

Some of the skippers of transports were rather rough diamonds, and on one occasion, when we knocked off embarking horses at the crew's dinner-hour, I was asked if I and my sergeant would not come down to the cabin and have a dish of soup together.

Annesley Bay, our port of debarkation, was a dreary waste of sand, though a mile or two back from the shore there was a belt of mimosa jungle most useful for grazing our camels, and containing some wart hog, which the few officers with any leisure vainly essayed to ride.

The headquarters of the transport train were here, and we had a Mess of sorts, about the biggest in the camp. So much interest was excited in Europe by the expedition, that we had representatives from most civilised armies with us, and some amusing stories were told concerning them. One rather helpless couple of foreigners had been wandering about for a day after landing, without food, when on making their plight known to an officer, they were of course carried off to

Mess. Under the influence of a square meal and a good drink they visibly revived, and in the course of the evening got into an animated argument between themselves, till one, springing to his feet, called to a servant, "Bring me a cup of tea—hot, d—d hot"—and when the "d—d hot cup" arrived, threw it in his comrade's face. The latter jumped up and challenged him, both appealing to some of the bystanders to act as seconds; but when reluctantly convinced that this would not be allowed at any price, they after some talk agreed to make it up for the present and fight on their return home.

Another who posed as being a mighty hunter, sallied forth *à la chasse*, the very day after his arrival, returning an hour or two later, radiant with the announcement that he had shot "*deux chameaux sauvages*."

One German officer was chatting with a captain of ours, when the latter called up a passing sepoy, to give some order. On the former expressing great admiration at the smart way in which the man had doubled up when summoned, the latter remarked that surely in his army a soldier came up when ordered. "Oh yaas," responded the Teuton, "he do cōm, but varr-ra shlow."

The first attempt at dispatching a convoy of our baggage animals with supplies should have been a useful object-lesson to those responsible for the disallowance of the issue of pack-saddles whilst we had nothing to do in India. These had been served out only the previous day, and we began loading up at daybreak, under orders to march at 7 A.M. The scene of confusion that ensued baffles description, and more resembled an exhibition of Buffalo Bill's "broncho bursting" than the orderly work of a disciplined force. The majority of the drivers, knowing nothing of how to girth a saddle or adjust a load, simply squatted on their hunkers and

left subsequent developments to fate; those who under the eye of their superiors were forced to work, showed marvellous aptitude in discovering wrong ways of fastening straps and cords; whilst the pack bullocks—upon which on this occasion our energies were expended—after being held by main force to be loaded up, as often as not started off with a series of buck-jumps, and after upsetting their burdens and scattering everyone on their path, stampeded with tails erect down the camp. Eventually, after toiling like slaves till past noon, we had to abandon all idea of marching that day.

Fortunately for myself, I was dispatched next morning in charge of another convoy whose officer had been floored by dysentery. Practically from the time of landing, all attempts at keeping the different units separate was perforce abandoned, and the first transport officer that hands could be laid on was just dispatched with any quadrupeds of any sort fit to march. There were some very fine-looking Syrian camels, which worked entirely independently under their own drivers, and their caravan was always headed by one tremendously powerful, thick-built beast, adorned with a plume of ostrich feathers, of whom they were inordinately proud, as they said he had killed two men. One morning, when loading up, he appeared to object to the process, upon which three or four Arabs rushed at him with sticks, when he turned and attempted to seize one of them in his mouth, upon which the man threw himself on the camel and seized his upper lip with his teeth, giving it a shake as a terrier does with a rat, and the huge brute shut up.

Even with animals which had already accomplished a month's work, I think one's transport experience was about the hardest and most thankless task I had ever had anything to do with. After working from dawn till about 8 A.M. to get the thousand odd animals of your convoy loaded up and dispatched in batches, with a strong rear-

guard of spare beasts, you mounted, after a hurried breakfast, at first under the delusion that the worst part of the day was over. However, it was soon learned by experience that the rear would be found halted within half a mile, replacing loads dropped by those ahead, whose drivers' sole idea was to push on and leave the trouble of replacing them to someone else. As the column, often composed of camels, ponies, and bullocks of varying rates of speed, soon strung out to 5 or 6 miles in length, their supervision in the narrow, winding paths up to Senāfe was quite impossible. At every turn, as one cantered forward to see how the head of the convoy was progressing, one encountered strewn loads, or found an inspector trying to catch an empty *bât* animal and a couple of drivers to reload it—and so it went on all day. A man considered himself lucky if his rear-guard got in before sunset to his intended stage of 12 or 14 miles, and he found that not more than two or three dozen animals and loads had been lost *en route*.

So great was the mortality, especially of camels, in the Sooroo Pass, that at each of the five posts established in it, thirty men were detailed simply to burn the carcasses strewn about, as the hundreds of over-gorged vultures perched on the rocks above were quite unequal to their task. Fortunately there was a good deal of scrub tamarisk jungle, which provided the necessary fuel, otherwise an epidemic must have resulted. I once saw a camel who had broken down, squatted with some forage in front of him, within five paces of a stream of water, and passing that way a week later, found him alive on exactly the same spot, he never having struggled these few paces to slake his thirst.

Amongst our European inspectors, we had half a dozen particularly smart and sober young dragoons, just the type of men, one would have thought, to stand

a bit of hard work, whilst we had about as many very old soldiers of the 109th, recruited in great part from the old Foreign Legion of the Crimean War. Most of these were old topers whose hands danced suspiciously of a morning, before they had had their first dram, and one and all were drunk at Christmas-time, whilst their younger comrades had been models of sobriety. Within a fortnight of our real work commencing, every one of the young cavalry-men was down with fever or dysentery, and had to be invalided, whilst not a single one of "*la vieille gárde*" was a penny the worse for the longest day without food, in a burning sun—and excellently well they did their work also. I suppose they were case-hardened, like a lizard in a bottle of spirits; and I remember an old officer of those days remarking, he "had never known a man die of too much drink, but a precious lot succumbed in training for it."

Six marches brought one to the cool plateau of Senāfe, 7,000 feet above the sea, where a considerable depôt was maintained, but onwards to Addigerat, and thence on to Antālo—the furthermost point I reached—there were only small rest-camps, with usually a guard of half a troop or company under a native officer. All these posts were practically defenceless, a small, loose stone breastwork serving for little more than to define the enclosure; and as one often saw some hundred natives seated within, either bringing supplies for sale, or bargaining with the Commissariat for forwarding stores, any of these camps might have been rushed without the smallest difficulty. Indeed, the universal friendliness we met throughout the entire route, alone made the expedition possible.

The native idea of trade was peculiar; the dollar—old Maria Theresa for preference—was the sole coinage known, and any subdivision of this never seemed to enter their heads. There might be seen, for instance, a couple of

women seated alongside each other in the camp bazaar, the one with half a dozen, and the other with three or four dozen, eggs for sale, but each would equally expect a dollar for her lot.

As to this currency, it is said that when the campaign was decided upon that the Austrian Government was approached by the British Ambassador with the view of purchasing from them the requisite amount of this, the most popular, form of coinage, to meet the requirements of our expeditionary force. The Ruler of the Dual Monarchy, although his Government was unable to supply the required sum in this obsolete form, evinced his friendship by lending the original die, by means of which the required sum of silver was struck in the London Mint.

Even in those days—when, goodness knows, my acquaintance with the vernacular was decidedly sketchy—I was much amused by the total ignorance of Hindustani displayed by the captain of a Madras infantry regiment —a dozen years my senior—who was attached to the transport train.

Whilst in India the Turkish term of "Welayeti" appertains to anything foreign, it is more commonly used as a noun to designate an Afghan or as an adjective to explain the European origin of an article. In this sense, to spare the susceptibilities of Mahomedan servants, ham is designated as "welayeti mutton," whilst for convenience soda-water is usually called "welayeti panni"; so it was natural that the English compressed forage introduced in this campaign should be termed "welayeti ghas" (grass).

Upon hearing an officer direct his native groom to ask for rations of "welayeti ghas" for his horses, this captain with fifteen years' experience of the East enquired what on earth that signified. "Why, English forage," he was

told. "Oh!" he replied; "why I always thought that 'welayeti' meant soda."

The late Sir D—— S—— commanded a brigade of the expeditionary force. Lord R——, then a major, was in the Quartermaster-General's department at the base, and Sir H. Stanley was there as correspondent for the *New York Herald*. Captain S——, who had for many years served in Theodore's army, also accompanied our headquarters. I believe his experience of that country was unique. Some years previously, on retiring from the British service, he went on a shooting expedition from Aden into Abyssinian territory, where he was well received, but was forwarded on to King Theodore, who promptly informed him that as he was desirous of discussing matters with him without the medium of an interpreter, he would be interned in a fortress until he had learned Amharic.

Having in six or eight months acquired sufficient proficiency, he was re-conducted before the ruler, and had, *nolens volens*, to accept a command. He had amongst others a French and a German colleague, and on one occasion, when at Eastertide there was a grand muster of all the chiefs and feudatories, they estimated that between two and three hundred thousand followers trooped past the king. After some years he obtained a reluctant permission to leave the country, and was marching towards the coast with all his effects when they were overtaken by a royal messenger with a peremptory order to return. Seeing it would be impossible to escape without abandoning his belongings, he ordered his servants to press on with the latter, whilst turning back with the messenger he rode straight to the king, before whom he presented himself, and with feigned indignation said he had come back because he could not bear to hear his royal master traduced; that although his majesty had shortly before given him permission to

leave the country, this man had the impudence to say that King Theodore had actually changed his royal mind. The ruler, with great promptitude, condemned his hapless subject to death, and Captain Speedy, pushing on by forced marches, got clear of the too-hospitable region.

Some of the scenery—such as that near Fōcada—was very fine, but the so-called towns were mere squalid villages, and the appearance and dress of the inhabitants suggested total savagedom. Of fighting, we on the lines of communication saw absolutely nothing, and in fact Magdala was occupied practically without resistance. We had a great opinion of the invincibility of the Sniders with which our British troops had been recently armed, our natives having in those days nothing better than smooth bore muzzle-loaders.

An amusing "shave" that we believed for a day or two was that our advance-guard had reached the place where Magdala was supposed to be, but could find no trace of it.

One lesson I learned was the great value of Arab horses as campaigners, and certainly nowhere was a horse tried with a greater variety of forage than in this expedition. Whilst at one camp one got rations of *gram* (peas), at the next the Commissariat provided English-compressed forage, and at the third, perhaps, barley and some locally procured rush-like grass. Whilst English and Australian horses, snorting suspiciously at the unwonted provender thus offered—got off their feed and rapidly lost condition, the little Arabs would instantly tuck into any species of food put before them and start fit and fresh in the morning.

Of game we saw but little. Some few elephants were shot south of Annesley Bay, but throughout the expedition not a single lion was killed, nor, I believe, seen. Near Senāfe we got a panther; and at the lower camps hyenas

—spotted, not striped like their Indian congeners—sometimes made night hideous with their yelling.

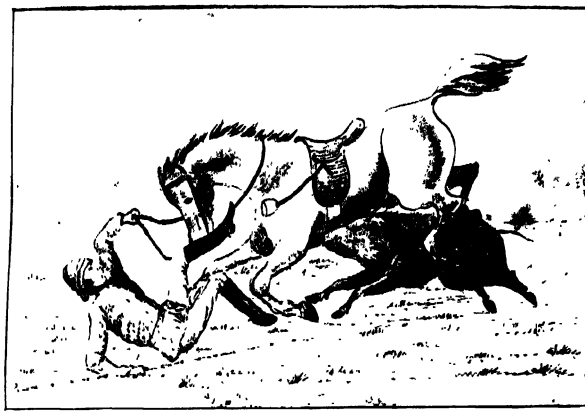
A rather celebrated big game shot, who had published a sporting work over the signature of the "Old Shikarri," considerably detracted from his own reputation by Munchausen-like narratives which were quite a joke in the Army.

Having at one period shot in Abyssinia, he hurried out to offer his services, but these not proving to be of sufficient value to justify his retention, he had to return to the coast. Whilst two or three of us were sitting in the Mess-tent one afternoon, a middle-aged, hard-bitten-looking little man in plain clothes rode up, saying that his baggage animals had broken down a few miles back, and could we send some assistance to them? Of course we invited him to sit down and have some refreshment whilst awaiting his kit, and as he at once launched into sporting talk, we soon concluded that he was no one else but the "Old Shikarri," an idea which was speedily placed beyond all doubt. He began by enquiring whether it was worth his while to halt here a few days, upon the chance of getting elephants, "as he wanted to keep his hand in," which induced the question as to whether he had shot many of these animals. "Yes; the last time I was out I shot nine hundred and seventy-one elephants in two years and three months on the Zambesi River." We naturally remarked that this was a very good bag. "Yes," he gravely replied, "the best bag ever made in this world by a single gun." "Were many of them bulls?" I queried. "All bulls," was the impressive rejoinder; "I never pulled trigger at a cow." We were then informed how much the ivory had fetched in the Grahamstown market—a sum running well into five figures; upon which an Irish doctor present remarked that if he had got all those dollars he thought he would like to sell him a "harse." This so

overcame our hitherto well-maintained gravity, that an uncontrollable roar of laughter brought these reminiscences to a conclusion.

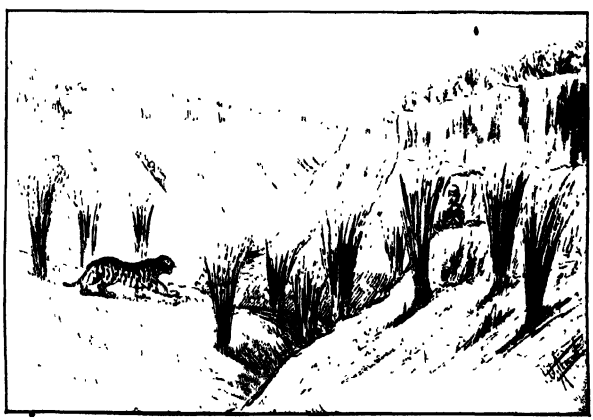
A tremendous lot of grain-pilfering went on all along the line of communications, chiefly in the badly-guarded camps, and the delinquent natives were, when caught, invariably flogged. Our political officers however disapproving of this, an Army Order appeared directing that offenders, when caught red-handed, were to be made over to their local headmen for punishment. As one could have bought over any one of these people in authority for a bag of flour, the idea of this procedure being of any avail partook rather of the nature of a burlesque than of a farce, and thieving received quite a novel impetus. In this dilemma we found it far more efficacious to hand over offenders to a British private with a useful pair of ammunition boots on, and direct him to see the individual out of camp, with the remark that we were forbidden to flog thieves, but that the Order said nothing at all against kicking them. This worked far better than the other system.

Guinea-fowl, spur-fowl, *chikore* (red-leg partridge), and green pigeon were the only game birds I myself shot, and one bright mauve-and-purple coloured bird, of the size of a thrush, was the only noticeable feathered curiosity I remember. In the Sooroo Pass were troops of sulky-looking, huge, red-breeched baboons, quite 3 feet high. In the evenings lots of what were called "rock rabbits" emerged from fissures in the cliffs and fed, apparently, on the tamarisk trees, which they climbed freely. Though of the size and colour of the English rabbit, they were more like guinea-pigs, being tailless, and having rat-like ears—and probably owing to this, no one that I know of ever ventured to eat one. There was one most fascinating little creature called the "Ben Israël Deer"—a



PERIL.

[*To face page* 80.



IN AMBUSH.

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perfect gazelle, the size of a hare, which it seemed a shame to shoot.

At the end of May, as we were already returning, a tropical thunder-storm converted part of the Sooroo Pass into a raging torrent—a flood wave 3 or 4 feet high bursting upon us from some side ravine, and sweeping off tents, animals and men. Our own belongings were, luckily, on a knoll, but those of another convoy in the bed of the stream disappeared bodily, and amidst the dire confusion, trying to save people, quite a comical element was introduced by the camels (the only quadruped which cannot swim), who were sailing off unresisting, and apparently unmoved, their long necks, in some cases, emerging swanlike from the flood, placidly chewing the cud. The "spate" passed as quickly as it had appeared, and within an hour all was over. The road in parts was so cut up as to be impassable for a couple of days.

On the following morning, upon descending to view the steepest portion of the Pass, immediately below Sooroo, which was popularly termed the "Devil's Staircase," an awful scene of destruction met the eye. Whereas twenty-four hours previously there had been a road perfectly passable for wheeled vehicles, here there was now only a chaos of disjointed ledges, down which a man had to be lowered by a rope, to get along at all. High overhead were to be seen in places the corpses of men and animals, in some cases so jammed betwixt boulders that they could not be extricated, and one had simply to heap wood over them and burn them as they lay. All available men were detailed for fatigue parties, and by working night and day the road was somehow, *tant bien que mal*, made passable for animals within forty-eight hours. Hardly had this been effected, and the pent-up stream of returning troops and animals been allowed to filter through somehow, when late in the afternoon, whilst the entire gorge

was blocked by men and baggage, inky-black clouds gathered overhead, and there appeared to be every likelihood of as destructive a "spate" as had occurred two days previously. Had it come then, the loss of life would have been something appalling, and would have exceeded all the other casualties by sickness or otherwise throughout the entire campaign. It was simply due to Providence, or luck, as some people prefer to term it, that such an eventuality did not occur.

Sailing on the 28th May, in one of Green's ships, with a cargo of horses, we were towed to Perim, and thence, thanks to the south-west monsoon, had a rough but fairly speedy run to Bombay. The fittings on one side of the ship giving way during a particularly stormy night, we had about thirty horses tumbling and sliding about for hours, and before they were secured two of our men got limbs broken, and about a dozen animals were so badly injured that they had to be shot next morning.

Being quartered for the next two years at Ahmedabad, my leisure time was more than filled up by pig-sticking, black buck, and small game shooting, which, however engrossing to the performer, is of scant interest to anyone else.

We had annual meets at Dongerwao, or Kheyraloo, of the Guzerat and Deesa Hunts, for a week or so at a time, which remain bright spots "on Memory's tablets traced."

We had, however, better fields—up to five or six spears—in 1868 and 1869, than in the previous years, and averaged three or four boar a day. An amusing instance of native character was shown one evening at a meet, a dozen miles off, where a few of us had come out overnight, and others had sent on their horses preparatory to joining us in the morning.

After dinner, one of the servants, loafing about in the

dark, fell plump down an old well 20 feet deep. On the alarm being raised, and he being found swimming about below, two or three turbans knotted together were lowered down, and by them he was hauled up about mid-way, when, these breaking, he flopped down again, began gurgling, and was apparently *in extremis*, when one of the party rushed to the nearest horse and began to pull off his heel-ropes with which to extricate the man. Thereupon the *syce* in charge, whose master was not present, interfered, saying his "sahib had given no *hookum* (order) for the heel-ropes to be employed to pull men out of wells with."

I had an unpleasant experience in this same camping-ground one moonlight night in July. A patent camp-bed collapsed with me soon after lying down, but being too tired to bother about this, I continued my sleep *par terre*. Gradually my dream shaped itself that a *wagry* had brought in news of a boar marked down, and that, afraid of waking me abruptly, he was tickling me with a feather to do so, when, becoming wide awake, I felt a cold flick along my leg inside my pyjamas, and as I bounded to my feet, saw in the moonlight a snake wriggle out of the tent-door.

In 1868 the railway from Bombay stopped at Ahmedabad, and as Madras time had not then been introduced, local time was employed everywhere. As the cantonment time was regulated by our mid-day gun, in order to ensure exactitude we used to send a non-commissioned officer weekly to the station, 3 miles off, to check the guard-room by the railway clock. This system had worked very satisfactorily for a year or two when by chance the station-master, seeing our sergeant setting his watch, asked what he was doing that for. "Why, to get the time for our gun," responded the sergeant. "Oh, but we always set our clock by your gun," replied the station-master.

In November 1868, I was attached to a battery, the E/14, for the march from Deesa to Deolali, forty-five stages as, owing to sickness, it was almost destitute of officers. We used to take a day's rest after every three marches—a far more popular arrangement than the present one of halting only on the Sundays—and, owing to the climate, *réveille* sounded at one o'clock, and we rode off at 2 A.M. daily, feeling quite chilly even with cloth clothing and cloaked up. There was no road, in the proper acceptation of the term—mere sandy lanes, leading from village to village, and zigzagging about in such perplexing fashion, that guides with torches generally accompanied the advance-guard. The first three or four hours in the dark were most wearisome, but about dawn we reached the coffee-shop sent on overnight, when, after half an hour's halt and hot coffee, all the world brightened up, cloaks were taken off, and by the time we reached our camping-ground, at 7 or 8 A.M., we were glad to change our tunics for white kit before morning stables.

A good instance of a bit of rough and ready enforcement of discipline occurred with one prisoner, who, as is customary, was ordered to march on foot instead of being seated on the limber or waggon. As he flatly refused to move a step, and became insolent, he was handcuffed and fastened to the muzzle of one of the guns. When the latter marched off, and he found he had the choice between walking forwards obediently or being dragged along, barking his knees and his shins, he was promptly converted, and offered to march the whole length of India, if only released.

Kaira, 30 miles south of Ahmedabad, is a most lovely, but now deserted, cantonment, in whose cemetery a large number of officers of the 16th Lancers, and another cavalry regiment whose number I forget, lie buried. Two or three civil officials alone now inhabit the station,

and owing to Government parsimony, the cemetery, when I saw it, was unwatched, and the marble tombstones were rapidly disappearing to make curry-stones of. I believe there are old records, authorising on behalf of the Bombay Government the most liberal expenditure on the cantonment at Kaira—"as it is definitely decided that our frontier shall never be further extended."

On the crest of the breach of the old fort of Broach, no less than, I think, eight officers of the former Bombay Fusiliers lie, most appropriately buried on the top of the rampart they so gallantly carried in a now long-forgotten assault.

We were halted for some weeks here to fire salutes for the Governor of Bombay's visit to the Broach Exhibition. During this tour, on one side of a triumphal arch erected in his honour, appeared the inscription, "The Governor is coming," and on the reverse, the words, "God help us!"

The Nerbudda, which is here three-quarters of a mile wide and tidal, though spanned by a splendid railway bridge, had no other means of crossing than common country boats, and no pier of any sort; so it took us from 8 P.M., full moon, till 3 P.M. the next day to get the whole battery across.

There were scores of starving pariah dogs infesting piles of timber stacked on the left bank, as, whenever a police edict was issued for the destruction of ownerless dogs in Broach, the pious Bunias would collect and ship these across the stream to save them from destruction, though absolutely indifferent as to their having to die a death of slow starvation there—not a rupee being devoted towards their sustenance.

After passing Surat, we hugged the sea beach more closely, and had some rather difficult tidal *nullas* to negotiate, and a most noticeable thing was how quickly marching on sea-sand wears out horse-shoes.

The numerous palm-trees along this part of the route, —most of which are at this season tapped for *toddy*, an intoxicating juice tasting something like soap and water— had an irresistible attraction for our men, who, under cover of the dark hours of the marches, stole off from their sub-divisions and bagged the hanging *chatty*-pots right and left, and though they were severely punished when caught, this seemed to have little deterrent effect.

Rejoining at Ahmedabad, in January 1869, after the journey, we found pig-sticking most unusually flourishing. The best boar of the season was killed at Butwa on the 3rd of March, and was a 36-incher—age, twelve years; tushes, 8¼ inches; length, 70 inches; but it would be wearisome to narrate details of ordinary runs.

There was such an abundance and variety of game in those days that on one occasion, camping-out overnight, I got, the next morning, five black buck, had two good runs and kills of jackals with a couple of Polygar dogs, joined the Hunt Meet at breakfast, and got two first spears, all in the course of the day.

When out at the beginning of the hot weather, with a brother officer, we had a curious experience with what apparently was a mad boar. One afternoon, returning from shooting, I found the entire population roosting in the trees surrounding a castor-oil field adjacent to the village, and close to the disused *dâk* bungalow in which we were staying, and heard that a boar had turned up and ripped six or seven people without any provocation. Mounting as soon as possible, I joined my comrade M——, who had preceded me to the spot, and hoicked in a couple of my dogs. Almost immediately a fair-sized boar charged out, ripping M——'s horse, and regained the field unspeared. Soon after, there were shouts that he had broken at the farther corner, and no sooner had I arrived there than I was charged by the pig, just as my

horse was recovering from a nasty drop leap, and only spearing him slightly, while my nag got a smart gash in the flank, I had my left foot cut; then the boar getting behind me, after chasing us for 30 or 40 yards up a lane, wheeled round and regained the tall crops before I could turn. After some more or less risky skirmishing amidst the 8-foot-high castor-oil, he eventually, being much badgered by the dogs, broke, routed a crowd of villagers, and the moment he heard my horse overhauling him, turned, and charged back from 50 yards' distance, when he died savagely fighting. He was a boar of 33 inches high, with 7-inch tushes.

Once when out alone, and I had speared a big boar who came to bay, I tried the effect of tucking my spear under the arm, like a lancer, instead of carrying it with a loose arm, as the ordinary *shikar* spear is used in India. The pig came forward at me, and we met at full speed; but instead of driving the weapon through and through as I expected, the penetration was insignificant, whilst I lost both stirrups, and felt lifted on to the cantle of the saddle. The exact opposite occurred when twice successively an unwounded boar whisked round and charged when I was racing at his heels, passed under my spear and caught his head slap against the sole of my boot, as both times he rolled clean over, whilst I scarcely felt the blow at all.

We had a very pleasant fortnight, sallying forth at dawn with spear, rifle, shot-gun and greyhounds, not quite sure whether we should first have a gallop after a boar, a shot at a buck, or half an hour at some snipe *jheel*, and gradually worked our way westwards, crossing the Null country into Kattiawar.

This is a most dreary, desert tract, as flat as a sheet of water, and is indeed at certain seasons almost submerged. It seems strange how any animal life can subsist

there, and the few widely-scattered villages are entirely dependent on their artificial tanks for drinking water both for man and beast. Whilst crossing this almost desert tract, I had my solitary successful experience of spearing an unwounded black-buck, which, on the dead open, I had been vainly trying to approach. Our led horses chanced to pass just then, and merely because a half-broken four-year-old was a bit above himself and giving his *syce* some trouble to lead, I got upon his back, with the idea of quieting him down by a gallop, and laid into the buck, who kept on easily well ahead of us. After a couple of miles, thinking I had given the colt a sufficient breather, I was on the point of pulling up, when the deer gave a bad stumble; so, pressing on, I ran into and speared him in another half-mile. There was the mark of an old wound on his off-shoulder, perfectly healed up, but undoubtedly the cause of his being run down.

The Runn of Kutch, to the westward of Kattiawar, presents the curious experience of a stretch of water, in no place more than knee-deep, which it takes several hours' march to cross, and so flat are its shores that for much of the time you are apparently out at sea, and must, if unaccompanied by guides, steer by compass. Joining our friend, who was in the political department, we pushed on to Joonaghur, which, though now a Mahomedan State, contains some of the oldest Hindoo monuments in India.

In fact, Kattiawar appears to have been a stronghold of Hindooism in olden time, and some of the edicts of Asoka still survive, inscribed on rocks near Joonaghur. A short distance to the westwards was the celebrated shrine of Somnāth, which was taken by Mahmud Ghaznawi in the tenth century, when 50,000 Hindoos are said to have fallen in its defence. According to tradition, the Brahmins offered eight *crores* of rupees (about eight millions sterling) to the conqueror to spare the idol, and, though recom-

mended by his officers to accept that sum, he refused to pander to idolatry, and when the image was by his orders sawn asunder, jewels far exceeding the ransom offered are said to have been found concealed therein.

Some very ancient temples crown the sheer precipices of the "Geernal" Mountain, and there is, or was, an old prophecy that whoever jumps over this cliff and escapes alive will become ruler of Joonaghur. As a precautionary measure, up to comparatively recent times the Nawab kept a guard of Mekranis at the summit, and whenever a fanatic prepared to take the leap, he was started with a volley of matchlock bullets, which was regarded as a useful precaution.

A certain residue of Mutiny times who had floated about as outlaws in Kattiawar and were denominated Wagheers, were eventually obliterated in January 1868. Though latterly numbering only a score or two, still, being frequently joined by hangers-on of petty *thakoors*, they for long had set the local authorities at defiance. Though they were often surrounded on one or other of the isolated rocky hills which form such a feature in that Peninsula, the inferiorly armed levies of the country scarcely ever ventured upon more than a blockade, which the dacoits easily broke through under cover of night, to be next heard of 50 miles distant. A detachment of Bombay troops from Rajkote, who had been sent out in pursuit, having heard of the Wagheers being thus surrounded, somewhat late in the afternoon, and several miles distant from their camp, pressed on to attack them before dark. To save time the sepoys put on their belts over their native clothes, and the outlaws, seeing them thus attired, and having no idea that they were opposed to regular troops, stood their ground, the result being that in the assault on the hill—which took place hurriedly and almost in the dark—either three or four British officers,

out of five who were present, and seventeen native soldiers were killed, whilst the entire gang of Wagheers was wiped out—no quarter being given on either side.

The "Gheer"—a hilly, and the only wooded, tract in Kattiawar, of about 40 by 25 miles, and practically uninhabited—is the last resort of the Indian lions, which would nowadays be quite extinct but for their being to some extent preserved by the Nawabs of Joonaghur. The virulence of fever is the cause of the lack of villagers, only a few settlements of former African mercenaries being found; these seem to be impervious to malaria, and to thrive like frogs in a marsh. The ordinary natives only penetrate into this tract from March to June for the purpose of woodcutting and cattle-grazing; all water is supposed to be particularly deleterious, and even in May, inside a tent, one could in the mornings brush the moisture off one's rifle-barrels with the hand. The fairly open, stunted tree jungle which chiefly fills this district is dotted with a good many banian trees, and a lion lying in the shade of one of these was pretty sure to notice people moving about as they followed up his tracks—the sole chance of finding him at all.

Once, tracking a lioness and a pair of cubs down a sandy path, I found that her trail diverged into a valley parallel to the road along which the cubs had continued, being rejoined by their mother about half a mile further on; and the old *puggee* (tracker) to whom I remarked on this firmly believed that animals can communicate amongst themselves. Our time being limited, we had to leave the "Gheer," only bagging some panthers and deer, tigers being absolutely non-existent in this peninsula.

When working our way northwards, devoting our time to panther, pig, and antelope, my friend, having on one occasion dismounted to stalk a buck, flushed a sounder

of hog. We got our spears, and cantering forward on their line, came to a piece of fairly open jungle, which we proceeded to beat through with a few of the local Rajah's *sowars*. Suddenly one of these, with his lance uplifted, galloped ahead, wildly shouting, "Wuh jata, sahib" ("There he goes, sir"), and we accordingly bucketted on seeing nothing, but perpetually urged forward by the excited cries of the *sowar*. After we had covered the best part of a mile, my friend called out, "What is it you see?" "Kargosh (a hare), Sahib," was the satisfactory reply. Thanks to the kindness of some of the local chiefs, who posted horses for me, I was able to accomplish the 240 miles into cantonments in fifty-two consecutive hours, spending each of the two nights on the road in a bullock-cart, on a heap of straw, where I slept very comfortably, and thereby knocked a couple of long stages off my journey.

On one occasion a police *sowar* on a riding camel, carrying a most important message from Ahmedabad to Rajkote (160 miles), accomplished the journey in thirty-six consecutive hours and without seriously knocking up his mount.

Shortly after my return I had, when out alone in camp—thanks to bad water—a sharp touch of something like cholera, and, I believe, saved myself by taking about four times the usual dose of chlorodyne (80 drops) within a few hours, but had to crawl back to cantonments in a country cart. Another officer who had been out with me died in the course of the night, of undoubted cholera. I remember, during a sharpish outbreak, a brother subaltern who had been at breakfast at Mess, remarking that he had just had a touch of colic. About 4 P.M. that same day the order-book was brought to my bungalow, and I found to my surprise that this man's funeral party was to parade in an hour's time.

Throughout Gujerat the *puggees*, or trackers, are a recognised institution of the country, and in the native States, should a robbery occur within village bounds, that community is held responsible unless they can carry the tracks to beyond their limits, when those on whose ground they are last found have to answer for it. Watching them at work, I have observed that trackers take cross-measurements with a couple of broken twigs, which are apparently accepted unhesitatingly by the *puggees* of the next village on to whose ground the trail has been carried.

As an instance of how reliable they are, I may cite the case of some travellers who were robbed a few miles outside Ahmedabad about 9 P.M. by three horsemen. It was not till ten hours after that the police and *puggees* reached the spot and carried the tracks some thirty miles along the sandy lanes which do duty for roads in these parts, till darkness stopped them. When they resumed the pursuit, the second day, the footprints were so effaced by village cattle in the preceding thirty-six hours, that, after proceeding a few miles, they had to abandon the chase; but as there was a criminal village two or three miles off, they thought they might as well visit it and inspect what is practically the "muster-roll," in which the absence for a night of any of the inhabitants must be accounted for. Whilst crossing the fields towards it, the *puggees* recognised the same horse-tracks again which they had lost for some hours, and ran two of them into this identical village, where the robbers, with most of the stolen property, were found.

In cantonments one has, as a species of blackmail, to employ a *puggee* as night-watchman, who sleeps peacefully on a *charpoy* in your garden, but whose presence guarantees complete immunity from thieves.

In consequence of some old treaty by which we are supposed to maintain a brigade at Baroda—as a

matter of fact we kept up only a battalion and a couple of guns, detached from Ahmedabad—we Royal Artillery subalterns had a month at a time, about twice annually, here on duty. The toy army of the *Guicowar* (literally "Cowkeeper") of Baroda was then a real stage one, comprising amongst other things a battery of solid silver 6-pr. guns, and a regiment of natives in Highland uniform—with pink tights to hide the black knees. There was also an amphitheatre for wild-beast fights, and precious stupid these were—such as a pair of elephants pushing one another to and fro, and being separated by big squibs whenever they began to get angry.

One official in a high political appointment here had, whilst I was at Baroda, a curious experience. Twenty years previously a brother officer of his, one K——, who in addition to being a wonderful linguist had considerable interest with the Court of Directors, had left regimental work for a lucrative political berth. Having by his own fault forfeited this, he was relegated to regimental duty, and at the time of the Mutiny was away on leave in the Persian Gulf, chiefly to keep out of the way of his creditors. Instead of rejoining his regiment, he not only remained absent, but was heard by Palgrave, the celebrated traveller, haranguing an Arab crowd in favour of the mutineers. On Palgrave's report of this to the authorities, and K——'s failure to explain his conduct, he was removed from the army. Next he was heard of as an officer in the *Guicowar's* troops, but had to leave that; next as commandant of cavalry in a small Rajput State, but drank himself out of this also.

Shortly before I heard this story, my friend, visiting a petty State near the Malwa frontier, was received by an escort from the Chief, the commander of which was his old acquaintance K——, now a *duffedar* (non-commissioned officer) on £2 a month. A present of

Parsi liquors and stores having been offered by the Rajah to our official, and declined by him, were bestowed on the "English Duffedar," who drank himself to death within a few days—a miserable ending to a once promising career.

In August 1868 we had the record rainfall of all my experience—36 inches in forty-eight hours. Many houses collapsed, posts where sentries usually mounted were waist-deep in water, and it seemed touch and go whether the greater portion of the cantonment, whose buildings are chiefly constructed of unbaked bricks, would not be swept down into the Gulf of Cambay.

In November of the following year we had the sole serious visitation of locusts I ever witnessed. We had heard for some time of their presence northwards towards Deesa, in a wingless state. On the day in question they appeared an hour or two before sunset, and our attention was first attracted by seeing apparently all the available crows, kites, and *minahs* in cantonments flying noisily to meet what resembled a great snow-cloud advancing upon us. Shortly, hundreds of big, pink, flying grasshoppers, 3 inches in length, pervaded everything, whilst tens of thousands began settling on the big mango trees, till their tops seemed weighed down with large pink snow-drifts. We vainly tried to move them on by repeated charges of snipe-shot, but though they fell by hundreds to each discharge, we did not produce the smallest perceptible impression on their masses.

The birds had long since retired, over-gorged, and the natives collected baskets full to make curry of, but the invaders continued to pour in until dark, by which time large branches as thick as a man's thigh were broken in every direction by their weight. With day-break they again moved on southwards, only the tree-tops apparently having suffered to any great extent, and within twenty-four hours scarcely a straggler was to be met with.

Judging by reports from ships, they headed straight out into the Indian Ocean where they disappeared, The *jowarri* (maize) fields, which were almost ripe, seemed at first glance to have escaped unharmed, as scarce a green leaf had disappeared; but on examination almost every single grain was nipped out of the ear, in some cases cut as clean in two as by a pair of nippers.

The small game shooting in the Baruj *bheer*, nine miles out, was at that time wonderfully good, and from October to Christmas, by which time we could commence pig-sticking, four of us usually shot this every Thursday. Starting about 4 A.M., we would reach our ground and begin shooting for quail at daybreak (6 A.M.), with a line of twelve or fifteen beaters, through knee-deep grass, knock off for breakfast under a magnificent old banian tree about 10 A.M., and after this separate for snipe and teal, reuniting and recommencing at quail from about 3 P.M. until shortly before sunset, when we cantered into cantonments in time for Mess. On more than one occasion we bagged 150 brace to four guns, and usually at least half that number. Undeterred by the firing, kites often hovered near, and occasionally carried off birds shot by us; and once when a kite with a quail in his talons had been dropped, the latter extricated itself, flew past, and was missed by a couple of guns, and went off apparently none the worse for its eventful experiences.

In April 1870, I spent a month in the Mandavi jungles, sharing with another gun in six tigers, some bears, panthers, and so forth, and had a further three weeks beyond Morassa, when three tigers and some panthers, with some very fair fly-fishing, rewarded our exertions.

There are some splendid ruins in the former jungle, one of which especially, "Songhur" (the golden or the jungle fort), particularly impressed us. A steep, almost precipi-

tous isolated hill, 400 to 500 feet high, is crowned by an old Mahratta fort, still in fair preservation, and garrisoned by a few sepoys of the *Guicowar* of Baroda. Two long flanking walls run down from the heights above, enclosing a fair-sized town, with the ruins of well-built houses and palaces, but now absolutely a city of the dead. This also had been strongly fortified, and from the *débris* of some of the double-tiered, casemated, flanking batteries some iron cannon were still peeping out, whilst the whole was rapidly becoming lost in banian and *peepul* trees springing up on all sides, and was seemingly infested with big rock-snakes, several of which we saw, and whose trail was everywhere visible.

This fort is traditionally said to have been captured by the Mahrattas at the end of the seventeenth century, as was the better-known fort of Poorundhur, near Poona, by a means not uncommon with dacoits of the present day in India. This was by utilising a huge lizard, called the *gao* —a couple of feet in length, and with enormous prehensile power in its limbs—to carry a silk rope over the wall, up which it was urged by spear-points and the pelting of pebbles. The lightest man of the party then ascends hand over hand by the cord attached to the lizard, and draws a rope-ladder up after him by which his comrades follow. On rainy nights in the monsoon the celebrated Tannajee Maloosray, a daring partisan leader, thus surprised three of these forts at extremely precipitous, and consequently carelessly guarded, points.

Whilst in camp, my friend, who was an official of the district, received a petition from a baboo of the Public Works Department which is worth transcribing:—

No. 5 *of* 1870, *to W*——, *C.E.*

SIR,—With deep regret I have the honour to request you, that at the village of Chilwas where a well is to be

constructed a man named Rajhow Bawa by caste a coolie was prayed on by a tiger at 9 P.M. on the 2nd current.

He was slept under the shades of a hut in the village with approximately ten men, when a big tiger rushed in, not in any apprehension, and took him by the neck.

No sooner the pray was caught he uttered "Hai Hai" which effected every mind and soul and all who were round about. All the workmen cried loudly and some of the friends of the pray taking burning pieces of wood from the bhutee which was lighted on the spot, ran after the tiger. The tiger on learning this joint and accidental clamour left the pray on the ground and absented himself.

The man is nearly dead, but as he is young, say twenty-one years, he is sent to his village viz.: Tuskèsur to solace his aged parents. He endures horrible agonies and will die in a day or so.

Every one of the workmen ran away on this horrible and trembling accidence and none dares to stop there.

No labourer is pleased to come at the place, and when with difficulty done so, they do not work hard, whilst on account of the greatest fear of these wild animals they goes out to work at 9 and return at 3. Workmen are soully unable to work much, so I plainly bring to your notice that there will certainly be an excess on the work, as the amount sanctioned is very short. I have &c.—

Overseer local funds.

This touching epistle induced us to make a 20-mile march to the spot, only to find that what had really happened was that a woodcutter had been scratched on the leg by a panther.

After one long morning's climb over some cliffs, in search of bears, when about to pay a half-naked Bheel who had been carrying my *chagul* (water-skin), he begged in lieu of money for a handful of flour—as he had eaten nothing for twenty-four hours—and explained that he lived 20 miles away, and had only come there to have a drink at the village liquor shop. On asking what had kept him from returning, he said in the most matter-of-fact way: "Oh, I drank; then I fell down ("bus; pilya

tō girpurra"), and was awakened by your sepoy this morning, who told me to carry the Sahib's chāgul."

The liquor distilled from the *mowa* berry is a most atrocious-smelling compound, reminding one of a tannery-yard, and though taxed by both British and native Governments at some hundred per cent. Excise duty over its original cost, it is so cheap in the districts of its production that average natives can get comfortably drunk at an anna (penny) a head.

As an instance of the oppression often practised in the name of the law, a friend employed in the Revenue Settlement of this, the Surāt district, whose mission was to enquire into the title-deeds of the land-holders, related to me the following instructive case, which had recently officially come before him. Put into English values and measurements, it amounted to this: that two brothers had individually owned eight or ten acres of land apiece, but whilst the elder was free from debt, the younger owed a couple of hundred rupees to the local Bunia, secured by a mortgage on his fields. He dying childless, this estate reverted to the elder brother, who was easily persuaded by the creditor to sign a fresh bond assigning the entire land he was now possessed of, as guarantee for his deceased brother's debt. Presently he was served with a notice to pay up—which the Bunia kindly explained was a mere formality required by English law, and of which he need take no heed—and then with a second and third, to which he likewise paid no attention. Shortly afterwards the unhappy *ryot* found his property attached, put up for sale by a Court Decree, and purchased by the village Bunia—the only man in a position to bid—for 180 rupees. He thus, through the accident of inheriting his relative's estate, and ignorance of English law, found himself kicked out of house and home, and sued *par dessus*

is simply bewildering. For instance, one cited how in the case of an isolated patch of cultivation in the jungle he had found two claimants, supported by the entire evidence of their respective villages, each of whom asserted that he had cultivated this particular field without question, for years, and had removed the recently harvested crop to his own yard, a stack being in each case pointed out in corroboration of the assertion. As it happened in this particular case, the cart-tracks were still so fresh that the officer was able to convince himself as to whither the crop had been really removed.

The Bheels—who, like most aborigines, will endure any privations rather than submit to regular work, or leave the district in which they were born—live a most hand-to-mouth existence, and if now and then able to indemnify themselves by a gorge of animal food or an occasional "drunk" of country liquor, they, on the whole, pass a most abstemious life. Far from having any reputation for the pastoral virtues, they are notorious thieves, and in Native States never stir abroad unless armed, those who cannot afford firearms invariably carrying, even in these days, bows and arrows. The former of these weapons is made of bamboo, and its chief peculiarity is that the string is composed of a slip of the same wood, fastened at either end by a couple of inches of twisted

sinew. The use of these mediæval weapons is so associated with this tribe, that, at one of the Calcutta University examinations, in reply to a question, "Describe the Bheels," the answer of one intelligent candidate is recorded to have run: "The Bheel is a black man, but more hairy; he carries archers in his hand; with these he shoots you and then throws your body into a ditch. By this may you know the Bheel."

One morning, in the Morassa country, our trackers reported that a tigress and a boar had been marked down on a small island in the river-bed. During the beat the pig trotted off unharmed, but the tigress, when shot, showed a semicircular cut on the skin of her belly—a quarter of an inch deeper would have been fatal—whilst the old tusker had not even troubled himself sufficiently to shift his quarters.

The late General H—— had this year the unique experience of being bodily carried off, and escaping from the jaws of a wild animal alive. He, with S—— of his regiment (the old 49th), and T——, a doctor of the artillery, out shooting, some 30 miles from Deesa, wounded a tiger severely. They followed the blood-trail into a dense clump of thorns at the bottom of a precipitous ravine, and approaching this cautiously, were just able, when lying down flat, to perceive the animal crouched within. One of the party accordingly fired both barrels of his rifle into it, and no sound ensuing, they naturally supposed it was dead. S——, who was on duty the next day, now started back for the tents, to ride straight into cantonments, whilst the two others, sending for hatchets to cut a path into the bush, remained behind to see that the skin was not damaged. As they were leaning on their rifles and lighting their pipes, there was a sudden roar, and the tiger was on them. H—— had just time to cock and

fire one barrel from the hip into its face, when he felt himself knocked down, the rifle sent spinning from his hand, and himself seized by the body and carried off. This shot, however, saved his life, as it broke off one of the long canine teeth which would otherwise have met the corresponding one of the lower jaw in his lungs. He tried to draw his *shikar* knife, but his left arm was pinned to his side above, so that he was unable to reach it. He told me that the stench of the tiger's breath, which resembled putrid carrion, was quite as trying as the pain in his side, but to relieve the latter he put his arm round the beast's neck, one of his fingers entering a bullet-hole there. Probably owing to the pain caused by this, the brute dropped him shortly after, but lay down about twenty paces off, watching him as a cat does a mouse. T——, who had been following, afraid to fire, now reached him, and seeing that an important artery was cut, had to kneel down, holding his rifle ready with the one hand, whilst with the other he suppressed the bleeding. One of the *shikarris* now joining him was directed how to hold the vein, whilst T—— stood up to shoot the tiger; but the man letting go in his excitement, and H—— imploring him not to leave him, he had to assist his wounded comrade's removal on an extemporised litter to the tents. Then having doctored the wounds and arranged for getting him carried in to cantonments that evening, he returned to finish the tiger, who had, however, meanwhile disappeared, and of whose death or whereabouts no further news ever reached them.

Shortly after rejoining I had an amusing experience of the ways of red tape. Whilst my pay for May had been duly passed, as I had been on muster parade on the 31st, that for April was withheld pending a certificate that I had been alive and appeared before

a magistrate on the 30th of that month. I eventually only rescued my overdue stipend by getting an official certificate that I had really been alive on that particular date.

With a garrison composed as that of Ahmedabad, elaborate field-days were out of the question, but our General had a mania for night-alarms. Our battery held the record of turning out in an incredibly short space of time by the simple accident of one of the General's *syces* living in our battery-lines, and our wily sergeant-major paying him for early intelligence whenever the great man's charger was ordered to be ready at night, when, naturally, the harness was hung up ready in stables, and the men lay down booted and spurred.

At one District Court-martial on some gunners, who in their search for drink had got into trouble in an adjacent *gaôn*, one of the villagers who was produced as a witness, seeming rather overcome by the sight of the members assembled in uniform, had it very carefully explained to him that he had nothing to fear, and that he had only to relate what he had seen happen. On his declaring that he perfectly understood all this, he was asked to give his evidence. Instantly he prostrated himself on the floor with, "Muāf kurro, Sahib, muāf kurro" ("Pardon me, Sahib, pardon me"). On being got up, and having it all made clear again, when asked to say what he knew in the matter, he flopped down on his knees, with "Jo hookum, Sahib, jo hookum" ("Whatever you order"). At this juncture the interpreter suggested that he thought he could better explain matters to the witness outside in the verandah, and permission being accorded, out they went. Through the open windows we could hear a torrent of abusive epithets, and the whack, whack, whack of a cane, when the interpreter marching the

witness in again, he gave his evidence pat off without a pause.

I had seen some flogging parades at Gib. which were not particularly impressive, but one I witnessed here had a most salutary effect. An extremely athletic but insubordinate gunner of ours had been sentenced by a District Court-martial to six months' imprisonment. When this sentence was promulgated on parade, he dashed his helmet into the officer's face, and wrenching a carbine from one of the escort, tried to brain the sergeant-major. For this he was awarded dismissal from the Service, and ten years' penal servitude by a General Court-martial, previous to undergoing which he had to work out his six months in our cells. Here he gave every imaginable trouble to the guards, and as the provosts were a bit afraid of him, he got daily more and more insubordinate. Finally, when he was doing the certainly very ridiculous "shot drill," he took the opportunity of the officer of the day's visit, to chuck the ball about and show what a bagatelle it was to him. Being promptly ordered one of double weight, and becoming audibly abusive, he was locked up, the matter reported to our colonel, a drum-head court-martial summoned, and the sentence of fifty lashes sanctioned, all in about an hour. A waggon-limber was run up in front of the cells, upon which he was spreadeagled, and without any parade for him to swagger before—merely with a picket ready to gag him if he became noisy—he got a particularly well-laid-on two score and ten. Never was reformation more complete, nor did we ever have a more respectful and obedient prisoner for the remainder of the period he had to pass with us.

A considerable number of our men, after the customary delays, received about £50 apiece of prize-money for the Central Indian campaign of 1858. As scarcely

one of them could be induced to deposit this in the savings bank, a Parsee was permitted to open a shop for a week in barracks, to let them have their fling, and allow the battery to settle down again to its normal state. Their idea of enjoyment was to purchase the most expensive articles, and one gunner was seen being treated to the Frog's March to the guard-room, with a bottle of champagne in one hand and a *pâté de foie gras* in the other, having become over-noisy in a bath-room whither he had retired to gulp down the former from the neck of the bottle, and eat the latter with a clasp-knife.

Enlistment for twelve years' service was then universal, and with the bounty and other compensation, amounting to about £12, offered for re-engagement to complete twenty-one years' service, quite nine out of ten men desired to re-enlist—not so much for the prospective pension of a shilling a day on completion of the second period of service, as because they felt thoroughly contented and at home with their present surroundings. In fact, commanding officers made quite a favour of re-engagement, and could take the pick of the lot.

In 1870 our armament was still the old 12-pr. S.B. gun and 24-pr. howitzer, and 1500 yards the longest range at which we ever attempted to hit a target. In those days, also, the system of examinations for Oriental Languages was peculiar, and scarcely calculated to inspire confidence as to passing on one's own merits. After working very hard for nearly a year, I twice presented myself at "up country Boards"; and though I easily passed the conversational and other tests, which were adjudged on the spot, I was spun on the one paper sent to the Central Board in Bombay. I had thrown my books aside for three or four months, and nearly re-

nounced the idea of trying to pass the Higher Standard, when, having a fortnight's leave left, at the commencement of the monsoon, I proceeded to the Presidency town, ten days prior to an examination held there, offered (which I was assured was a *sine qua non*) the whole of the Government reward (about £36) to the Board *munshi* who corrected the exercises, and passed easily. I think I was fairly proficient and deserved to pass, but I am quite positive that I did not do nearly as well as I had at the two preceding examinations, when, however, I was not subsidising the Native Examining Member. There were many amusing stories connected with these exams.—such as an officer, hopeless of struggling with the crabbed writing and false spelling of the vernacular petitions given to test one's perspicacity, simply learning off a specimen one by heart, and boldly reciting this in lieu of the one put into his hand; or of the subaltern, asked how he would explain to his *syce* that he should have taken his horse back to the stables, replying, "I should say 'jeldi jao' ('go quickly'), and punch his head."

Two middle-aged experts, who may be called for the nonce Smith and Jones, came out under a contract made by the Secretary of State, to advise on canals, but at the outset found their pay cut by the controllers, on the ground that they had not passed the language test. Being, however, perfectly independent of the Indian Government, they simply struck work, and refused to put pencil to paper until they got their dues. In this dilemma a special Board was convened to bridge over the difficulty, when, upon the one asking, "Smith sahib tamhara nam kya?" ("Smith, what is your name?") and the other replying, "Humara nam Smith hai" ("My name's Smith") they were declared to have passed satisfactorily.

Shortly before their first Christmas in India they

were engaged in projecting the line of a canal, and expected their respective traverses to meet about the 24th of December, so it was arranged that on completion of that day's work Jones should return to Smith's camp for the holidays. He accordingly had the necessaries for a few days' visit carried by coolies, when he started for the day's work. Having completed what he considered his share of the survey, he sent back his instruments and the clerks, who also acted as interpreters, as though he had not yet met Smith, he fully expected to do so very shortly. Time, however, sped as they tramped on, with no sign of his friend, whilst his coolies, who had no idea whither they were being led, as the day waned, became unwilling to proceed. Jones, who was steering by compass, and knew they must keep on at any price, attempted to urge on his following by displaying a rupee, with the lucid explanation: "Jones sahib, Smith sahib ek (one) Rupaie; Smith sahib, Jones sahib ek Rupaie." The natives sadly shook their heads, but obediently followed their leader, till eventually, just at dusk, on topping a rise, camp-fires appeared close below them. Upon finding they had after all arrived somewhere, the coolies burst into joyous chattering, when Smith, who was afflicted with a dread of robbers, turned out of his tent and let fly both barrels of his gun at them. Jones, who was leading, threw himself down, loudly shouting out his name, upon which Smith, who thought he had killed his friend, rushed forwards and flung himself upon the supposed corpse, whilst the coolies, realising the situation, danced round the two sahibs, singing, "Jones sahib, Smith sahib, ek Rupaie." Such at least was the incident as related by Jones himself.

CHAPTER V

CENTRAL INDIA—1871-1875

AT this period the prospects of promotion in the Artillery seemed so hopeless that I was induced to go in for the Staff Corps, much tempted thereto by the promise of an appointment in the Central India Horse, and the knowledge of the splendid sport which fell to the lot of that favoured corps.

As the authorities raised no objections, I shot my way through the Bheel country, from Ahmedabad *via* Godra, Dohud, Sirdarpore and Dhar to Mhow, a little over 200 miles, by most execrable cart-tracks. There I had a few days' welcome halt.

This cantonment, which is situated 1800 feet above sea-level, is supposed to be one of the healthiest in India, but from the want of trees has a rather dreary appearance.

About 25 miles south-west are the ruins of Mandoo, a vast but little-known city, though of no great antiquity. The position is unique, being on a semi-detached plateau at the southern edge of the great Malwa tableland, at an elevation of nearly 2000 feet above sea-level, and towering over the Nerbudda valley, 1000 feet below. Thirty-five miles of rampart enclose the plateau, which in its day must have been practically impregnable; and which, originally founded early in the fourth century, subsequently became the capital of the Afghan rulers of the Khori and Khilji dynasties, who occupied the kingdom of Malwa. All the

finest ruins—such as the pavilion of Rūp Matta, Queen of Sultan Baz Bahadur, which from a sheer precipice overlooks the wooded spurs of the Vindhya range, the Jehaz Mahāl or Water Palace (1500 A.D.), and the marble mausoleum of Sultan Hoosein Shah Ghori (1405 A.D.)—are of a purely Mahomedan type. Now, a few miserable thatched huts alone are inhabited in this scene of departed grandeur, which is buried in jungle and fast crumbling to decay.

From Mhow, striking the main Bombay-to-Agra high road, I marched the remaining 200 miles in twelve days to Goona—then the cantonment of the 2nd Central India Horse. This well-known force, composed originally as a brigade, formed from Meade's, Mayne's and Beatson's Horse, was, in the financial panic of 1860, reduced to two regiments.

Being under the direct orders of the agent to the Governor-General for Central India, it was available for the maintenance of order—without the delay of references between the civil and military authority—from Gwalior to Ali Rajpore, and from Neemuch to Bhopal, a stretch of some 500 by 200 miles.

As not only the *raison d'être* for the existence of local corps, but even our present system of native cavalry is the direct outcome of the Mahratta wars in these parts, a short digression may be excused.

At the commencement of the eighteenth century the weakening of the paramount power of the Delhi emperors on the death of Aurungzebe, and the ascendancy of the Mahrattas—who, embodying the Hindoo revival, became a formidable military confederacy—brought these territories into the line of their direct advance upon Delhi. For some years they were contented with annual incursions to levy the *Chaoth*—practically the fourth part of the harvest—in the Emperor's name, but gradually they camped there

of the Mahratta power, made their houses on the backs of their horses; gradually the house came to be made of cloth, and now you would make it of mud—mark my words, and take care that shortly it does not all turn to mud and is never rebuilt." When the Rajah lightly replied, "Who is there that dare oppose me so long as I have my infantry and my guns?" the old chief retorted: "Beware! it is those infantry and those guns which will prove your own ruin"—which indeed was exemplified when Sindia went to war with the British a few years later.

It was fortunate, perhaps, for us that the crushing defeat the Mahrattas sustained at Paniput, in 1761, from the Afghan Ameer, Ahmed Shah Durannee—when 200,000 of their race are said to have perished—broke their power for a time, and delayed the period of their coming into contact with us, until we were better prepared to meet them. As characteristic of the times and people, it is said the news of this defeat was brought from Paniput by a *côssid* (foot-runner) engaged to accomplish the distance to Aurungabad—the Peishwa's headquarters, about 700 miles as the crow flies—in nine days. Meeting that prince's army crossing the Nerbudda, the letter was opened, and contained the story of their losses in these figurative terms: "Two pearls have been dissolved, twenty-seven Mohurs have been lost, and of the silver and copper the total cannot be cast up."

The local Rajpūt Rajahs, notably those of Nūrwur and Ragoogūrh—an ancestor of whose had been Governor of Mooltan under Akbar's enlightened rule—gallantly

struggled to maintain their independence, but the Mahrattas, thanks to the employment of disciplined troops and a powerful artillery under European adventurers (notably the Frenchmen de Boigne and Perron, who enjoyed salaries double that of an Indian Viceroy of the present day), eventually stifled all resistance, and at the commencement of the nineteenth century they were in virtual possession of the country. What, however, between the internecine feuds between the houses of Sindia and Holkar, and their disastrous wars against the British, Central India drifted into a state of anarchy and became the home of the *Pindarris* (composed of disbanded soldiers and professional robbers), who raided in *lubburs* of 10,000 horse, as far southward as the Madras Presidency. Disorder had attained such a pitch, that at the time of the battle of Mehidpore (1817) our Government practically accepted the *status quo*, and guaranteed all *de facto* holders of territory who made their submission at that time.

As some of the Mahratta chiefs had assigned conquered territory to mercenary leaders in lieu of payment for their contingents, and these individually purchased their sovereign status by separate submissions, the original owner's rights practically disappeared, *e.g.*, Amir Khan, a partisan of Holkar's, held the Tonk district in 1817, on the revenues, or rather the exactions, from which his hordes subsisted, whilst the Jaora *pergunnah* of Malwa had been reassigned by him to Ghuffoor Khan, one of his own subordinates. Each of these made his separate submission to us at that time, and they are the ancestors of the present Nawabs of Tonk and of Jaora. The consequence is that territories are dovetailed into one another without order or method, and whilst there is always a certain amount of friction between the rulers of nowadays, they are one and all cordially hated by the impoverished

descendants of the whilom chiefs of the country, who, through our mediation, were assigned a few villages for their subsistence.

This sketch is perhaps necessary to explain why it was difficult, half a century ago, to guarantee order in a wild and sparsely inhabited part of the country where there were no scientific nor even natural boundaries, whose inhabitants habitually carried arms, and all of whom, on principle, were on the worst of possible terms with one another. Cattle-lifters or dacoits invariably operated on some one else's territory, secure in the knowledge that they would enjoy complete immunity in their own from the police of their neighbours. The presence, therefore, of some troops of the Imperial Government, whose pursuit of delinquents across any local frontier could arouse no party jealousy, was really the sole guarantee that petty marauding did not expand into serious disorder, and that the remnants of the Mutineers who dispersed in these jungles in 1859 did not again come to a head.

The present "irregular," or *silledar* system for native cavalry—under which the trooper is supposed to own and feed his horse, as well as provide himself with uniform, arms, equipment, including even house and tentage—was an outcome of the Mahratta wars of 1803-4, and was unwisely adopted for practically the entire native cavalry after the Mutiny. When Lord Lake, in 1803, with a force of 2,500 British and 12,000 native troops, including all reserves, assumed the offensive against Sindia's army of 100,000 men, including 50,000 cavalry and 500 guns, and in the following year was opposed to Holkar, who disposed of 60,000 horsemen alone, our handful of dragoons was wholly inadequate to cope with such a mass, and it was absolutely indispensable for us to augment our mounted troops by any possible means.

Perron, the Commander-in-Chief of Sindia, having at

the outset of the campaign dismissed nine officers of British extraction from the Mahratta army, these had taken refuge in Lord Lake's camp, and were employed to take command of detachments deserting from or disbanded by our opponents, and to utilise them in our service. For instance, after the battle of Delhi, eight *rissalahs* of Perron's Horse, having come over to the British, were allowed to name their own commandant, and chose Colonel Skinner, one of these same refugees; and this was the origin of the present 1st Bengal Cavalry. Engaged originally merely for the campaign, they proved so useful, that a certain number were permanently retained; but the same system under which they were first taken on, each man bringing his own horse, equipment, and arms, and getting so much a month to "find himself," is practically continued to the present day. The chief difference, perhaps, is that the above items are now really regimental and not individual property, and that the carbine and ammunition is supplied by the Government.

The whole arrangement very much resembles the old regimental purchase system of our Army. The recruit pays to be enlisted, Rs.350 to 400, to provide his *assami*, *i.e.*, horse, arms, and equipment generally, with the guarantee that he receives this back again when he retires into private life.

Service in the Central India Horse, and other corps similarly situated, was so popular in 1870, that a book of *umedwars* (candidates) was kept, and any vacancy could have been filled a dozen times over within the twenty-four hours. The real secret of popularity was the cheapness of all necessaries, *e.g. gram*, the usual horse grain, was for some years at 80 lbs., and flour at 60 lbs., per rupee, so that a *sowar* could not only live comfortably on his scanty pay, but in a good year save up to 100 rupees. After twenty-one years or so, on retiring,

he got a pension—small, but sufficient to exist on; so, between all these resources, he returned to his native village a comparative man of means.

It is the higher prices prevalent in the larger cantonments, and the perpetual smartening up of uniforms, saddlery, or equipments, to merit favourable reports from inspecting Generals—all of which has to come out of the private's pocket—that tells so injuriously on the stamp of recruit we now obtain. Formerly they were of what may be styled the Yeoman class—joint owners with two or three brothers of a house, and sufficient land to support one or two, but not all, the brethren. One of the juniors would be provided with the price of an *assami* in a native cavalry regiment, and spent all his furlough at their common village home, where, as a rule, he left his family. The recruits we get nowadays are usually of a lower social scale, and cannot produce the necessary funds for their purchase money, so live on for years, paying for this by instalments from their pay, and acquire a habit of debt from which they very seldom get wholly free. From a political point of view, this is a grave evil, as just as the possession of a fully paid-up *assami* is a security for a man's loyalty, so do pecuniary embarrassments render him unsettled and discontented. Indeed, native officers have told me that the hopeless state of debt of most of our *sowars*, in 1857, was very largely the cause of their mutinying. They had nothing to hope for by continuing in our service, whereas they at least wiped off their debts, and started with a clean slate by trying to upset the existing order of things.

Goona, in 1870, was over 200 miles distant from the nearest railway station (Agra), and enjoyed so good a climate—over 1600 feet above sea-level—that there were only two British officers buried in the cemetery, one of

whom had been killed in a skirmish, and the other by a tiger. Cavalry regiments in those days were composed of three squadrons—500 all told, in the Central India Horse—and, since the lessons of the Mutiny, following the Roman maxim of *divide et impera*, composed of Mahomedans, Sikhs and Hindoos in equal proportions. Each troop, native officers and men, is of the one caste, and though the *sowars* are susceptible of great *esprit de corps*, they have but little social intercourse with those belonging to other creeds.

On one occasion, some Sikhs, returning from *shikar*, carried a dead boar through the quarters of one of the Mussulman troops; the latter, in retaliation, paraded a bullock's head on the point of a lance through the Sikhs' lines, and the Hindoo squadron had to be turned out under arms to prevent a row.

A sect that must be so frequently alluded to, demands a few words of description.

The Sikhs, or "Disciples," originally founded by Nanak, their great *gūru* or prophet (1469), with the object of abolishing caste and idolatry, and assimilating the Hindoo to the Mahomedan creed, were at first recruited from *Jāts* and *Khattris*. They assumed the denomination of "*Khalsa*," or "free," and were a fairly peaceful and law-abiding community, especially under the enlightened rule of the great Emperor Akbar, who protected all alike. The persecution to which, however, they were subjected in the reign of Aurungzebe (1658-1707)—Tegh Bahadur, their ninth *gūru*, being put to death by his orders—transformed them into warlike *misls*, or confederacies, under their *sirdars*, and converted them into bitter enemies of the Mahomedan religion. The members of these two creeds are nowadays on terms somewhat similar to those of Moors and Spaniards in the sixteenth century. Whilst the followers of Islam abhor pork and abstain from wine,

Sikhs are ostentatiously addicted to both; and whereas the former are inveterate smokers, shave their heads, and crop their moustaches, the latter may never cut hair or beard throughout their lifetime, nor touch tobacco in any form, Warlike virtues are much inculcated. To be shot in the back, *i.e.* killed when flying, is the most unpardonable of all sins. Steel is a sacred metal, whilst even in his home no Sikh should die in his bed, but on the bare ground; and frequently nature is a little assisted by the anxiety of his friends to prevent his passing away in the comfort of a couch; and plumping him down on the earth hastens his end. Whilst Mussulmans can only eat the flesh of animals which have been *hallāled,—i.e.*, made lawful by having the throat cut whilst still alive,—this ceremony makes it uneatable for Sikhs, who may partake of any bird or beast of the chase—not of the bovine race—killed by a weapon, but may only eat the male of a domestic animal—cattle being of course sacred—whose head has been severed by one sweep of a sword. It was not till Ranjit Singh's time, (1780-1839) — Govind, their tenth and last *gurū* being killed in 1708—that the Sikh *misls* were made into one homogeneous state, whilst, during his reign, the *Khalsa* army was welded by the genius of the Italian adventurers, Avatabili and Ventura, into the formidable fighting-machine which it proved itself to be in 1845 and 1849. It is not, I think, generally known that in those two campaigns we lost more, killed and wounded, than in the entire course of the Peninsular War.

One old Sikh, relating to me the days of their past greatness, had an intense admiration for the memory of Harri Singh, whom he revered as a splendid general, and related, as if it were a trait of genius, that "whenever he caught a Pathān, he used to put him into a pigskin and burn him alive." When I chaffingly remarked that this

must have had a very soothing effect upon them, "Excellent!" replied the old man, with an air of the most profound conviction.

Some years later, conversing with an Afghan, the latter expressed his opinion that we did not know how to treat the Singhs, as they term their rivals. "Now, before your *rāj* (rule), when we caught a Sikh, we put him in a cowskin and burned him alive."

As above remarked, Sikhs are devoted to liquor—rum for choice—but they have far more self-command than our lower orders. It was customary when out shooting to give the *sowars* who accompanied us a "feast," including rum for the Sikhs, after any particularly hard work. On one occasion their *duffedar* came to ask if they were wanted for anything the next day, and when told they were required for the next two days, said, "All right, Sahib; just let us know the first spare day, so that we can get drunk."

They, in fact, will keep drink untasted for a week, if need be, until they can have a square meal, finish off all the rum they can lay their hands on, lie down peacefully, and sleep it off.

Like all Hindu sects, they have, from contact with Mussulmans, imbibed a prejudice for the seclusion of women. On one occasion the wife of one of our Sikh *duffedars*, in consequence of some domestic quarrel, rushed forth from their house and threw herself down a well in the Lines, some 25 feet deep. Next moment her husband, a decidedly stout and heavy man, followed suit, leaping down after her. Wonderful to relate, neither of them were hurt, and the alarm being given, ropes were lowered, and the woman was first hauled up. Then it appeared that her husband's chief preoccupation, whilst swimming about in the water, had been to divest himself of his turban and muffle up the

features of his spouse, so that she should not, when rescued, expose her visage to the gaze of men.

The experiment had been tried in the 2nd Central India Horse of having one troop of native Christians, with the idea that the British officers would in case of trouble have a nucleus of perfectly reliable men. When I joined, there were still some thirty of this class in the regiment, but within the next few years all but two of them had to be got rid of, as drunkards, thieves, or generally useless characters, who furnished more defaulters than all the rest of our five hundred men put together.

On one of the very rare visitations of the chaplain from Morar, 130 miles distant, whilst conversing after service with one of our Christians, he asked a certain trumpeter if he was married, and on being answered in the affirmative, enquired why he had not brought his wife to church. "Which of them, sir?" replied the half-caste, to the horror of the *Padre*, and further interrogation elicited the fact that he had married No. 2, because No. 1 had disappointed him in the hopes of a family. The wife of a Christian native officer in the 14th Bengal Lancers, falling ill and failing to recover—although prayers had been offered for her in church—her distressed husband then applied to the Brahmins. A white bull was brought up and, with many incantations, paraded three times round the house in which she was lying, and, as luck had it, the sick woman pulled round, to the great edification of the natives in general.

All our native officers of those days had served in the Mutiny, and some were men of considerable importance in their own districts. Our *rasseldar* major's troop was almost entirely composed of men from his brother's *jagir* (estate) on the Chumbul.

A particularly fine, old fire-eating Sikh officer, who

died about the time I joined, had served in the old *Khalsa* army of Ranjit Singh's against the Afghans, and had the most unbounded admiration for "Avatabili Sahib," one of Ranjit Singh's Italian Generals. As he used to relate, on the occupation of Peshawar—one of the most lawless cities of Asia—the Sahib planted a gallows in every cross-road of the place, and as he expressively added, "The Sahib always liked to see a tassel on them." In fact, Avatabili never wasted time when a murder had been committed, in hunting up the actual culprit, but just strung up the first man of the delinquent's tribe he could lay his hands on; and whenever a Sikh soldier was assassinated, he hanged the Mahomedan found nearest to the spot. The result was that in a very short time the entire population had to act as police, in their own self-defence, and hand over any offender to the Governor, to obviate the risk of expiating the crime in his place; so in a few months the district became safer for life that it is nowadays.

One characteristic story of Avatabili is, that when riding through the bazaar of Peshawar eight or ten shots were fired at him, apparently by pre-concerted arrangement, from the rear ranks of a densely-packed crowd. Seeing at a glance that with the labyrinth of slums behind them it was impossible for his escort to arrest the attempted assassins, he simply ordered, "Hang the nearest ten Mussulmans," which was promptly done. No further shots were ever again fired at him in Peshawar.

Such drastic measures are so thoroughly appreciated by Asiatics, that when, in 1857, one of the tribes on our frontier had set us at defiance, and had remained *en contumace* for several months, the spectacle of the energetic action adopted by the authorities, in suppressing the revolt of the sepoy regiments at Peshawar, induced the tribe to submit at once, although, owing to

the Mutiny, we were absolutely powerless against them, saying, "Avatabili Sahib ke raj phir hogaia" ("Avatabili's rule has again begun)."

Being quite out of the world, and with no society, we were thrown very much more in contact with our native officers and men than is nowadays customary.

The wretched muzzle-loading smooth-bore carbines we had, were mere pop-guns in which nobody placed any faith, and our "musketry" of those days was limited to an hour's occasional practice at a target 100 yards off, when no scores were kept, but the squadron officer usually had a bottle suspended over the bull's-eye, and gave a rupee for each one broken. I do not remember ever having seen more than two or three hit in a morning. There was, on the other hand—thanks to our commandant, one of the best known *beau sabreurs* of the Mutiny—quite a cult of the *arme blanche*, and every exercise of lance and sword was keenly practised and jealously contested. Swords were invariably kept sharp, and two afternoons weekly were devoted to a *fête* of *neza-bazi* (tent-pegging, lime and goat cutting, firing at a mark at a gallop) and mounted combat.

To cut a goat through at full speed with a back sweep (cut two of the sword exercise) is really a simple affair, though so few acquire the knack. It is managed by riding so close as to brush the animal, and delivering the blow a clear horse's-length before coming abreast, when it actually is a front cut in disguise. This was the sole exercise at which British officers, as a rule, could beat the natives.

Our men also took a great share in our tiger-shoots and in pig-sticking, of which, however, owing to the extent of jungle, we had but little, although during the rains we had many jolly pig-mobbing parties with the Sikhs.

An incident which occurred a year or two after I joined shows how little we can really expect to understand natives. Riding one evening with one of our *rasseldars*, and wanting to examine a leak in our cantonment tank, we called up a couple of *dhobis* (washermen) who were working near, and told them to hold our horses. They advanced with joined hands, and besought us not to oblige them to do so, as it was "against their caste." On remarking to the native officer that surely this was all humbug, he replied that he had never "heard so" before, but that it was not impossible; and as they persisted in the assertion, we did not insist further. A day or two later the *rasseldar* came up to me with a smile, saying he had enquired into the matter, and their statement was perfectly true, and added, "I am fifty years old, and a Brahmin, and this is the very first time I ever heard of it." The reason of the prohibition appears to be that, as it is necessary for the washer caste to cultivate cleanliness, they must not even touch the bridle which has been made by a *chumar*, the lowest caste in the social scale, and regarded as unclean.

Once on my asking an outspoken *rasseldar* as to which of the British officers spoke Hindustani best, he candidly replied, "Between the best and the worst of you Sahibs, there is but little to choose"—though we all, I think, rather fancied ourselves on our supposed proficiency in the vernacular. For some few officers who have been brought up as children in the Sunny East, and have a touch of the tar-brush, it is, of course, different, and I have known one or two who spoke English with a Hindoo accent. I have seen some excellent all-round officers of this class, and one or two have risen to high command in India; but so far as regimental work is concerned, they are more disliked by the natives under them than are regular "Rankers" by the "Tommies" in the British service.

The reason is they know too much, and very often have the objectionable defect of encouraging petty gossip on the part of natives. In fact, such a one is not, as a rule, what an American calls, "a white man."

It is extraordinary how closely every action of their British officers is criticised by the men, and native officers have told me that the exact amount of every officer's Mess-bill is well known in the lines. Much given to economy themselves, they greatly admire open-handedness amongst their British officers. Once asking an old *rasseldar* I knew well, how they got on in the regiment with a new commandant who had been transferred to them, he said, with evident admiration, "Oh, he is a puckha (real) Sahib; out of his pay he does not save one single rupee." This evidently impressed him far more than his merely professional qualifications.

Two well-known heroes of Mutiny days held commands in neighbouring cantonments, both, if I remember right, V.C. men, and both possessed of far too much individuality to suit the humdrum fashions of nowadays. The one who commanded at Agra, though extremely religious, used very decided nautical language, and being somewhat deaf, his stage asides occasionally rather surprised his auditors. When engaged one day at family worship they were interrupted by a native outside jabbering at the pitch of his voice. The General, laying down his Bible, went out, and after the sound of a cane and shouts for mercy had ensued, he returned, and as he continued the prayers, remarked, in a stage aside, "I think I pretty well settled that ——'s hash this time."

The other who commanded at Morar, and had earned by his reckless dare-devilry the *sobriquet* of "Hell-Fire Jack," whilst his trumpeter had been dubbed "D——n Bill" by an admiring soldiery in the black days of the Mutiny, was removed to another command, it was said, for

personally inviting the ruler of Gwalior to bring out his entire army and he would knock it into a cocked hat with his little brigade in a quarter of an hour. Prior to his departure, in the course of a harangue to the force, he said "he knew the British troops there would follow him anywhere"; upon which a voice from the ranks was heard, "So we would, Hell-Fire Jack; we'd follow you up a blooming rat-hole," upon which the whole torrent of eloquence was diverted into "Mutinous scoundrel," "Drumhead court-martial," etc., etc., and the speech came to an untimely end.

In his next command at L——, soon after the result of the Franco-German War had imbued us with the idea that salvation existed only in German methods, his divisional adjutant-general, Von S——, was a Teuton, by name and birth, who had entered the British service through the back-door of the foreign legion of Crimean War days. Needless to say he was at the time regarded as a second Von Moltke, and persuaded his General that it was absolutely necessary to give the garrison an instructive tactical lesson. It was accordingly arranged that the assistant adjutant-general was to command a skeleton force on the left bank of the Goomtee, and that his chief would bring out the garrison at a later hour to manœuvre against him. Accordingly, at 8 A.M. appeared the head of the attacking column at the "Iron Bridge," which was ornamented with a huge placard of "Bridge blown up," and commenced gaily to defile across it. As this movement entirely upset the defensive scheme, the wretched S—— rode up, and attempting to remonstrate with the opposing leader, said, "But you cannot use the bridge; just look at the paper." "Paper be ——," retorted the old soldier, as he pressed forwards, absolutely turning his opponent's flank and rear, and the object-lesson collapsed. One of the last stories connected with him was that at

a camp of exercise, his horse falling and breaking his leg, he put the surgeon under arrest who arrived to set it, for coming in plain clothes.

The first inspection of the Central India Horse I witnessed under him was charmingly simple. After the usual march past, we were trotted out and deployed towards an adjacent rocky ridge, the "gallop" sounding as we reached the foot, and the "charge" as we gained the summit. As the reverse slope was considerably steeper than that by which we had ascended, and as we raced down into very broken jungle, something like a third of the regiment must have been down at once. Anyhow, when we rallied, fifty-four men and horses were still missing, and loose steeds kept trotting into the lines for the next few hours. We received a most flattering report, however, as the inspecting officer was quite delighted with the performance.

One of our charming old Sikh officers had a very supreme contempt for musketry, education, and drill. As to the first, as he expressed it, "There was no real fighting till you came to the clink, clink, of the swords." As to the second, he held that if you once taught a sowar *ilm* (science), as he contemptuously termed it, when he received an order, he would commence to reason whether it was possible to execute it, instead of blindly obeying; and as to the third, he said, "What is the use of drill? 'Threes right, threes left, and charge'—that is enough." ("Kawaid men, kya faida hai? 'threes right, threes left—charge'—yai bus hai.") It is wonderful how the modern form of cavalry exercise has assimilated itself to this maxim.

The present craze—especially with inspector-generals belonging to the British Service—of education at all costs, is productive of far more harm than good. It is not the clerkly, dapper native officer who can glibly quote whole pages of the drill-book, that one would select to

be useful in a tight corner. In military as in civil life, caste keeps its place in India, and writing and fighting are considered two separate men's work.

Many a comic incident does one see on parade. One of our commissioned officers had a very poor word of command, and, moreover, generally managed to deliver this from the wrong flank. On one occasion, when advancing at a trot, and we just could hear, "Troops—wheel!!" some wheeled right about, some left about, and some to a flank, and as I went round I caught, "There you go again like a flock of sheep—yes, like a flock of —— sheep." Next minute, the "halt" and "officer's call" sounding, we—chiefly native officers, not one of whom could speak English—formed up before our colonel, who, fairly stuttering with rage, addressed us: "Jub hum right ka hookum deta, to tum left ko jate, aur—aur—aur—wicéy werséy" ("When I give the order, 'to the right,' you go to the left, and—and—and vice-versa"). "Ha, Sahib," assented the natives in chorus, with an air of profound conviction, and absolute ignorance of what on earth it all meant.

On another occasion one subaltern, ignorant of the trumpet-call which had just sounded, and not conforming thereto, was apostrophised with, "Oh, of course you don't care about the trumpets, why should you? 'Blast those trumpets,' says you."

Another officer I knew, who possessed the happy knack of never being in time for anything, arriving late on parade for about the nineteenth time, and riding up to the colonel with the usual formula "Very sorry, sir, but I'm late," was greeted with the remark, distinctly audible down the line, "It's a most extraordinary thing, Captain S——, that you're always late, and you're always sorry."

So plentiful was game in those days, that in February and March we shot nine tigers and three panthers within from 3 to 8 or 9 miles of cantonments, receiving news



A SHOT FROM THE HOWDAH.

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after drill or morning stables, and being able to canter back in time for Mess.

At our hot-weather party—in April and May—when we received every possible assistance from the local chiefs—to whom we were indebted for the loan of nine elephants, and had, moreover, half a troop of our *sowars* to act as *shikarris* and assist us generally—we bagged, to four guns, eighteen tigers, besides six cubs, four panthers, eight bears, and seven head of other game.

It is a mistake to suppose that natives welcome with joy the advent of a British sportsman. Not only in some districts do their crops suffer more from the ravages of wild pig than they do from the loss of cattle—so that the presence of a couple of tigers is considered rather a benefit than otherwise—but they have to endure the exactions of a sahib's native servants in the only too-common case when their masters are ignorant of the language, or, from laziness, entrust payments of beaters and supplies to their tender mercies.

Some tribes believe that a human soul is imprisoned in a man-eater's body, and that this accounts for their preternatural cunning. One of these scourges of the jungle in Central India was locally called the "Chumputtia," and the legend was that a *dhobi* (washerman) had learned the magic art of transforming himself into a wild beast, the recital of a short spell by a second party being needful to enable him to resume his human form. Unfortunately for himself, he having entrusted the secret to his wife, she became so terrified on seeing him changed into a tiger, that she forgot the mystic words, with the result that, being doomed to roam henceforth as a wild animal, he vented his rage on the human species.

I believe that, as a rule, it is pure accident that creates a man-eater. Either a wounded animal, unable to catch game or struggle with a large bullock, is driven

by hunger to seize a human being, or, as commonly happens when one of the village cattle has been killed, and a few *chumars* with a tom-tom, and practically unarmed, attempt to drive the tiger off and annex the carcass for themselves, the tiger being extra hungry shows fight, kills a man, and finding him the easiest-caught and most helpless form of game, turns its attention to human flesh whenever at a loss for a dinner.

Much of the country we traversed was most interesting, both historically and to an antiquarian; whilst some of our camping-grounds and river-beats were picturesque in the extreme. Not only around several of the now jungle villages, but even in the midst of the beats were ruins of beautifully carved stone temples and old forts, testifying to the former presence of a far larger population than is nowadays found, and to a high state of culture, where at present only half-naked wood-cutters and cattle-herds are to be seen.

At Dilanpore—a small village buried in the jungle, but surrounded by some beautifully carved ruins—curiously enough, in two different years tigers went clean up a tree after a sportsman, and on both occasions after the same man. It was here also that B——, a very popular and well-known commandant of the C.I.H., lost his arm by a tiger. He was posted in a tree a few paces back from the bank of a river, which there had an earthen scarp of 9 to 10 feet high; the water-course being comparatively dry at the time, with scattered pools of water, and dotted with clumps of *jāman* bushes. His one companion was posted 100 yards off on the other side. A tiger, coming his way up the bed, was badly wounded, but inclining inwards, became defiladed by the high bank; so, thinking this sufficient protection, he got down, and sending his gun-bearer off to stop the beaters, began peering over the edge to try and locate the animal, eventually getting into an

overhanging bush to get a better view. The tiger, who meanwhile had ascended by a cattle-track and was on the same level as himself, seeing him moving about, charged down upon him. B——, turning in the bush, attempted to shoot at close quarters, but a twig getting under the hammers of the rifle, both barrels missed fire. Jumping down into the bed of the river, his rifle remaining hung up in the bush, he ran for the nearest pool of water, intending to dive, but finding this nowhere more than knee-deep, and the tiger catching him up, after dodging it once or twice round a big boulder, he was seized by the left arm, the brute lying down upon him and crunching this slowly. His orderly, just after, ran up, and putting the muzzle of his master's second gun into the tiger's ear, blew its brains out. It was the hottest time of the year, and no doctor was within 70 miles, but a camel *sowar* being sent off to bring out the regimental surgeon, an extempore litter was made out of a camp-bed, and starting at sunset, and pushing on all night, at ten o'clock next morning they met the surgeon galloping out to meet them. After a hurried inspection of the arm, he decided to amputate it at the shoulder there and then, as mortification had already set in ; and on a May day, under the scanty shade of an acacia tree, this was done successfully with a case of pocket instruments, and without, I think, even chloroform. Nineteen out of twenty men would have succumbed to the shock, but sheer pluck pulled him through, and this officer, now more than thirty years after the accident, still ably fills a high and important post. His relinquishment of military work in consequence of the accident was, however, a distinct loss to the Service.

Another mishap near Goona, having a more tragic sequel, was a decided instance of *kismet*. A young officer, in the course of a beat, got mauled by a tiger, and the regimental doctor, who was one of the party, running up

to attend to the wounds, laid his rifle down on the ground. A beater treading upon, accidentally discharged this, the shot killing the already-wounded man on the spot.

As, thanks to the influence of our commandant, we had several staunch elephants with our party, we had absolutely no risks; but great as is the luxury of shooting under such conditions, one feels scant credit to oneself in thus bagging a tiger. The three or four elephants we had out daily, accompanied and covered the line of beaters, who had orders to stop and get up trees as soon as ever a shot was fired. If a whistle from the guns was heard, this was the sign to resume the advance, and signified that the tiger was killed, or had broken out of the beat. Failing this signal, whilst the beaters remained halted, the head *shikarri* came forwards on an elephant, for orders—as a rule, taking into the howdah the man who had fired—and he worked round behind the wounded animal, endeavouring to finish it off, or force it on to one of the other guns.

We camped at the picturesque spots of the Mokundurrah Pass and Sheregurh Fort—famous in Colonel Monson's disastrous retreat in 1804—and at the latter had an extraordinary run of luck, bagging eight tigers in a week, three of which fell in a few minutes in one beat. We encountered some severe, though partial, thunderstorms during the month of May, rather an unusual occurrence, and wound up on the 1st of June when beating an isolated rocky hill—where we did not expect to see anything except a panther—by shooting, besides it, two tigers and a bear, as well as seeing three more of the latter. Both the former afforded some sport, on account of the difficult character of the ground, the one being shot by us on foot, and the other finished in a cave.

As on the conclusion of this trip I was allowed further leave to try for a man-eater who had stopped



IN EXTREMIS.

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the road 50 miles eastwards of Goona, and passed a solitary winter in charge of a detachment whilst my regiment was at the first camp of exercise at Delhi, I was lucky enough to assist in killing thirty-three tigers and seventeen panthers and bears in my first year with this regiment. Amongst other things, I speared a boar of 38 inches (*i.e.* 9½ hands high, length, 75 inches, girth, 51 inches), killing him off a 14-hand Arab, who was, however, badly ripped in the chest.

A most delightful Sikh orderly of a brother officer's, Maytab Singh, had a fearful accident this year. Out looking for deer near cantonments, with a single-barrelled muzzle-loader, he came upon two tigers in a sort of *cul de sac*, and walking up to within 15 yards, deliberately fired at the nearest. The pair charged over him, when he fought it out by driving his knife into one of them; but he had his left eye and cheek-bone torn out, a small piece of his skull broken off, exposing the brain, besides receiving severe wounds on arms and thighs. His case was considered by our surgeon to be absolutely hopeless, but, thanks to his care and skill, and the man's wonderful pluck, he not only pulled round completely, but remained as keen and venturesome a *shikarri* as ever, and eventually was killed by a runaway horse on parade, nearly twenty years later.

He certainly did not value human life, whether his own or that of others. Once when out partridge-shooting he was seen in fits of laughter, slapping his thighs in the ecstasy of his glee. On enquiring the cause of his hilarity, he hurriedly said: "Hush, Sahib! that coolie," indicating one of the beaters, "has just been bitten by a green snake, but he thinks it is only a thorn! Don't tell him, or he'll be frightened and stop beating."

I was absent in camp when I received news of his first accident, the account saying that the poor fellow was

dying. On communicating this to some other Sikhs out with me, who all were great friends of the wounded man, the *duffedar*, Old Hursar Singh, tranquilly remarked, "Perhaps his time of death has come" ("shayad uska maut hogaya"), and began asking orders for the next day's *shikar*. I thereupon said, "But are you not sorry for your friend, who, I know, is very fond of you?" "Well," he answered, "is it not God's will?—why should we mind? and our grief will not help him."

This old *duffedar* was a wonderful character, and had probably been present at the death of over 500 tigers. He had the rare quality, for a native, of not being the least subservient, and would unhesitatingly contradict his own colonel over questions of sport. He always carried an old double rifle, with which some admirer had presented him, but which was absolutely useless as a weapon of either offence or defence. On one occasion when a tiger had charged back close past him as he led the beaters, he had vainly snapped both caps at it. On being laughed at for the state in which he kept "merri ruffle," as he fondly termed the piece, he replied that it all came of his being too good-natured, that he had lent the "ruffle" to some burned dog last month, who must have fired it off and never told him! Poor fellow, he was killed by a tiger, thanks to the same useless piece of old iron, some fifteen years later.

Very bigoted himself, he objected to one of the Sikhs with him having his hair cut, to get at a wound in the back of the head, saying that he knew his friend would far sooner die than let this be done. Some time afterwards, he himself shot a black cow by mistake for a boar—the most awful sacrilege a Sikh could commit—and I think that even the Hindoos were far more amused than scandalised at such a thing happening in connection with such a fervent champion of the faith as he was known to be. On his return from doing penance at

the Golden Temple and bathing in the Ganges, he burned the *shikar* cloths he had worn on the fatal occasion, but drew the line at parting with the rifle with which he had done the deed, hedging on this point by giving away to a relative another gun he owned. On my telling him this was very generous on his part, he gravely admitted that it was, "besides which," he added, "the barrel had got worn so very thin that there was just a little doubt (zerra sa shūk) if it was quite safe."

To anyone fond of sport, life was, if wild and devoid of society, most enjoyable, and as one lived chiefly on horseback in the open air, it was a most healthy sort of existence. Things were so different from nowadays, that for five years I was never once inside a railway carriage, whilst, by a rough calculation, I had ridden at least 20,000 miles in that period. Our sister regiment was at Augar, 130 miles distant, and it was quite a common occurrence to exchange visits, riding, as a rule, the first 100 miles in the day—by utilising the horses of our detachments which patrolled the intervening space—and cantering in for breakfast on the following morning. More than once the 186 miles from Goona to Indore have been accomplished, almost entirely in the saddle, between an early start on the one morning and breakfast-time of the next day; and this is certainly excellent training for a cavalry officer.

At that time the postal service along the line—Indore to Gwalior, about 300 miles—was performed entirely by runners, who carried the mails, including parcels up to a total of 50 lbs. weight, at an average pace of 6 miles an hour, for the whole twenty-four hours, or, say, 140 miles per diem. There were relays of bearers every 6 miles—who received the munificent pay of six rupees each a month—and escorts to safeguard them, maintained by the various petty States, who received

considerably less. It was extraordinary how well and accurately this very antiquated organisation worked, nothing but an extra heavy flood on some of the unbridged rivers ever occasioning even a few hours' delay.

Our hot-weather shoot of 1872 was a decided disappointment, as, starting with six guns, as many elephants, and the full expectation of making a record bag, we only made a total in two months of seventeen tigers, nine panthers, nine bears, and twelve head of other game. Our sport was, moreover, most unevenly distributed, four tigers being killed in two consecutive days, five in one day, about a month later, and another the following morning; so we only picked up seven in the remainder of our two months' shoot, or, on an average, one a week, and marched over 400 miles to accomplish this. We visited, amongst other places, the old city and hill-fort of Chandairee, which bears many traces of former grandeur. Not only the streets, but the roads, for some way beyond the gates, are paved with huge stone slabs; there is a tunnel cut through an adjacent range, to save the crossing, and the bazaar has been built of carved stone of a uniform pattern. Now, a few imperfectly repaired dwellings are inhabited by an apparently poverty-stricken handful of people.

Old as the town is, there are the ruins denominated "The Old City," some few miles to the north-east. The fort, which was stormed by Sir Hugh Rose in 1858, enjoyed the reputation of having been only twice taken previously—in the sixteenth century by the Emperor Akbar, and in the eighteenth by Jean Baptiste Filose, a French adventurer employed by the Mahratta chief Sindia. During the siege of 1858—when our engineers utilised the trace of Jean Baptiste's approaches, as there is in fact but one single point from which the fort is assailable—an officer told me he had overheard a

couple of our gunners in the trenches discussing the prospects of taking the place. "This fort has never been taken afore, has it, Bill?" queried Number One. "Oh yes, twice," responded Number Two. "Who by?" quoth Number One. "Well, I heard Saint John the Baptist took it once, but I don't know who t'other beggar was," explained his comrade. The same officer narrated how, prior to the assault, when the breach had become practicable, news was brought in by our spies that the mutineers, fully persuaded that they could not successfully oppose the first rush of our column, had arranged to leave a poisoned cask of rum at a conspicuous point inside the breach, confident that our British soldiers would certainly be destroyed thereby. A warning to this effect was read out to all our troops on three successive parades; yet when the place was stormed—a narrow, razor-backed spur of rock, admitting a couple of men abreast at most, being the sole means of approach—our officers found some of the leading stormers already tapping and drinking the supposed deadly liquor, before they were able to stave in the barrel and spill its contents. As luck would have it, the rum, judging by the result, was not poisoned after all. I have heard that in the course of that campaign, in the fights at Bagrode and Khoraie, the villagers were at work in the fields on either flank of the combatants, only stopping when they got under fire, and absolutely indifferent as to the results, so long as they were left to till their fields in peace.

Besides four other tigers bagged in the course of two or three days' leave from cantonments, the last Central Indian lion was shot at Cheen Hill, 9 miles from Goona, on Waterloo Day, 1872. Though we had had frequent reports of one having been seen about—up to six or eight had occasionally been shot in a single season a few years

previously—we beat on the day in question in expectation of a tiger. Towards the conclusion of the drive, I got a glimpse of what from its colour I fancied to be a *sambhur*, though it appeared to glide along more smoothly than a deer usually walks. The next moment, as its head appeared from behind a rock, I saw a fine lion with, despite its being the end of the hot weather, a very fair mane. Though he measured the same as an average tiger, he gave one the impression of being comparatively harmless, and fell to the first shot. Length, 9 feet 4 inches, of which the tail was 2 feet 11 inches, girth, 48 inches, round neck, 32 inches.

Though one reads of the "maneless lion of Guzerat," the late Mr Edwin Ward considered the Indian and African species identical, and the mane entirely a question of climate; just as tigers from cold regions, such as the Amoor, are adorned with a ruff denied to their brethren of hotter latitudes. The "struggle" set up by the same naturalist, which was awarded a gold medal at the Paris Exhibition of 1867, was so far founded on fact, that the lion which was shot in the Goona district had, apparently, considerably the worst of the encounter. They were known in Central India, at least, as being far more gregarious than their striped cousins, and were usually found in regular family-parties.

Beside thirty-nine specimens of big game, and about as many *sambhur*, hog, etc., my bag ran to about a thousand head of small game, and several hundred *mahseer* and trout killed with spoon and fly. The Indian trout is a most game fish, and rises to a fly freely, but seldom runs to more than three-quarters of a pound, and is too full of bones to be pleasant eating.

In November, our regiment marched for Burwaie—about 230 miles—where the Viceroy held a *durbar* and laid the foundation-stone of the railway bridge across the

Nerbudda. Camp life in India is always most enjoyable. With the number of servants at command, your Mess and one of your tents precede you overnight; so, marching off about 5 A.M., you are on your new camping-ground by 8 or 9, have finished "stables" and got to breakfast by 10 or 11, and have the whole afternoon to shoot, unless you happen to be officer of the day.

Being detailed for the Viceroy's escort, I had to post relays, and ride with his *tonga* from Khundwa to Burwaie, 40 miles—a distance his carriage accomplished in four hours. On the way down, some *sowars* of the Maharajah Holkar's, who were encamped within a few hundred yards of us, having been gratuitously insolent to me, I on finding their officer in our lines reported the matter to him, he promising every redress. As I was tubbing in my tent a quarter of an hour later, I heard a row in front, and going out, found the two delinquents, with their turbans tied round their necks, ignominiously dragged up by some of my Sikhs, who, overhearing the complaint I made to the Rajah's officer, had taken the law into their own hands and seized and hammered these two men into a very abject state of submission.

It being known that the Viceroy was a great fisherman, a reach of the Nerbudda had been preserved and ground baited with *gram* for a month previously; and though you might spin with the spoon, or cast a fly for hours without stirring a fin, at the first handful of *gram* cast in you saw the broad backs of 12- and 15-pounders breaking the surface of the stream like a school of porpoises.

The Maharajah, on hearing His Excellency was keen on fishing, native-like had all the fishermen and nets along that part of the river assembled; and really could not understand why the distinguished visitor disdained to avail himself of their help.

An unseasonable downpour of rain greatly marred

the success of the display, which lasted only three days.

The next four months were spent in the most enjoyable of all duties—escort work with the Agent Governor-General for Central India. The climate was simply perfect, the country wild and picturesque, and though in about four months we covered nearly 1000 miles, it was all done with the utmost comfort and luxury.

In a country like India, which, despite all the platitudes in which some people indulge, was won by the sword, and must be held by the sword, whilst military officers—even Generals on inspection tours—have to provide tents, camp equipment, and transport for the same, being, generally, considerably out of pocket by every march they make, civil or political officials are not only provided on a lavish scale with all the above, but receive a handsome daily allowance *par dessus le marché*. The luxurious reception-, dining- and sleeping-tents of the "Agent" were all in duplicate at the very least, and, so far as sleeping accommodation went, he could entertain several guests in addition to his own party. One hundred infantry of the Bhopal Battalion, and a troop of the Central India Horse, acted as escort, and what between them, Government and personal servants, clerks and *vakils* (representative of each State in Central India), our camp numbered between 1400 and 1500 souls. Not only do all these people, as a matter of fact, live at the expense of the State in which they happen to be, but the *chupprassis* (Government servants in livery who act in a capacity something between footmen and *maîtres de cérémonie*), at the end of a tour, are quite men of means. One head *chupprassi* at the Indore Residency, whose pay was ten rupees a month, was currently reported to have bought in house property in the *suddhur* bazaar, in one year, for between thirty and forty thousand rupees. It is said that tent-pitchers refuse to

drive a single peg into the ground until they receive their *dustoor*, which was generally believed to be five rupees each. Anyhow, I remember a junior native officer, on one occasion, bringing me up eight gold mohurs (£12) which he said had been sent to him by the Rajah as the *dustoori*, and asking what he was to do with it. What the head *munshis* and other clerks received, who really had influence to help the donor, goodness only knows.

The whole system of *baksheesh* is so engrained in Eastern minds, and sanctified by custom, that it is just as impossible to put a stop to it as it is to prevent railway porters and game-keepers from taking tips in England.

Though a couple of Government *chupprassis*, who were accidentally seen receiving a handful of money from an official of one of our hosts, were promptly sacked, still I do not suppose it had the smallest effect in checking the custom ; and, as someone remarked, their successors will probably be just as greedy, though far less useful than the men dismissed.

There is great *naïveté* and credulity, combined with a low tricky cunning, inherent in the ordinary Oriental mind, and it is difficult to disabuse them of the notion that interest or bribery can override all laws, or that any evidence, no matter how clear and complete, can not be improved upon by a few ingenious additions. Perjury involves no moral turpitude in their minds: it is merely an intelligent utilisation of the brains with which they are endowed by Providence. It is of not infrequent occurrence to hear complaints of villagers entrusting money for their tickets to a plausible stranger they meet at a railway station, who assures them that being a friend of the booking clerk he can buy them considerably cheaper than at the advertised rates. I have also seen *sowars*, in order to save walking a mile to the station, wait beside the line and call out to the engine-driver

to stop the train as they were going to get in; and they could not be brought to see but that they had been very hardly treated.

Once, having to despatch a camel *sowar* about 100 miles through a very jungly part of the country, with which he was unacquainted, I read out from the map the names of eight or ten villages on his most direct line, telling him to make a note of these. On his replying that he could not write, I remarked to the native officer accompanying him, that he would surely never remember the names: but the *jemadar* confidently answered that he certainly would do so, because he could not read and was accustomed to depend on his memory; and I found upon asking him that he could repeat the lot without the smallest hesitation.

Our route ran, roughly, from Indore to Gwalior, about 300 miles, thence south-eastwards through Bundelkund to Rewah, by a slightly zigzag course of another 300, and thence south-westwards back to Indore, a further 400 miles. The usual routine was: all the camp required for the morrow marched by noon the day previous, and the bulk of our luggage, private servants and kitchen establishment, started about 10 P.M. There was, in fact, one perpetual stream pretty well all night through, the belated parts of our establishment getting under weigh up to midnight; *vakils*, some of our escorts and led horses moved off from 2 to 6 A.M., and we ourselves, mounting about 7 or 8 o'clock, cantered through—usually with a change of horses midway—and got to our new ground about 10 o'clock. Here we found tents pitched and ready, hot coffee presented as we dismounted, and breakfast on the table by the time we had tubbed and changed our clothes. Except on days when formal visits had to be paid, my only further duties consisted in shooting for the table, as our *menu* was largely dependent on the gun.

In the course of the tour I bagged 10 head *sambhur*, etc., with the rifle, 978 head of small game, including 27 geese, 210 duck and teal, and 616 snipe; and when again on tour in 1874-1875, 32 head with the rifle, and 1296 with the gun.

Gwalior, where my General was detained a fortnight by political business, is too well known to require description. The late Maharajah, having at that time no direct heir, had adopted a youth, who, it was alleged, tried to poison his benefactor. As by Eastern custom a child, when once formally adopted, possesses all the rights of an actual son, his deposition from the position of heir-apparent necessitated a good deal of correspondence and a certain amount of formalities. The result was fortunate, as the chief, marrying again, became the father of the present able and enlightened ruler of Gwalior.

Marching through the Jhansi country, a story reached our camp that in the *zenana* (harem) of a neighbouring chief an English woman was living, one of the supposed victims of the massacre there in 1857. Though this was by no means impossible, as nothing definite could be ascertained, it was out of the question to take any steps in the matter.

Both the fortress and following of the Sumpter chief especially impressed me, though the former lacked the imposing appearance of the hill-forts of Kallinjer and Adjygurh, and owed its strength entirely, as does Bhurtpore, to its formidable and well-revetted ditch.

On days when the A.G.G. reached the capital of any of the rulers, he was met at a certain specified distance outside the town by a formal *peshwaie* of the Rajah and followers, got up in barbaric pomp, with a great display of elephants, caparisoned horses, dresses varying from cloth-of-gold to dirty white cotton garments, and from men in chain armour to sepoys in a caricature of

European uniform. Some of these Bundelkund *thakoors* were especially fine men, with most dignified manners, and in more than one instance, in admiring their weapons, I noticed Toledo blades amongst them, which had been in their families for many generations. The long-barrelled matchlocks, with which the majority of their followers were armed, are really more accurate than is generally supposed, and I recollect having some practice against a few of the Rajah of Adjygurh's followers, the mark being a stone protruding from the water, about 100 yards off, and perhaps a couple of feet high, by half that in width. Though they fired standing and without a rest, and did not dwell on their aim, quite half the shots hit, and none were very wide of the mark.

The barrels must be well made, as they sometimes put extraordinary charges into them, generally on the top of a handful of coarse-grained, country-made powder. Once, on my asking a *mogiah*, who was showing me the skin of a tiger he had shot, what he had loaded his match-lock with, he replied, "With two bullets and a spear-head."

A very interesting uncovenanted civilian we met in these parts had escaped from the massacre at Jhansi in 1857, but spent a month knocking about the villages before he was able to join a British column. As he described it, whenever he was in whilom British territory he was hunted like a mad dog, but on independent soil he was, if not actually befriended, at least tolerated. As a matter of fact, we are far more popular in native districts than we are in those directly administered by us. In the former we are looked upon as a final refuge against local exactions, and, individually, many white men here and there make themselves very popular; whereas in the latter we are chiefly associated in their minds with the screw of taxation and the exactions of our underpaid native police.

One officer of the North-West Provinces Police told me

he had constantly, but vainly, represented to his superiors the impossibility of getting good policemen on five rupees a month, when the humblest domestic servant earned six. The mania, however, of a good budget on paper overrode all other considerations, and consequently men entered the Constabulary on five rupees of pay, and took treble that amount in the form of bribes.

Included in our cavalry escort were a couple of *shuttar* (camel) *sowars*, for carrying letters. As the smell of camels annoys horses, they were always tethered in rear of the men's tents, which stand in a double row, with their steeds picketed close in front and facing inwards. The one sentry whom we usually found sufficient, paced up and down this centre street. One morning, an hour or two before daybreak, when a whole stream of *vakils* and their followers were passing close by our cavalry camp, a couple of thieves coolly saddled up, mounted, and rode off with the two camels, the sentry who noticed them, without distinguishing their riders in the dark, fancying they had been despatched to accompany the *vakils*. Though tracked for 60 miles they eventually gained the labyrinth of deep ravines on the banks of the Chumbul, where pursuit was hopeless.

At one petty State, Chirkaree, they had in those days a wonderful preserve of *cheetal* (spotted deer—*cervus axis*), *neilghye*, and hog. In the course of a single morning's ramble I might have shot a dozen stags, but contented myself with a couple. At Panna, celebrated for its diamond mines—which here resembled common gravel-pits —my chief, wishing to buy a few specimens, had a couple of the local jewellers summoned. These produced any number of small stones in the most casual way, wrapped up in bits of old newspapers, "This lot, 150 rupees apiece, and these 200, and those 500," and so on. We finally selected and put about half a dozen aside to show to the

Rajah's *dewan* (minister) when he called, in order to ascertain if the prices asked were reasonable. As soon as he inspected our selections, he at once rejected quite half of them as being Cape, and not Indian, diamonds; and enquiry showed that a large portion of those offered for sale in this obscure Hindoo township really came from South Africa.

Crossing the railway at Sutna, we reached R——, a couple of stages further on, and thence marched to Govindghur, the Rajah's palace and shooting-box at the foot of the Kymore range of mountains. This range, which descends abruptly into a well-cultivated plain, had an 8-foot stone wall built—about 7 miles in length—parallel to the foot, and leaving only a narrow belt of jungle of 400 or 500 yards between it and the fields. Openings of 60 to 80 yards were left in the barrier, every half-mile or so, with a well-built tower, on the roof of which there was room for a score of men, in the centre of each of these gaps through which game was accustomed nightly to pass to graze on the crops below. Previous to a shoot, fires were lighted an hour or two before daybreak, to prevent the animals' return to the mountain, when they usually lay up in the strip of jungle, which was sufficiently thick to induce them to do so. The Rajah and his guests were distributed among the towers, where each sat in an easy-chair, with a carpet under foot, and a basket of refreshments at his elbow, whilst 1200 or 1500 of the local army advanced in skirmishing order and beat up past you the miscellaneous crowd of animals, which had been shut out from the hills. These evidently understood all the rules of the game, and it was comical to see, for instance, a sounder of hog halt 100 yards away from one of the towers, look up and sniff suspiciously at it, and then gaze back at the beaters, till at length, realising that the latter were getting unpleasantly close,

they would put their heads down, and race at the gap in the wall as if they were finishing for the Derby. Watching a neighbouring tower always reminded me of a stage battle, with the puffs of smoke from the crenellated battlements; and the result of a score of shots was perhaps an old sow and a squeaker knocked over.

Though an occasional panther, and even a tiger, has been shot in such beats, I have, myself, seen only wild hog, *sambhur*, *cheetal* and *neilghye*. Altogether, it was one of the most thoroughly Oriental forms of sport imaginable, and regarded by the natives as nearly perfection, chiefly on account of the luxury with which it could be conducted, and the absence of any fatigue accompanying it.

On one occasion, having expressed a desire to the Maharajah to ride a boar instead of shooting them, he gave me a cordial invitation to stay on another day, and he would have any number marked down on practicable ground. Arranging to stop behind and rejoin my General by riding double stages, I accordingly went to bed to dream of "saddle, spur, and spear," being up and ready to start at 6 A.M. The *shikarris* in attendance conducted me, however, into a perfect labyrinth of deep ravines, where sounder after sounder of pig was seen, which they vainly supplicated me to shoot. Remonstrances and promises of reward, if they would only show me a boar on rideable ground, proved vain, as they declared their *hookum* was to show me over that particular piece of country. Cheered, however, by the intelligence that fifty other *shikarris* had been deputed to mark down pig, I returned to breakfast, and about ten o'clock a messenger arrived from the palace, with the Rajah's *salam*, to inform me that a sounder of a dozen hog were safely harboured, and that he would let me know as soon as he was ready to set out. I had my horses saddled and brought round to the door, but vainly waited until long past noon, without any further news of a start.

I then sent a servant to the palace, who returned with the intelligence that His Highness would start immediately. Still time dragged on, till at 4.30 P.M., more than six hours after I had received the first message, when, within less than an hour of sunset, I was at length invited to join the Rajah. We finally started with a *cortège* of a dozen elephants, about a hundred *sowars*, of sorts, and a rag, tag and bobtail of several hundred footmen to the spot. There, in a small *dall* field alongside some of the town gardens, the sounder was surrounded by about fifty men, who had, in addition, covered the end of the field with running-nooses of twisted gut. Behind these snares, the Rajah and other notables formed their elephants in line, and as soon as the beat began and the pig broke, greeted them with a volley of bullets which were far more dangerous to the beaters than to the porkers, who naturally turned and broke into the gardens. Galloping round these, followed by a score of the Rajah's *sowars*, we got into a wide, sandy lane crowded with people, who, turning to gape after me as I went best pace for the further end, got knocked down and ridden over in all directions by my uninvited *cortège*, and by the outcry that resounded in our wake, one might have fancied that the town was being sacked. As luck would have it, I got away with, and eventually killed, a good boar, after breaking my spear, and having to take a very blunt lance from one of the Rajah's men. It was by this time past sunset, and riding back to the palace to take leave of my host, I heard that he had already retired to his *zenana*, but hoped I would stay for another day's sport!

He was a tall, powerful man, and a very good shot, but terribly indolent, overwhelmed with debts, more than usually superstitious, and spoke somewhat broken English, interlarded with most comical figures of speech. One might write a bookful of amusing anecdotes in connection with him.

On one occasion, when our respective camps were pitched near one another, we heard a tremendous hammering of tent-pegs, and saw the Rajah's tent struck and re-erected under a solitary tree 50 yards apart from the rest of his belongings. Meeting him out for a stroll that evening, and enquiring the reason for all this fuss, the old man, who still had a somewhat perturbed expression, replied with a shake of the head, and let drop the golden maxim: "Never argue with woman—never argue with woman."

Once when he was showing me illustrations by native artists, painted on the walls of the palace, of the deaths of all his tigers, I drew his attention to one in which he was depicted seated on a *charpoy* in an umbrella-shaped tree, with half a dozen matchlock men squatted cross-legged on the ground below, behind a small screen of branches, whilst a beautiful gold-and-black tiger followed by a pre-Raphaelite line of beaters advanced towards him. On my asking what these sepoys were doing at the foot of the tree, he replied: "Oh that is if the tiger wish to attack me." "But," I objected, "surely they must get killed sometimes?" "Oh yes, sōmtimes —sōmtimes," he remarked, with a tone of supreme indifference, and with an expressive shrug of the shoulders. I thought to myself that if a European did post the men on the ground, he would not at least have them in the picture; whereas, from the native point of view, if you are a sufficiently big person, it seems just as natural that you should hire a man to get killed as to black your boots for you.

A *sūttee* having once taken place at an outlying village in his fairly extensive territory, for the most part jungle, the British Political Agent insisted on the arrest of the principal participants. Partly from superstition, and chiefly from indolence, the chief strongly deprecated this, alleging

that there were many Brahmins in that village prepared to die for their religion, that a great loss of life would undoubtedly ensue, and our Government then be angry with him for the disturbance. Our official then jokingly suggested that if that was the case, he might as well send thither a certain regiment of his, which, being about eight months in arrears of pay, was consequently almost in a state of mutiny, "as, if some of these were killed off, he would save their wages."

This idea was eagerly adopted by the Maharajah in perfect seriousness, his only preoccupation now being to get the troublesome regiment bundled off as soon as possible.

On another occasion, when a Brahmin had been condemned to death by our Resident for a brutal murder, the Rajah, with a large following, came to plead for mercy, even going to the length of taking his turban off, a sign of the most abject submission. All his prayers proving unavailing, he declared that such a sacrilege as the execution of a holy Brahmin having never occurred from time immemorial within that State, Divine vengeance would surely ensue, and that he must proceed to Benares, to bathe in the Ganges and deprecate Heaven's wrath.

Within an hour of his arrival there, our political official received a telegram from the Rajah, who had evidently taken no one into his confidence when composing it: "Without hanging, no good government"—apparently afraid that the scene he had played for the gallery might lead to the commutation of the culprit's sentence.

Marrying somewhat late in life a supplementary wife, a daughter of one of the most noble families in Rajputana, he received the congratulations offered him by a high official with a far from enthusiastic expression, and replied, with a shake of the head, "Yes, she is sōmthing noble, but she is sōmthing old."

In his vocabulary, "sōmthing," pronounced with all the accent on the "o," did duty on all occasions, very much like the "whateffer" of a Highland gillie—as when he described a neighbouring chief as "sōmthing noble but sōmthing cunning."

He having sent in a petition to the Governor-General, complaining of the tyranny of the chief political authority in Central India, and the letter having been given to this very official, the latter took occasion, when the Rajah was greeting him effusively, to pop the petition into his hand with the query, "But, Maharajah, how about this?" As he said, to see the old man's face was a picture, but to gain time he fumbled everywhere for his spectacles, until a way out of it had occurred to him. Then his face brightened up, and mounting his glasses he pretended to read the letter attentively, at the conclusion exclaiming, "Forgery! it is all a forgery of my *dewan*, who must get kala pani (transportation)"—and he would cheerfully have let the man be condemned to save himself bother.

Knowing that Lord Mayo was keen on the subject of education, he gravely informed His Excellency, at an evening party, that he had "One Mayo College" at his capital, and the Viceroy, much interested, sat down beside him on a sofa, and received a wholly imaginary volume of details as to the number of scholarships, pupils in the English class, and other statistics which his *dewan* in attendance had to fill up, before the arrival of the local political officer disclosed the fact that no college even existed.

The Governor-General, somewhat taken aback, exclaimed "Good God! have you been telling me a parcel of lies all this time?" "Oh no," said the Maharajah, deprecatingly, "it is not quite so yet, but that's how it will be." Lord Mayo stared at him for a minute, and his sense of humour being equal to his dignity, burst into

a roar of laughter, whilst the old chief, realising the comic side of the incident, put his hands on his fat knees and laughed in chorus, the two sitting and shaking with amusement like a pair of Chinese mandarins nodding their heads at one another.

It was just this wonderful *bonhomie*, combined with his imposing presence and hard riding, that made Lord Mayo by far the most popular ruler the natives ever had in India. With them it is very much the case of "*Le roi est mort, vive le roi*," and homage is paid to the position, not to the personal qualities, of any one of our satraps.

On seeing a life-sized portrait of Lord L——, painted for the Calcutta town-hall by an English artist, the old Maharajah of R—— ordered a duplicate for his own palace, price £500. He apparently expected it to be knocked off like a photo, and sent to him in a week or two. Instead of this, the picture did not arrive for over a year, by which time Lord L——'s term of Viceroyalty had expired, and he had left the country. Thereupon the Maharajah flatly refused to take the portrait, saying, "He not Governor-General now; what good to me?"—and that just about sums up native sentiment in the matter.

It would be wearying to report more of the amusing stories connected with our Rajah, which I heard during four or five different visits to his territory, but the final one with which he was credited, and which led to his State being temporarily placed under British management, was that in the course of a week he got four native bankers from four different towns, and showing them the revenue papers for a certain outlying district—where he thought it would not attract attention—sold each individually that year's collection of a lakh and a half, for a lakh of rupees (100,000) cash down. Having got his 400,000 rupees, he gave each a *parwana* to levy that year's taxes, and shutting himself up in his *zenana* left them to fight it out amongst

themselves, whilst the wretched villagers were simply skinned alive.

I had another and more unpleasant experience when camping in this neighbourhood, and my first acquaintance with the dexterity of Indian thieves. As we were marching hard, wishing to diminish the amount of "sentry go," I had dispensed with the *sowar* usually mounted on my flank of the line of tents. The bulk of my kit had as usual preceded us after dinner, and in my small sleeping-tent I had nothing but the evening dress I had dined in, and the undress uniform which I was to wear for next morning's ride to our new camp. My sword and revolver were as usual tucked under the mattress, within reach of my hand. Although it was a bright moonlight night, the outlook was considerably obscured, as we were encamped in a grove of mango trees. I remember waking during the night and seeing what I took for a village dog going out of the tent, but being sleepy, simply turned over and dozed off again. When my servant awoke me in the early morning, I saw him cast a startled look around, and then realised that, apart from my bed and my wash-stand, there was nothing left in the place, not even my slippers. Going to the doorway, I saw the local political agent just starting, and making my plight known to him, the only comfort I got was, "Very sorry, old fellow; I can lend you my great-coat if that's of any use." The alarm being given and search made around, my long boots, spurs and helmet were found thrown away in a neighbouring *nulla*, whilst an old pair of cord breeches and a worn shooting-coat were unearthed, which had been doing duty for extra pillows, and clad in these over my sleeping shirt, I made a triumphant entry into the local chief town, whither our camp had preceded us. My next-door neighbour's, the regimental surgeon's, tent had also been visited, but his clothes being laid upon the ground had escaped notice,

whilst the thieves had cut out with a knife the greater part of a new railway rug on his bed, and which was too tightly tucked in under him to be taken off.

Even portmanteaus and boxes are occasionally removed without awaking the inmates of a tent, and, not long before, this was done when a small child, sleeping in a cot near her mother, happened to be awake, and tranquilly watched the proceedings. Eventually one of the thieves, after carrying off everything of value, in taking a last look round, picked up her toy lamb, when the little girl raised such a wail of distress that the alarm was given, and the men had to abandon everything in order to escape.

Marching, once, from Agra to Gwalior, we were followed by a regular gang, who amongst other things succeeded in cutting off a couple of camels from the rear of a string of six or eight, and leading them clear away with their loads, unperceived. We had finally to have a mounted patrol round our camp, and one of the thieves narrowly escaping with a smart sword-cut, they gave us up as a bad job.

The *rasseldar* major of our 1st Regiment, Isri Pershad, a small, wizened native officer who had behaved splendidly in the Mutiny—keeping his troop together, attacking the mutineers and driving them out of Mehidpore after the British officers had escaped to Mhow — was largely employed in those days in hunting up dacoits. This he was allowed to do entirely in his own fashion, involving methods which would have fearfully scandalised Exeter Hall. Anyhow, the results were most satisfactory; and the awe his name inspired thoughout Malwa—of which he was nicknamed "the king," and where scarce a single villager had not at some period of his life some more or less direct connection with cattle-lifting at least—was most amusing. It was related that on one occasion a dacoit

rode into a village, and in reply to a question as to who he was, replied, "One of Isri Pershad's sowars," upon which there was a general scuttle into the adjacent jungle, and the man, dismounting, looted the most portable articles, and departed unmolested. Once at a jungle fair, this old native officer attached himself to the heels of a newly-joined subaltern of ours, who was pottering about the booths trying to pick up curios, in order to see that he was not unduly imposed upon. The officer enquiring the price of some petty article, and being told "twelve annas" (*i.e.* about as many pence), old Isri Pershad stepped to the front with a stern "What!—twelve annas? What's your name? What village do you come from?" "Ne, Sahib, ne, Sahib! hum chár anna lainge" ("No, sir! no, sir! I'll take four annas") hurriedly replied the vendor, rather than have his antecedents enquired into. Taking a fancy myself to a certain brass idol at this same fair, and being asked 85 rupees for it, one of my native officers told me to leave the bargaining to him, as Sahibs were always cheated, and, after a couple of days' haggling, eventually got it for about one-fourth—twenty-two rupees' twelve annas!

During this winter there was a rather important robbery which, as being typical of the time and district, is worth recording. A consignment of about half a lakh of rupees worth of silver ingots was despatched by a banker, from Indore to Kotah, upon camels, escorted by about fifteen *burkandazes* (lit. lightning-throwers) chiefly armed with matchlocks and swords. These were attacked and cut up by a strong gang of dacoits, camels and treasure being carried off bodily. The A.G.G. for Central India at once telegraphed orders for the *rasseldar* major to take up the case, and after some months' research he was completely successful in not only arresting about twenty of the gang, several of whom were executed and the remainder trans-

ported, but in even implicating the receivers of the stolen property, who were prosecuted by the British Government. The story disclosed at the trial was a curious one. The gang, who, as the sequel showed, were prompted by other bankers, had known for weeks of the expected dispatch of silver, and some of them were identified as having lived at one or other of the Indore caravanserais for a month previously, taking their departure a few hours before the departure of the convoy. This, as is usual in the East, marched some hours before dawn, and pressed on so steadily that at dusk of the second day they were within 2 miles of the village of Nulkhera, beyond Augar—over 90 miles from Indore; and there, as above stated, they were attacked, six or seven of the escort being killed, and nearly all the remainder wounded. So well did old Isri Pershad understand from what direction the gang must have come, that he at once telegraphed to have certain fords on the river Chumbul guarded, but the delay caused by the A.G.G.'s absence in camp frustrated this chance of catching the delinquents. The dacoits eventually arrested, belonging to native territory, were tried and executed at Augar in Central India, but the receivers of stolen goods were wealthy *shroffs* belonging to Goorgaon, near Delhi. These had to be tried in British Courts, and were defended by English barristers at exorbitant fees, eventually only escaping through some legal technicality. The evidence brought forward by old Isri Pershad was singularly clear and to the point, and there were witnesses who swore to seeing the ingots weighed in scales by the *shroffs* against Government rupees, the difference of the alloy being their only margin of profit. During the progress of the trial—the prosecution being conducted by a Deputy Commissioner deputed by Government—old Isri Pershad's letters to the *mir munshi* (head clerk) of the Malwa Agency were singularly instructive, and showed

that, absolutely convinced himself of their guilt, he was quite prepared to further the ends of justice by any means tending to ensure a conviction. In one, for instance, he wrote that a certain approver had given "awfully good evidence" ("bohut atcha gawaie") at the trial, but as "there was just a little discrepancy" ("zerra sa farrak") between this and his former depositions before the political agent, when the original files were called for by the higher Court, it would be better "to omit this one, and say that it had been eaten by white ants." In another letter he stated that "it would be very useful to produce one of the original ingots of silver, so accordingly to apply to the native banker for a spare one, and if none remained, to have one cast at once, and "send it with a certificate that it belonged to the original lot."

More than fifteen years later, after he had retired on a well-earned pension, I asked him how he had run these men to earth; when, smilingly stroking his beard, he oracularly remarked that if a man was judiciously strung up, spreadeagle-wise, by his thumbs, much useful information might be extracted; and having no marks of ill-treatment to show to the Sahibs, he generally held his tongue. In fact old Isri Pershad's maxim was to convict a malefactor, honestly, if one could, but to convict him; and I thoroughly believe that nothing would have induced him knowingly to charge an innocent person. There are, and were, many other such in India, though few of these are, I fancy, above letting a culprit off if he can pay high enough. One *Mekrani*, hanged at Alikajpore some years ago, sadly remarked as he was led up to the gallows, "If I had only had three thousand rupees I should not now be here."

Another object-lesson we might well take to heart was furnished this year by a boundary dispute between the inhabitants of the small States of Banswarra and Purtabgurh.

Some of the subjects of the latter having seized the site in dispute were surrounded and starved out by a larger force, chiefly composed of Bheels belonging to the former Rajah. They were promised immunity on evacuating their position but were treacherously attacked when passing a gorge, where the road had been barricaded by felled trees, thirty-seven men being killed and fifty-nine wounded. An outpost of ours at Poonakheri, who visited the scene of the massacre, saw over a score of corpses still lying about, although many had been previously removed. The upshot of this, however, was, that the family of a *thakoor* thus killed, in revenge denounced the *dewan* (chief minister) of the Banswarra State, as being a proclaimed rebel, a former native officer of Holkar's, who had treacherously attacked our Residency at Indore in 1857, and had been the most active of our enemies in that part of the country. Yet he had been *dewan* within 100 miles of the scene of his misdeeds for over nine years, and though this was well known throughout the country-side, there was not a man to warn us of it, until this was done as a matter of private revenge. The ex-mutineer was arrested, and in spite of a vain claim of Holkar's that this was one of his own subjects, and amenable only to him, was tried in the Court of the Agent Governor-General, and hanged. Not a man in all Indore would testify against him, and the only two witnesses who ventured to give evidence were two non-commissioned officers of the Central India Horse.

His crime was that having been sent down by Holkar to protect the Indore Residency, he had suddenly opened his guns, with case-shot, on the slender force of the Bhopal contingent, forming the escort, whilst the men were in their tents and the horses at their pickets. It was only the determined gallantry of General T——, who, followed by seven Sikh *sowars*, charged and silenced the guns, slashing the leader of the mutineers over

the face with his own hand, which gave our representative and other fugitives the chance to escape to Bhopal. When, as above mentioned, brought to trial seventeen years subsequently, his defence was specious enough, viz., that he was unable to control his own men, and he adduced the fact that the British officers in the adjacent cantonment of Mhow had similarly been impotent to keep their sepoys in hand.

Against this, our old *shikarri duffedar*, Hursar Singh, who had been one of T——'s *sowars*, deposed that when our people had to retire, his officer had called for a volunteer to carry a message to stop the English battery of artillery summoned from Mhow (fourteen miles distant) for the protection of the Residency; that he had taken the letter, having his horse shot *en route*, as all the villages he passed were up in arms, and finally meeting the battery at Rao, the half-way house, he had delivered the order.

Major H——, who commanded the battery which was coming out under the escort of a troop of Bengal cavalry—which mutinied the same afternoon—after giving him a spare horse to escape upon, wheeled round and galloped back straight into the old fort at Mhow. There being no other British troops in the cantonment, this measure proved the salvation of the women and children, and of such officers of native regiments as were not murdered by their own men, as all mutinied that same day.

It is in strict accordance with Royal Engineer principles that this same fort, which proved so useful a haven of refuge in the Mutiny, was subsequently condemned by our Military Works Department as not being up to date, and demolished, to make way for a more modern one on a scientific plan. The money for the new one, however, not being yet forthcoming, the garrison

is now, forty years afterwards, left without any place of defence at all.

Old Hursar Singh, finding himself alone amidst a hostile population, made for the broken jungle below the Ghāts a few miles south, and losing his horse *en route*, divested himself of his uniform, and getting himself up as a *fakir*, returned to Indore, where, sitting as a mendicant by the roadside, he witnessed the arrival of our mutinous sepoys from Mhow. These, as he saw, were placed under the command of this very man, who averred he had done all he could to restrain his followers from attacking the British envoy, and Hursar Singh saw them inspected by him, and several cartloads of sweetmeats sent by the Maharajah distributed. At the trial, when the prisoner, who defended himself, attempted the hopeless task of browbeating the old Sikh in cross-examination, he finally asked "How was I dressed at the time?" which was promply described. "What colour was the horse I was riding?" "A chestnut." "Who were with me?" "Two sowars." "Who were they?" "Budmashes (blackguards)," responded the old *duffedar*.

The other witness, a retainer of our *rasseldar* major's family, had, when the Mhow mutineers marching up to Delhi besieged his brother's "Tower," been sent out as a *parlémentaire*, to buy their leaders off, and had there also found this same man commanding the enemy.

We had very enjoyable hot-weather shooting-parties in 1873, 1874 and 1875, in which year I went home on furlough, having to my credit for my first eight years in India, 111 tigers, a lion, 69 panthers, 2 leopards and 83 bears—shot or shared in.

In 1874 and 1875 a Russian and a couple of Hungarian travellers shot with us in Central India, and proved themselves charming companions and excellent sportsmen. The first, in particular, was the best walker I ever met



DISTINGUISHED VISITORS.

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with, and though starting seedy, and never sparing himself, put on a stone of weight in the course of the two months' trip. I had the luck to shoot a tiger from the saddle this season. The animal, which was supposed to be wounded, was being followed by three of the party on elephants, when my terriers giving tongue at him, he started off along the hill-side. Seeing he was unwounded, I mounted one of my Arabs who was close at hand, and taking a light single-barrelled rifle, cantered ahead, merely to keep him in sight. This was easily done, as the jungle was very open and a cart-track skirted the foot of the slope. As he presently inclined down, evidently bent on reaching some deep ravines below, I, at first, tried by shooting at him to head him back, but without the slightest effect. At about 40 yards, as he pulled up to stare at me, and turned to snarl at the terriers who were yapping at his heels, I got an easy chance, and broke his shoulder with the first shot.

I also had the unusual experience one day of watching four tigers, for quite half an hour, in their natural state. After posting the other guns across a river-bed containing a good deal of oleander covert, I had walked up to guard what I was told was a likely spot for them to break out, and was looking for a tree to get into, when, being still 150 yards from where the buffalo had been killed, and where the tiger was supposed to be, I saw a date-palm bush, about 20 paces distant, move, and out walked a tiger.

Having a distinguished guest who I was anxious should get the shot, I was determined not to fire unless obliged in self-defence, so drew myself up against a small tree, motioning to my orderly to do the same. Luckily the wind was blowing towards us, and my tiger, after listening for a minute, walked forwards into a shallow pool, through which he waded, lapping the water as he went. Next moment, in the deep

shade of some big trees, I perceived a second tiger, and then a third and a fourth lying down amongst the oleanders. There were several lungoor monkeys sitting in the trees above, one old patriarch on a low branch not ten feet from the ground, looking from me to them with a most comically-puzzled expression. One by one they got up, lapped water or took a tug at the dead buffalo, whose carcass I presently discerned under the bushes, whilst the monkeys, contrary to their usual habit, remained perfectly silent, without uttering a single one of their customary warning barks. I could see the beaters form up about 400 yards distant, and at the very first tap of their drums, all four tigers rushed together as if for protection, trotted down the river-bed for 50 yards, and lay down close together, panting hard. As they continued down in the desired direction, it ended in our bagging three that day, and the fourth, as well as two other unexpected tigers, on the day following: two quite red-letter days.

We always drew lots for our posts in beats, and one of our Hungarian friends, having been out for more than a month without getting a single first shot, was pressed on one occasion to take the best place, instead of the outside one which he had drawn. He, however, most sportingly insisted on keeping to the one assigned him by lot, and was well rewarded, four tigers walking up to him, of which he bagged a couple right and left.

The last on my list was perhaps my luckiest season, as in six weeks, with four guns for the first half of the time, and only two for the remainder, we got 19 big tigers alone.

In 1873 we had a rather disagreeable experience. After a very hard day's work, somewhere about midnight, when, luckily, nearly all the camp had already marched for the next stage, I was awakened by my



A PARADE OF FIGURES.

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servant (we each kept one, to give us tea in the morning and bring on our bedding) with the words, "Sahib! Sahib! an elephant has gone must (mad) and killed his mahout!" and sure enough, one could hear the clink-clank of the broken chains, as the huge beast hunted to and fro for the dead body of his driver, which, after having first tusked and trampled upon, he had thrown away. The night was moonless, and in the shadow of the thick mango-grove, where we were encamped, it was dark as pitch. Slipping round and warning my friends to dress as noiselessly as possible, I sent down to have our horses saddled, and to warn the *sowars* to load their baggage-ponies up and move off into the open. It was with a feeling of intense relief that we found ourselves in our riding-kit, and our horses ready saddled alongside. Luckily the elephant took an excursion to the village, 300 or 400 yards distant, where, encountering a cart laden with merchandise, on the top of which the owner was sleeping, to prevent pilfering, he charged and overturned the whole concern into a prickly-pear hedge. I often wondered what the *bunia's* sensations were on waking, to find himself flying, cart and all, through the thorns!

A sugarcane-field adjacent next attracted his attention, and he wrecked a considerable portion of this, so we meanwhile had time to consult.

It appeared that the poor wretch killed—who had been the driver of the animal for twenty-seven years—had been sleeping close in front of his trunk, and as he stood up to prepare for the morning's march, the beast suddenly broke his chains and dashed him to the ground.

The *mahouts* of the other three or four elephants flatly refused to use their beasts to capture the delinquent, and all agreed that nothing could be done till daybreak. We accordingly had our camp-beds put near

one another, and posting a sentry, got snatches of sleep, until warned that the enemy was again coming our way, when we jumped on our nags and sent our servants up some of the big trees amongst which we were encamped. At the first dawn, riding forwards, we found the remaining six or eight elephant-men, armed with spears, surrounding the delinquent at a distance of 30 or 40 paces, pelting him with stones, and reviling his female ancestors in their choicest vernacular. Every now and then he chased some of his tormentors, who dodged round old tombs and other obstacles, whilst the spearmen in rear closed in, pelting and shouting at him; when, apparently, dreading to let them close upon him unseen, he desisted from the pursuit after a score of paces or so, and swung round to confront those on the other side. Occasionally he solaced his feelings by putting his head down and going full tilt at one of the numerous date-palms scattered about, and it was wonderful to see one of their tall stems bend over like a fishing-rod, and occasionally measure its length with a crash on the ground.

This had been going on for ten or twelve minutes, and the friend riding with me had just remarked what humbug it was their pretending that they would thus catch the beast, when, as he made one of his charges, a short, old, bandylegged *mahout*, instead of bolting, stood his ground, catching the elephant's trunk on the point of his spear, when the huge brute, after vainly fighting against it for a moment, fairly receded as if driven back by main force. After taking it out of another palm-tree, he again attempted a rush, but by this time he had lost heart, while his opponents had gained it, and three of them, standing with their spears levelled, easily stopped the charge. In another minute he was in full flight, being chevied and prodded on all sides, one Pathān *duffedar* of ours riding

close to his head and spearing him in the ears, whilst one of the footmen, hanging on to his tail, jobbed him in the quarters. Presently, as he pulled up exhausted, a man slipped behind and clamped a chain to one hind foot, and shortly afterwards to the other also, when all the spearmen closing in, backed him up against a tree, where he was securely bound and helpless, within twenty minutes of the commencement of the episode. As he was Government property, belonging to the Commissariat at Morar, I told the men that, to save risks, the elephant might be kept there, and I would write to the authorities to send assistance to have him removed. They, however, laughed me to scorn, and said it was the simplest thing in the world, and that any one of them would mount and drive the beast on, as soon as ever they had buried their comrade; all they required were extra strong shackles for the nights. As a matter of fact, a couple of men drove him back, about 300 miles, without any further incident.

One of the most extraordinary escapes I ever heard of was related to me by one H——, an officer of the Central Provinces Police at Lullutpore, a short distance to the east of Goona. He had followed up a wounded tiger to a small island on the Betwa, which was a mere sand-bank of 50 or 60 yards in length, by half as much in width, covered with high grass interspersed with tamarisk bushes. As it was too thick to enter on foot, and too green to burn, he made the dozen or so of policemen who accompanied him search the whole covert with low volleys, twice apparently touching up the tiger, who charged roaring towards them, but turned back before my friend could get a shot. Their ammunition being nearly exhausted, proceedings came to a standstill, and they were discussing what to do, when, to H——'s horror, the grass opened, and out walked a native woman and two children who had been gathering firewood, and who, on seeing the tiger enter, had simply squatted

on the ground, and there remained, by some miracle, unharmed.

I had an unusual experience at Duttia, in January 1875, when on tour with the A.G.G. Out for snipe within half a mile of the city, and close below the *bund*, or dam of a tank, where scores of people were bathing or washing clothes, a generally useful fox-terrier which accompanied me began baying at a small patch of sugar-cane. Knowing from her tone that there was something bigger than a jackal there, and fancying it might be a hyena, I desired my orderly to take the three or four coolies accompanying me to beat it out, luckily exchanging my shot-cartridges for a couple of Meade shells, which I invariably carried in a side-pocket, on the chance of a deer. No sooner had the men entered than there was a "Woof! woof!" the cry of "Tendwa, tendwa," and the coolies bolted out like rabbits, followed by a big panther, which, after downing one man, but contenting itself with giving a shake to the *chuddar* wound round his loins, left him, and flattening his ears back, charged straight at me. By a lucky fluke I got him in the head and dropped him dead, so close that he hit my feet as he rolled over.

One of the greatest pests of the jungle, the wild bees, whose enormous combs, two or three feet deep, are seen under overhanging rocks, cornices of buildings or branches of big trees, are most dangerous and easily-aroused enemies. At the marble rocks in a gorge of the Nerbudda near Jabalpur, four Englishmen lost their lives, many years ago now, by imprudently firing a shot in proximity to some of their nests, as they were either drowned in the river, or stung to death by the incensed insects. A couple of men of the 71st Highlanders were killed in 1859 at Bujrangurh, near Goona, as they threw themselves from the high tower they were on to escape some bees whose comb they had stirred up for a lark.



A LEOPARD AT CLOSE-QUARTERS.

[*See page* 100.

Two officers of my acquaintance, one of whom was suffering from gout, and was wearing slippers, going out to watch a hunt, were so terribly punished by a swarm of bees, who routed the elephant upon which they were at the time, that after vainly struggling to get under each other in the *howdah*, they took headers off the bolting animal, at the imminent risk of their necks. Although landing in the dry bed of a river, all stones and thorns, the victim of gout, without even his slippers, which were lost in the fall, picked himself up and ran like a three-year-old, till, absolutely exhausted, he took a header into a thorn-bush for protection, but got so punished about the rear-guard that he again continued his flight.

As he told us afterwards, what drove him wild was seeing one of the shooting party, as they passed the tree in which he was posted for the beat, roaring with laughter at their plight; and at the moment he felt he would cheerfully be hung if only he could manage to shoot that man.

Another rather harum-scarum sportsman narrated how he had tried the result of firing a rifle-bullet into a bee's-nest, having first carefully hidden himself in a thick corrinda-bush. When asked what was the result, he replied, "Oh, the experiment was perfectly successful: the bees came down and stung to death an old woman working near!" Of course he had had no idea of the proximity of the old lady, who was grubbing in a cotton-field, but standing up on hearing the shot, she had attracted the attention of the enraged swarm.

A brother officer of mine lost his horse from stings, the animal being picketed under a tree and unable to break loose, whilst he himself only escaped by diving into a tank infested by *muggars* (crocodiles), and lying *perdu* under an overhanging bush. One comical incident I remember was when I had shot a tiger on a narrow pathway between a

cliff ornamented by several bees'-nests and a deep reach of a stream, 30 yards wide. The simplest mode of removing the body was by towing it across the river, and some of my *sowars* accordingly stripped, and leaning their carbines against the rocks, began to swim across, dragging the carcass with them.

The bees, who had remained undisturbed by the shot, for some reason took umbrage at this and came for us, when a general stampede ensued. The elephant, our horses, and the bulk of the beaters assembled on the opposite bank, were scattered in all directions; the tiger was allowed to sink, the *sowars* plunged in like otters, whilst we on the pathway, abandoning rifles and cartridges, had to take to the water and dive, clothes and all.

A curious feature about these insects is that they single out and stick to their original victims, quite regardless of other men they may meet during the pursuit. Neither hornets nor wasps ever combine in the same way, and these are consequently not so dreaded, nor, as a rule, are they in the least dangerous.

During this period the first Central India railway—a narrow gauge one—was in course of construction, and it was only due to Sindia, the Maharajah of Gwalior, who advanced large sums for its construction, that we were spared the same unsatisfactory pattern on the Indian Midland line.

When undertaking the "Mètre" gauge railway, it was considered necessary to import an American engineer, one M——, who, if not particularly successful professionally —as much of his trace had to be subsequently altered— considerably enriched our Anglo-Indian vocabulary. By his dictionary, a European was a "white man," a keyless watch a "stem winder," and to go quail-shooting was to go "still hunting with a smell dog and a scatter gun." The

general apathy of the mild Hindoo was very appositely described by him as "having no more idea of time than a sitting hen." On one occasion, when returning empty-handed from a morning after black buck, he accounted for his ill success by the native attendant having, as he was preparing to take aim, exclaimed at the top of his voice, "Maro, Sahib, maro!" ("Shoot him, sir, shoot him!")—when the antelope, not unnaturally taking the hint, cleared out. On asking what he had done, he replied, "Wal, I reckon I booted him round a ten-acre lot."

This same narrow gauge railway—which was eventually completed across Central India and Rajputana—is a very harmless one, and seldom averages more than ten miles an hour. The carriages, which are fairly comfortable, are built with only three sleeping-berths in each first-class compartment.

Three officers from Mhow, including a decidedly irrepressible dragoon, boarding the train one night, found that one of the only two first-class compartments was already tenanted by a couple of natives, whilst a sahib was installed in the other. Taking their places with the latter, they left their volatile comrade—who entered at the last moment, and had not realised who were his stable companions—to double up with his Aryan brethren. Coming round at the first big station, an hour or two later, to jeer at him and ask how he was getting on with his black friends, they found him in solitary occupation of the compartment, and enquired in surprise how on earth he had managed to get rid of the natives. "Simplest thing in the world," was the sleepy response. "As soon as we were clear of the station I just opened the door and fired them both out."

Soon after this railway was extended to Agra a local *thakoor*, whose village was on the line a few hours' journey thence, proceeded on his first excursion

to visit the city, installed in great state in a first-class carriage, with the whole population of the *gaon* drawn up on the platform to salaam to their lord and master on his departure. When his dependents were again assembled, a couple of days later, to greet him on his return, they, however, vainly searched the first-class carriages for him, and at last he humbly crawled out from a third-class. On their expressing surprise that a man of his dignity should condescend to travel thus humbly, he sadly replied that "he did not understand the ways of the Sahib *logue*." As it turned out, about an hour before he reached Agra, a couple of subalterns who had been out snipe-shooting had entered his carriage, and they had made him shampoo them alternately the whole way in!

The blind way in which a native soldier unhesitatingly obeys an order is very refreshing. A few days before the Inspecting General was once due at Augar, it was suddenly discovered that our Mess was lamentably short of champagne. We were then 150 miles from the nearest railway station, and the only channel through which to procure anything was by the Government bullock-train, which ran past the native town of Shajapore, 30 miles distant from the cantonment, and where we had a small guard for the protection of the road. The *duffedar* of this, a frontier Pathán, was accordingly enjoined to get the best bullock-cart he could and forward on our supplies, under charge of a *sowar*, as soon as ever they reached S——. The stores duly arrived at Augar in good time, but a couple of days later a woebegone-looking *bunia* appeared, plaintively asking to have his bullock *shigram* and bullocks returned to him. It appeared that he was travelling with his family up the road, in his private vehicle, when our non-commissioned officer had bundled them out on the wayside, saying his cart was required for the

use of the sahibs, and despatched our Mess stores in it. When reprimanded for his *zūlm* (high-handedness), the *duffedar* was quite surprised that such an interpretation should be put upon it, because, as he explained, "I was ordered to get the best bullock-cart I could, and that was the very best one I could find."

In the rage for copying German methods all sorts of new theoretical ideas began to be crammed down officers' throats, and a man with a good seat on an office-stool was regarded as a higher military authority than one who could show the way across country.

On similar principles, when, under the newly-issued rules for garrison classes, in 1872, it was laid down that officers who had passed through Sandhurst were exempted from passing certain of the prescribed tests, one colonel put the question as to whether this did not cover the case of subalterns who had passed through Woolwich, but received the reply from Headquarters that, as the latter were not mentioned in the order, the scientific corps lieutenants must be put through the A.B.C. of the garrison class, from which Sandhurst cadets were exempted. This is what is complacently referred to as "Army Reform," presumably with the well-meant intention of promoting efficiency; but its only effect in this instance was to deprive regiments of some of their much-needed officers for several months, whilst these had to attend lectures on subjects with which they were generally far more conversant than the garrison instructors themselves.

The difficulties caused at the outset by the inauguration of the Staff Corps led to the anomalous position in which many field-officers found themselves, who were denominated "doing duty officers," a race happily now extinct. These were men naturally not pre-eminent for physical or mental fitness, who, having no duties beyond being on the roster for garrison and for court-martial

work, ran terribly to seed from enforced inaction. I heard of one who was pulled up for visiting the guards, as field-officer of the day, in a bullock *shigram*, and of another performing the same duty on a camel. Perhaps the best story, however, was that of a corpulent major, who, having to attend a general parade, mounted his very sober charger for the first time for months. A friend, cantering past him as he walked his nag sedately down, called out that he had better hurry up a bit, as the General had already started. "Good gracious! has he really?" exclaimed the old boy, who thereupon dismounted, pulled the reins over his horse's head, and began to run.

A brother officer of mine, who had taken part in the Persian war of 1856, was proceeding to Bushire with a draft, in a sailing transport, which, tacking too close inshore, got aground on a sand-bank. The officer commanding the details on board, a Captain P——, a man with a particular amount of swagger, belonged to the —— Light Dragoons, now the —— Hussars, who earned the *sobriquet* of "Threes About" for their conduct at Chillianwallah. He was extremely irate at the *contre-temps* of thus getting hung up, and fumed about the deck, abusing the ship and all connected with her navigation in no very measured terms. "Wretched old tub, stuck on a mud-bank; we'll be too late for the impending battle, and I'll lose my brevet," etc., etc. The little skipper, who was dancing about giving orders, having no time to attend to him, let this run on for a while, but at length, perfectly exasperated, turned squarely on his critic with, "I'll tell you what it is, Capen'; if you ain't no more use here than you was at Chillianwallah, then you're a deal better where you is," —to the entire discomfiture of the Plunger, who shut up like a rat-trap.

A story, "*si non vero ben trovato*," of a distinguished

Highland regiment, at the taking of Lucknow in 1857 by Lord Clyde, was, that they had so distinguished themselves that he decreed three V.C.'s to them, to be awarded by the votes of the rank and file, as all had done so well that it was impossible for any outsider to distinguish between them. At that time, the canteen-sergeant gave them honest measure when distributing the daily tot of rum, and did not follow the objectionable practice of putting his thumb into the tin pannikin, the shortage of which multiplied by 800 issues gave two or three bottles of surplus to the responsible non-commissioned officer. The regimental approbation evoked by his integrity in this respect was such, that he was unanimously voted the V.C.

It is a curious circumstance, which I have heard commented on more than once, that the modern outbreak of enteric fever amongst British troops is coincident with the abolition of the issue of rum to the troops. Of course, this is mostly attributable to the younger men who now fill the ranks, due to the short-service system, but there are many who consider that the amount of flat, tepid beer and bazaar concoctions sold as iced drinks—which are now consumed in lieu of the old spirit ration—are just as probably responsible for much of the epidemic.

At the time of the Duke of Edinburgh's visit to India in the sixties, there were some amusing stories current in connection with the reception of native princes he held on board his ship. A chief, whilst wandering round the vessel, gaping up at the masts, fell down an open hatchway, with a great clatter of sword and shield. The Duke, who heard the crash, turned to a blue-jacket near, with the enquiry as to whether any accident had happened. "That, your Royal Highness? Nothing at all, your Royal Highness; only one of them black potentates

as has fallen down the after-hatch," cheerfully responded the sailor.

I have already alluded to the way in which natives prey upon their humbler brethren. On one occasion, having been out for the day settling a boundary dispute, as we were preparing to ride home, one villager besought us to pay for the two fowls we had had, as he was very poor and could not afford to lose them. Having brought our own provisions out from cantonments, and obtained nothing except milk locally, we had an enquiry made in the village, and found that the Rajah's *sowars* had requisitioned sixteen fowls in our name, not one of which had been paid for, and concerning which only one of the owners had ventured to complain.

In Kattiawar there was a custom that the followers of an official were entitled to ask for food at any village —under the denomination, I think, of *veht*—and it was very instructive to see how the guides one got out of one village would claim this at the very next hamlet they reached, natives having absolutely no consideration nor compunction for one another. At the same time, with their curious apathy, you cannot induce them to undertake a job—even with the promise of immediate payment —so long as you ask for it as a favour; whereas the moment they are addressed in a peremptory tone, they at once comply. I have, for instance, vainly searched a village for a guide on to the next—offering double payment for the same; whereas a *sowar*, appearing on the scene and overwhelming them with abuse and threats, has produced one in half a minute.

There was a good story of N——, a celebrated sportsman, [illegible] shooting in Hyderabad territory, and [illegible] the entire of the village Burgaon, whilst his camp up like a rat-trap. [illegible] one on to another of the same A story, "*si non* [illegible] distant. Having no money in his

pocket, he humbly asked some of the *bunias* in the bazaar to give him credit for a feed for his horse, but this was impertinently refused, and he was hustled out of the place. As he was departing sadly with his tired horse, he met a *sowar* of the Hyderabad Contingent to whom he stated his dilemma. "All right, Sahib, come along with me," said the trooper, and reconducted him back to the bazaar whence he had been expelled with contumely. There, dismounting, planting his lance in the ground and curling up his moustache, the *sowar* cried, "Iddar ow! bahnchūt" ("come hither, you scum"), and all the *bunias* in the place came obediently forward with hands joined to deprecate his wrath. N—— instantly came to the conclusion that if a private of the Hyderabad Contingent could command such respect, what could not an officer, and soon after applied for a transfer to that corps.

I must say that in the native States of Central India one met with far greater civility from the very poorest classes, than I have ever experienced in British territory, and I have known villagers run a considerable distance to warn a sahib that the road ahead of him was impassable or the river unfordable. On one such occasion, when cut off from my kit, which had preceded me the previous day, and when within a dozen miles of the Augar Cantonment, I found myself, towards dusk, confronted by a tolerably rapid stream, the Lakoonda—perhaps 80 yards wide—in full flood. I knew there were no boats on that part of the river, but at the nearest village I found half a dozen *bhooies* (fishermen) who volunteered to get me across for a rupee apiece. Encumbered as I was with boots and breeches, they placed me astride a couple of *mussacks* (inflated goat-skins), fastened any accident with a piece of rope, and four of them [illegible]? Nothing at all, me, and the other two with my [illegible] black potentates

got safely through, though swept a hundred yards down stream.

One charming old character, Khundoo Rao, a Mahratta, quite six feet in height, with a matchlock as long as himself, who inhabited the Mahratta *chawni* (camp) near Goona, was supposed to be more than a centenarian. He had—at least by his own account—been at the siege of Asseerghur, towards the end of the eighteenth century, and described a battle, which we failed to identify, in which he had fought against the British. His account was most graphic: how the Mahratta camp stretched "from there to there"—indicating points in the landscape—whilst the "Fauj Angrezi" had only occupied a little bit of ground opposite. In the evening they saw the English officers riding along their front, looking at them with their telescopes, and the following morning when both forces were drawn up confronting one another, finding our troops remained immovable, they resolved to attack, being greatly stimulated thereto by their artillery fire remaining unanswered by our guns. Their cavalry accordingly advanced to charge us, with tremendous enthusiasm and shouts of "Hur-hurree, hur-hurree!" but, to their astonishment, the British maintained an attitude of disconcerting quietude, until, as he described it, they saw them called to attention and (company) volleys began firing all down the line. Like this, as he said, snapping his fingers. "Upon this we all ran away," he naïvely concluded.

This was from no want of pluck on his part, as he frequently showed out tiger-shooting. He often accompanied us, and invariably squatted on the ground behind a low screen of branches, with nothing but his long matchlock. On one occasion five tigers unexpectedly emerged all around him—as he said afterwards, "tumam zameen peela hogaya" ("the whole ground became yellow"),

but all the same he shot the nearest one without hesitation, and the others stampeded off past him.

According to him, there was a large treasure still buried in the ruined hill-fort of Burjunghur, near Goona, which had been captured by General Jean Baptiste at the end of the eighteenth century from the Rajah of Ragogurh. As this man religiously nourished his feud against the Mahrattas—making a detour to avoid passing through Bujrunghur, even in my time, because as he said, it once belonged to his family, and he would never go there until he could do so sword in hand, the secret of the hiding-place of this hoard has never yet been disclosed. On one occasion, my colonel rode out with another officer to meet old Khundoo at the fort, as he thought he could indicate whereabout it was hidden; but having sent their *syces* ahead to hold the horses, they found on arrival the local officials assembled to greet them. They consequently had to adjourn the indication of the spot till a future occasion—which never occurred, as the old man is dead and the secret buried with him.

One day, when I accompanied my colonel, who had to settle a disputed boundary a dozen miles out of Goona, after completing a compass survey of the tract in question, on entering the names of the most conspicuous points upon the sketch-map, one isolated fort-like hill was designated as the "pola pahar"—or the hollow hill. On asking the cause of its being so called, the villagers said that there was an immense cave therein, where in the Mahratta days the population of three villages had taken refuge during an invasion. Their retreat was, however, betrayed by some of their *pye* dogs barking at the entrance, and, refusing to surrender, they were smoked to death by the invaders. Nobody since that time had ever dared to enter, being afraid of *djinns;* but, according to them, the truth of the story was

clearly demonstrated by the fact that when the wind was in the north, it could be distinctly felt blowing out of an entrance on the southern slope of the mount.

Though I subsequently visited the hill in question more than once, I never had time to procure a guide—the nearest village in those days being some miles distant—and the numerous holes in the rocky scarp of the summit were too suggestive of snakes to make one care to explore them on all fours. Some years later a brother officer of mine, also searching for this enchanted cave, lost several of his dogs down one of the fissures in the rocks, the smallest terrier alone turning up eventually, four or five days afterwards, in a very emaciated condition. It certainly seemed as if they had all fallen down a drop, and that the little one had finally squeezed its way out through a jackal's earth.

There are, undoubtedly, enormous treasures still buried in some of the old Indian forts, in many cases all indications of the spot where they are hidden being lost. Natives believe that a cobra watches over and jealously guards such deposits. In the "Gurdee ka wakt" or "time of troubles," strange to say, the *chūmars*, or skinners, the most degraded class of the community, were commonly made the depositaries of the secret of buried hoards. The very circumstance of their degradation was supposed to render them indifferent to the possession of wealth, and the result seems to have fully justified this theory.

I have often asked Brahmins what there is to prevent a low-caste stranger passing himself off as belonging to the priestly race. Although absolutely convinced in their own minds that this cannot be done, they can assign no reason why such a personation should not be carried out, save that "no one would venture to do so."

When on a journey, hospitality is unhesitatingly accorded to a caste fellow, if there is no *serai* where he can

be lodged. A native officer told me an amusing story illustrative of the great simplicity of life. The inhabitants of the coast districts subsist wholly upon rice, and of the inland ones, on scones. Once making a pilgrimage to Juggernath, he stopped to cook his food at a Brahmin's house, in a rice-eating district. Seeing his host curiously eyeing the *chupatties* he was preparing, he enquired if he never ate these himself. "No," was the reply, "but my father once ate one," which seemed to have been handed down as a family legend.

At one of our shooting-camps, visited annually from Goona, a wretched village, inhabited by a few *seriahs*, marks the spot where a Rajput *thakoor* of some importance and his seven sons all fell, sword in hand, in defence of their ancestral fort; and a considerable treasure, the secret of whose whereabouts perished with them, is commonly believed to be entombed in some unknown corner of the almost razed works. Throughout the Goona country the invariable answer to one's enquiry as to the history of any of the hundreds of generally ruined strongholds one meets is, "Jean Baptiste Sahib ne lia" ("it was taken by Jean Baptiste"), and certainly the marks of the handiwork of that very enterprising French engineer officer are everywhere visible. At some of the more important places, such as Kagoghur, the *emplacements*, and even the embrasures of his breaching batteries, are still visible, and the direction of his mining operations can be distinctly traced. One fortified town bears the name of "Isagurh"—the "Fort of Jesus," and many native works have been improved by the addition of a *glacis*, hornwork, or some of the more Western means of protection.

Towards the close of 1874, considerable excitement was caused by the reported arrest of the infamous Nana Sahib, at Gwalior. Even the Maharajah Sindia, who

himself surrendered him to our Government, seems to have been completely taken in. Some months elapsed before the prisoner, who was kept under a guard of British soldiers at Morar, confessed the imposture. It seems to have been merely a plan to get money. The pseudo-descendant of the Peishwas, who bore some resemblance to the Nana, and had been coached to play the part, threw himself on Sindia's mercy at the time of the *Dussēra* festival, imagining that the latter, desirous not to compromise himself in the eyes of the British Government by protecting the ex-mutineer, and at the same time unwilling to surrender the representative of the former head of the Mahrattas, would at least provide him with funds to effect his escape. The impostor's name and parentage were fully traced out, and the numerous enquiries set on foot all conclusively pointed to the fact that the real Nana had died in Nepaul, in 1858. The year preceding this false alarm, the late General T——, when shooting in the *terai* with Sir Jung Bahadur, was taken a short detour by the latter, "to see the place where the Nana Sahib was cremated." A near relative having died, the Nana had to assist at the funeral ceremonies, stripped to the waist. Owing to heavy rain, the funeral pyre would not burn, and the party being thus detained for hours, he caught a chill, jungle fever supervened, and death followed in three days' time. It was scarcely possible that the Prime Minister of Nepaul could have been misinformed in the matter, and there was no earthly reason why he should have invented the story fifteen years after the event, and when for a dozen years there had been no mention of the man at all.

One Central India chief, Mān Singh of Perône, descendant of the dispossessed Rajahs of Nurwur, at the time of the Mutiny, had risen against his old hereditary enemy, the Mahratta chief of Gwalior. Being treated as

a rebel by us on that account, he, in order to purchase his pardon, had, in 1858, seized and handed over to our people the celebrated Tantia Topee—one of the Nana's associates —who was promptly hanged at Seepree. During the time whilst it was still believed that the great mutineer had been resuscitated, a British officer, talking to Mān Singh, jokingly remarked, "They say that you gave up the wrong Tantia Topee, so you had better look out for yourself, as he's alive." "Oh, *is* he?" replied the chief, with a depth of meaning which showed how thoroughly convinced he was on this point. The Ragogurh Rajah, who had remained thoroughly staunch to us throughout, never would hold any further intercourse with the Perône chief for surrendering even a mutineer who had thrown himself upon his protection—such an act being considered unworthy of a Rajpūt.

Great nonsense was talked in the English papers as to the excitement "amongst the Mahratta troops," caused by the arrest of the supposed Nana. This was absolute fiction, as five-sixths of the Gwalior army are not Mahrattas at all, their sepoys being chiefly recruited in British territory; whilst the Rajpūt subjects of both Sindia and Holkar, high and low, would, if given some small help in money and arms, ask for nothing better than to try to reconquer their ancestral acres from their present rulers. One *thakoor* of the old fighting breed, when lectured by a political officer of ours for insubordination towards his suzerain, the Maharajah Holkar, replied: "If it was not for your *fauj* (troops) in Mhow, I would ride into Indore to-morrow and pull Holkar by his beard off his *guddee* (throne)."

Twenty-odd years ago, when passing through the small State of Nursinghur, accompanied by a brother officer, I paid a visit to the Rajah in his old hill-fort. A couple of grey-whiskered sentries, as we passed, brought their arms

to the present with such a smart slap, that I involuntarily remarked to my companion that they had never learned to salute like that here; and as the idea struck me that they might well be ex-mutineers—the remnants of whom had dispersed in these jungles in 1859—I determined to look them well over on going out. When we took our leave, however, we found that this pair had been replaced by two others, which seemed to give colour to my suspicion.

Up to comparatively recent years, there were one or two strong gangs of dacoits, generally in the direction of the Betwa River. In 1872, I think, one under Rundheer Singh, a *thakoor*, who had been dispossessed of his land, kept the field for two or three years, and there were rewards aggregating Rs.13,000 on the heads of three or four of the leaders. The first-named had been, a few years previously, arrested and sentenced for dacoity, *i.e.* robbery by an armed gang, but managed to escape, and he having murdered every single witness who had given evidence at his trial, not a man in the countryside ventured to give a hint as to his whereabouts. On one occasion, in escaping from Lullutpore jail, he broke his leg by a high drop from the wall, but managing to crawl into a field of grain just across the road, lay there for a couple of days, undenounced by the owners of the field, within a few hundred yards of the police quarters, until removed by his friends.

We had at one time a whole squadron detached to assist the local authorities, and I twice had a raid after the outlaws, once finding the fires still burning at which they had been cooking. They were, however, invariably forewarned, and seemed to vanish into the ground, probably dispersing in the jungle.

As usual in such cases they were eventually killed, more or less by treachery, and always in connection with a woman.

CHAPTER VI

HUNGARY—CORFU—RUSSIA—1875-1876

DURING the eighteen months spent on furlough, 1875-1876, a most cordial invitation from my Hungarian friends who had shot with me in India induced me to spend the greater part of the winter there. Life at Buda Pesth was certainly lively, and I was overwhelmed with civilities on all sides. Society centred entirely in the National Club, or *Casino* as it is usually styled, and having been made an Honorary Member of this for the period of my stay, I met all the men worth knowing, either at the six o'clock *table d'hôte* dinner, or later on after the theatre.

A pack of fox-, and one of stag-hounds hunted—the former three and the latter two days a week—with English huntsmen and whips. All turned out in pink, with breeches by Hammond and boots by Thomas, and everything, down to "hold hard, gentlemen," was given in English. The fields averaged forty to fifty men and half a dozen ladies, the late Empress being an invariable attendant.

Having gone out to the meet by train the morning after my arrival, when I knew scarce a soul—the friend who had accompanied me being obliged to quiet down his mount by a spin across country on his own account —I was riding along alone, whilst we were drawing some scattered clumps of reeds. Presently a very smart lady rode up and addressed me in faultless English, and as she knew all about me, and with whom I was

staying, I imagined it was some relative of my host's who wished to practise our language upon me. We chatted along, accordingly, on very friendly terms, I giving her no higher mark of deference than "Madame," and when once or twice I reined back, thinking I had talked long enough, she beckoned me with her whip to keep abreast of her.

The hounds "finding" just then, we separated, and when after the run I asked my friend—who had meanwhile turned up—who was the lady who spoke English so well, he exclaimed, "Mon Dieu! j'ai oublié de vous prévenir; que c'est sa Majesté."

A single groom in plain livery and a maid of honour alone accompanied her on such occasions, and similarly, when the Emperor came out—which he did in English hunting kit—he had a solitary groom in attendance. Both of their Majesties chatted freely and familiarly with all the field, doing thereby, I venture to think, very great good politically, as the principal families of Hungary were all represented there. His Majesty also did me the honour of favouring me with a long chat on sport, riding up with the remark, "J'entends, Monsieur le Capitaine, que vous avez tué cent cinquante tigres?"—which shows how accounts gain in the telling—and at the conclusion invited me to breakfast the following week at the Gödelloe Palace, where the hounds were to meet.

As people I had never met before would come up and be introduced at the Club, in order to ask if I required a mount for any of the days, I was able to hunt all five days a week; on Thursdays we had what was called "polo," and on Sundays steeple-chases—gentlemen riders—so there was not much spare time left on hand. As some of the members of the Club had got stage-boxes for the season at the two principal theatres—commonly called *Le Bleu* and *Le Rouge*, from the colour of their decorations

—and invited all acquaintances to make full use of them, one could, after the day's hunting, go and listen to an Operetta in all luxury. That wonderfully popular piece, *La Fille de Madame Angôt*, was then in vogue, and after hearing it in English, French, and German, at London, Paris, and Vienna, I was destined to find it in full swing in Buda Pesth.

One soon got to know all the somewhat limited number of hunting members, so it was with some surprise that I once noticed a rather well-turned-out stranger holding himself aloof from the rest of the field. After some conversation in a group, who cast frequent glances in his direction, one young Hungarian detached himself from it and rode up to the new-comer, who, after a few words had passed, hurriedly took his departure. On enquiring later on what it all meant, I was told that they would not have a "dirty Jew" out with them, and that he was told he would be horsewhipped if he did not clear out!

Duelling—not as in France—but seriously with pistols, was of common occurrence, and one very charming Count who, as President of the Club, had signed an order for the expulsion of a member suspected of cheating at cards, was credited with having fought seven duels in as many consecutive mornings. As the story goes, when, a few days subsequently, the friend who had acted as his second entered his bedroom, the Count enquired with a yawn, "By the way, who on earth is it I have got to fight to-day?"

A young sportsman had his dog-cart overturned by a collision with a tram-car, and the horse, bolting down the street, having killed an old woman, abusive articles appeared in some of the Viennese Radical papers. These stated that it was time to stop young noblemen driving furiously in the town, killing inoffensive citizens, and the usual clap-trap of that description. Some of the young

Clubsmen then drew lots as to who were to horsewhip the various editors. Prince C——, a particularly muscular young man, who had drawn one of the winning numbers, relating the episode to us some time subsequently, described how he called and sent his card up, following the same into the editor's room, when without more ado he caught him by the collar and towelled him down with a cutting whip, his victim finally escaping from his grasp by the coat splitting down the back. "And then," as C—— continued, somewhat amusingly, "he was indignant, and said he wished to duel me. 'My good sir,' I replied, 'I will give you one week to get well, and then, although you are a Jew, I will duel you with anything you please—although you are a Jew,'" he repeated.

His Hebrew antagonist's courage, however, failed, so he summoned my friend for the cowhiding and the damage to his coat; the judgment rendered being:

> "Pour l'honneur blessé cinq florins,
> Pour le frac endommāgé, vingt cinq florins,"

which apparently fixed their relative values. On a lady, who was one of the auditors, remarking to C—— that he must have hurt the poor man if he required a week's rest, he lightly replied: "Oh, that was nothing. Why, if you had seen the Jew that P—— drew: he was a month in bed."

Though personally rather an unbeliever in that sort of thing, I admit I was much impressed by one story of supernatural visitation which I heard related at the Pesth Club—just about the last place on earth where one would expect such a tale to receive ready credence.

The talk one evening had turned upon ghosts, which were generally ridiculed; but one of the men present, while stating that he had been till recently incredulous, narrated a recent experience of his own, which, though

at first received with considerable chaff, was told so seriously, and so many mutual acquaintances were cited who could corroborate the story, that I could see that the narrator carried his audience with him, and I must say that I was myself convinced. Briefly, the story amounted to this: that the preceding year an old valet of the Marquis P——'s, in Croatia, on being reprimanded by his master, had committed suicide in a chamber adjacent to what was used as a billiard-room in the rambling old family *schloss*. Shortly afterwards, the most weird noises arose nightly in the billiard-room, and the old noble, a noted pistol-shot, who believed in some mystification by the servants, gave warning that he would shoot on sight at any strange figure he met. The man who told the story arrived at the château three or four days after the occurrence, and nightly took part in the vigils in the haunted chamber. As he described it, although three or four of them were together, all fully armed, they could not endure to remain in the room in the dark, so ghastly were the cries and yells, accompanied by a heavy tramp, tramp, tramp, round the room, which went on continuously. Often, as the tread approached them, they made a sweep with a sword at the spot, only to encounter empty space. Even with the room fully lit up this continued, but was then more endurable. On one occasion, four of them having resolved to watch throughout the night, two had a couple of shake-downs made on the billiard-table, the narrator and a fourth man settling themselves on the sofas. Whilst they were all wide awake, their attention was attracted to the pair on the table by one accusing the other of pulling his hair, and before their eyes the two mattresses with the men on them were whisked to the floor, whilst the heavy billiard-table was overturned by invisible hands to the opposite side. As he candidly admitted, this was too much for their nerves, and they did

not that night prolong their vigil. A new valet having arrived from Vienna, and having been carefully kept in ignorance of the whole occurrence, was assigned the room in which his predecessor had shot himself, the party keeping watch outside. Hearing a shriek, they rushed in, to find the new arrival unconscious; and on coming to himself he declared he had been awakened by an old man, with a bloody bandage round his forehead, standing by his bedside, and the description he gave exactly tallied with that of the old valet. After continuing for about six weeks, these manifestations ceased as suddenly as they had begun, nor, so far as was known, had they ever recurred.

A short visit to an Austrian cavalry regiment, quartered in a country town, impressed me with the idea of the most absolute dreariness of life under such conditions, in winter at least; and yet I was told that they regarded themselves as fortunate, in comparison with other squadrons billeted from autumn to spring on straggling villages, without communications, society, or sport.

They are certainly not allowed to vegetate, even under such circumstances. One captain told me that his colonel had paid a surprise visit to his squadron, manœuvred them across country for four hours, and then when they ranked past in single file after this, and two horse-shoes were found missing, he was given seven days close confinement to his quarters.

The riding-school was one morning given over from 7.30 to 8 for two officers to fight a duel with their colonel's permission, one of whom was severely, if not dangerously, wounded by a sabre-cut in the neck. On asking the colonel what would be the consequences if the wounded man were to die, "Nothing," he replied; "I merely report to the Minister of War that the duel was fought

with my sanction, and no further notice is taken. If, however, the family of the deceased brought a civil action, his opponent might"—which he evidently regarded as an extreme case—"get six months' imprisonment, which the Emperor would remit."

I wound up a very charming visit somewhat unluckily, getting a bad smash in a steeple-chase, on a strange mare which tried to gallop through a very uncompromising post and rail, and in a point to point race for a cup, given by the Empress, jumping into a canal and finding my horse unable to scramble out up the further side, which was hard frozen.

Severe frost and snow setting in just before Christmas-time—even the Danube, 600 yards wide, with a strong current, being frozen over—the Pesth season practically concluded, and there was a general exodus.

A Hungarian acquaintance and myself having resolved to try the Albanian coast for woodcock, we reached Corfu very comfortably by the Austrian-Lloyd boat from Trieste. At that time there was a particularly clean and fairly good hotel there—the "St George," I think, was its name. Though English society was very limited, occasional yachts dropped in to reinforce the residents, and there was a British Consul, a Bank, and an Italian Opera Company in the town.

To shoot on the Albanian coast one required a license from the Turkish authorities, and to get there, had to hire a so-called yacht of twenty or twenty-five tons, of which in those days there were three or four available. Though apparently these had never been cleaned or repainted since our evacuation of the Ionian Islands, ten years previously, they were tolerably serviceable and remarkably cheap. A pound a ton a month, including a crew of two or three ruffianly Greeks, was the usual rate, and, except having to supply these with bread and wine, we had no further

expense, beyond a beater, taken more as an interpreter than as anything else. The one we had was a real Greek, whom we could have gladly dispensed with had that been possible. He considered he had been badly put upon by a former employer whom he had requested to recommend him to any of his friends that might be coming out. The departing visitor told him that one was expected presently, but it was not known by which boat, so that he had better board them all, and when he saw a big man with a beard ask him if he was Mr Cardsharper. The result was that he got kicked down the ship's ladder before he realised that the recommendation was of doubtful value.

At Butrinto—6 or 8 miles across from Corfu—there is some good ground, but it is so much shot over that one must go further afield. Some of our best sport was at Fanari, a night's run down from Corfu, and not far south of Parga, where we spent a fortnight or three weeks altogether, returning every five or six days to replenish stores and have a little change after the very cramped quarters of a twenty-tonner. Our ordinary diet consisted perforce chiefly of woodcock, on which we experimented, even in the shape of soup. Occasionally we could exchange these for fresh sardines from the fishermen, and milk and eggs could now and then be purchased; but for meat and bread we were entirely dependent on Corfu.

The climate was simply perfect; whilst the mountains were covered with snow down to within 1000 or 1500 feet of the sea, we had bright sunny days, and though it was not too cold to take a header overboard in lieu of one's morning tub, yet there was cat-ice in the puddles when we landed and commenced shooting.

A decided drawback to one's enjoyment is supplied in the shape of the large Albanian sheep-dogs, which

come for you and your spaniels in the most savage style. Though the owners stand by indifferently, and never take the trouble to call them off, it might cost you your life to shoot one; but by the unwritten law of the country you are held guiltless if you should injure one with the cold steel. At Corfu, hunting-knives with tapering, cork-covered handles can be bought, to extemporise fixed bayonets when you "prepare to resist dogs." More than once we and our beater, with our own timid sporting curs hid between our legs, have been held up for quite five minutes, standing back to back with charged bayonets, whilst four or five of these big wolf-hounds, looking as if they would take a bite out of your calf as clean as a bite out of a sandwich, bayed and snarled, just clear of the point of our weapons.

Whilst at Corfu, a middy from one of our men-of-war, having shot one of these brutes, was made a prisoner, and was being carried up the mountains when, luckily for him, the commander of a Turkish gun-boat anchored hard by hearing of the occurrence, landed an armed party and rescued him, making him pay £1 as compensation to the owner. But for his prompt interference, it was considered probable that the youth would have been murdered.

Your bag there is entirely dependent on having good cockers, and plenty of them, game to face any amount of thorns. Whilst cock may be found here and there scattered through the thick scrub with which the mountain slopes are everywhere covered, it is only in the swampy hollows that one finds them in sufficient quantities to afford any real sport. In some of the valleys are numerous old irrigation channels, which in the course of time have become overgrown with a dense thicket of blackthorn, brambles and alder, matted together into an almost impenetrable hedge, 12 feet high, and a dozen yards in width, which simply swarm with woodcock. With a

gun on either side, and a brace of spaniels working within, we got a shot almost every 20 yards, as the birds dodged in and out every minute. So dense was the covert, that there were constant delays to recover the game hung up in the thorns. We suffered from want of dogs, as of the two couple we had, two were old, or soft, and knocked up in half an hour, whilst the other brace were usually quite done up by noon, and capable of working only on alternate days. Every gun should have two couple of spaniels, one of these being given a day's rest on the yacht for each one of work, and the others being used alternately for an hour at a time.

Even handicapped as we were from want of dog-flesh, I see our united bags ran occasionally—

21st January 1876	.	35 brace woodcock, 3½ brace snipe.
23rd ,,	.	1 brace partridge, 36½ brace woodcock, 4 brace snipe, 2 duck, 1 hare.
25th ,,	.	40½ brace woodcock, 1½ brace snipe, 1 duck.

There was some good ground near Prevesa and in the Gulf of Arta, but two or three other parties were already in possession.

On the south of this bay, the fortifications of Antony's camp before the battle of Actium are distinctly visible, after the lapse of nearly a couple of thousand years, and show how solidly they must have originally been constructed.

At Santa Maura, near which we shot for a couple of days, earthquakes are of such frequent occurrence that the upper storeys of the houses are generally constructed of wood. Having occasion to despatch some telegrams, we had repaired to the telegraph-office, which was situated on the first floor of a somewhat ancient-looking building. Whilst my friend was having a message translated into the Greek tongue by the clerk, a curious, deep rumbling

noise broke upon us, reminding me of the sound of a heavily-laden waggon going over cobble stones underneath an archway. A smart shock accompanied this, and several doors opening into the landing flew open and some women ran out screaming. I measured the distance with my eye, feeling inclined to make a jump into the street, and I believe I should have done so if a second shock had followed, but all the time the clerk went on writing as if this was of everyday occurrence.

Continuing southwards, and having been becalmed for twenty-four hours, we were, after drifting unpleasantly close to the rock-bound coast, caught by a white squall just at dusk, under the historic cliffs of "Sappho's Leap." Right glad were we when, after beating about for four or five hours, we managed to weather Cape Dukato, the most southerly point of the island, and anchor about midnight in what proved to be the small creek of Vasilitri. On landing next morning, to see if fresh provisions were procurable, we found the small village consisted of almost as many wine-shops as dwelling-houses, and we bought some rough but pretty strong wine for our crew, at the rate of one franc and a quarter for a *cruche*, containing fifteen bottles, or just about a penny a bottle.

After a few days' sport at Pétala—where it was amusing to see in what a hurry our men were to get on board before dusk, for fear of brigands—we ran down to Dragoméstre to try for deer. In the territory of the maligned Turk, one was perfectly safe, the Pasha, as a rule, crucifying any brigand caught, merely as a beginning, whereas in Greece they are just as likely as not to be relatives of one of the Ministers and enjoy proportionate immunity. Here we were obliged to subsidise a guard of Greek *gendarmes*, who, I am fully convinced, would have bolted at the first shot, but the authorities refused to let us land without them. Though we had several beats,

and saw the tracks of what must have been heavy stags, we failed to get a shot.

Some years before, three English sportsmen were held up by eight brigands with only three guns amongst them, who, after disarming them, boarded and looted the yacht. Detaining one as hostage until a ransom of £3000 was produced, they allowed the other two to sail for Patras, where they eventually obtained the money and the release of their friend, who was kindly treated, although he had on the whole a rough time of it.

By the middle of February, cock had either moved away or scattered up the mountains, and one met with very few, although a fair lot of snipe were to be found in any of the open marshes up to the end of the month, when I took my departure, *viâ* Brindisi, for England.

Being invited to pay a visit to Russia in the autumn of 1876, and hearing that there were to be big manœuvres in Poland before the Tsar, I tried to arrange matters so as to combine the two, and applied for official sanction to attend. From the War- I was referred to the Foreign Office, where, after being kept waiting about an hour for someone to interview me, I was told by a clerk of sorts, with a highly-injured air, that my request was altogether irregular, and that in a case of that sort "the correspondence should have been initiated by the Foreign Department," and then, "at the suite of this," names of officers to attend should be submitted to *them*, he adding with a triumphant air, as if this were a clencher, "besides which we have no official intimation that there are to be any manœuvres at all." To this I replied that, as I was going there at my own expense, I did not see how that affected anybody besides myself, and eventually was referred back to the War Office. Here, after being bandied about from pillar to post, I was told, thanks to the assistance given me by a former commanding officer who happened to be in the

Department, that, if I liked, the matter would be referred to the Commander-in-Chief, then in Homburg. H.R.H.'s reply, which was to the effect, "Of course let him go. Why not?" was most encouraging, and so far satisfied the Foreign Office, that a telegram was sent off to our Ambassador to obtain the necessary permission for me from the Russian authorities.

Reaching Warsaw on the 28th of August, and having private letters of introduction to Count K——, the Governor-General, I was attached to the German "deputation" of General Von W—— and five of his Staff, and we were accommodated at Sielce, a small château in the Imperial Park, where a couple of Officers of the Guard acted as our hosts, and through them we received orders daily as to uniform and hours of parade—carriages, horses, even down to tickets for the Opera, being all put at our disposal. The Austrian Governor-General of Galicia, with five Staff Officers, was similarly entertained at another château. There were no other foreign officers present, and as everybody knew that Russia was on the eve of war with Turkey, and it was generally supposed that we would side with the latter Power, it was decidedly interesting to see their army under such circumstances; and riding round camps amongst their men, it was amusing to notice how eager the soldiers were to see what a real, live *Anglichanin* looked like. Chatting with some of my German companions at dinner I happened to remark, "Mais vous, officiers Allemands." "Pardon, mon Capitaine," the Teuton replied, "nous sommes Prussiens," with much emphasis on the last word.

It was instructive also to note the intense national antipathy betwixt Russians and Germans. Whilst my Prussian comrades in conversation were unsparing in their criticism, when no Russian was within hearing, of "ridiculous tactics," "undisciplined Cossacks," etc., some

Russian officers with whom I stayed for a few days on the conclusion of the manœuvres made no secret of their sentiments. "Swaggering, stuck-up, German pigs—they think because we are *bons camarades*, and not always on stilts amongst ourselves, that we are not as good soldiers as they are. If we get the chance we will show them," etc. A curious commentary on the *entente cordiale* is, that whilst all the Russian railways to the east of the Vistula are of a broader gauge than those to the west, the Prussians had already, prior to 1875, applied a system to their own rolling-stock rendering it adaptable to the wider gauge.

Altogether, eighty-seven battalions, forty-one squadrons, and one hundred and fifty guns took part in the manœuvres, including a division of infantry, a brigade of cavalry, and thirty pieces of artillery of the Imperial Guard—Warsaw and Petersburg being the only two stations of that distinguished corps. Nearly all the troops were under canvas for the summer, the encampment of the Guards—each of whose tents was surmounted by a brass ball and spike, and surrounded with flower-beds—having a very gay appearance.

The opinion I then formed has only been confirmed by somewhat frequent contact with their troops in subsequent years, and is, briefly, that their infantry is admirable, their cavalry, as a rule, are poor horsemen, and valuable chiefly as mounted infantry; the Cossacks excellent for their particular *rôle*, but their horses deficient in pace or weight, if opposed to well-mounted light cavalry, and the artillery useful but untidy. The men are cheerful, patient and enduring, and their officers I have always found most kind and obliging to strangers, whose chief complaint on leaving their hosts is the too-profuse hospitality to which they have had to do honour.

I received the utmost kindness from several Russian officers whom I met accidentally in restaurants or at the theatre, solely on the ground that I was an English officer, and I am sure that increased intercourse between our Services would lead to a mutual liking. The unfortunate international prejudice between our respective countries is chiefly due to ignorance, and seems largely fostered by the Press on either side.

On the last day of the manœuvres, which lasted a week, one battalion, marching in close column with fixed bayonets, was struck by lightning in the course of a severe thunderstorm, seven men being killed and forty-nine injured. The steadiness of the battalion was above all praise, the column merely taking ground to the right to clear the fallen men and continuing its advance unshaken.

During the nine days of his Majesty's stay, the foreign officers present dined twice with him, besides attending a couple of balls and two or three gala theatrical performances. Upon his departure for Odessa, on the 7th of September, the camp began to disperse, the normal garrison of Warsaw then consisting of twenty-seven battalions, twelve squadrons and forty guns.

I was throughout given every possible facility to see and examine all I wished, and I experienced the utmost courtesy and kindness from all, both Staff and regimental officers.

The great pull Russia has is, that whilst all the adult population is liable for military service from the age of twenty-one to thirty-six, they require only about one-third of the number to keep up a standing army of two million men, and they are able not only to grant numerous exemptions, to pick and choose, but, as a rule, out of the seven years' service due with the colours the men receive three years' furlough. Cossacks serve alternately three years with

a (strictly Cossack) regiment, and spend an equal period on furlough, for a total of eighteen years. Whilst in the first ban of the Reserve they have to keep up both horse and arms, the former need not be maintained by their *voiska* after that period, though they must be provided if necessary. They were supposed to be able to turn out a quarter of a million mounted men on an emergency.

The express train from Warsaw to Moscow, about 800 miles, took fifty hours in those days. The landscape throughout is dead flat and dreary, its monotony being only relieved by some fine natural forests of spruce, pine and birch. Some of the former trees are quite 100 feet high, with drooping branches covered with long pendent white moss. The absence of game was easily accounted for, as in almost every single turnip-field one passed there was a black dog with a curly tail hunting. The line throughout was then only a single one—since doubled — and the rails, not being laid in chairs, but simply spiked on to the sleepers, were not adapted to stand the wear and tear of fast traffic. Wood was the only fuel then used for the engines, and as there was a certain Oriental-like indifference as to time, it was not surprising that the train took two hours and a half to accomplish a distance that our English trains could cover in one.

From Moscow, where my host met me, I accompanied him to one of his country places, where I saw the national life under very favourable circumstances, the whole château being filled up for his brother's wedding. It was one perpetual round of gaiety from noon, when the day began, till considerably past midnight, or whenever the dancers were too exhausted to continue the extempore balls which always finished up the evenings.

Life in a Russian country-house is very different from what it is in England. All bachelors were in a detached wooden châlet, some 50 yards distant from the main

building. When breaking up for the night, a lackey took orders as to your requirements, plans, or the hour at which you desired to be called on the morrow.

We arranged for what resembled the Indian *chota haziri* in the verandah of our rooms at the hour that suited us, and made up riding- or shooting-parties amongst ourselves, there being fifty or sixty saddle horses in the stables. Returning in time to make ourselves presentable, we appeared in the drawing-room by half-past twelve, the earliest hour at which we were supposed to show ourselves to the ladies, and the day really commenced with the *déjeûner* about one o'clock. A drive or a riding-party after this, tea at five, dinner at half-past six, cards, generally baccarat, till half-past nine, and dancing until we were too tired to go on; a second supper and bed concluded the day.

One most charming old lady, the grandmother of my host, had been a married woman with three children when Napoleon entered Moscow in 1812, and her recollection of that stirring period appeared to be as clear and fresh as if the events were only a few years old. She really could not say whether the city had been burned accidentally or, as is supposed, by order of the Governor, Count Rostopchine, but she was positive that they had not received the slightest warning of such a catastrophe, and that all she had saved from her palace were her children and a pet parrot. Nevertheless, like an old Spartan, she highly approved of the result, as hastening the disaster of the hated invaders.

From here I visited the historic field of Borodino, where, even by Thiers' admission, forty-seven French Generals fell in the course of the day, and I must say that what most struck me was to wonder how on earth, judging by the state of the roads in September, the French army ever penetrated so far into the country, or how even the

remnants of it ever got back again, a couple of months later.

The much superior education of Russians over ourselves in the matter of foreign languages greatly impressed me. My friend had a decidedly polyglot assortment of servants, and I have heard him turn from giving orders to his coachman in German and continue to give directions to a groom in English, just as fast as he could talk, which he would break off to give a message to his valet in Italian, whilst as to French and Polish, they were as his mother-tongue. I always regret the years wasted at school upon classics, when I see the solid advantages they possess over us in this respect.

After the wedding, which was a very gay, though somewhat tedious, ceremony, and a very trying breakfast, when apparently it was the proper thing to break your glass after each toast to the newly-married couple, the party broke up, all being invited to reassemble at the mother-in-law's, Princess S——, country place, near Smolensko, that day three weeks. The interval was spent in visiting the oft-described sights of the land, and in October we had again a considerable gathering, and resumed the life above detailed.

The most amusing ten days of this was when we went out to a village, buried amongst the swamps and forests of the left bank of the Dnieper, with the Princess's pack of hounds. These were more or less foxhounds, but accustomed to run whatever they pleased, whilst a certain number of *borzoies* and greyhounds acted as auxiliaries. The huntsman and three whips were got up in rather smart green livery, with velvet hunting-caps, and mounted on Cossack ponies, with the usual Cossack high-peaked saddle. It was all conducted on somewhat happy-go-lucky principles, and chopping a fox in cover seemed preferred to

a good run without a kill. When, the night preceding our start from the château, I was told that the ladies would appear next morning in masculine attire, in consequence of the fearfully muddy state of the roads, I was prepared to see something startling. Their turn-out, however, proved most quiet and commonplace. Loose Norfolk jackets and wide knicker-bockers, with soft leather knee-boots, and hair hidden away under pork-pie hats, might have passed muster without remark even in England. Certainly the state of the roads justified these precautions, and after jolting some 25 miles through what in this country would be considered a snipe-marsh, we had to cross the Dnieper by a raft of green timber, so imperfectly secured, that our horses' legs kept slipping through between the logs, and we had to stand in water up to our ankles. I was told that there was no better ferry within 50 miles of the place, and that communications were easy only in winter by means of sleighs.

Our accommodation in the village was equally primitive, the school-house—as tuition goes on only in the winter months—being the sole available building, so six or eight ladies and as many men were quartered in three moderate-sized rooms. Bedsteads we had none, only mattresses on the floor, whilst as the gentlemen's apartment separated that allotted to the fair sex from what we used as the *salon*, they had to knock at our door and demand "est ce qu' on peût entrer?" every time they passed through, so as not to surprise us in the act of changing our attire. It was a curious medley of discomfort and luxury, as with all this roughing it we had a French chef and unlimited champagne. Goodness knows where the numerous servants slept, as there appeared to be little choice between the wood-shed and the stables.

At nights the peasants crowded round the house, singing and dancing in quest of *baksheesh*, and when on occasions they became too importunate, and climbed up to the windows, the lackeys threw a bucket or two of water over them to drive them off.

"*La chasse*," such as it was, was on similar principles, and, if mighty poor sport, was very good fun. The pack drew the coverts, generally swamps, and hunted every mortal thing they came across, on the first day opening with a brilliant run after a colt. The field dodged about outside, two or three of the ladies riding with a brace of *borzoies* in leash beside them, and it was very pretty to see them canter ahead and slip their hounds, which were so perfectly trained that they never strained in hand, and kept close abreast of the horse on the off side. As to giving an animal a chance, there was no such idea, and in the middle of a run a fresh pair of greyhounds would be slipped to head and mob even a fox or a hare. We had only a few runs with wolves, which really are very scarce indeed, and only got one, who was practically chopped.

By the unwritten law of the country, if the peasants catch a horseman riding over their wheat, his horse is forfeit and he must ransom it. One evening, having become separated from the others, and trotting on to rejoin them, I had entered a roadway, fenced by post and rails on either side, leading into a village, and a sudden rush of villagers with shouts of exultation greeted me as I heard slip-rails put up behind me across the entrance. Being luckily mounted on an Irish steeple-chase mare of my friend's, I had no difficulty in jumping out over the side-fence, which performance was hailed with a good-natured roar of laughter from my pursuers, who thought they had got me.

The villages, on the whole, seemed decidedly poorer than Indian *gaons*, and their general plan, appearance, and

construction just as haphazard—the principal difference being that in Russia timber replaces both clay and tiles, whilst the depth of mud in the streets throughout the autumn fully equals that of a low-lying village in Bengal during the worst part of the monsoon.

CHAPTER VII

CENTRAL INDIA—1877-78

CURTAILING my furlough, in order to arrive in India in time for the "Proclamation Durbar" of 1877, I had the good fortune to be attached as orderly officer to Sir H—— D——, the Agent Governor-General, and so saw the whole *tamasha*, as it is designated in the vernacular (which is, I suppose, the derivation of "Tommy-Shaw"), under the most favourable circumstances. The whole display—the first of its kind, and on the lines of which that of January 1903 was probably modelled—though quaint and interesting to tourists and sightseers, was on the whole disappointing.

One great drawback to all such pageants is the inevitable dust, but it was fortunate indeed that the twelve hours' heavy rain, which fell shortly after the departure of the Viceroy, did not occur a week earlier to mar the show and convey an unfavourable omen to the superstitious native mind.

It was specially interesting to ride round Delhi with General D——, who had been such a leading figure there in the autumn of 1857, and was able to point out so many spots, and detail so many reminiscences of incidents which have become historical.

He had, when in command of the Guides, marched from Hoti Murdan to Delhi, a distance—quoting from memory only—of about 700 miles, in twenty-one consecutive days, and in the month of May, the hottest

time of the year. Despite the severity of the march, both cavalry and infantry arrived so fit that, within four hours of joining the British Camp, they went into action and had half their British officers killed or wounded before sunset.

I remember being much struck by a story he told of the great Nicholson, who fell in the storming of Delhi. Shortly after the second Sikh War, Sir H—— D——, at that time a subaltern in the Frontier Force, when passing through the station of which N—— was then the Commissioner, stopped a few hours at his bungalow. They had been having *chota haziri* in the most shaded verandah of the house, where the guard — a necessary adjunct in those days, usually mounted—had temporarily moved round elsewhere, so as not to inconvenience the Sahibs, leaving their spare muskets leaning against the wall. After breakfast, whilst resting in the usual long arm chairs, a Pathān suddenly appeared, and Nicholson seeing something suspicious in his demeanour, ordered him to halt. The man continued to advance despite a second warning, and before they could even gain their feet, drew a long *churra* (Afghan knife) and rushed at Nicholson, who had just time to stretch his hand back to the piled muskets, seize, cock, and fire one from the hip, dropping the fanatic dead. On examining the rest of the arms, the weapon used proved to be the only one of the lot which was loaded. It was a curious illustration of *kismet*.

So striking was Nicholson's personality, that a sect of Sikhs regarded him as a new *guru*, and attempted to worship him—in which they persisted even although he always had them flogged for attempting it.

At this first big durbar, the turnout of some of the native chiefs was most incongruous, as they never

seemed to have the least notion of attending to the *tout ensemble.* One saw, for instance, a Rajah on a magnificent elephant, with a solid silver *howdah* and *kincobb* (gold) housings, and the whole girthed on by a dirty old cotton rope, with a strand or two frayed and dangling out; and whilst the chief himself was a perfect blaze of jewels, and the *mahout* most picturesquely attired with a splendid *Kuftgari* shield, the spearman, who invariably follows behind the elephant, would be in attendance in his dirty whitey-brown cotton garments, with a rusty lance in hand.

The bump of veneration is not largely implanted in the average Tommy Atkins, and the sentry, at the main guard's cry of "Guard, turn out," was often followed by a very audible *sotto voce* of, "Hurry up; here's another of them bally kings."

Both for his visit to the Viceroy and the Proclamation Ceremony of 1st January, I was put in charge of one of the Bundelkund chiefs, and the first-named function was decidedly comical. The Rajah himself, who was accompanied by his *dewan,* was in a most abject state of nervousness, and would apparently about as soon have been attending his own funeral. After being presented to the Governor-General, the latter, turning to the interpreter, began, "Tell his Highness I am delighted to meet the loyal son of a loyal parent" — which was rendered into the vernacular: "Lord Sahib, firmata ke ap ko dekke, koosh hy"— literally, "The Lord Sahib orders that having seen you he is glad." And it was decidedly comical for anyone acquainted with the language to hear how briefly the flowing periods were toned down in the translation, and the bland unconsciousness that any such side-play was going on, exhibited by His Excellency.

There were many good stories current at the time. When presenting one of the newly-invented standards to a chief, His Excellency spoke, "And tell His Highness I trust this standard will never be unfurled"—and was probably going to add—"except as an ally of the Queen-Empress," or something to that effect, when the Rajah, the moment this first sentence had been translated, anxious to propitiate the great man, broke in hurriedly with, "Nahin, Sahib, nahin, kabhi nahin" ("No, sir—never—on any account").

Complimenting the Nawab Consort of Bhopal, on his reputation as a writer, Lord —— said, "Tell His Highness that I also am a poor poet." "Ha, Sahib, aisa suna" ("Yes, sir, I have heard that"), assented the Nawab, with disconcerting promptitude.

Besides the standard, the Rajah upon whom I was in attendance was informed that he was granted two more guns in his salute, and received several flowery compliments, which he did not seem quite to understand. The very moment he regained his carriage he turned to his minister, and, instead of expressing the least pleasure at the honours bestowed, his only preoccupation was as to what his neighbours, the Rajahs of this, that, and the other State, had respectively got. On hearing that they had received similar honours, any momentary satisfaction which he may have experienced vanished, and he leant back in the carriage with a wearied air. Natives are so terribly touchy on this point, that I once heard of a Rajah attending a durbar, sending in an offer, to the General in command, of fifty thousand rupees, to get one gun more accorded in his salute, than in that of a rival who was similarly going to be present.

One function, which developed a decidedly comic element, might well have culminated in a tragedy of

grave dimensions. This was a *levée*, fixed for 9 P.M., to which, in addition to the usual official classes, a vast number of natives not commonly invited on such occasions were bidden. Apparently every officer in camp had been struck with the same happy thought of coming early before the crush, making his bow, and getting away quickly to finish the evening at Mess. Arriving a few minutes after the hour, and entering a huge, but dimly-lighted *shamianah*, we perceived a fair-sized crowd at the further end, which was presumably filing into the reception-tent beyond. It was not till we had wedged ourselves into the mass, that we realised that the portals were not yet opened, and by that time, with the continual influx of fresh arrivals, all anxious to hurry through the ceremony, retreat had become as impossible as advance. As time dragged on and the crowd thickened, the first discontent at this inconsiderate unpunctuality gave place to amusement at the entirely unconventional character the meeting assumed, and, in fact, degenerated into a regular football "scrimmage." Nearly all the sofas and chairs were trodden to pieces by people standing upon them to escape the crush, whilst threats from seniors to put juniors pressing upon them under arrest were heard, mingled with the plaintive requests of fat baboos—who were invited there by way of conciliating them—"Do, kind gentlemen, let me go, I will die, I will die." I heard one cheerful party of hussar subalterns in my neighbourhood exclaim, "Oh, here's another nig.; let's rosh him!" followed by a dull crash, as a sofa, upon which a dozen of the Muscat delegation had piled themselves, collapsed. The entire fabric was swaying so ominously, that it seemed as if something must fall—when, with the certainty of the tent taking fire, the mortality might have been terrible.

Finally, an hour and twenty minutes after the time,

the Viceregal dinner was at length cut short, and the struggling crowd were hurriedly admitted, to save the walls of the tent from being levelled, and as everybody was in an equal hurry, it became a regular "gallop past." Men trotted past on one another's heels, made a bob of the head, and raced off. As the exit was becoming blocked, one of the A.D.C.'s on duty directed the person in front of me to another way out, and I and those next behind me followed. Our leader should apparently have turned to the right, but as he went to the left, and all was in utter darkness between the *kanāts*, we next moment heard a crickle-crackle as people went tumbling about amongst the dessert service, which in the hurry had been laid out on the ground. After what we had just undergone, nobody was going to stop for such a trifle, and, indeed, judging by the noise, some must have been kicking their spurs about on purpose, till, eventually, emerging in the kitchen enclosure—where supper was laid out on a table for the Viceroy's band—everything liquid was drunk, and the crowd, tripping over tent-ropes, drifted out and got their horses as best they could.

The pageant itself passed off successfully, unmarred by the weather, though rain fell in torrents just after the Viceroy's departure, bringing down several *shamianahs* and swamping some of the camps, which were scattered over an extent of about 7 miles.

The show was doubtless impressive to the natives, but was rather too stagey and theatrical for the more fastidious European taste. Rumour had it that the Muscat representatives, who, not being regarded as feudatories, were not accorded banners—which were sort of Venetian streamers such as are seen at Free Foresters' processions—were thereby much disappointed. They excited much interest, as they ate the whole of the soap provided in their camp.

One of the political officers attached to their deputation sent a very off-hand note stating that, as he was on duty the following morning, he required a *sowar's* horse to be sent to his tent at 7 A.M. next day. Though of course nowise bound to do anything of the sort—as a well-paid official is supposed to provide his own nags and not sponge on those of the poorly-paid troopers—the commanding officer, in his ire, set to work to find a nag "that would kill the fellow," as he kindly remarked; and after some discussion a dun country-bred was selected and sent over. It returned riderless to the Lines twenty minutes later, and the native cavalry were not asked to provide any further mounts.

A gloom was cast over the proceedings by poor C—— of the 9th Lancers being killed at polo—and in a collision with his dearest friend.

As the railway in those days was then comparatively in its infancy, it was somewhat difficult to obtain accommodation to get away at all, and many of the native chiefs and minor officials were detained for days, waiting for the line to clear. One day at the station, seeing a couple of hundred very forlorn-looking servants squatted mournfully on the platform, we found on enquiry that they belonged to the Rajah of ——, whose special train was just then departing. These poor wretches—who had been chucked out of the carriages by the railway officials as being in excess of the regulation limit of thirty-two per third class waggon—were left stranded 400 miles from their homes, and most of them, according to their own account, were eight or nine months in arrears of pay, whilst their lord and master departed, supremely indifferent as to what became of them, so long as he was not bothered on the subject. How these poor people ever pull through such little difficulties is an Oriental mystery; but they do manage to do so somehow or other.

I here witnessed for the first time the effects of a fire in the big Indian, double-walled tents. One would have supposed that whilst loose articles were burned, clothes packed away in portmanteaus would escape with a slight singing, instead of which everything except metal-work absolutely disappeared, and of bullock trunks and solid leathern portmanteaus and their contents, nothing remained but their lock plates and brass clamps.

I had again the agreeable duty of acting as orderly officer to the Agent Governor-General and we had pretty hard marching to accomplish the Bundelkund tour and regain Indore before the hot weather had fairly set in. In this, my third, march through that part of the country, I came across three or four tanks which excited my highest admiration. There are some very fine and picturesque ones, especially in the Tehree, or Oorcha district, those of Burwa-Saugor, Besa-Saugor, and Band being particularly striking. The second named of these is formed by a colossal dam in the gorge of a sharp limestone range of hills, and I roughly estimated its area to be about 4 miles long, by half that in width. The antiquity of the work is sufficiently attested by the enormous banian and tamarind trees growing on the dam, overshadowing hoary-looking temples; and by timing the drop of a stone down the reverse side of the dam, I made its height about 120 feet, whilst it was from 80 to 100 yards thick. Most of these tanks—which were established in pursuance of some vow—are regarded with much veneration.

The most stupendous undertaking in this respect is shown by the ruins at Bhojpore in Central India. Rajah Bhoj Singh having vowed to dam up nine rivers and ninety-nine streams, discovered that by arresting the waters of the Bétwa at the gorge at Bhojpore, he could include all but one of the required number in the one lake. The ninety-ninth, "bunded up" after the Rajah's

death by his Minister, Bhopal Singh, forms the present considerable tank at Bhopal, and gives its name to the capital of that State. This work of Titans, executed about the 7th century, endured for over eight hundred years, and was eventually destroyed by the fanaticism of the Mussulman Emperor, Shere Shah, who demolished the magnificent work, on account of the Hindoo temples erected upon the embankment. According to local tradition, the sheet of water, which measured some 20 miles by 12, or nearly 250 square miles in area, when the dam was broken down, took three months to drain, three years to dry, and thirty years before its bed became habitable. The overflow provided was a gap, quite half a mile long, cut through the solid rock of a hill. In Sir John Malcolm's days there were three hundred and sixty villages flourishing within the area of the old tank, and the present Indian Midland Railway traverses its bed for 16 or 18 miles.

There is one curious example of how the enormous slabs of stone, sometimes seen in the roofs of Hindoo temples—whose builders, in pre-Mahomedan days, were ignorant of the principle of the keystone—were raised to their elevated position. An earthen ramp, with a very slight gradient, still exists to the top of one unfinished temple there, and several enormous blocks of cut stone are still lying abandoned upon it. Presumably the ramp raised for the erection of a building was dug away bodily upon completion.

The name of the district to the present day is the *Tal*, or Tank, and one railway station in its bed, *Dip*—signifying in Sanskrit an island—presumably refers to an adjacent rocky promontory. It must have been a great boon to the country.

Whole villages nowadays subsist almost entirely upon a single one of these comparatively large Bundelkund

tanks. In addition to considerable areas irrigated by sluices, the edges of the lake, as the water recedes, are annually utilised for cultivation, whilst fish and wild-fowl are laid under heavy contribution by the *bhoies* and other castes. I have occasionally seen lines of horsehair nooses, extending for 100 yards, set just at the height that teal, especially, swish down across the surface of the water before alighting.

In some lakes where there are no *muggars* (crocodiles), the natives also capture duck, and even wild-geese, in a very ingenious and original manner. By habituating them to see the common earthen *chattys*—so universal throughout India—floating about the tank, and eventually by drifting down open ones containing a little grain, the wild-fowl, far from being alarmed by these, are led to flock around them in search of food. A man with one of these inverted over his head, with a few peep-holes knocked in it to see through, gently paddles down amongst the flock, and, pulling those within reach of his hand under water, wrings their necks. I saw one man emerging from a tank with six or eight big duck strung in his belt.

Marching daily, as we usually did, one had no means, as a rule, to find out the best snipe ground, and wasted perhaps half of his limited time in tramping across rocky banks. The best bags I made were 53 brace snipe and some teal, one day between 11 A.M. and sunset, and 73 brace and 26 duck and teal for one whole day, besides a couple of hours on the preceding afternoon, when reconnoitring the ground. The only retriever one could safely employ was an elephant, not so much for fear of crocodiles, as on account of the tangled weeds which wind themselves round the limbs of a swimmer, like the tentacles of an octopus.

On one occasion when I had shot a wild-goose, a native who swam in to retrieve it from a comparatively

small, artificial tank, was within a dozen feet when a crocodile pulled the goose down. As may be imagined, the man struggled quickly to land, but he did not seem much impressed by the episode, and merely remarked that "it was not his fate!"

The son of my chief, who had recently joined his regiment from England, and was out in camp with us, had failed in his first stalk for duck, from not understanding the old native officer who had accompanied to coach him. On their return to the tents the latter was explaining to the General the cause of their failure, and said: "You told me your son was for years at a *madrassa* (college) learning science, and yet I find he does not even know what *butuk* (duck) means"—which he evidently regarded as a grave omission in his education.

One morning our doctor, who was on the opposite side of a small tank, started on all-fours through some very muddy ground, to approach a flock of geese, and it was most comical to see his loader, with his second gun, walking bolt upright at his heels. When afterwards reproached for thus ruining his master's chance, he in all seriousness excused himself because "he had received no *hookum* (order) to crawl also!"

Game was so plentiful in those days, that on one occasion, when a friend and I got up within 40 yards of a flock of large bar-headed geese, by driving a herd of camels in front of us, we bagged a dozen to two barrels of No. 1, and the same of No. 5 shot. On another occasion I have known of thirty odd *koolun*—a big crane—picked up as the result of four barrels of No. 6.

Some of the *Kunjurs* of Central India, who eke out a gipsy sort of existence by thieving and snaring game, have occasionally a tame black buck by whose means many others are captured. The tips of his horns are

bored with gimlet-holes, through which two or three nooses of twisted gut are fastened. Approaching as near as they can unseen to a herd of wild antelope, their decoy is let go, and naturally approaches his kin, and equally, as a matter of course, the champion buck advances to drive off the intruder. In the course of butting their heads together, some of the nooses are pretty sure to get entangled over the adversary's horns, and whilst the pair are thus temporarily locked together, the men run in and secure the wild one.

Antelope are so accustomed to be shot at only by men on foot, that they exhibit little or no fear of country carts or of horsemen. The former are sometimes utilised by sportsmen, and one can thus easily get a shot within 100 yards, but it is a slow and rather poaching method. Going on horseback, with one's rifle slung, and an orderly following within sight, carrying a spear, with which to ride down a wounded deer, and a shot-gun in a leg-of-mutton case, to utilise for duck or snipe, is, on the other hand, a very enjoyable form of sport. One should have a leading-rein buckled from the snaffle to his belt, so that on jumping off to take a shot he need not bother about the reins, and so long as he can dismount unperceived, a fairly easy shot is generally obtainable. This is also the only successful way I ever found of approaching bustard, whose long necks generally pop up in the most unexpected manner, when you flatter yourself you are crawling up to them unseen.

It was certainly a very pleasant way of varying the monotony of cantonment life to send on tent and servants to some camping-ground 20 miles distant, on the Tuesday night, leaving a horse and orderly to meet you with your guns ten or a dozen miles out. You could usually finish your work for the day by noon on Wednesday—Thursday being invariably a brigade holiday in India—canter out, pick up

your rifle, and change horses by 3 or 4 P.M., and shoot your way to your tent by dark. Out again at dawn next morning, and work till 9 or 10 A.M., return, tub, breakfast, and then shoot your way back to where you had left a horse, or posted your *dâk*—as is the Anglo-Indian expression—and canter home to cantonments in time for Mess. An average bag for such a trip was two or three black buck, a *chikara* (gazelle), or perhaps a bustard, three couple of duck and teal, and half a dozen brace of snipe.

Wolves are very common in the open plains, and although they kill a certain number of goats or sheep, and not unfrequently carry off children, they evince little fear of man, as native *shikarris* seldom waste powder on them. I once rode on to a pack of them in a small hollow in cultivated ground, four of which did not even take the trouble to get up until I dismounted within 70 yards, and managed to bag three of them.

Another morning, seeing some commotion in a herd of cattle about a quarter of a mile off, I discerned half a dozen wolves badgering a half-grown calf, which finally they got by the nose and pulled down. Two or three cows, lowering their heads, drove the wolves back, but as the moment the calf was released the cattle recommenced grazing, the assailants returned and dragged her down again. I had by this time advanced to within 100 yards, and was preparing to take a shot, when the cattle-herds, perceiving what was going on, rushed up shouting, and the pack trotted off.

On another occasion I saw a big, black *pye* dog, accompanying a goat-herd, go for a wolf, which was stalking his flock, and the two disappeared out of sight, the dog, who apparently meant business, being within three or four lengths of his brush as we lost sight. I have, however, only once known a wolf killed by a dog, and this a large cross-bred bull-terrier. The animal, who had been

chased by three greyhounds, came to bay in a shallow pool of water, which his pursuers would not enter, and none of us had anything heavier than a riding-whip. "Toby," who had been steaming on in the wake of the chase, arrived at this juncture, and sitting down in the water, within a couple of yards of his antagonist, panted like a steam-engine until he had gained his second wind. The moment he had done this, he pinned the wolf by the throat, and half-throttled, half-drowned the beast.

Two very powerful deer-hounds — crossed with Polygar dogs of mine—were fast closing on a couple of wolves, when these gained some jungle which threw me out, and immediately afterwards my hounds rejoined me, one with a particularly nasty gash in the neck, and both seemingly having had quite enough of it.

Some native chiefs used to keep packs of big *pye* dogs, which on occasion were slipped on tigers, and tackled them most manfully. Some of these dogs saved the life of one British sportsman, when the Duke of Edinburgh was shooting at Ulwur, in 1869, and I have been assured that on another occasion, at Kerowli, an unwounded tigress was killed outright by the pack. Some drug is said to be administered, prior to employing them, which blunts all sense of fear, and they are often alluded to as *massalah* (spice) dogs. A friend of mine saw thirteen of these dogs slipped upon a wounded tiger in Ali Morad's country in Scinde, and I think he said all of them were killed one after the other, as they could only get at his head. Even bull-dogs could not have done more.

I had four presented to me by the Rajah of Ulwur, but they remained hopelessly savage with other dogs, were awfully stupid, and once slipped, if they did not instantly sight nobler game, they tackled one another, two or three of my pack being killed in their internecine feuds. Twice they pulled down unwounded hyenas outright,

several times brought unwounded bears to bay, and, in company with some other dogs, ran a tiger one day, which I happened to knock over about 50 yards ahead of them, when they charged in and worried him without hesitation.

I have heard of a wolf being ridden down and speared, but though I have often seen it tried, we never once succeeded in doing so. They seem to keep on lolloping in front of you,

> "With that long gallop which can tire
> The hound's deep hate and hunter's fire,"

until they eventually baffle you in broken ground.

A hyena is, however, easily ridden down—far more easily than a boar.

There are one or two well-authenticated stories of wolf children—one of which is quoted in Sleeman's "Memoirs" three-quarters of a century ago—which probably gave the idea of "Mowgli" in Kipling's "Jungle Book." The native idea is that the cubs not being hungry when the child is brought in, begin to play with instead of devouring it, and so it becomes an adopted member of the family.

I think we greatly over-estimate the pace of beasts of prey. Wolves only catch *chikara* (gazelle) by surprise, and yet in wet weather the latter are occasionally pulled down by greyhounds. I have known both *sambhur* and *cheetal* ridden down and speared in about a mile, between two rocky hills. Still, it stands to reason that a tiger cannot run them down even in a jungle, or he would not often fast for days at a time, as we know he does.

I have twice shot tigers off a small Arab, and never felt for a moment that there was any particular risk about it, and a horseman on any ordinary pig-sticking ground should be absolutely safe.

The short swift rush of a *cheetah* (hunting leopard) is



A SHOT FROM THE SADDLE.

wonderful, but they invariably inhabit comparatively open country, and live upon antelope. The sport of hunting with tame *cheetahs* is so well known, that I will not touch on it here, but will only say that from the moment the buck seems to realise his danger, and bounds off with perhaps 50 yards' start, until one sees him rolled over in a cloud of dust, is so almost instantaneous, that you scarce realise how the leopard has caught him up. If they miss the first rush, they seldom follow up the quarry, though I saw one *cheetah* chase an antelope for about 400 yards. A curious peculiarity is that they almost invariably go for a buck in preference to a doe.

Once, out with a brother officer, beating a grass *bheer* near the Sind river, for pig, we were posted 400 yards apart at the edge of a ploughed field, about 700 yards wide, beyond which some shallow ravines began A *cheetah* broke within a dozen yards of my comrade, who was mounted on a particularly fast Arab—which fully justified his cognomen of "Wildfire"—and he was instantly off like a rocket, close at the leopard's tail. Coming down, as I did, at an angle, and almost abreast of the lot, I had a particularly good view of the proceedings, and for the first 150 yards I almost fancied that my friend, who rode with his spear down—he was so close up—would run into him. At the end of that distance the *cheetah*—who, I fancy, must have been too much surprised to put on speed at first—began drawing away, and by the time we reached the ravines he had increased his lead to 60 or 70 yards.

A panther will seldom face the open. One that was beaten out of a small rocky hill, and broke for some corrinda jungle 400 yards distant, seemed to go no pace at all, and was run into by my dogs, and speared when little more than half-way across it. He seemed absolutely cowed by the pack, and showed little fight.

The build of a *cheetah* is to that of a panther as a greyhound is to a mastiff, and they are formidable in about the same proportion. The former has only semi-retractile claws, and the markings, on a much lighter ground-work, are distinct black spots, whereas those of a panther resemble the tips of four fingers dipped in ink, and dabbed on in a sort of rose pattern.

The only particular incident in our 1877 shoot—when to five guns we bagged sixteen tigers, five panthers, and eight bears—was that one of the tigers broke away, unfired at, across a rocky hill, and as some of our markers signalled that he was lying down, we followed him up. The stones were almost red-hot, and before we had gone half a mile we came upon fresh blood-tracks—caused, as we afterwards found, by one of his pads having been burnt off. He had lain up close by, and was shot without difficulty, as he never got upon his legs to charge, and contented himself with roaring at us.

An old native *shikarri* told me that on one occasion, when sitting up over the carcass of a cow, he posted himself in a small but very shady tree, about 6 feet from the ground. On the tiger turning up, he fired and wounded it, when it saw and charged him. His matchlock being empty, he clutched the branch overhead and tried to draw himself up, but this not being up to his weight, bent down, and the thick leaves momentarily hid him from view. Instantly, as he said, "shere bulgaya"—"the tiger forgot me"—and it passed on, leaving him unmolested.

Another curious trait was described to me by a small *thakoor*. Returning to his village shortly after sunset, along a jungle path, when crossing the bed of a deep *nulla*, he perceived a tigress and two cubs drinking near, and, as instead of bolting they glared at him, he drew his *tulwar* and put his back against the steep earth-bank. As the tigress approached him, crouching, "he thought that

his hour had come," but resolved to strike one good blow before he succumbed. Twice, as she appeared on the point of springing, one of the cubs by pressing forwards diverted her attention, and apparently fearful lest it should come to harm, she drew it back with her paw, when, to his intense relief, the voices of a returning party of wood-cutters were heard, and mother and cubs took to flight.

Walking from one beat to the next, another time, up the side of a river, suddenly, on turning a corner, we saw a tigress and three cubs drinking, about 50 yards from us. Four or five natives in front prevented my firing, and picking up one of the cubs in her mouth, she sprang up the high bank and disappeared in some very thick *beroo* grass. A second cub managed to scramble up the path, but the third slipped and rolled back into the river-bed, where we ran forwards and caught her, as she was so small that a man was able to lift her up by the scruff of the neck. Within a couple of days she became so tame that she tumbled about the floor of the tent with a fox-terrier, on the very best of terms, and we had her subsequently loose at Goona for about a year, till she was almost as big as a panther. Often when writing in one's room one would hear the *chick* at the door pushed aside, and "Parbutti," as she was christened, would lounge up to you to have her head scratched, have a game of romps with the dogs, who generally were on very good terms with her, stretch herself, and stroll off again. Her gentleness with puppies was extraordinary, and the latter seemed attracted by, rather than frightened of her. They would gambol up in the blundering sort of way peculiar to their age, throw themselves down on their backs, with paws uplifted, and worship her. Though she often would take one of their heads into her mouth, at the first squeak of her playfellow she let it go, and out of a good many of her species, was by far the best-tempered I ever saw.

A lady eventually arriving at our very wild cantonment, we had, in deference to her prejudice on the subject, to chain up our somewhat overgrown pet. She lived under a mango tree in front of our stables, and one morning some of our *syces* (grooms) on coming to saddle up our horses for parade, found her crouched upon the body of a man. After she had, with some precautions, been dragged off the supposed corpse, the latter picked himself up, and bolted like greased lightning—nor was it ever discovered who he was. He was probably some trespasser taking a short cut, and, if not hurt, must certainly have been very thoroughly frightened. Our pet had a tragic end, the ship on which she was sent home from Calcutta, destined for the Zoo, being wrecked at Point de Galle, and of two tigers on board, one was drowned, and the other, after swimming ashore, was shot.

There is a rooted belief amongst native *shikarris* that wild dogs actually attack tigers, and even occasionally kill them. They certainly do drive them off their kills, as I have myself seen from the tracks, and in such cases the tiger is rarely found within two or three miles of the scene. Two *sowars* of my regiment, who had been out prospecting for me, brought back some scraps of tiger-skin as big as a napkin, which they had found under the following circumstances—

They were informed at one jungle village that a few days previously a tiger had been seen on the top of a rock, on the plateau above, surrounded all day by a pack of wild dogs. During the night they heard a *tamasha*, as they termed it, and upon my men, accompanied by some of the villagers, repairing to the spot, they found the scraps of skin above mentioned.

An officer, out stalking in the early morning on the Vindhya range, saw some things bobbing about in the grass at some little distance from him. Approaching, he

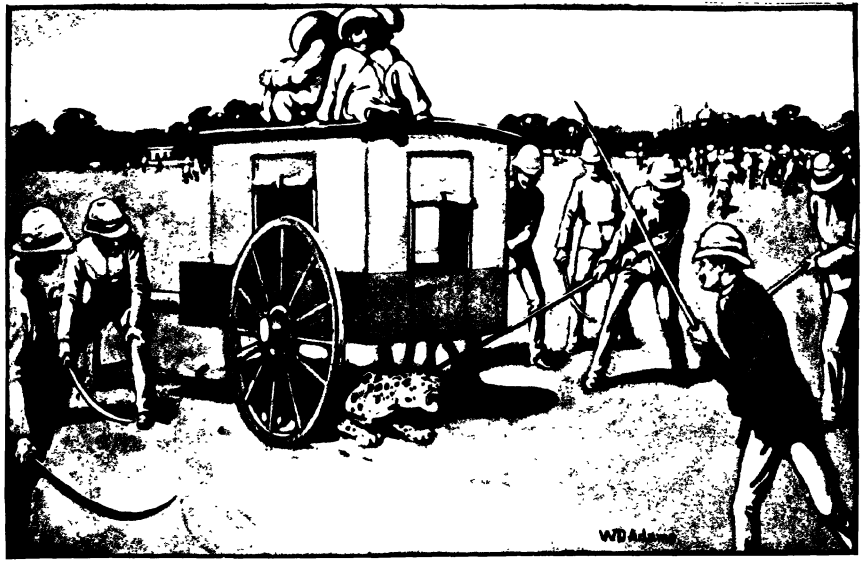
made them out to be wild dogs, who were so engrossed by what they were watching in a thick tree above that they did not notice him. When he had arrived within 50 yards, a large panther sprang out of the branches and made off, pursued by about a dozen of the tykes. He had a clear view of the chase for some hundred yards, and could see that whilst two of the biggest of the pack kept on either flank of their quarry, the remainder hung close to the tail. Twice whilst still in view they, apparently at a signal from one of the leaders, closed in, on one occasion the panther being rolled head over heels, but regaining his legs he continued his flight. Losing sight over a ridge, he failed to pick them up again, so what the sequel was remains unknown.

An old colonel told me that the most comical scene he ever beheld occurred at Belgaum in connection with a panther, some years prior to the Mutiny. A small specimen having been caught in a trap, it was resolved, by way of amusing a Rajah who had just come to visit the cantonment, to have a fight between it and an elephant on the parade-ground.

The poor little beast was accordingly picketed by a long rope in the middle, which was presently surrounded not only by all the men of the garrison, but by some thousand spectators from the native town. The Rajah drove up in great state in a carriage, but the only other vehicle on the ground was a bullock *shigram*, in which a select party of three stout old men had come up, who, after unharnessing the bullocks, had climbed upon the flat roof to get a good view of the spectacle. When all was ready, one of the Commissariat elephants, well primed up with *arrack*, was brought forward; but though he had taken his liquor like a man, the very moment he beheld his antagonist he gave one scream, and, despite

all the efforts of his *mahout*, bolted straight back to his yard. Proceedings being thus at a standstill, some of the soldiers, to pass the time, began to pelt "Spots" with pebbles. The latter, who seemed full of fight whenever touched up by an extra hard one, made a rush at his tormentors, being pulled backwards by the rope. The Tommies thought this high old sport, and redoubled their efforts. Suddenly, as he made an extra vicious rush, snap went the cord, and in one moment there was a wild flight of several thousand people before one small panther. The Rajah's coachman whipped up and went off at full gallop, whilst after the narrator of the story had run a hundred yards, it dawned upon him that it was long odds against his being the one man bagged out of four thousand people, so he turned to look. The whole centre of the parade-ground, a moment before one seething mass of humanity, was now absolutely empty, save for the one bullock *shigram* planted there; whilst the three occupants of the roof, with knees drawn up to their chins, were huddled together as far as possible from the edge, apparently in mortal terror of attracting the attention of the panther. The latter, equally alarmed, was trying to hide itself beneath the vehicle. As most of the Englishmen had from a similar process of reasoning stayed their flight, they borrowed a few swords and lances from the Rajah's *sowars*, and with some little difficulty speared the animal, who stuck to his shelter. The only casualty which occurred was when after an extra loud roar, one of the men above, making an instinctive plunge backwards, cannoned the friend who was *dos à dos* with him over the edge; and the latter, falling on the top of the panther, got bitten through the most prominent feature of his person.

The native townspeople never ceased in their wild flight until they gained the shelter of their homes.



AN INGLORIOUS FINISH.

[*To face page* 220

Pouring in a solid mass across the open, the roads leading therefrom were far too narrow to receive the terror-stricken mob of fat *bunias* and baboos, who rather than tarry a second, burst through the cactus hedges, strewing the ground with fragments of muslins, turbans, and slippers, hustled some of their more unlucky brethren down an open well, and, tumbling through compounds and gardens, disappeared in the direction of the city, leaving in their wake all the trail of a routed army.

Although the monsoon made a show of beginning towards the end of June 1877, it soon died away, and by September it was evident that we were face to face with a sufficiently serious famine.

The Resident at ——, trying to impress upon the Maharajah the necessity of supplying food for the starving poor, urged amongst other things that this was a most meritorious work and acceptable to God. The Chief, however, who was a terrible old screw, did not see things in this light, and remonstrated: "Why should I fly in the face of Providence? If the Almighty wishes to preserve these people he would send a shower of rain, which would do far more than anything within my power!"

The scarcity was bad in Central India, but it was a positive famine in the drier lands of Rajputana and the North-West Provinces, and we were soon inundated with a continuous stream of starving persons, with the usual accompaniment of an epidemic of cholera.

By the somewhat unauthorised expedient of closing the high road a couple of miles on either side of the cantonment, establishing a halting-place for travellers on a piece of waste ground, and diverting all traffic round a temporary track, we managed to escape any serious outbreak of cholera amongst our men. We also got some thousand rupees of the Mansion House

relief fund, and with this fed about a thousand people for several months, employing them to reconstruct some old tanks in the neighbourhood. A native officer and a few men were taken off duty for the time to superintend work and keep the accounts; the workers, men, women, and children, being paid in food and not in money. The whole system worked admirably and smoothly, and the poor refugees seemed cheerful and contented.

An amusing letter appeared in one newspaper, from an official employed on famine work in British territory One of the usual inane Memos. emanating from the office-stools of the Simla Secretariat, enjoined a very strict daily classification of all applicants for work. These were to be divided, I think, into four groups, were to be allotted tasks commensurate with their physical capabilities, and were to be paid according to a very elaborate and complicated table of fractions laid down. As the writer said, "Having an eagle eye, and quick decision, I can by beginning at 8 A.M. just get the 1,500 or 1,600 applicants classified by 4 P.M.; by starting paying them then it is just possible to complete this by midnight, and as to the allotted tasks, I have not yet discovered when they can be undertaken."

The general mistrust of all officials evinced by Headquarter Offices is ruinously costly to the country. Executive engineers in the Public Works Department have such a mass of accounts, returns, and estimates to render, that they must perforce delegate the supervision of the work itself to subordinates, through whose connivance or carelessness bad materials are employed, and buildings presently collapse.

One old officer, the head of the Public Work Department in the station, was to be constantly met with during the day playing billiards at one or other of the regimental Messes. "How on earth is it, Colonel, you

have so much leisure?" he was asked one day; "I thought in your Department you had such an awful lot of work to do." "Yes," candidly replied the old boy, "I have an awful lot to do, an awful lot—but then, the fact is, I don't do it."

In the hot weather of 1878, all the jungles were so pervaded with cattle, sent thither in consequence of the preceding famine, and the prospects of sport so precarious, that I took my two months' leave to pig-stick at Meerut where I stayed with a friend in the Hussars. On my horses, which had preceded me, reaching that station, my host, meeting them in the road, asked to whom they belonged. "To the Sahib," was the lucid reply. "To what Sahib?" "To the Captain Sahib." "To what Captain?" "To the Cavalry Captain." "In what regiment?" "In the Goona Regiment?" "Do you mean they are Gerard Sahib's?" "Ha! Sahib," assented the *syce*, as if a great weight were lifted off his mind.

The grand Meet of the year, when the "Kadir Cup" is run for, was generally commenced on the 18th March, and lasted six to eight days. The Kadir itself is a tract of uncultivated ground some 25 by 5 or 6 miles, formed by successive shifting of the bed of the Ganges, which at present is constantly eroding the flat alluvial soil to the eastward. The wasted space is chiefly covered with tall rank grass, sprinkled with tamarisk jungle, and contains many old water-channels and marshes, and a very few cattle-grazing villages exist upon it.

Polo was only in its infancy in those days, and did not take precedence of hunting, as it now does; every British cavalry regiment kept a pack of foxhounds, and the Kadir Meet attracted forty or fifty competitors from all parts of Northern India.

Our camp on this occasion was at the village of Sherepore, some 25 miles eastwards of Meerut, and besides one large

Mess-tent, there was quite a crowd of private ones for the accommodation of the fifty odd people who attended the meet. The competitors were divided by lot into groups of four each, the takers of first spear in each party being again distributed in sets of threes or fours, the gainer of first spear in the final heat becoming the winner of the Cup, which was a handsome and valuable trophy.

The style of sport differs entirely from that enjoyed further south. The several groups of spears, or at least as many of them as there is room for at a time, ride at intervals in the line of beaters, which also mustered in its ranks two or three umpires upon elephants. The grass, as a rule, was waist-high, and as soon as a rideable boar was seen on foot, the nearest judge would cry, "No. 3 Tie, boar to the right front—ride!" Upon this the line halted until the result of that heat was decided, when another team took its place and the advance was resumed.

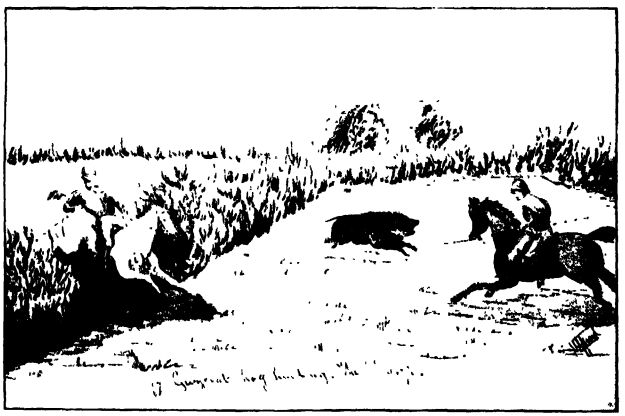
I have seen four groups all riding different pigs simultaneously. There are seldom if ever any disputes. The rule is that upon anyone touching the pig and calling "Spear," should any other man of the team have reason to question the claim, he must shout "No spear," when the former individual must pull up and show his spear-head to the umpire. A single drop of blood suffices to settle the question.

Those whose turn had not come round to compete, often walked with a gun in the line, as a good many black partridges, quail, and snipe could be thus picked up. In the course of running off the Cup there were over thirty croppers, but nobody was hurt, it being, as someone remarked, "much like falling in a haystack." Racing through the girth-high grass, this would suddenly open, and you would go down a 4-foot drop into the deep sand of a dry water-channel, or plump into a muddy hole in which buffaloes



TWENTY YARDS TO THE CANE-FIELD—TWO TO ONE ON THE BOAR.

[*To face page 221.*



HOG-HUNTING IN GUZERAT—THE CHARGE.

[*To face page 224.*

had been wallowing, and if your mount was overweighted, or a bit overdone, you were bound to come to grief.

After the Cup had been run off by the forenoon of the third day, many took their departure, and general pig-sticking ensued, and up to the 27th, when we returned to Meerut, thirty-four boar were bagged.

When hacking into Meerut most people had a fresh horse posted half-way. G——, a hard-riding officer of the 9th Lancers, on arrival at this stage, found that his second nag had not turned up. Noticing an officer of the 10th, who after critically inspecting a good-looking chestnut pony had turned off and mounted another horse, he called out, "Oh! do you mind, D——, my riding that other pony?" "By all means, old fellow; delighted to let you have him," cordially responded his friend. It was not till G—— was well on his way to cantonments that an angry voice in the distance led him to suspect, what was indeed the case, that D—— had obligingly lent him a total stranger's hack, and that the rightful owner was in pursuit on a tired horse.

We had a couple more of ten-day meets in the Kadir, the only incidents being two or three pretty heavy croppers, one mare being killed by the owner's own spear. A certain *jheel* near Poot, with shoulder-high reeds, was one continuous sheet of water about a foot deep. It was alive with pig, and at first one fully expected to get at least into a boggy bit, if not to go overhead in a hidden pool. Nevertheless the bottom was firm and hard throughout, and the effect of galloping through it in a shower of spray, with the brilliant sunshine, was that the riders seemed surrounded with a rainbow-coloured halo. M——, of the 15th, and myself, who alone remained out till the end of the final meet, had a wonderfully good finish, as we got three good boar apiece on each of the two last days.

I had a lucky three days' outing just before the rains burst at Goona, bagging, with my dogs and without beaters, a tiger, three bears, and two stags; on two different occasions when I thought the pack was on a lubberly old bear, I found we were on a tiger, which they twice or thrice brought to bay, but which always bolted before I saw what we were after.

CHAPTER VIII

AFGHAN WAR—1878-79

IN the autumn of 1878, the long anticipated Afghan War became imminent by the stopping of Sir N—— C——'s mission, after the Ameer, Shere Ali, had received a Russian delegation. As my regiment was not for service, I was delighted to be appointed Brigade Major of Cavalry, and pushed up with all dispatch, my horses marching the 170 miles to Dholpore, the nearest point of the railway, in four days. The line then extended only as far as Jhelum, 160 miles short of Peshawar, and from the terminus of the railway one had to push on by mail-cart, crossing the Indus at Attock by a bridge of boats. The brigade to which I was appointed was composed of the 9th British and the 10th and 13th Bengal Lancers, and it assembled at Nowshera, 20 miles east of Peshawar, whence we marched on to Jumrood, at the mouth of the Khyber, which remained our headquarters until the early spring.

On leaving the railway at Jhelum I met a very fine charger, with smart saddlery and horse-clothing, being led about by a *syce*, and asked the latter where he had come from. "From Calcutta." "Where are you going?" I queried. "Malum ne" ("I don't know"). "What is your master's name?" "Nam bulgaya" ("I've forgotten the name"). "What is his regiment?" "A red-coated regiment!" In fact the *syce*, with true Oriental apathy, had never asked his destination, and just squatted in

the train until he was put out at the further end. On enquiring from him what he proposed to do, he replied that he was going to *baito* (sit down) at the *serai* until something turned up.

As usual in all camps, "shaves" were many. Rightly or wrongly, the commonly accepted story was that, at the outset, the command of the expedition had been offered to Sir N—— C——, whose experience and knowledge of the country seemed to entitle him to the selection. He, however, insisted upon having 50,000 men, with which force he said he would settle the business so thoroughly and completely, that the Afghan question would not be heard of again for a dozen years.

The then Commander-in-Chief was popularly credited with being very much under the thumb of the Viceroy, and the latter was supposed to be desirous of managing everything entirely upon his own ideas, and by the advice of his private secretary, a distinguished authority on scientific soldiering. As the latter clearly demonstrated on paper how the whole campaign could be successfully conducted with about half the number asked for, Sir N—— was laughed to scorn. Whatever truth there may be in this, the result was that the Afghan question dragged on for a couple of years, and before its conclusion we had 70,000 men across the frontier.

The command was said to have been next offered to Sir D—— S——, but he, declining to have his hands tied by being saddled with a political officer, was given the minor line of the advance on Kandahar, and whilst the present Lord R—— was told off to the practically unknown route of the Koorum Valley, the main column by the Kyber consisted of two divisions under Sir S—— B—— and Sir F—— M——, with the ill-fated Major C—— as chief political officer.

Ali Musjid, after a premature and unsuccessful attempt to storm it, was evacuated during the night, the turning movement of General T—— across the mountains to the northwards having been by that time effected.

Two small bodies of about a hundred horsemen in all had been surprised in a very narrow part of the Pass by the Guides, reinforced, before the appearance of the second party, by a wing of the Rifles.

Although it seemed so impossible they could escape, that in the first instance the officer in command ordered his men not to fire, and summoned them to surrender, both parties successfully ran the gauntlet, with the loss of half a dozen men. This was the more surprising as they were in a defile not 50 yards wide, and were commanded by four or five hundred rifles from the rocks 300 feet above them.

Hearing that the Pass was in our occupation, the garrison escaped through the Bazar Valley, where the tribesmen, with the charming impartiality which characterises them, turned out and looted them of all, including their arms and ammunition. Others also swarmed into Ali Musjid before we realised that it was evacuated, and cleaned out everything in the shape of weapons and cartridges before our arrival.

It was instructive to note that all the packets of cartridge-papers strewn about on the position which had been held by the Ameer's troops, bore our Government Dum-Dum stamp.

The Afghan camp, which contained some good tents, was indescribably filthy, the spaces between the pegs and the walls, or *kanats*, being commonly used as latrines.

A pensioned *soubédar* of one of our frontier regiments, who lived in the hills near this, was very fond of coming into our camp to have a chat with the Sahibs. Soon after the occupation of Ali Musjid he came into Jumrood, simply

bursting with merriment at the excellent practical joke he had just played, but which it was perhaps unwise to boast of in his own village. It appeared that a young fellow-tribesman, having succeeded in looting an Enfield rifle and several hundred rounds of ammunition from the fort, had become a perfect nuisance to his neighbours, blazing about promiscuously at *pye* dogs, cats, or crows. The wily old officer, having asked his friend to a repast, got an opportunity of plastering a handful of stiff clay down the barrel, unseen. When his guest, refreshed with good cheer, sallied forth and loosed off at a passing dog, the rifle had burst and killed him on the spot. This our old friend regarded as most humorous.

The difficulty of keeping munitions of war out of the hillmen's hands is enormously increased by our ridiculous legal trammels. Some years since, a lot of cartridge-cases were seized when being smuggled across the frontier, and the senders were convicted, and received an exemplary sentence from a local magistrate. The prisoners, however, appealed to the High Court at Lahore, many of whose judges are appointed direct from England, and merely quote the letter of the law like so many parrots. The finding and sentence were quashed on the grounds that "cartridge-cases were not ammunition, as this must consist of powder and ball"! Needless to say, the impression conveyed by such a decision to the native mind is that our law is a farce, and that English judges can be as venal as their own countrymen.

It is, I fear, only too true that many of the thefts of rifles from barrack-rooms take place with the connivance of our soldiers. I have heard through an old non-commissioned officer that, by means of native servants and bazaar shopkeepers, the men get to know the price they will receive if their weapons should "happen" to be stolen. The tariff used to run from Rs.250 for a long

Martini, and Rs.150 for a carbine, to Rs.100 for a Snider. As almost invariably it is impossible to convict a man of more than mere carelessness, he is probably merely sentenced to pay for the value of the rifle something under 50 rupees. The prospective profit to be thus realised proves a strong inducement to unscrupulous characters.

The winter at Jumrood passed fairly quietly and uneventfully. I think I never felt cold more than I did that Christmas Eve, which we spent in the *dâk* bungalow at Peshawar. This was due more to the cutting wind from the hills than to the actual number of degrees of frost, although it was freezing in the shade all the twenty-four hours. Inside a room, and wearing cloth uniform, we sat round a roaring wood-fire, with our cloaks on, even then feeling chilly.

Peshawar, which is nearly the same latitude as Malta, though at above 700 miles from the sea, is only 1,000 feet above it, and although the hot weather season is detestable, the cold one is charming. The vegetation, in some respects, assimilates itself to that of temperate climes; palm-trees have practically disappeared, whilst willows, brambles, and some of the wild-flowers common to Europe take their place, and the sight of an occasional magpie gives a homely appearance to things.

There are some large peach-gardens near the town, a favourite find for the Peshawar Vale Hounds, and on one occasion, when drawing, I saw a woodcock flushed therein.

Thanks to irrigation, gardens are easily kept up, roses especially flourishing; but this is a doubtful blessing, as *bheesties* only too commonly fill up their *mussack* from the canals, to save themselves the trouble of drawing it from a well. Anyhow, the cantonment bears a bad name both for cholera and fever.

The old palace is still shown, occupied by Avatabili during his reign here, and according to hearsay, he lived in very Oriental style, down to maintaining a harem. A tower was still pointed out, from the summit of which one condemned man, caught trespassing on his preserves, was thrown. The poor wretch managed to clutch a projecting piece of stone-work and besought for mercy in God's name. The only reply was, "Let Heaven have mercy, for I will have none," and he was launched into eternity.

It was also said that to guard against assassination he kept a dozen bedrooms ready, and that no one knew in which one he slept, nor where to find him. In fact, when he awoke during the night, he generally changed to another apartment.

While we were here the cantonment roads had to be patrolled nightly by native cavalry, but despite this, the theft of horses from stables was no unusual occurrence.

Officers kept armed *chokidars* over their bungalows, and there is, or was, one tombstone in the Station Cemetery, in memoriam of a certain missionary, detailing the number of years he had laboured in these parts, that he had translated the Scriptures into Pushtoo, and finishing with "who on the —— was killed by his own *chokidar*. 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant'!"

At the neighbouring cantonment of Nowshera, 20 miles distant, there occurred a curious episode some thirty years since, which although it has been already recounted in an English newspaper, is but little known; and as I heard it myself from officers of the regiment who were eye-witnesses, I may be pardoned for repeating the story as it was told me.

The 5th Bengal Cavalry having been stationed there, in view of the general dearth of accommodation, three young officers resolved to build themselves a bungalow.

They got permission to have this erected on a knoll on the right bank of the Kabul river, but had scarce commenced operations when an old *fakir* appeared and warned them to desist, as they were desecrating the tomb of his *peer* (saint). They paid no attention to his admonitions, and though he reappeared on two or three occasions, the house was proceeded with, and in due course completed. The old Mahomedan then appearing, for the last time, solemnly cursed them for profaning the tomb, and predicted that all three of the desecrators would come to a violent end within twelve months, and that God would not permit the house to stand.

Within five months one of the two was killed by a fall, and the second by a gun accident. The sole survivor became rather nervous, but was luckily (he thought) transferred to a regiment at Allahabad, 800 miles from the scene. It was to a day the end of the fated year, when he went out after dinner on the river with a party, and remarked to a friend how glad he was that the time would be past in a few hours, as he had become almost superstitious over what was a mere coincidence. The boat grounding on a sand-bank just then, he stepped overboard to push it off and disappeared in a quicksand.

Shortly afterwards there was an earthquake at Nowshera, and the ill-fated bungalow was, if not the only, one of the only houses wrecked in cantonments. It was certainly an extraordinary sequence of coincidences.

Even with the cold weather of the Kyber Pass, the mortality amongst our camels was considerable. Slightly as they are laden—4 *maunds* (328 lbs.) being their regulation load, and 164 lbs. for a mule or pony—the long halts in column, and the absence of grazing, does not suit their constitution, and they simply collapse and die from no assignable cause. Our army is, however, in no

wise singular in this experience. The Russians, in Scobeloff's 1882 campaign to Geok Tepe, lost eleven thousand out of fifteen thousand baggage camels.

Some *koochie* camels, as they were called, used also to carry stores by contract for the Commissariat. Their owners put double the weights on their beasts that we did, and made double marches, doing the 80 miles from Jumrood to Jellalabad in three or four days; but then when they had once reached their destination they gave their animals four or five days to graze, and under this system they seemed to thrive. Natives have no conscience as to what they put upon a beast of burden, and I have seen 16 *maunds* (three-fifths of a ton) piled on to one camel.

In this, as in the Abyssinian Campaign, a blind adherence to rules and regulations not only seriously affected the efficiency of the transport service, but was productive of needless expense to Government.

For instance, the collector (magistrate) of the Agra district was asked officially what number of baggage ponies, at what average price, could be procured in his jurisdiction. He replied six or seven hundred at about Rs.150 apiece, but that to get them at this figure, he must have confidential notice beforehand, so as to make all his subordinates begin to purchase simultaneously before the market could get "rigged."

This common-sense proceeding not being consonant with Commissariat ordinances, a native baboo was deputed by them to purchase "according to regulation," the prices averaging Rs.600 to Rs.700 each—more than fourfold of what need have been paid.

Our divisional commander was a fine and smart soldier, but most unfortunately and embarrassingly deaf. Dining one night at Jumrood with the 25th King's Own Borderers—who had recently been manufactured into a Scotch regiment and had started pipes, of which they

were inordinately proud—the pipers, as is their wont, were at dessert-time skirling away their level best immediately behind the chair of the commanding officer, and this in the somewhat confined space of a Mess-tent. As the General sat on with an absolutely impassive face, Colonel R——, fishing for a compliment, remarked, "Well, General, how do you like our pipes?" "Beg pardon, I didn't quite catch what you said," replied the latter. "How do you like our pipes?" was again shouted. "Very sorry, I didn't quite hear you." "How do you like our pipes?" was fairly screamed into his ear. "Oh, thanks; I think I would prefer a cigarette," was the disconcerting answer of the old warrior.

It was not difficult to account for the unpopularity he enjoyed in the Army, as the following instance will show. Mr S——, of the Survey Department, when mapping the Northern Dakka route, with an escort of twenty rifles of the 24th Punjab Infantry, was attacked by a strong band of Mohmunds. Fighting their way back, retiring by alternate sections along the crest of a ridge, the squad, going to the rear, was suddenly rushed by a gang of swordsmen who had crept up a side *nulla* unperceived. A young Sikh *naik* on that flank, after shooting the leading fanatic, clubbed his rifle, braining a couple more, and so checked the rush, that his men had time to open fire and repel the assailants, so his case was brought prominently before the divisional General, in the expectation that the *naik* would be recommended for the "Order of Merit."

The only notice taken was a memo. to the brigadier to call the attention of the regimental commanding officer towards discountenancing any such "irregular practices" in future, and that the "procedure laid down in the drill-book of fixing bayonets and charging should be strictly adhered to."

The camp at Jumrood, being about a mile from the foot of the mountains, with fairly open ground between, was left singularly unmolested by snipers at night, but at first, several of our followers, straggling off towards the hills, were cut up.

On one occasion when four or five drivers grazing their camels had been butchered in cold blood, the alarm was given in time for a patrol of the 13th Bengal Lancers to cut off the raiders, six of whom were brought in prisoners. Before a "Summary Court" — which is equivalent to the old drumhead court-martial—they were promptly convicted, and sentenced to be shot. One man alone protested his innocence, and averred that he had been walking towards his village, when he met the picket returning with the others captured, and that some of the former said: "Here's another Pathān; let's bag him also." As, however, the *sowars* swore stoutly that he was one of the original gang, his defence availed him not. The following morning, when as Staff-officer I had to be present and certify that the sentence had been duly executed, five of the party met their fate like men, and with an air of absolute indifference looked the firing-party full in the face. It was their *kismet;* they had been caught red-handed and must pay the penalty. The sixth, however, who had denied all complicity in the affair, kept struggling with his bonds and calling out for *insaf* (justice). As he was a fine-looking man, and seemed nowise a coward, I could not help feeling impressed by his demeanour, as to the truth of his story, and remarked to a white-bearded native officer standing near me: "I fear, *Rasseldar* Sahib, that that man must be guiltless, but I have no power to stay the execution, and I feel very sorry for him." "Kūch muzāika ne Sahib?" ("What earthly matter does that make, Sahib?"), replied the old Sikh, with a smile of supreme contempt, and curling up his

moustache; "if he didn't do that, he is quite certain to have done something else."

As a matter of fact, independently of raiding, the system of blood-feuds is so ingrained amongst the frontier tribes, that but few of them attain middle-age without having at least one life to answer for.

The Afridi blood-feud is far more mischievous than the Corsican *vendetta*, as in the former case it is not the actual murderer who must expiate the crime, but the account may be balanced by anyone down to his third cousin being killed by anyone of the same degree of kindred to the victim. A second cousin of the one being potted by a third cousin of the other, by bringing several more families into the feud makes the whole count so complicated, that they scarce know to whom they owe a shot, nor by whom they are liable to be fired at; and living in such a constant state of watchfulness, they become the finest skirmishers in the world. When the tribe gathers to meet a common enemy, the heads of families which have a quarrel on hand bury two stones side by side, in the presence of a *mullah*, as symbolical of the feud being put out of sight during the public danger. On the conclusion of the expedition, when affairs revert to their normal state, the stones are solemnly disinterred, and each is free to go on shooting at his neighbour. They are, however, so faithless in all their engagements, that despite the fact that a truce has thus been made, they dread giving a private enemy the smallest chance of taking them at a disadvantage, and to this the absence of night-attacks is chiefly ascribed. They will go out with a few pals to snipe into a British camp, but they will not assemble in a mass to rush it, as in a crowd an old score may be so easily wiped out by a stab in the dark.

In their villages every man of moderate means owns a tower of refuge, standing at the corner of his courtyard,

or sometimes on the edge of a scarp, honeycombed with caves, wherein dwell his family and live stock. These towers, made of mud and stones, are perfectly solid for the lower 20 feet or so, the top being surrounded by a loopholed wall, and roofed over to make it habitable. A sort of *mâchicoulis* gallery provides for the protection of the base, and the only means of ascent is by a rope, aided by a few projecting stones, and the entry to the room above is effected by a sort of bolt-hole, which one swordsman could hold against an army unprovided with artillery.

Whenever a man has made things too hot for himself, he takes refuge in his *bûrj*, and by the unwritten law of the country, which shows a sort of rude chivalry, he will never be starved out so long as his food and water is brought to him by a woman.

Indeed I have been assured that whilst a couple of occupants of neighbouring towers may be taking a pot at one another, whenever each can catch a glimpse of his opponent, their respective wives will be at the village-well, discussing the local gossip, on terms of perfect amity.

When marching into a village named China a native officer belonging to that part of the country pointed out one tower whose occupant had been unable to stir out for something like ten years, so many people were after him.

After the occupation of Ali Musjid, at the end of November, the headquarters of the 1st Division were pushed first to Dakka, and then on to Jellalabad, the former 30 and the latter 80 miles from Jumrood. After the first week or two our convoys were but slightly molested, though occasional sniping went on from time to time. To recover some camels looted, and in retaliation for molesting our baggage, two punitive expeditions were sent from Jumrood in the course of the winter into the Bazar

Valley, three fairly short but difficult marches. The Zākha Khels inhabiting this are a regular tribe of Ishmaelites—their hand is against every man, and every man's hand against them. Troops moved without tents, and in the lightest possible order, though, owing to the bitterly cold nights, a couple of blankets per man were absolutely indispensable. The fact, however, that not only all food, but nearly all the forage, had to be carried with us, enormously outweighed all other baggage considerations.

Making out lists of transport requirements for any unit was a sum very much like "the house that Jack built." You began with a first calculation of the baggage, rations and forage of, say, one squadron of cavalry for ten days, and the number of ponies, with one driver to every four, required to convey the same; then came a second list for the requirements of the ponies and drivers employed on the first list; then a third for those of the second list, and so on until you arrived at the minimum unit of a single animal.

Speaking roughly, whilst a squadron of a hundred and fifty native cavalry required only thirty ponies to convey baggage and cooking utensils, with which they could have kept the field for a month, no less than a hundred and twenty-seven more were needed to carry ten days' supplies for man and beast.

In our first expedition we were but very slightly opposed, and found the valley—which is about 5 miles long, and nowhere much over three-quarters of a mile in width—quite deserted. A solitary flock of sheep was espied being driven up to the hills and was captured, and this gave rise to a comical incident.

The political officer accompanying us, whose mission invariably is to hamper the action of the military as far as possible, acting on the information of some of the

"catch-'em-alive-oh's" in his train, protested against these sheep being touched, as they did not belong to that tribe at all, but were passing through accidentally. As our General did not hear a word that was said, and no one else believed this story, not the slightest attention was paid to the remonstrance, and the herd was brought along. When we halted to bivouac for the night, some of our men strolled up, and began with hungry looks to eye the muttons, which, owing to the General not having heard the report about them, were in no one's charge in particular. A few Tommies and Goorkhas presently annexed and began cutting up half a dozen of the animals, despite the remonstrances of the Political, as the officers appealed to by the latter, having no orders on the subject, regarded them as fair prize of war, and declined to interfere.

Whilst the civil officer with his myrmidons went about trying to save the remainder of the flock, one of his satellites, a great, burly Peshawari, with a huge turban, and a *kummerbund* stuck full of daggers and pistols, went up to a Goorkha and ordered him to "put that sheep down." The sepoy at once complied, so, emboldened by his prompt obedience, he swaggered up to a second one with, "Put that down, you soor (pig)." "Oh, I'm a soor, am I?" responded Goorkha No. 2, with a cuff on the big man's ear that sent his *pugaree* flying. The Pathān, furious at this, heaved a stone at his assailant, catching him between wind and water, and knocking the breath out of him. "Ai dekho bhai, puttur marta" ("Look, comrades, he is throwing stones"), gasped the little man, and three or four other Goorkhas standing about, went for the offender, and with a few kicks, cuffs and punches brought him to his knees with cries of *tobah!* An officer who witnessed this, thinking it time to interfere, ordered the men to desist, which they promptly did, and strolled off with their hands in their pockets. As the big

man rewound his turban, and began to repair damages, a wail of dismay broke from him when he came to his waist, whence knives, purse, and everything else portable, had disappeared by a sort of conjuring trick.

In these expeditions, the unpractical nature of the British infantryman's long trouser was very manifest. A considerable part of one march, in particular, lay up the bed of a small mountain stream, which had to be crossed and recrossed every few hundred yards. The infantry consequently reached their bivouac in the evening, soaked to the knees, though generally dry above that point. Having nothing but what they stood up in, the men detailed for guard-duties that night had to make what shift they could to dry their kit whilst they ate their dinners.

It was easy for native soldiers—who wear knicker-bockers—to dry *putties*, socks, and shoes in the course of an hour, and go warm and comfortable on night-duty, but though their British comrades might dry these articles, the wet trouser remained, which, with several degrees of frost, freezing as stiff as a board, on picket duty, caused the greatest discomfort, if it did not sow the seeds of subsequent illness.

On our second visit to the Bazar Valley the tribesmen were evidently better prepared to make things unpleasant for us, although only a few desultory shots greeted our advance into it.

The experienced Sir C—— M——, who was acting as Chief of the Staff, being altogether dissatisfied with the site of our bivouac—whose right flank was commanded by a high rocky hill, and whose left rested on a labyrinth of *nullas* most difficult to guard—sent me with a couple of *sowars* to ride higher up the valley and prospect for a more suitable halting-place. As I started, I was joined by H——, the General's A.D.C.,

and we trotted forward for about three miles, without seeing a trace of any living thing. Just as we got abreast of, and about a quarter of a mile from, the village of Khur, which consisted of a dozen mud-huts and two or three towers, upon noticing a couple of birds rise hurriedly from the nearest wall, we pulled up to try and make out what had flushed them, and next moment a spattering rifle-fire opened on us from the enclosure. As we wheeled our horses, which were luckily untouched, I caught sight of two or three dark figures running along the bank of the stream in our rear, and as we had a deep river-bed to cross on our return, we had to let out and gallop for it. We only got across the stream a few hundred yards ahead of those who were trying to cut us off, and as they now began sniping, we slanted off towards the rocky range underneath which our camp was situated. We were cantering along slowly and within a mile of our bivouac, when we were greeted with another volley, the helmet of my companion being touched, but we regained our lines without mishap.

Very strong pickets were posted at night, but as soon as dark set in pretty smart sniping began, especially from the high ridge on the north, which commanded us. Our headquarters were on this flank, and as we assembled for dinner underneath a solitary wild olive-tree, in proximity to the fire at which our food was cooked, we gave an excellent mark, of which our friends above were not slow to take advantage, and a good few bullets whistled about us. As our General was seated with his back to the hill, he was in blissful ignorance of what was going on, and as we one and all dreaded his sarcastic remarks, should we call attention to the fact that we were offering an unnecessarily conspicuous target, we just let things take their course.

Presently, finishing our frugal repast, he stood up and faced the hill, just as a fresh volley flashed out. "Oh! they have commenced firing; have the light put out," he remarked, under the impression that this was the commencement of the entertainment.

A couple of pickets of the same British regiment, mistaking each other's positions, exchanged volleys for nearly an hour, whilst a Rajputana local battalion, who had only recently received breech-loaders, were so pleased with themselves that they blazed away well over a thousand rounds, in response to one or two desultory shots sent into their camp.

The rocky hill was searched next day, one dead body only being discovered, whilst we had lost one private killed; a few men in camp were wounded, and we had expended some thousand rounds of ammunition.

Being joined by a weak brigade of the 1st Division from Dakka, an advance was made towards Tirah, but the distance to the Kotal (Saddle), which we found was held in force, proved too great to be accomplished in a single day, It was therefore determined to get up another convoy of supplies, and then to move our camp on to the foot of the ascent, before attempting to force it.

Daily columns were sent out, partly to explore the ground, and partly to keep both our men and our opponents fully occupied. It was a curious experience having everyone's hand against one, and it became a case of "there's a man; have a shot at him."

When I was watering my horse at a small pool near the foot of a ridge held by the hillmen, a rush of *doolie*-bearers to drink water drew their fire, one Enfield bullet at about 600 yards denting the sketching-case in my breast-pocket.

No sooner did a force move out of camp than this was signalled by a line of smoky beacons on the surrounding mountains—and every single point commanding our route had to be seized.

When any of these hills was held in comparative force, the way was prepared by a few shells from the guns, and a company or two were sent to carry it. The lower ranges, as a rule, being under 1000 feet in height, a few sections of British troops—who alone were armed with Martinis—deployed in the valley below, sufficed to prevent any of the enemy doing more than occasionally bobbing a head up over the sky-line.

The attacking party therefore were able to accomplish the ascent almost to the crest-line practically unmolested, and when they had arrived within 50 yards of this, after halting for a couple of minutes to get their wind, and fixing bayonets, the bugle would sound and they would charge up cheering, but on gaining the summit, we from below could see them staring right and left in quest of an enemy, whose whereabouts would presently be signalised by a spatter of musketry from the next ridge beyond, forcing our men to take cover.

Leaving a strong picket to hold the point taken, the rest of the detachment would either rejoin the column, or continue along the ridge, according to the configuration of the ground, and so the game went on all day.

If the occupation of such points was easy, the evacuation of them was far from being so. Do what one would the Afridis almost invariably spotted the withdrawal of our detachments, when, lean as greyhounds, a few of their more enterprising spirits raced forwards to reoccupy the crest and snipe away at our retreating picket, despite section volleys and occasional shells directed on them.

Once only I saw them fall into a trap. A squad

of the 24th Punjab Infantry lay absolutely still long after the departure of the main body of their detachment, and as the hillmen, thirsting for a pot at our men, came tearing up, they were received with a point blank volley which dropped eight of them, and the sepoys racing off regained their party unharmed.

One evening we were returning from a reconnaissance through somewhat broken ground with a good deal of wild-olive scrub scattered about. Owing to the good cover afforded thereby, our enterprising foes, who as usual were following us up, were within 100 yards of our skirmishers. A couple of deserters amongst the enemy kept taunting the Goorkhas who were covering our retirement, till the latter got into a very bad temper, and would hardly obey their orders to fall back. On the "Retire" sounding for about the twentieth time, the two afore-mentioned traitors kept imitating the bugle-call and shouting, "Teri hookum māno. Bāgo, bāhnchut" ("Obey your orders. Run, you swine!"). Just then, as one of them, dodging from one rock to another within 50 yards of us, was hit by a snap shot in the leg, I saw the two nearest Goorkhas tear forwards, drawing their *kookries* as they ran; a slish-slash at the crawling figure on the ground, and they crept back, slowly wiping the blood off their blades and with a benign smile of content on their faces.

No more intangible foe than an Afridi can be imagined, and being able to go two paces to a regular soldier's one, and knowing, in addition, every yard of the country, he fights only whilst it suits him to do so, and retires unmolested whenever he begins to get the worst of it.

A regular soldier, no matter how active he may be, has his haversack, water-bottle, greatcoat, and seventy rounds of ammunition with him, as he must perforce be prepared to spend the night where he stands.

The Afridi, lithe and lean as a hunting leopard, clad only in a light cotton robe, and with a handful of cartridges, has in every sense the legs of our heavily-clad and weighted men, and on his own hill-side can buzz around them as securely as a wasp.

They are, from the circumstances of their existence, most admirable skirmishers, and exhibit a marvellous aptitude for working round your flank and profiting by every mistake made, but, like other Asiatics, will not stand when their own line of attack is threatened. One day when sheltering behind a rock whilst collecting stragglers—who had got separated by ravines or other obstacles from their flanking parties—a small Goorkha *havildar*, who was one of the waifs, in the familiar but very respectful manner characteristic of the best class of native soldiers, favoured me with his views on the situation.

After, Orientalwise, expressing the gravest doubts as to the chastity of our opponents' wives, mothers, and daughters, he continued: "But this is not the way to fight such bāhnchuts, who run when we advance, and are only brave when we retire; just let the General Sahib give our *pūltun* a hundred cartridges each, and grant us leave to sally out by night in shikar parties. A good many of us may be killed, but we'll do the Sirkari kam burra saf (Government work awfully clean)—even their children we'll slice up with our kookries!"

It was only when actually starting on service that lancer regiments had been armed for the first time with carbines, so their ideas of all pertaining to musketry were most perfunctory. On one occasion I saw a lancer employed on dismounted service who, after firing off his first shot, tried to reload his weapon by cramming the cartridge down the muzzle. Volley-firing—which had been altogether done away with by the then edition of

Upon reporting this to the Chief of the Staff, a Court of Enquiry ultimately resulted, and it ended in H——, a young officer of Engineers who accompanied S——, being awarded the V.C., solely from the latter's modesty in ascribing all the credit to his companion.

As a matter of fact, the whole party ran like a pack of hounds whom a sheet might cover, and as the entire risk lay in the probability of their being cut off, the officer who took the responsibility for venturing this was decidedly far more deserving of the honour.

Expected troubles in the Jellalabad Valley necessitating the return of our auxiliary brigade thither, we had to patch up some sort of an agreement with the tribesmen, accept a nominal submission, and return to Jumrood. A few hours after this arrangement had been come to, our cavalry grass-cutters—who were collecting forage three-quarters of a mile from us—were fired upon, their escort responded, and all the makings of a pretty skirmish resulted. Some of the Afridi *mâliks*—or headmen—who happened to be still in our camp, hastened across with one of our officers to stop this. In response to the remonstrances of thus breaking truce, the transgressors explained that it was all in fun, and merely for a little practice, as they must shoot at something.

Just then half a dozen other Afridis—probably headmen also, as they were upon ponies—appeared from the opposite side. "Well," said our officer, "why not have a shot at those fellows, if you want a shot at somebody?" No sooner said than done, and the tribesmen turning, banged away at their friends, sending them scuttling under cover.

In this, as in many subsequent expeditions of the sort, officers were restricted to 40, and rank and file to 15 lbs. of baggage. Some few went in for light bivouacking tents weighing 15 lbs., but it is far more comfortable to do

without one and bivouac in pairs, your blankets being made up on one of your waterproof sheets, and the other being pulled over all as a covering. One became very cunning at the building of low stone walls on the windward side, and even with occasional rain, or sharp frost, could sleep like a top, although taking off your spurs was your chief toilet for the night.

A friend on the Staff had just got out from White of Aldershot a wonderful little tent, about 3 feet high, and of an invisible khaki colour. Almost the very first evening he was going to use this there were heavy banks of clouds coming up, and all portended a wet night. He was accordingly proportionately jubilant about his luck in having it, and was chaffingly contrasting the quiet night he would enjoy, against the discomforts he predicted for us.

In the middle of our sleep we were, however, awakened by the voice of our friend cursing volubly, though in smothered accents, as he vainly tried to disentangle himself from the ruins of his abode. It turned out that some stray camel-driver, loafing through the camp, had in the gloom tumbled over the invisible-coloured tent, smashing its fragile poles, and after picking himself up and treading heavily on the stomach of its occupant, had vanished in the darkness.

Some camels having disappeared one day from our camp at the Shergai ridge, an officer strolling out next morning perceived a party of Pathāns cutting one up near at hand, at the bottom of a deep ravine. Seeing a Goorkha *havildar* passing, he called him, intending to send in word to the Staff-officer, but the moment the little man caught sight of what was going on, without a word of explanation he grasped the situation, and dashed off with a guttural "Ha! Sahib." My friend waited with curiosity to see what would ensue, and presently saw the non-commissioned officer, with eight or ten of his

men, appear fully armed, and without any instructions send them off in pairs to stalk the unsuspecting hillmen. Allowing time for the surround to be accomplished, he then strolled off with the remaining couple of sepoys. The Pathāns sprang to their feet, and seeing only three men before them, seemed inclined to show fight, when, in response to a whistle, up started the remaining Goorkhas, blocking all lines of retreat, and the whole party were disarmed and marched off without more ado. It was impossible to have done the business in a more prompt and soldierly manner.

With the arrival of spring, the headquarters of the 1st Division moved on to Gundamuk, and of the 2nd to Lundi Kotal, with our cavalry brigade at Basāwal, 20 miles from Jellalabad.

It was here that there was a sad accident to the 10th Hussars, and one that seems unaccountable to anyone not conversant with the absolute want of common-sense sometimes exhibited by young soldiers when off the parade-ground, amidst unaccustomed surroundings. One of the many punitive expeditions which occupied us throughout the summer was across the Kabul river, near Besud, in the Kunar Valley. The force marched early in the night, and a wing of the 11th Bengal Lancers, which headed the column, forded the river without the slightest trouble, even their *pukhāl* ponies crossing easily. The Britishers, who followed them, less experienced in such operations, fell into the usual mistake of not inclining up-stream. If you allow your eyes to rest on the running water, whilst you imagine you are crossing it at right angles, you insensibly drift downwards into the pool below. Out of two weak squadrons, I think forty-four men were drowned on this occasion. In the following summer six dragoons of the Carabineers were similarly lost, and this time in broad daylight.

In one forced march of a picked detachment, to try and surprise a *moolah* who was stirring up the tribesmen against us, the British infantry were so completely outpaced by the Guides, that these had to halt when little more than half-way and act as a support. The native portion covered, I think, 50 miles, there and back, without a stop.

The 1st Division had a smart skirmish at Fattehabad, when poor Wigram Battye of the Guides, about the finest soldier in our army, was killed. He came of a very fighting stock. Of four brothers who were officers in India, three fell in action, all in the same regiment, and the fourth, who was in the Goorkhas, was twice severely wounded.

We had a couple of expeditions in April, with columns of about 1200 strong, including 150 sabres, and half a battery of mountain-guns. In the first of these, to the south-west of Basāwal, the offending villagers—who had without provocation attacked a survey party—submitted without resistance, and gave hostages for their future good behaviour. In the second, to Pésh Bolāk, in the Shinwarri country, about 8 miles south of our camp, we had a much livelier time.

My own brigadier being absent at Divisional headquarters, I was pretty well my own master for the time being, so accompanied the native cavalry, of which we had 150 lances of the 11th and 13th Bengal Lancers. So little was resistance anticipated, that I very nearly left my revolver behind, and in my ignorance of the country, fancying one might sight a gazelle in the open plains towards the Sufèid-Kho range, I made my orderly bring a light double-barrelled Express and a couple of packets of cartridges. The object of the expedition was to surprise and exact hostages from a village which had raided some of our grazing camels.

As happens almost invariably with night-marches, unforeseen delays so retarded our progress that, although we marched off at midnight, dawn surprised us when still 2 or 3 miles distant from our objective. Leaving the infantry and guns to follow as best they could, General T—— pushed on with the *sowars*, and, crossing a belt of cultivation, arrived within a quarter of a mile of the destined village, just as it became broad daylight.

Two fair-sized river-beds here joined, but as every drop of water was utilised for irrigation, the main channel after their junction was a mere waste of sand and stones about half a mile wide. Both the tributaries had splendid crops of green wheat, stirrup-deep, the western portion especially having a cultivated zone a couple of hundred yards broad, all studded with fortified towers. The offending village, which was fortified, and contained half a dozen *burjs*, stood on a high bank overlooking the easternmost water-course. Sending off two parties of fifty lances each to surround the place, the General took his post with the remaining *sowars* to await the arrival of the infantry. We were at the apex of a very obtuse-angled triangle formed by the two cultivated stream-beds, the spurs of the Sufêid-Kho range, about 1000 yards south of us, forming the base. This triangle, though stony and undulating, was open and fairly good going for horses.

Within a minute of our arrival on the ground, a couple of shots signalised our presence, and this soon increased into a pretty continuous fusillade, men swarmed out like ants from goodness knows where, whilst we could hear the rub-a-dub of their small war-drums beating all up the valleys right away into the gorges of the mountains. By the sound of firing, our two detached parties had quite enough to do to hold their own; large groups began to hem us in against the irrigated ground, whilst a score of men, issuing from the village we were after, began

firing into our party at 400 yards. The fact is, the tribesmen thought our handful of cavalry was unsupported, and hoped to cut us off entirely.

No regimental officer being available, I volunteered to take fifteen dismounted men, who were all who could be spared, and drive this last lot back behind their walls. Right glad was I to have my Express to see me through the job, as the lancers, though keen as mustard, were more familiar with the cold steel than with their carbines. Advancing in open order, a very few rounds drove our opponents back under cover, and we reached the wall, which was not loopholed, with the loss of only one man. A stack of corn just inside was temptingly within reach, but no one having matches with him, we were unable to set fire to it. One of our *sowars*, climbing up on a ledge, said a lot of Pathāns were streaming into the village from the opposite side, and that the place seemed full of men. A message also reached me that the two detached parties had been obliged to fall back, so we began to retire in extended order. Just as we started, a couple of long *jezail* barrels were pointed out at us from an adjacent tower, but the loopholes were so cramped that two or three paces to one side and you were completely defiladed. A *sowar*, however, who rode up with a message, disregarding, or not understanding, my warning, got badly wounded.

Luckily, as we fell back it appeared that there was only one exit from the village, a narrow pass to our left front—between the corner tower and the scarp of the river-bank—just sufficient for a single man at a time. When we had retired about 100 yards, with great beating of drums, a standard-bearer heading a rush of swordsmen appeared at this Pass, but my first barrel dropping him, flag and all, and the second sending another man headforemost over the edge of the scarp, temporarily stopped that charge.

We fell back another 100 yards without incident, when a fresh mob appeared, this time from our right front round the southern angle of the village. Again the standard-bearer was dropped, as well as some of his followers, and the crowd, apparently sickened, tried to work round our right flank. Our left was luckily protected by the high river-bank, so we pelted away, trying to check the others, who were more or less in the open, but without much perceptible effect. I had but three cartridges left out of the twenty I had brought with me, when to my delight I saw our opponents beginning to fall back, and had scarcely realised this, when a line of skirmishers of the 5th Fusiliers doubled up. Before their fire the threatening swarms melted away, and we started to run back to our horses.

Whilst we had been thus employed before the village, six or seven hundred men, issuing from the *būrjs* in the western belt of cultivation, or coming from the south, had quite encircled us on those two sides. As on the appearance of our infantry their main body began to move towards the towers in the irrigated ground, we scrambled into our saddles, and as there was no time to lose, each officer, with whatever *sowars* he had to hand, just deployed them and advanced at a gallop. The squad who had been dismounted, and the rest of the General's escort, put themselves under my leadership, and we galloped forwards, with our right resting on the edge of the river-bank, our opponents stalking slowly and doggedly—retiring but not running—across our front—within half a mile or so of where we had mounted.

As we crossed two or three undulating hollows, and had a couple of small irrigation canals to jump, we were terribly broken up by the time we reached the enemy. As in addition to the attendant disadvantages of checking the *élan* of the men at any time, we were being enfiladed

from the towers on our right, I gave the order to charge just as we were, as we closed upon the mob. It remains indelibly impressed on my memory how an old grey-bearded Sikh of the 11th Bengal Lancers, riding a star-gazing, pulling, white country-bred, shot out past me at this juncture and charged straight at a low *sangar* (stone breastwork) behind which half a dozen Pathāns crouched to receive him. With toes well stuck out, in a manner suggestive of "'Ware gate-posts," he went slap through the obstacle, and his mount not rising a single foot, there was for an instant a confused vision of a white horse, bearded faces and flying stones. Next moment he was through without a fall, and I got a fleeting glimpse of him with his lance through someone, but had no time to spare to the doings of others.

The bulk of our opponents, who were on the further side of a hitherto unseen hollow, had turned to face us, and greeted us with a desultory and comparatively harmless fusillade, and next moment, very much broken as our line was, we were into and through them like a sheet of paper, and it was a regular case of "disperse and pursue." Whilst the troop which had formed our left in the charge wound up by getting more or less bogged in the irrigated fields to our right, the right of our line finished up at the spurs of the hills to the left. One's recollections of a *mêlée* of that sort is perhaps somewhat confused, and one remembers incidents without recollecting the exact sequence in which they occurred.

Though trying to get away from us, all these hillmen turned and fought like tiger-cats when we closed on them. Not one in three had a firearm, and when they had blazed off at you, they took this crosswise to guard the head—as did those armed only with *tulwar* and shield—the skull being the sole point they appeared to think vulnerable. One had but to make a feint of employing the obsolete

cut No 7, and up would fly their guard over the face, when dropping your point you went clean through your man. I was riding an uncommonly handy and plucky Arab, who was an excellent pig-sticker, and swerved at nothing. The fourth man I tackled fired at me just as I closed, and I felt a blow on my side, but next moment my sword went through something hard, and the weapon was twisted out of my hand and hung by the sword-knot. The blade, which was a straight rapier one by Wilkinson, got a slight but permanent wave in it, and I can only account for receiving such a wrench by having taken my opponent through the head-piece as he crouched and tried to stab the horse from below. That evening when unwinding my *kummerbund* (waist-sash) a bullet which had lodged below the sword-belt fell out. The man, reloading in a hurry, had probably spilled most of the powder on the ground. I do not suppose the whole *mêlée* lasted three minutes, and just as I cleared the ruck, a solitary mounted man, clad in white, appeared to my right. Whether he was one of their *mâliks* or only a Ghazi, I do not know, but he charged forward to meet me with cries of "Allah, Allah!" wildly flourishing his *churra*—the short, heavy half sword, half knife, in vogue with the hill-tribes. As he was on a wretched pony, and no swordsman, a feint, a thrust, and I saw him go toes upwards as I galloped past.

One couple alone, making for a rocky knoll, were still ahead, and hearing me coming, they turned and fired without effect from 60 yards off, but gaining the mound, stood at bay. Twice as I galloped up it they dashed stones full at my face, which I only avoided by ducking down along the horse's neck, but missing my thrust each time, my poor little Arab got a nasty sword-cut on the quarter. Meanwhile, up came a solitary *sowar*, and as he charged, he was caught between the eyes by a

stone, launched with the dexterity of a cricketer, and knocked clean out of the saddle. Pulling up to protect him, the two Pathāns, I saw, were loading up their guns and already putting the bullets in, when for the first time I remembered my revolver. Drawing this and covering them, I offered them *amān* (quarter), but "dog of an infidel!" ("kafir i sug!") was the only response, and they still continued to ply their ramrods, and holding their *churras* between their teeth, they looked about as amiable as a couple of wild-cats.

I remembered the advice of an old Mutiny man—"always take a Ghāzi in the pit of the stomach"—and it served me in good stead, as the one dropped in a heap, whilst the other reeled to the first, and collapsed to the second shot; and not a bit too soon, as his musket, I found, was then loaded, and the cap clenched in his fingers. I remember hoping as this passed that when my time came I should meet death as unflinchingly as these two wild hillmen.

This closed the pursuit, as the trumpets blowing the "Retire," and the sound of our mountain-guns in action, made us hasten to rally. Riding back we counted sixty odd bodies lying on the line we had traversed, whilst our casualties amounted to six men and seven horses, the lance giving our *sowars* a preponderating advantage. The guns, we found on our return, were employed against one of the Afridi towers, held by a single rifleman, whom they took nearly an hour to silence.

We held our position whilst the men had their dinners, and the pioneers worked away trying to destroy a couple of the most prominent towers, and all seemed to have quieted down. When, however, we commenced to fall back, about 3 P.M., it was a very different story, and before we had retired half a mile, quite two or

thousand men were pressing upon us. Their fire was insignificant, and the ground being fairly open—though with enough cross *nullas* to hamper cavalry—our infantry were never really pressed—though just for a couple of minutes it looked as if we might have a lively time of it.

We could see the heads of a swarm of swordsmen bobbing down a *nulla* almost parallel to but inclining towards our right flank, whilst a wild, half-naked-looking dervish, waving a flag, danced along on the crest of the bank, untouched by the fire of an entire company of a British regiment, blazing away within 300 yards. I think six or seven hundred shots must have been fired at that one fanatic. Emboldened by the immunity he had enjoyed, a mob of Ghāzis, springing up, attempted a sword charge at our skirmishers, but a lucky shot dropping the leader, and a troop of cavalry being brought up, they fell back again under cover. They only bothered us for a mile or so, when the ground becoming fit for horsemen they desisted, nor although our very open camp was within 6 or 7 miles of them did they ever attempt to rush it at night—a *coup de main* which they might have attempted with a reasonable prospect of success. We expended something like 16,000 rounds in the skirmish, and, according to our spies, the Shinwarris admitted a loss of 200 men, of whom from a third to a half must have fallen by sword and lance.

Our opponents next day sent us a most sporting message to the effect that they would fight us again if we would bring no cavalry! Though our casualties did not exceed a score, still this can scarcely be taken as an indication that such an affair is mere child's play and without any serious risk. If the handful of regulars, either by mishap or panic, had once got into confusion, their ill-armed but determined antagonists would probably have annihilated them.

The Dakha garrison on the lines of communications had subsequently a smart affair with the Mohmunds on the right bank of the Kabul river. In this a *bheestie* (water-carrier) of the Mairwarra battalion especially distinguished himself, heading a couple of sorties with a *tulwar* and his empty water-skin wrapped round his arm, A V.C. was also gained in the same action, and a handful of the 10th Bengal Lancers signalised themselves by a brilliant little charge.

The post at Dakha was an old caravanserai, which invariably consists of a quadrangle surrounded by a 15- or 16-foot wall with one single gateway. The flat-roofed stables, which are built all round inside, act as banquettes from which to fire over the parapet.

One day it was accidentally discovered that the commencement of a tunnel had been made on the side furthest from the gate, at a point which, abutting on to waste ground, was seldom visited. As it seemed possible that the work would be completed the following night, a sentry was posted in the stable at the spot where the mine would emerge. The officer of the day, when going his rounds after dinner, found a young Pathān *sowar* of the 10th Bengal Lancers posted at the place, and asked him what his orders were? "If I hear the Ghāzi logue digging," replied the trooper, "I am to remain burra chūp (awfully quiet) and let them finish, and when the first head comes through I am not to move, as that will only be a turban on the end of a stick, but when the second head comes through then I am to marro (strike)." On enquiry it appeared that the *rasseldar* of his troop, a frontier man and up to all the rules of the game, had given this characteristic order, and it showed how thoroughly qualified he was to take charge of an out-post.

Indeed I have been assured that, in certain sections of

the Waziris, any newly-born male infant is passed through a hole in a wall, on the principle, I suppose, of—

"I was rocked in a buckler, and fed from a blade."

There was a story of an Irish Provost-Marshal at this camp, who was not wont to err on the side of leniency. A Pathān who had been consigned to his care, on a charge of attempted highway robbery, was seen leaving camp an hour later, though somewhat hurriedly. On chaffing the Hibernian at Mess that evening on his newly developed leniency, he replied, "Why, sure, I found out that he was a very dacent man, and that it was all a false charge against him, so I just gave him three dozen and let him go!"

Although no night-attack was ever attempted against our camp, still sniping into it was of common occurrence. On one occasion when a Goorkha sentry had been fired at, some of the guard doubling up to his assistance found him lying groaning on the ground. The little man was, however, untouched, and had merely slipped down, and was playing 'possum to try and entice the Pathān forwards.

Every now and then a few traps were laid, the execution of these surprises being invariably delegated to our invaluable little Nepaulese. The rest of the troops knew nothing about it, though the pickets were warned that Goorkhas might be out at night. It was instructive to see one of their native officers, with half a dozen men, sauntering with hands in pockets around the outskirts of the camp, and unless one knew exactly what their errand was, no one would have guessed that the place of ambush for each party was being indicated by a jerk of the elbow. They seldom if ever had a blank night, though, as one cynic remarked, they would go into the nearest village and shoot the first man they could get at, rather than return empty-handed.

One annoying feature of the campaign was the amount of needless writing that was forced upon Staff-officers, many of whom, having only a scratch office and an untrained clerk, had practically to compile all returns themselves.

We had, for instance, to send in bi-weekly returns of strength, combatants, followers and transport train, to the adjutant and quartermaster-general at Simla, on two totally different forms. These had to be made out sitting on the ground, with your knees as a writing-desk, amidst heat, dust and flies; and if any of the arithmetic was wrong and columns did not tally, one precious soon received a reminder to that effect. When, however, the smallest movement was in contemplation, you invariably received a wire—"Telegraph immediately the number of men, horses, guns, etc., etc., now available," the laborious tabulated returns being apparently regarded as mere tests of your clerkly skill.

The Commissariat indents for rations were likewise a thorn in the side of Staff or detached officers. With a regiment it did not matter, as the whole is drawn by the quartermaster, but the solitary arrival in a camp, after perhaps twelve hours in the saddle, had to fill in six forms—for himself, for native servants, and for animals, each in duplicate—before he could get anything to eat. The result was, that many months after the conclusion of the campaign the Commissariat, finding it impossible to wade through a whole waggon-load of dirty slips of paper, issued a circular asking officers to certify what rations they had drawn during the period of operations. More than one flatly declined to do so, saying, that having signed such a lot of vouchers, the Department should check these, as they had kept no account themselves, and the result was that they escaped payment altogether.

As we were, as a rule, absolutely dependent on Commissariat supplies, and all equipment was reduced to a minimum, when one was asked to dine out, the words "camp fashion" were generally added, which signified that the guest must bring his own chair, cup, plate, knife and fork: when "campaigning fashion" appeared, then he had in addition to send over his rations to be cooked.

A wild, impracticable-looking mountain, "Mar Kho" (the "snake hill"), rises abruptly from the left bank of the Kabul river opposite Bosāwal. The chief interest about it centres in a row of quite a score of rock-hewn Kafir caves, a couple of hundred feet up, overhanging the stream. The only approach to these is by a slippery-looking pathway, which a single man might hold against an army, and is certainly indicative of a former state of insecurity even greater than prevails at the present day. The Kafirs (infidels)—who are by some supposed to be descended from a colony of Alexander the Great—occupy a triangle of almost inaccessible mountains north of Jellalabad, between the Kunār and Panjshére valleys. Differing as much in religion as in feature from the Afghans—fair hair and blue eyes being no uncommon type amongst them — they lived up to recent years in a state of perpetual warfare with the surrounding Mahomedans. Though almost destitute of firearms, and dependent chiefly upon bows and arrows, they managed to hold their own, until within the last ten years, when the late Ameer is said to have subdued or exterminated them.

The valley of Panjshére, which bounds the Kafir country to the north-west, was supposed five-and-twenty years ago to be able to turn out thirty thousand fighting men, and to refuse successfully all payments of tribute to the Ameer, yet during the four months when the Khawak Pass is open (crossed by Tamerlane, in 1398, in his invasion

of India), even these Panjshéris had to exchange hostages with the Kafirs to keep truce during the caravan season. When the Pass, which is 16,000 feet high, was again closed by snow, hostages were returned, and their normal state of warfare was resumed, no Kafir youth being allowed to marry until he had killed a Mahomedan. On the other hand, the latter are eager to capture their adversaries' children, who fetch high prices as slaves.

After the treaty of Gundamāk, 26th May 1879, the evacuation of the Jellalabad valley commenced coincidently with a sharp outbreak of cholera, which attacked regiments marching down, in the most haphazard fashion.

Our small post at Barikāb, between Bosāwal and Jellalabad, was considered particularly liable to assault—indeed we received reports that the Ali Khels and Mohmunds intended trying to rush it. Its sole fortification was a loose stone breastwork, and the interior space being limited, tents were crowded pretty closely together. In one of these there were three successive cases of cholera, and the victim in each case was the man sleeping second from the doorway. It being impossible to move the tent elsewhere, the ground was dug up and disinfected, and underneath the bedding of the men seized was a peculiar streak of red earth. Whether this had any connection with the disease, or what, no one seemed to have any theory.

The troops commenced their return march on the 27th May, and our cavalry brigade broke up at Peshawar on the 4th of June, I rejoining the Central India Horse at Goona at once.

Two results of this campaign were the abolition of the clumsy single pole-tents previously used by officers, and the general adoption of khaki, and so enamoured were some officers of this colour that one at least in all seriousness proposed to have grey horses so dyed! Many officers

were officially called upon to submit suggestions on many points of equipment, organisation, and transport, but not one single idea submitted was, I believe, ever acted upon. A 7-foot Kabul tent, with its double fly, poles and ridge—if possessed of a semicircular bathroom—is ample for service, and an 8-foot one is quite luxurious. Either is infinitely preferable, and, weight for weight, affords more interior accommodation than does a bell-tent. In camp life it is the trifling minutiæ which make all the difference between comfort and discomfort. A smaller tent with a bathroom and a carpet is pleasanter to live in than a larger one without these adjuncts. Then, again, hooks to the poles, and pockets to the walls, materially add to your convenience, whilst *yakdans*, or mule-trunks, of a size to fit underneath your bed, practically increase the available space. It is almost superfluous to add that much also depends upon a suitable stamp of camp-furniture for the very few indispensable articles of equipment.

Some of the most ridiculous of all our encumbrances were the clumsy *doolies*, each requiring six bearers. About 2 miles an hour was all they averaged with a wounded man inside, whilst the rations of the carriers came to 12lbs. weight a day. Both *cacolets* and, for the lines of communication, *ekhas*, were freely recommended, but medical objections successfully prevented their adoption. The doctors' stock argument against them was that the jolting would prove fatal to a man shot through the chest. The consequence was, that in a cavalry reconnaissance one had no means of removing a wounded man at all, and he had to be carried across the saddle-bow like a sack of turnips. I knew one distinguished British cavalry regiment whose commanding officer insisted on every patrol of half a dozen of his men being accompanied by a *doolie*, which reduced their mobility to that of a lame duck, and if they had been

pursued in force, the wretched bearers must have been cut up. Without going further into the question, I may remark that whereas the removal of each man, whether wounded, sore-footed, or with a touch of fever, necessitated 12 lbs. of food *per diem* for the *doolie*-bearers, by *cacolet* or by *ekha*, it would have required 5 lbs. and 3 lbs. respectively, with double to treble the mobility.

A very small incident may haply change the course of history. One morning, in August 1879, an Afghan *sowar* of the 1st Central India Horse—Abbās Khan by name—came up at *durbar* (orderly-room) for four months' leave on "urgent private affairs"—("burra zarurti kam"). Upon enquiring what was the nature of his business, he replied, in the most matter-of-fact way, that he wanted to shoot the *kotwal* (mayor) of Kabul, who had given an iniquitous judgment against his family, and taken away a part of their land. Our commanding officer somewhat hard-heartedly refused this very sporting application, which, if granted, might have obviated the necessity of the second Afghan campaign. The petitioner, whom I knew well, as he belonged to my squadron, would assuredly have bagged his man, or been killed himself. A few weeks later this same *kotwal* led the attack, and was the chief instigator in the massacre of our Embassy.

It was not until the 10th of September that the news of Cavagnari's massacre reached our out-of-the-way cantonment at Goona. Receiving a telegram early on the 20th, that I was appointed brigade-major to Sir C—— G——, I started the same afternoon, reaching the railway at Dholpore—170 miles—in time to catch the early train on the 22nd. One little Arab did 70 miles in about twelve hours, and was fit and well at the end of it. Arriving at Jhelum on the 24th, I got to Peshawar by mail-cart on the morning of the 27th. Learning that our brigade was

assembling at Jumrood, and would advance the next day, I bought a pony, saddle, and some necessaries to see me through, until my servants and horses could overtake me, and joined my brigade at Jumrood that same evening. My things eventually joined me on the 4th October in the Jellalabad valley, having accomplished about 1000 miles—350 by road, and 700 by rail—in just a fortnight. This may not sound much to those accustomed to modern railway travelling, but it meant marching for ten days at about 35 miles a day.

We were terribly hampered by want of transport, all available *bâl* animals having been transferred from Peshawar to the Koorum valley for Sir F—— R——s' advance on Kabul. Many officers only got their kit forwards by impressing the *ekkas* which had come out for the afternoon from Peshawar to Jumrood, putting them under a guard, and taking them on to Jellalabad.

One complaint made to me was, I fancy, fairly typical of how some of our followers were recruited. The petitioner in question stated that he was a barber, and three weeks previously had gone to the weekly fair at Peshawar for the day. Here he was told by the police that he must serve the *Sirkar* (Government), and had been drafted off as a *doolie*-bearer! After all, it is always *à la guerre, comme à la guerre.*

Although rumours were rife that the Mohmunds were gathering, we occupied Ali Musjid (19 miles) unopposed, on the 28th, in a storm of wind and rain; Lundi Kotal (10 miles), on the 29th; Dakha (13 miles), on the 30th September, and Basāwal (13 miles) on the 1st October, with the Guides' cavalry and infantry, the 2nd/9th Foot, and four mountain-guns. Here we were detained for ten days, entirely from want of transport, when, this difficulty being sufficiently overcome to enable the 10th Bengal Lancers and the 24th Punjabis to come

up, we marched *viâ* Barrikāb and Ali Bogān to Jellalabad, which we entered on the 13th. A few days later we occupied Gundamāk, which it was intended should form our headquarters for the winter, with regiments cantoned from there to the Jugdūllak Pass, ready to move on to Kabul if assistance was necessary. Another division between the Kyber and Jellalabad was to be in support, and to take our place should we advance.

It was all very pretty on paper, but, as usual, the moment it was heard that Kabul was in R——s' possession, our civilian rulers, anxious to save expense, stopped all troops who had not already started, and our brigade, instead of being concentrated at Gundamāk with the advance guard at Jugdūllak, had to garrison Jellalabad, and hold the line of communications back to Barrikāb.

Though nominally a brigade, we really formed a division, having three and a half regiments of cavalry, one battery Royal Horse Artillery, and two of mountain-guns, with one British and four native infantry regiments. A couple more of the battalions originally told off for us were kept on the line of communications, and never joined.

During the week when we were halted at Jellalabad there was a sudden change of temperature, heralded the preceding day by long lines of small birds migrating eastwards towards the plains of India. Within twenty-four hours of their disappearance the crest of the Sufèid Kho range (white mountain), which rises to over 15,000 feet, was covered with snow. One could also nightly hear countless flocks of wild-fowl migrating to southern latitudes. Seven months previously we, as it happened, had listened to their cries as they winged their way northwards to their breeding-grounds in distant Siberia. The chief peculiarity in both cases was, that although the Kabul

river runs more or less from west to east, and is joined by the Kunār almost at right angles from the north, the migratory waterfowl never seemed to cut across the angle, but steadily followed the line of the streams.

After, between the 6th and 12th November, moving with a column to Seh Baba, three marches short of Kabul, and joining hands with M——'s brigade from there, we began to scttle down into winter quarters at Gundamāk, with the 3rd and 10th Bengal Cavalry, two mountain-batteries, the 2nd/9th Foot, 2nd and 4th Goorkhas, 24th Punjabis and some sappers. The Guides' cavalry and infantry held Jugdūllak, 20 miles in front of us, and about 40 miles from Kabul. Although Gundamāk is only 25 miles, as the crow flies, from the Peiwar Kotal, by which Roberts' force had moved, still no lateral communication between the two lines of advance was practicable, the peak of Sitarām rising to 15,600 feet midway betwixt them. The situation of our camp was charming, at an elevation of about 4000 feet, within a mile of pine-forests, above which one got glimpses of snow-clad peaks, and the ground was intersected by rills of clear, ice-cold water. The Nimla Bagh, with its magnificent cypress trees—mentioned in Baber's "Memoirs" of the 15th century—is situated 3 or 4 miles to the eastward.

So far, our column had met with no resistance, save one slight skirmish in the Tezin valley, nor had we even been harassed save for a few cases of attacks on convoys or followers, and the usual desultory sniping incidental to the country. The Koorum road had now been abandoned, and as the Jellalabad route formed our sole line of communication, a telegraph had been established, but as the wire was cut almost nightly, we were to a great extent dependent on the heliograph. Early in December, however, the rumours peculiar to the East,

generally correct, and invariably in advance of official news, which emanate from no one knows where—warned us that something was on foot.

The political officers—who practically form our Intelligence Department when across the Frontier—were, however, so thoroughly misinformed by the tag-rag who habitually surround them, and misled by their spies, that nothing serious seems to have been anticipated. The deportation of the Ameer Yakub Khan to India, in November—which was accomplished *vid* Jellalabad without the slightest attempt at a rescue—was supposed, by removing the figure-head, to preclude all possibility of any general combination against us. So much confidence was reposed in this, that no attempt had been made to run up even a shelter trench round the two unfinished faces of the Sherepore cantonment, and had the outbreak been delayed a few days longer, Sir F—— R—— would have been absent inspecting the line of communications to Peshawar.

We had, in fact, already got horses and escorts posted every ten or a dozen miles for him, and the Inspector General of Transport and a large party of sightseers were expected to reach our camp on the 12th December from Kabul. Instead of this, we received orders on the 9th to hurry up the Guides to the front, and move forwards with the remainder of the force to Jugdūllak. Our brigadier's aide-de-camp, who rejoined us on the 12th, from Kabul, said he had started on the preceding morning, and was to have been overtaken by the Transport General's party at Butkhāk, but whilst they had not made their appearance, he had heard guns in action to the westwards of the city. We pushed on the same day and occupied Jugdūllak, whilst the Guides—who had received a somewhat erratic order to cut off the retreat of the Kohistanis—hearing bad news from the front, marched

straight on to Sherepore instead, which they safely reached the same night. It was characteristic of this splendid corps—which has not its match in our army for scouting or outpost work—that, hearing they were badly needed, they pushed on cavalry and infantry 40 miles in the day, including altogether 4000 feet ascent, without losing a single straggler.

What had happened, meanwhile, was this. Learning that there was a hostile gathering to the westward and along the Ghuzni road, one brigade, under M——, marched out on the 9th to the north-west, camping at Kila Karez on the night of the 10th, and another, under B——, to the south-west, "to strike at the enemy's communications," as it was scientifically stated. As, however, the nearest mountain-side represented the latter, Jomini's precepts were scarcely applicable to the actual conditions. The result was that when the 9th and 14th Bengal Lancers, with four horse artillery guns, after camping for the night at Aushar, moved towards the Ghuzni road on the morning of the 11th December, to effect a junction with M——'s brigade, they unexpectedly met Mahomed Jān's army in full march, and within 4 miles of Kabul.

The result, as is known, was disastrous to us. Hampered as our mounted troops were by irrigation-cuts, the slopes of which were hard frozen, our cavalry failed to deliver a decisive charge, or the artillery to produce the smallest effect on their somewhat scattered groups, and our force was driven back upon Sherepore, with the loss of all their guns. The 9th Lancers suffered severely, especially in officers, and the situation was only saved by an aide-de-camp hurrying out two companies of the 72nd, who arrived just in time to seize some houses in the Déh Mazang gorge, and by their fire, checked the victorious Afghans. Even then the game was entirely in their hands, had they pressed on by the Aushar Kotal.

With the feeble garrison left behind, they might have swarmed into the Sherepore cantonment in its then defenceless state, and, with the loss of our magazines and stores, a calamity of the first magnitude might have resulted. Luck, however, favoured us, for thinking apparently they had done enough for the day, as soon as their advance by the direct road was checked, they dispersed through the villages to get food. Meanwhile, M—— had turned and marched on the sound of the artillery, and the 67th and the 3rd Sikhs, arriving in the evening, recovered, under the leadership of that grand soldier M——, our abandoned guns, the whole brigade regaining cantonments by night, without much molestation.

The cavalry brigadier was severely blamed for this disaster, though it was the common opinion in the army that this was more justly attributable to our faulty intelligence. As it happened, whilst our two brigades were *en l'air* vainly hunting for an intangible foe, the latter were within easy striking distance of our practically defenceless base. The fact that the cavalry, instead of following the back track and joining the Ghuzni road at Déh Mazang, had cut across the angle and were caught by the enemy upon irrigated ground, points, perhaps, to not scouting sufficiently in advance. They would, however, have been cornered in a position equally unfavourable for mounted troops had the encounter taken place, as it otherwise must have done, near Déh Mazang. In short, our political officers, upon whom the military authorities relied for information, were in complete ignorance of the numbers, determination, and locality of the enemy.

The 12th was passed awaiting B——'s brigade, who had been hopelessly isolated, but made his way back to Shcrepore without serious opposition on that night.

The Shér Darwaza (Tiger's Door) peak, which overhangs the city by 1200 feet, was meanwhile successfully held by some of the 72nd, whilst the Takht-i-Shah (King's Throne), about a mile south on the same range, was in the possession of the enemy. On the 13th this was brilliantly stormed by the 92nd and Guides, a strong picket being left to hold it. Morning dawned on the 14th, however, to find Afghan standards flying on the Asmai heights, 1000 feet above, and within 1200 or 1300 yards of the Sherepore cantonment itself. The Guides and 72nd captured this in the forenoon without any serious resistance, but were driven off again in the afternoon, with the loss of two mountain-guns, by the determined advance of overwhelming numbers from several different points.

The result was the immediate withdrawal of our posts from the Shér Darwaza range, with the loss of some ammunition, the concentration of our force within Sherepore —whose north and west faces were hurriedly entrenched— and, shortly before the telegraph-wire was cut, the issue of urgent orders for our brigade to advance. We now felt the pinch of the penny-wise policy of Government. Instead of having a solid force of some 7000 men in advance of Gundamāk, ready for any eventuality, we had barely half that number, and transport only sufficient for a couple of thousand. There were, moreover, rations at Jugdūllak only for a single regiment, so it took five days to bring up supplies for our advance, and a fortnight's food for the battalion which remained behind to hold that important point.

Our political officer had news that we were to be attacked by 30,000 men, which proved so far correct, that on the evening of the 15th, three or four thousand tribesmen turned up, and commenced building *sangars* on the peaks near the ruby-mines, about a couple of thousand

yards to the eastward of the ruined fort upon which we were encamped.

For the next five days strong escorts with artillery marched daily, from Gundamāk to Jugdūllak, bringing forward supplies, and exchanging baggage animals near the Pezwan Kotal; whilst the remainder of the troops were kept hard at work entrenching and scarping the old fort, and putting it in a position to withstand an unexpected rush. Various rumoured night-attacks kept us on the alert, but nothing came of them, although our daily convoys had desultory skirmishing.

One lesson we learned was that it was far the better plan to start with a sufficient force attached to the advance-guard to provide for all the flanking parties; so that these might hold their posts throughout the day, and join the rear-guard as it passed. The latter was thus, just at the time when it was likely to be pressed, being constantly reinforced, whilst the fatigue of men having to scale the heights was reduced to a minimum. Studying the ground as we did by constantly skirmishing over it, it seems pretty clear that both the massacre during the retreat, and the subsequent resistance to General Pollock's advance in 1842, were not at the picturesque Parri-darra defile—which is a mere chasm in the rocks, and can be turned by an easy alternative road—but at the Kotal between Jugdūllak and Mara Dand, at the head-waters of the Surkh Ab.

The tribesmen who had come to beleaguer us, after spending the best part of the first two days in building *sangars*, seemed greatly disappointed that our General paid no attention to their proceedings, and I think this took the edge off their enthusiasm. The points they occupied were out of shot of both our camp and our convoy route, and so, very wisely, they were allowed to remain just where they were; and whereas there had been much shouting and waving of standards and brandishing

of swords at the commencement, all demonstrations ceased, and I think that they began to melt away after the first few days.

Twice only we received letters from Kabul, the messenger being disguised as a *fakir*, and having the paper concealed in a slit in a half-charred piece of stick. One of the bearers, on arrival, was greeted with two volleys from a picket, who, on finding they could not hit him, went forward and took him prisoner! A brother officer met him subsequently at Kabul, and the man told him that the *munshi* in the agency office had only paid him five rupees for the job! Probably he had entered it in the accounts as five hundred.

Sufficient supplies were collected by the 20th, and we marched on the 21st with the 2nd/9th, 2nd and 4th Goorkhas, Hazara mountain-battery, and a company of Sappers—something under 2000 combatants. The 24th Punjabis remained as garrison at Jugdūllak, and we being ordered on account of the scarcity of forage to bring no cavalry, the 3rd and 10th Bengal Lancers were, much to their chagrin, left behind. A half-hearted demonstration was made upon our right flank as we marched out, but we reached Sćh Baba that night, and the Lataband camp the following evening, practically without opposition. This was garrisoned by the 28th Punjabis, and though entirely isolated for a week, had been only feebly attacked.

The 12th Bengal Cavalry, who had made their way out from Sherepore the preceding night, in order to meet our column at Butkhāk, finding this strongly held by the enemy, pushed on and joined us here. They had between forty and fifty men missing, though many of these, we learned subsequently, had, after losing their horses, regained Sherepore on foot under cover of the darkness.

The reports we had been receiving were so bad that

we had kept these to ourselves, in order to prevent any discouragement amongst the men, but with the arrival of the 12th Bengal Cavalry the news of the loss of the guns and our force being on the defensive became public property.

I do not think the difficulty of Sir C—— G——'s task was ever properly appreciated or acknowledged by the Government of India. When 7000 of our best troops had to stand on the defensive behind entrenchments, the Afghans — officially estimated at 60,000 strong — with their great mobility, should, from a purely military point of view, have been able to check if not to overwhelm the couple of thousand men advancing by a difficult pass, long before the two forces could get into touch with one another.

When we marched in the grey dawn, reinforced by the 28th Punjab Infantry, we all believed that our work was cut out for us, as we could hear heavy firing in the distance. The only really cheerful and beaming face I saw was that of old *Rasseldar* Bahawldeen Khan—himself an Afghan—who was acting as our guide, and accompanied me with the advance-guard. On asking him if he expected we should find the village of Butkhāk strongly held, he, with a profound knowledge of his fellow-countrymen, replied that they, being sure to imagine that we had at least 20,000 men, would more likely decamp; but added cheerfully: "Ugar hain, khūb tamasha hoiga. Un men se yeki ne butchaiga" ("If they are here, there will be some real sport. Not one of them will escape alive").

Finding the village evacuated, we soon after got within sight of Sherepore, and during a brief interval of sunshine, as it was a dull threatening day, we got into heliographic communication with the garrison. The orders we received were to halt at the Logar bridge that afternoon, and to advance and attack the Siah Sung hill at 4 A.M. next

Evening set in dull and misty, and as we settled ourselves down for the night some rain-drops falling on my face induced me to pull the over-lying waterproof sheet over my head, and I slept like a top until awakened by the sentry about 2 A.M. I felt so warm and comfortable that I was loath to move, but on attempting to rise found the mackintosh extremely weighty, and realised that there were three or four inches of snow over all.

In order not to put the enemy on the alert, all bugle-sounds were forbidden, and on going round to warn regiments to get under arms, the camp presented a most curious and dreary appearance. When I first got upon my legs, there was nothing but a white sheet, dotted with dark figures of sentries, and in the background, of horses and mules. Taking a short cut across what seemed a low mound, I felt it squirming beneath me, and found I was stumbling over a solid mass of *doolie*-bearers and other followers, huddled together for warmth, and completely hidden beneath the snow.

We had scarce got under way when snow began again to fall, and the fairly long causeway we had to traverse was fast trodden into a slushy quagmire.

Even when day dawned, what between mist and snow, one could not see fifty yards ahead, and just as we crossed the canal beyond the Logar one of our cavalry scouts reported that there was a large body of men in front, upon the Bala Hissar road. After passing the canal, wheeling to the right, under the old *rasseldar's* guidance, we deployed a battalion and a couple of guns, which gradually felt their way forwards and took post on the eastern crest of the Siah Sung (black stone), whilst our advance-guard blundered right on to Ahmed Khan's fort before we realised it was there. Fortunately it proved to be deserted, and as we groped our way along, expecting every moment to be greeted by a volley, suddenly the mist lifted and we saw the walls of Sherepore within rifle shot, and shortly afterwards were met by Sir F—— R—— and Staff.

Cavalry who were pushed out later in the day failed to find any assemblage of men, who had apparently melted into air, and our brigade which was to have stormed the Bala Hissar on Christmas Eve was, as the place proved to be absolutely deserted, peaceably installed therein as winter quarters, and a flying column moving out towards Kohistan, destroyed some forts without any opposition.

As is, I fancy, common enough in similar cases, there was a certain amount of jealousy between the two forces, and whilst the Sherepore garrison claimed to have scattered the gathering off their own bat, the relieving column maintained that this result was solely due to the moral effect caused by their appearance upon the scene. The so-called assault upon our entrenchments never got beyond a small arm fusillade, from well under cover, on the part of the assailants, nor did the latter begin to disperse until the reinforcements were within sight, and half a dozen miles away.

In any case, if 7000 fully prepared men behind entrench-

ments were considered to have been for a single moment seriously threatened, what can one suppose would have been the fate of a third of that number, encumbered by baggage, if attacked on the line of march? Personally, I fancy that exaggerated rumours as to the strength of the relieving force was the cause of the half-hearted attempt at attack never being pushed home, and that their dispersal to their villages was largely due to the setting in of the snow. It was not indeed until spring had begun, and men could keep the hill-side, that there was any renewal of disturbances, and scarcely even any rumoured gatherings.

From what one heard, a large portion at least of the garrison were thoroughly disgusted with the style of fighting, and were unfeignedly glad that it was over. What between the rocky heights above, and the innumerable forts and irrigation cuts below, the long-legged Afghans never fought to a finish, and neither our cavalry nor infantry ever got a chance of dealing a crushing blow. As one distinguished Lancer said to me—"It's just like chasing a lot of wild cats, and if you do catch them, you get more scratches than honour and glory."

Our three months in winter quarters were very enjoyable, as the Ameer's palace in the Bala Hissar furnished rough but very comfortable quarters for the Staff and British infantry, whilst other buildings were occupied by the two Goorkha regiments. The entire space within the walls of the "Upper Fort"—as its name signifies—was crowded with hovels, intersected by narrow and tortuous lanes, and large fatigue-parties were employed for some months levelling the less desirable buildings and clearing open spaces.

The morning after our occupation of the fort, I was ordered to prospect from the summit of the Shèr Darwaza

range 1200 or 1300 feet above us, to see if there were any hostile gatherings visible in the Chardeh valley beyond. I had an escort of the 4th Goorkhas with me, whom I always selected for such work when I had any choice in the matter. I knew that in the first place they would never be caught napping, and in the second that they were like a set of bull-pups, and that a surprise would only sharpen their wits, and not demoralise them. Their *havildar*, with whom I was chatting as we trudged up, remarked: "I hear, Sahib, there is bohut ātcha kubber" ("awfully good news"). "What is that?" I asked. "Oh, they say in the bazaar that the Ghāzi logue (fanatics) are coming back." "Are you glad of that?" I queried. "Oh yes, Sahib," the sturdy little man replied. "Why, the 5th Goorkhas who were up here are *bucking* awfully of what they did; now we will just show them a little what fighting really is."

In one expedition to the Maidan valley, some shots having been fired at our people from the village of Dari-i-noor, which stands in the open about a mile from the foot of the mountains, the place was searched by a party of British cavalry. There being one knoll near at hand completely commanding the ground, it seemed sufficient to post a couple of vedettes upon this to permit them to depart from the usual practice of holding half the detachment in readiness, and all the horses were unbridled and fed. Whilst the men were hunting about the houses for eggs and milk, a volley was blazed into them at close quarters, and they had to drive out their nags, with their nosebags on, into the open, before they could get ready. It was naturally supposed that the vedettes had been surprised and killed, but on calling the roll they both answered their names. On being called to account for failing to keep a proper look-out, they replied: "Well, we saw a lot of them chaps coming

along with flags, but we thought it was only a *rammy-sammy* procession, so took no notice of them."

Very different indeed was the kind of scouting as performed by the Guides, who by their style and swagger earned the *sobriquet* of "God's Own," and they fully lived up to their reputation. Meeting a foraging party of that regiment, one would at first glance imagine that they had not a single outpost or even a sentry posted; but if you studied the most commanding rocks in the neighbourhood, there you would see two or three of them lying flat on the ground, like cats watching a sparrow, with heads protruding over the crest—facing in all directions. One could sleep soundly when they were on outpost duty.

There was rather a joke that when a couple of officers of this regiment had called upon the General's wife at Rawal Pindi, she—who either was, or affected to be, ignorant of all matters pertaining to India—glancing at their cards, remarked, "Oh! so you belong to the Guides?" "Yes, rather," responded the young officers with great pride, anticipating some compliment at belonging to this distinguished corps. "And are they soldiers?" innocently queried the lady, to their dismay.

The Residency, where the ill-fated Cavagnari and his escort perished, was adjacent to the Ameer's palace and touching the southern wall of the fort. It was a very ordinary Afghan house, and was closely surrounded by other buildings, and commanded at a couple of hundred yards by a higher ridge, upon which the Ameer's powder magazines stood. Our envoy's escort consisted of only twenty-five *sowars* and fifty sepoys of the Guides, every one of whom fell fighting—save one *rasseldar*—subsequently *rasseldar* major of my regiment—and a couple of *sowars* who chanced to be absent at a distance outside the walls.

The former, who was himself an Afghan, and belonged to a village within sight of the city, had ridden out towards Charassia to make arrangements for some of our officers, who intended to go fishing on the following day. When he returned, the Residency was in flames, all firing had ceased, and he was warned by a friend to hide, which he did in a high Indian corn field just under the walls. Under cover of darkness he made his way to his home, and despatched his brother to ascertain what had befallen, cautioning him to give out that he had come in search of his relative's corpse. There was not a survivor left, although there was a rumour that a couple of Sikhs had held out in an isolated tower for a day or more. There was also a story that two Pathān *sowars* of the escort, who were shopping in the bazaar when the outbreak occurred, were offered quarter by their co-religionists, which they scornfully refused, and drawing their swords held the crown of the causeway against all comers until shot down at close quarters.

On learning the news from his brother, our native officer made his way across the Sufèid Kho range to Ali Khel, about 50 miles as the crow flies, and probably quite double that distance to traverse, bringing our Government the first really authentic news of the tragedy.

The *rasseldar* was quite convinced that although the outbreak was fomented by the *kotwal* (chief magistrate) of Kabul, that its occurrence just when it did was wholly fortuitous. Certain regiments of the Ameer's being disappointed in not receiving their pay, which was largely in arrears, after vainly waiting on the Ameer, went in a body to the British Resident to demand it there. Upon his refusal to mix himself up in the matter at all, some of them began to help

themselves by seizing the horses in the courtyard, and looting other property within reach. A collision consequently ensuing with the guard, who, it is said, fired upon them, they ran for their arms, and were soon joined by the city mob in the attack upon our Legation. The fact that in the first instance they had repaired unarmed to the Residency, when, had they been so disposed, they might easily have rushed it before the gates could be closed, was instanced by the *rasseldar* in proof that the massacre was wholly unpremeditated. He also pointed out that all the villages he passed that day were absolutely quiet and the men engaged at their ordinary avocations, whereas some symptoms of unrest at least would have been visible in the case of any preconcerted plan.

Two sorties were made by "V.C." H——, commanding the escort, who in the first succeeded in temporarily silencing the two guns which had been brought to bear upon our little band. By one account he fell in the second, striving to fight his way up the ridge upon which the magazines were situated. These were flat-roofed mud-built "go-downs," within which it was said two hundred tons of gunpowder were stored in huge earthen jars. I often fancied, walking over the ground, that he had the heroic idea of trying to fire one of these, when the already doomed survivors of his garrison would, in the company of their assailants, the Ameer, and the ruins of this city have

"In one wild roar expired."

So far as my informants believed, the Ameer had nothing to say to the outbreak, but with culpable weakness just let things run their course. One *sirdar* commanding a cavalry regiment at Beni Hissar, two miles distant, is said to have requested permission to bring his men up

and clear the streets, but was peremptorily forbidden to move.

The *kotwal* and fifty or sixty of the principal actors in the massacre of our Legation were, after our occupation of the capital, hanged on a gallows erected upon the ruins of the Residency.

A couple of years subsequently, when travelling in Persia with a couple of Pathān orderlies of my regiment, chatting at night over our camp-fire with them I enquired whether a certain Afghan native officer of our acquaintance had suffered much loss by being banished from his country. They in the most matter-of-fact way in the world replied, that although he had lost his land, still he must have made a lot of money when employed upon the enquiry into the massacre of our Legation. Upon asking what this had to do with the matter, they answered, "that of course he only handed up to justice the accused who could not pay up!" Rightly or wrongly, this was their manifest belief in their own national morality.

We had five or six weeks of very excellent skating, the valley of Kabul being nearly 6000 feet above sea-level. One was generally awakened in the mornings by hearing the men cutting out slides on the moat, and strapping on one's skates just outside the gateway, you could, by skirting up a ditch or two, and walking across a road, get upon a sheet of ice nearly a mile in length. Although it was freezing all the twenty-four hours in the shade, the sun, without appearing obtrusively powerful, or necessitating any more serious headgear than a forage-cap, asserted itself sufficiently upon the ice to make it very crackly by noon, but by sunset it was as strong again as ever.

Our supply of literature was scant, so we had the more inducement to devote our leisure moments to learning Persian, which, at Kabul, as at Kandahar, is the language

of the country, whilst at Ghuzni, and amongst the frontier tribes, Pushtoo is chiefly spoken.

The Kabul bazaars were an animated and picturesque scene, and during the long days when we were practically snowed-up I spent many an interesting hour wandering through them. The order very properly was that officers entering the town should be in parties of at least three and fully armed.

Colonel R—— of the 4th Goorkhas and myself, being interested in studying our whilom opponents, and watching the ever-changing crowd which thronged the streets, paid them frequent visits together, taking with us a couple of Goorkhas with their rifles, to bring our party up to the required strength. The main bazaar, in the figure of a cross, is a narrow unpaved lane, very little wider than the Burlington Arcade, and, similarly to it, roofed in. This is effected not by glass, but by two or three tiers of overlapping, thatched screens, which admit a certain amount of air and light. Along this one roadway, in a "dim religious light," pedestrians, equestrians, and beasts of burden jostle one another in a solid mass of confusion, progress being slow, and complete blocks of common occurrence. On one occasion when R——, who was a very broad-shouldered, powerful man, had forged ahead of me in the crowd, a well-dressed passer-by, whose green turban denoted the *haji* or a *syud* (descendant of the prophet), on being pushed aside, turned and, showing his teeth with the snarl of an angry dog, glared, quivering with rage at the accursed infidel. At this moment one of the little Goorkhas, who was not going to stand having his officer looked at in that way, shoved past me, and brought the butt of his rifle down to the "order," with a crash, upon the foot of the fervent Moslem. The latter's grin changed into one of acute pain, and if looks could kill, that orderly would have been obliterated; but as the latter stood

with an absolutely impassive face, looking straight to his front, negligently playing with the handle of his *kookrie*, the holy man thought it better to limp off without remark.

In a *kābristan*, or Mahomedan burial-ground, just outside the Bala Hissar gate, we found a curious monument, to which our attention was directed by a mention in Lady Sale's Journal.

This is a small, square-shaped marble pillar, about a foot wide at the base and a couple of feet high, terminating in a blunt point. Quoting from memory, the inscription upon it, beautifully cut, runs—

"Here lies JOHN HICKS,
The son of —— and Margaret his wife,
Who departed this life
On the 17th March 1642."

As to his history or that of the erector of this memento nothing is known, but the fact that he was buried in a Mahomedan cemetery indicates that he was an honoured guest at the time of our Civil War in England. I believe that this stone—which was removed, as it had been recently overthrown and somewhat injured—is now in the Lahore Museum.

Sherepore, which formed the headquarters of the Kabul force, was in a most unfinished state at the time of our occupation. The plan was apparently to enclose a square of about a mile and a half each way, with the low, isolated Bemaru hill lengthways in the centre. The entire design was a mere reproduction of a caravanserai on a big scale, the walls, about 15 feet high, having a continuous interior row of dwelling-rooms or stables, from whose flat roofs it is possible to fire over the parapet. The earth required for the construction had been excavated without order or method, forming a series of pits outside instead of a continuous

ditch, and save a few of the usual small semicircular bastions, of flank defence there was none. The southern face, and about half a mile of the eastern, up to near the village of Bemaru, had alone been completed, and at the time of the disaster of the 11th December one might have driven a coach-and-four through almost any point of the northern and western boundaries extending over a couple of miles. Owing to the command given by the Bemaru ridge over the open ground to the north, and the Wazirabad lake in rear, there was little chance of any attack by day from that quarter. Subsequently to the incidents of the 14th December, shelter trenches, wire entanglements, and other methods of defence were improvised along the entire perimeter, amongst which the captured Afghan guns played a prominent part near the headquarters gateway at the south-western angle.

The long range of mud-brick buildings formed excellent barrack-rooms for the British soldiers. All had fireplaces, a *maund* (82 lbs.) of firewood was allowed for each room daily, and four blankets apiece for each man. It shows how hardy our native soldiers are that they, who were chiefly under canvas, were only allotted two blankets apiece, and no firewood save what they could collect for themselves.

Another cause of some discontent was that, although Government is by way of being most anxious that native officers should be regarded and treated as gentlemen, none of these were permitted, even by payment out of their own pockets, to obtain the same food as the lowest-graded British private. I have more than once been asked by old and well-to-do native officers to get them permission to purchase British rations, or even the daily one of tea and sugar, but was always met by the *non possumus* of the Commissariat Department. The native army ration for all alike is, I may

remark, almost exactly the same as for the commonest class of camel-driver, and consists chiefly of coarse flour, with a little *dāll* (pease) and *ghee* (butter).

When, towards the spring, look-out pickets were established upon some of the most commanding peaks, a British officer was, by Headquarter orders, always obliged to be in command, even if the party was only one of a few rank and file. More than one commanding officer vainly urged that he would be personally responsible that this duty could be perfectly well performed by the *jemadars* he might select—but no! the hard and fast rule must be adhered to. As by our present native army organisation all units not exceeding a hundred men (company or troop) are supposed to be commanded by natives, we should either adhere to this on service or definitely change it. To employ this in peace time, and then to evince our disbelief in their capacity when in the field, only humiliates the native officers, and overworks the few British ones, who have their own duties to attend to.

A fairly successful club was established at Sherepore, located in some large tents borrowed from the Commissariat. Newspapers were scarce, so a little whist in the afternoons was the chief form of amusement, but it afforded a useful rendezvous at which to meet other regiments. One visitor, who came up nominally as a special correspondent, was V——, a General officer on half-pay, and still belonging to the Army, in which his popularity may be gauged by the *sobriquet* which clung to him of the "False Apostle." One day as a group was chatting in front of the tent, V—— in passing trod on a favourite fox-terrier which was basking in the sun. The owner, B——, who concealed the makings of a first-class soldier under a Lord Dundreary sort of exterior, being exceedingly annoyed, drawled out, "Why,

that d——d old fool V——, has twodden on my dawg." General V——, to whom this was distinctly audible, stalked back to the group, and said in a tone of crushing severity, "Captain B——, will you have the goodness to repeat what you said just now?" Captain B——, nowise disconcerted, screwing his eyeglass up and putting on an extra drawl, repeated, "I said, Genewal, that that d——d old fool V——," etc., and the offended one, white with rage, stamped off to lodge a complaint, amidst the titters of the bystanders.

The same gallant captain who, when for the first time acting as Staff-officer was striving with indifferent success to post the points for a brigade parade, was vainly shouting, "Dwess up there; dwess up the markers of the ——— Lancers. By Jove! if you fellows don't dwess, I'll go home!"

Soon after the road was fairly opened, some Parsis and other enterprising hucksters swarmed up with stocks of "notions" as the Yankees say. One of the first of these arrivals who appeared early in January, terrified by the bazaar rumours he heard, disposed of his goods at an alarming sacrifice and returned to India. On his coming to my office for a pass to travel down the road, I inquired why he was in such a hurry to be off, remarking that it was a very fine country. "Oh yes, Sahib," replied the merchant, "very fine country—very fine country indeed; but they cut off heads!"

Amongst other things, I had to act as Press censor for the Bala Hissar telegraph-office, chiefly to prevent the overworked wire from becoming blocked with unnecessary messages. Many, such as "Fondest love to baby," I ruthlessly scored out, and I also evoked a heated remonstrance from one special correspondent—who, after detailing the incidents of a petty expedition, had added a foolscap page of his opinions as to how much better

he could have done it himself—as I struck out the theoretical portion of his manuscript.

There was some fair snipe-shooting to be got in the swamps near the Logar river, and a few duck to be picked up, at flighting time in the evenings, at springs near the city, and of course with the approach of open weather we had a race meeting or two, and soldiers' games for the men.

The event which of all excited most interest was a 3-mile foot-race for all comers, British and native, for which there were about forty entries. Popular opinion was almost unanimous that the stamina of some of the British competitors would tell in the long run, in every sense of the word. The result was, however, a complete surprise, as after the first couple of miles not one of them was in it at all—a couple of Sikhs of the 23rd Muzbees, and after them a Pathān of the Guides, being placed. I forget the exact time, but connoisseurs, I remember, considered it uncommonly good.

Throughout the winter not only was all quiet, but the villagers one met appeared most friendly. Still, I suppose the old proverb of "Be wafa Afghan" ("treacherous as an Afghan") holds as true nowadays as it did in the days of Baber.

I certainly, however, sympathised with them as to the dilemma in which they were placed by the uncertainty as to our future policy. Whilst the more industrious portion of the inhabitants would have cheerfully cast in their lot with us if assured of our permanent occupation of the country, they dared not exhibit even their sympathy, whilst there was any possibility of having to suffer for this after our departure. Once asking a well-to-do Afghan on whose side he was, he responded with the question, "Is your army going to remain here or not?" and on my replying that we did not yet know

what our Government intended to do, he answered: "How can we decide before we know that?"

We had two distinct shocks of earthquake during the winter; the walls of most of the more important buildings are strengthened by wooden beams, to give elasticity and guard against their ill effects.

There were several minor expeditions undertaken in April, May, and June—none of which presented any particular features of interest. It was very enjoyable being out again in the field after three months of winter quarters, and some of the smaller side valleys we explored were lovely, with brawling trout-like streams, and masses of hawthorn and fruit-trees in blossom.

Our baggage animals got terribly rampageous, especially the mules, and work on the march was undesirably increased by their casting their loads, and our midnight slumbers broken by their breaking from their pickets, kicking and fighting.

I saw an amusing exemplification of Goorkha ways one day. Whilst writing in my tent, exactly opposite the General's, a tall, well-dressed Afghan, probably connected with the political department, took a short cut through his tent-ropes, a thing always forbidden. A Goorkha orderly seated on the ground at the other side, with his rifle across his knees, shouted out to him to turn back, but the big man calmly ignoring this kept on his way. The small sepoy being too late to stop him, jumped up, and, running after the delinquent, caught him a real good kick from behind, although he had to jump up to effect this. The tall man turned furiously on his diminutive assailant, when the latter, remarking cheerfully, "What! not off yet?" caught him such a dig in the pit of the stomach, with his rifle, that he was doubled up, and thought it advisable to retire from the forbidden path.

The inhabitants, as a rule, took to the hills, and were invariably ready to attack any small party. Three officers with a very small escort, I remember, only escaped by the skin of their teeth on their return through a village, where they had been most hospitably received and presented with milk and fruit a couple of hours previously.

On one occasion whilst we were foraging in a valley a good many of the inhabitants kept the hillside, taking occasional long shots at us, although a certain number remained calmly seated at the doors of their forts awaiting developments. Feeling somewhat thirsty, I asked a native officer who chanced to pass, and who happened to be an Afghan, if he could get me a drink of water. The owner of the house, whom he addressed, replied with alacrity that he would give me some milk if I would come in. I accordingly jumped off my horse, and was about to enter without further ado, when the *rasseldar* touched my arm and motioned to me to draw my revolver. I noticed that he carried his own ready, hidden under the loose ends of his *kummerbund*, and that he made our host precede us. Afghans evidently have a deplorable opinion of the faith of their fellow-countrymen.

One curious feature was, that every village apparently owned a (Hindoo) *bunia*—their general purveyor and only man of business. These invariably remained unconcernedly behind, whilst their clients kept the hillside, usually firing upon us, and on our departure, after we had perhaps seized all the available forage, they tranquilly awaited the return of the somewhat ruffled tribesmen. They were evidently regarded as absolute neutrals, and were assured of full security under all circumstances.

When marching down in April to meet Sir D—— S——'s column from Kandahar, we had two or three skirmishes—one near Syadabad, when the infantry had

to dislodge a big crowd from a peak a couple of thousand feet above them, being a pretty stiff day. As usual, we had only ten or a dozen casualties, whilst our opponents left fifty odd bodies behind them in their retreat.

The same day a column from Sherepore had a smart little fight near Charassia, in our rear, with the usual result.

The following forenoon, when marching towards Ghuzni, we got into touch by heliograph with the Kandahar force—from the summit of the Tangi Sher Kotal—nearly 39 miles distant. There being several parties out on the warpath, with their usual accompaniment of flags, the first glint we caught through the dust was mistaken for a white standard fluttering on a ridge ahead of us. In a few minutes we were in direct communication, and learned the particulars of the battle of Ahmed Khel, fought the preceding day.

This march up of S——'s was, I consider, a more brilliant performance, and the fight in front of Ghuzni a more ticklish business, than is generally admitted. It was only the unflinching steadiness of the Sikhs and Goorkhas, after two other regiments had been thrown into confusion, that saved the situation.

When we marched over the field in August, there was a rude Persian inscription upon a board at the local *kabristan*, to the effect that "1200 martyrs of the Faith" were there interred—a greater loss than they are generally wont to admit.

When marching back to Kabul we made a détour with a flying column to attack the fort of one Abdool Ghuffoor, a pestilent *moolah* incessantly preaching the Holy War against us, who was the chief cause of the recent loss of life. His stronghold was situated in a most charming dell, which at the end of April was fragrant with the scent of hawthorn and orchard blossoms, whilst a regular

Highland trout-stream foamed down the glen. We met with no opposition, having taken the inmates very much by surprise, as nothing save a few of their cattle had been removed. Underneath some splendid walnut trees outside there was a rough, but charmingly cool, *sirdab* (underground room), with a rill of refreshingly cold water running through it—evidently used as a refuge from the summer heat—and not far distant was a pit filled with ice; so existence there during the hot months must have been considerably more agreeable than in the most luxurious cantonment of the plains of India. Inside the fort was one huge chest filled up with books, including several manuscript editions of the Koran, a few of which we brought away, and one of which is now in my possession. One copy thus carried off subsequently sold for £100; but as we expected to have to fight our way back, we could not encumber ourselves with much, and after two abortive attempts of our sappers to blow up the towers, all else was committed to the flames. In the harem were found some tawdry French fashion-plates, which probably came from the loot of a shop at Kabul.

Preceding the arrival of Abdur Rahman Khan from Turkestan, the greatest uncertainty seemed to prevail as to whether he came for peace or for war. Whilst one day we heard positive details given of the composition of a couple of flying columns which were to push forwards without tents, and drive him back before he could establish himself in Kohistan, on the next it would be asserted equally positively that only a guard of honour was to be detailed. Finally we went up with a strong brigade, encamping at Mir Akhor, about 6 miles from Istalif.

As probably the only Sikh temple existing in Afghanistan is situated in this neighbourhood, it is regarded as peculiarly sacred, and some of our Sikhs

asked leave to visit the shrine. All being quiet, this they were permitted to do, in charge of one of their own native officers.

Upon asking the latter—when he reported in the evening that his party had returned safely to camp—the history of the building, he related how a certain follower of Nanak's, in bygone days, having saved the life of the then Ameer, had received permission to erect a place of worship. One of their *gurus* (prophets) being then in the flesh, was invited to come up and inaugurate the shrine. The holy man being unable to do so, sent in lieu four bricks, with the injunction that these were to be laid in the four corners of the temple, adding, that whenever the faithful might be assembled for worship, "I will be there in the spirit." And the old Sikh impressively added, "on the *parab ke kin* (festivals) you can hear the rushing of horses through the air, of the *guru* and his disciples coming to attend the *poorstush*." "Well, and did you hear the horses?" we asked him. "No, but I saw the bricks," he responded, with an air of the most profound conviction. It always struck me as an excellent illustration of genuine faith.

During the fortnight we were encamped in this valley the chief worry that Staff-officers, at least, had to confront was with our own politicals. In their representations the soldier was always the brutal oppressor, and the Afghan the much-suffering example of all the pastoral virtues. These complaints were generally contained in Demi-Officials, and I quote one almost verbatim, impressed on my memory. "My dear G——, I regret to say I have to bring to your notice that a marauding party of the —— Bengal Cavalry have been cutting *shuftal* (clover) on the lands of one of our adherents. Now, if this sort of thing is to go on, without the political officer's sanction, etc." On another occasion a trebly-underlined *urgent* message

was delivered to me when in bed at night, pointing out the grave risks, from a military point of view, of a reconnaissance ordered for daybreak the next morning. The order cavilled at emanated from a distinguished General of over thirty years' service, whilst the critic was a captain who, though in civil employ, actually received a brevet for his services in the campaign. Truly, this is reducing the meaning of military rank to as great a farce as do the Volunteer colonels and majors, who spend their lives in trade, and soldier as a recreation.

Although we had heard of Abdur Rahman's arrival in Kohistan by the Dasakh Pass, and despatched one of the *sirdars*—Wali Mahomed—as an envoy to assure him of our good intentions, it was some days before the actual preliminaries of a meeting were settled. Up to the last, the followers of the prospective Ameer deeply mistrusted our intentions, and our outposts reported that on the night preceding the interview our camp was most jealously watched, to see that no fresh troops were introduced into it surreptitiously.

It was arranged that an escort of three hundred cavalry should accompany each side, and a large tent for the meeting was pitched about midway between our two armies, which were 8 or 9 miles apart. To the last moment the Afghans so mistrusted us that, contrary to the convention, they kept the bulk of their men concealed behind the ridge—during the first conference at least.

Mahomed Jan, who had been our most formidable opponent in the preceding winter—and belonged to the Shere Ali, as opposed to the Abdur Rahman, faction—was rumoured to be in the mountains to the south-west with a large following, and was credited with having requested our army to stand aside, and he would give the latter's force the soundest drubbing that they had ever had.

Anyhow, it was not many years before the new Ameer had this luckless leader's head off his shoulders.

Briefly speaking, the gist of the whole Afghan succession is that we failed in 1840 to re-establish the rightful Ameer Shah Sujah on the throne, and that the descendants of Dost Mahomed, who was a relative and had been his *wuzeer* (minister), form the present dynasty. The elder brother, Abdur Rahman, had been defeated by Shere Ali in 1873, and had fled to Russia, and up to our quarrel in 1878 the latter had been acknowledged and subsidised by the Indian Government as the *de facto* ruler of the country.

The first and subsequent interviews passed off satisfactorily and cordially, and, as is known, our nominee was eventually installed as Ameer. He was a strongly-built, black-bearded man of apparently about forty, with markedly Jewish features. He appeared grave and reserved, but courtly in manner, and gave the idea of a man who knew his own mind.

No sooner was this adjusted, and we expected orders to return to India, when the news of the disaster at Maiwand changed the whole aspect of things. It seems undoubtedly the case that rumours of this were gossiped about the bazaar, before even our Headquarters were apprised by telegram, and the intelligence was common property in the city days before the bulk of our force knew anything about it.

Resigning my Staff appointment, as my brigade was returning direct to India, I rejoined my regiment, the Central India Horse, which was brought up from Jellalabad to take part in the march to Kandahar. We had a splendid force of about 10,000 men, with 8000 followers and 11,000 animals.

Some years subsequently, discussing the matter with a Russian officer, he adduced the fact that we had "huit

milles domestiques," in disparagement of the mobility of our troops. I thereupon asked him whether in Scobeloff's campaign of Geok Tepe their soldiers had acted as drivers to the 15,000 camels that were employed in that expedition, when, somewhat huffed at the idea, he explained that they had Turkoman drivers. "There," I said, "you see you employ 'domestiques' also." In fact, all foreigners, and most Englishmen, are apt to classify the "followers" of an Indian army as private servants.

Our numbers were made up by four cavalry and twelve infantry regiments with three batteries of mountain-guns. Officers were allowed 80 lbs. of baggage, including tentage, whilst the British and native rank and file had a half and a quarter as much respectively, but as their tents were carried in addition, they were about as well off as any of us. The *sowars*, of course, having their own baggage *tatoos*, were on their normal footing, which is far and away the most practical mode of equipment yet discovered.

The cavalry brigade consisted of the 9th Lancers, Central India Horse, 3rd Bengal, and 3rd Punjab cavalry under G——, whilst the three infantry brigades, which included the 72nd and 92nd Highlanders, and three regiments of Goorkhas, were commanded by M——, M——, and B——.

Not only was the feeling throughout the force one of absolute confidence, but the chief preoccupation was whether there would be any resistance at all at the end of it.

Though universally made so much of, I do not think that, all things considered, it was as risky as R——s' first advance upon Kabul, or as Sir D—— S——'s march over the same ground three months previously.

When I attended a court ball at Vienna in the following month of January, the Emperor did me the honour of questioning me as to "cette marche célèbre," politely ascribed to modesty my disclaimer as to the extremely hazardous nature of the expedition, in which he believed.

We carried five or six days' supplies with us, after which we were dependent nominally upon the Commissariat, but as a matter of fact upon the foraging of the native cavalry.

The details of this march are so well known that it would be superfluous to repeat them now. From the Tangi Wardak, about 50 miles south of Kabul, the road through the Haftasia valley is open and easy, and the Sher Dahan Kotal, though 9000 feet high, has most easy gradients. Onwards from Ghuzni, which is about 100 miles by road from the present capital, the valley widens out still more, and is practically a gentle descent to Kandahar, a further 220 miles.

The nights, even in August, were at this elevation bitterly cold, and the cavalry, who marched about 5 A.M., were cloaked up for the first three or four hours.

The ground was so favourable that all the latter part of the way we were able to move in regular military formation, as we never knew when we set out whether we might not be heavily engaged within the next hour or two. Indeed, on the day we marched from Ghuzni, the advance cavalry were strictly enjoined not to be drawn into an engagement, which was considered inevitable that day, before the arrival of the infantry.

The usual order of march was, first, a couple of cavalry regiments, 5 or 6 miles in advance, and covering the entire width of the valley; then two brigades of infantry with their artillery; next the whole of the baggage, flanked by the two remaining cavalry regiments, the third

brigade with one squadron bringing up the extreme rear.

The supplies we had brought with us being pretty well eaten up by the time we reached Ghuzni, the duty of foraging along the foot of the hills devolved upon the two flanking regiments, who used to take three or four hundred baggage animals with them to bring in provisions. We were often out twelve or fourteen hours upon this duty, and as we found by experience that the Commissariat, when supplies ran short, served out full rations to the Government animals, and left our far harder worked horses only the residue, we soon learned to reverse the process, and provide for ourselves in the first instance. As a general rule, all the villages were deserted, and it required considerable ingenuity to unearth the hidden stores of grain. Our *sowars* from the frontier districts were adepts at this, and used to go about sounding the floors with the butt of a lance for buried provisions. One favourite place of concealment was underneath a mass of litter or *débris*.

The country to the south-west of Ghuzni is inhabited chiefly by Hazaras, who at that period were in a state of chronic feud with their Afghan neighbours. As usual, religion is at the bottom of their mutual antipathy, the former being Shiahs and the latter Sunnis. The former are also of a purely Mongolian type, and earned their name originally from *hazar*—"a thousand"—certain colonies of this strength having been imported and settled down in the country by former rulers.

Active hostilities had been proceeding for some months betwixt the two parties, the Shiahs being accused, amongst other things, of burning alive all the wounded Afghans left on the field after the fight at Ahmed Khel.

They are considered, as a rule, far less bloodthirsty and treacherous than their opponents, and considerable

numbers of them are employed by our Public Works Department in the Punjab, and can do a day's work equal to that of an English navvy.

The transmission of news in these countries seems always a bit of a mystery to Europeans. Although the entire district up to Kabul was held by Sunnis, yet on reaching Ghuzni I remember seeing various small parties of armed Hazaras trooping into the town, apprised in advance of the arrival under our convoy of one of their principal *mullahs*, whom they had come to escort to his home.

Being on flanking duty on the day we marched from Ahmed Khel, and the spurs of the mountains being open and undulating, we were able to penetrate some miles into the Karābāgh. Never did I see such a scene of desolation, and the devastation was apparently of very recent date. There was the mark of fire and sword everywhere, not a roof-tree left to a homestead, nor the trace of a living creature, and even the fruit-trees were barked or cut down. Some of our Pathān *sowars* informed me that these had been Hazara villages, and that they had been sacked in revenge for Ahmed Khel.

Near here, also, our column relieved a couple of hundred Shiahs who had been besieged in their fort for several weeks, and who took advantage of our presence to evacuate it and escape westwards with what few belongings they could carry.

As we proceeded down the valley of the Tarnak we met far more cultivation, Indian corn began to take the place of wheat, and the generally defenceless state of the villages indicated a less turbulent population.

On some days we were entirely dependent upon the maize for forage; the *bhootas* being, fortunately, almost ripe at this season proved a sufficient substitute for grain, and their stalks for hay.

Although we experienced no open resistance, still any stragglers were sure to be murdered, and in two instances a mounted *sowar* disappeared, horse and man, when carrying a message between two squadrons within sight of one another.

Despite this, as the marches lengthened out, camp-followers were constantly found hiding in *nullas*, to smoke or get a little sleep, and the squadron on rear-guard had to deploy a troop in extended order to regularly "whip in" stragglers, who, if left behind, were doomed to certain death, a fact which they either did not realise or disregarded.

By the 25th August we reached the fort of Khelat-i-Ghilzaie, garrisoned by the 27th Beluchis, and also heard the news of the unsuccessful sortie from Kandahar, and the death of General B——. The country around was quiet, and our garrison had remained unmolested.

After one day's rest, withdrawing, and taking the Khelat garrison with us, we marched to Khelat-i-Akhoond, where we got into direct communication with Kandahar, and there being now no pressing necessity to hurry along, and our General being laid up with fever, we were treated to another day's halt.

It is quite possible that the necessity of accurately weighing the respective merits of the two plans which obviously presented themselves at this juncture, may have been the real cause of the delay. The one which we actually followed was the simple one of continuing along the main route to the city. The alternative was to send on our sick and baggage under the escort of three of our cavalry regiments to Kandahar, whilst the remainder of our army crossed the low intervening range into the Arghandab valley, and marched down-stream upon Ayoob Khan's camp. The latter would then have had to fight with the desert and the Kandahar garrison

on his rear, and, had he made a stand, must have been annihilated. As this movement would probably have required two days to accomplish, it is pretty certain that the Afghan leader, who had already sent away his harem and more valuable possessions, would have decamped in the night, the spurs of the Khakrez range being within 4 miles of his camp.

On the other hand, it must be said that if Ayoob had been a man of the smallest capacity and energy, our forward move down the Tarnak valley to Kandahar left the road completely open for him to march up the Arghandab valley to Ghuzni and Kabul, when the work of the past twelve-month might have been undone by him in a single day.

Marching into Kandahar on the 31st August, very few indeed of the late besiegers were anywhere visible, but a reconnaissance of the 3rd Bengal Cavalry and 15th Sikhs, in the afternoon, disclosed the fact that they were still present in force. As usual, as soon as our reconnoitring force began to fall back, our adversaries came on in a swarm, and some delay was caused by the unwillingness of the Sikhs to retire, as, fixing bayonets, they clamoured to be led on against those "bāhnchuts."

Say what apologists may, the garrison had distinctly lost heart. One old brother officer of mine, who had been present at Maiwand, was especially outspoken on the subject.

For the first disaster, the blame must be chiefly allotted to the political authorities. In consequence of Ayoob Khan's advance from Herat, two or three thousand troops of Shere Ali Doorani—our puppet King of Kandahar—were despatched with a brigade, under General B——, to oppose his further progress at the Helmund river.

Upon the first appearance of the new Pretender, Shere Ali's levies, with touching unanimity, deserted to

him. Our weak brigade—consisting of the 66th Foot, B——'s battery Royal Horse Artillery, and one cavalry and two infantry regiments of the Bombay army—being now left isolated, had to retire. They had passed Maiwand on their return journey, when, on the night of the 26th of July, the principal officers were summoned by the General to what was an informal council of war. At this they were informed that a party of 500 Ghāzis having occupied the village of Maiwand, it was proposed to double back upon and cut these up, when the retirement could have been resumed with all the moral effect of a success.

My friends heard S——, the political officer, say that he could guarantee that not one of Ayoob's regular regiments had as yet crossed the Halmund (30 or 40 miles distant).

However good the idea may have been, its execution was most faulty, and it would have probably failed, even if the information upon which it was based had not been absolutely, and probably designedly, false. Although it was the hottest time in the year, the brigade did not get under way until nearly eight o'clock. With proper cavalry scouting, no surprise on such ground should have been possible; but our infantry, after struggling on for hours without water, under a burning sun, were thoroughly done up when they were unexpectedly met by Ayoob's entire army in full march upon them.

As Clive has said, "to stand still is danger—to recede, ruin," and the disastrous result is only too well known. As it subsequently transpired, there was a line of *karez* midway between the two forces, and the possession of this water by our troops might have changed the entire fortune of the day, our adversaries being as much in want of it as were our men.

What undoubtedly added to our loss was that the mule-drivers following with the baggage, as soon as

matters began to look serious, threw their loads on the ground and rode off, whilst our men, falling back upon these, maddened with thirst, swallowed soda water, wine or spirits, or any fluid they could lay their hands on. Towards the end the horse artillery alone covered the rout.

On the morning of the 1st September, the anniversary of Cavagnari's massacre, our force moved out to the attack. The cavalry camp, which was outside the city walls on the south, was left with little more than a stable guard, and yet the moment firing began the gates were shut in the face of our servants, who were unable to obtain any food for the day.

A certain amount of scepticism was exhibited by some of the garrison as to our finishing off the business in a single day, whereas, as a matter of fact, the entire fight was decided in twenty minutes.

One Staff-officer returning to the town to arrange for the despatch of a message, as soon as the result was decided, was eagerly questioned by the officer on guard at the gate as to "which side was getting the best of it."

Moving out westwards, until confronted by a labyrinth of walled gardens, the cavalry were dismounted under cover, whilst the infantry cleared the enclosures in front; and it was here that that brilliant soldier, Colonel B—— of the 72nd was killed.

Standing on a wall one got a very fair view of the proceedings, and it was a very pretty sight in the brilliant sunshine of a clear autumn day. Straight to our front, that is to the north, the precipitous razor-backed spur of the ridge, which extended in a south-west direction from the Baba Wali Kotal for about a mile and a half, ended abruptly in the plain, a further detached continuation of this range beginning near

Kokaran and the ruins of old Kandahar, a mile beyond. Through this gap, which was filled with well-kept, walled orchards, ran the road, or rather track, to Herat. The hill immediately in front, which concealed Ayoob's camp on the Arghandab, was 500 or 600 feet high, and gay with the standards of crowds of tribesmen lining the sky line, whilst almost at its foot the large village of Gundi Moolah—whose flat-roofed houses, built upon a knoll, rose tier upon tier over one another—was simply black with human heads.

Our heavy guns on the extreme right were shelling the Baba Wali Kotal, whilst within 1200 yards of us we saw the 92nd, led by W——, going forward in magnificent style at the above-named village. So clear was the light that we could notice their kilts waving as they advanced steadily in line, though here and there dropping figures could be discerned: the fire was tremendous, but ill-directed, otherwise but few could have survived it. As they neared the walls, and in response to their dashing leader—who was the first man in—broke into the *pas de charge*, we then for the first time perceived the 2nd Goorkhas, who had been working their way round on the left unseen, spring up and race at the village to try and forestall the Highlanders.

The latter, however, held the lead and kept it, and whilst nothing but muffled street firing was audible for a few minutes, one continuous black stream of fugitives came pouring out, followed presently by lighter khaki-clad figures blazing into them at close quarters. However, whilst "that race of flight and chase, pursuers and pursued," swept on towards the south-west point of the rocky ridge, the order for us to mount and push forward engrossed our immediate attention.

I may, however, mention, that giving no time for the fugitives to rally, the 92nd, the Goorkhas and 23rd

Pioneers pressed on, and turning the spur, changed their direction from south-west to north-east, rushed thirty odd guns covering that flank, and were in full possession of the enemy's camp in less than half an hour.

Hampered as the cavalry were by narrow lanes and unbridged water-channels, our progress to the Arghandab river was but slow, and a lot of precious time was needlessly wasted, especially in crossing the canals.

Throughout the campaign I noticed that some commanding officers seem to imagine that it detracts from their authority to allow the rear squadrons of their regiment to cross an obstacle at any other point than that by which they had led the way themselves. I have even known a young officer, who during a block asked his colonel's leave to look for another ford, being angrily asked, "Who is commanding, I should like to know? You or I?" The constantly recurring result was that whilst the head of a column moving in sections at a trot reached one of these canals—crossed by one narrow foot-path over which we had to go in single file, the steep ascent out of it soon getting wet and slippery—it was perhaps ten minutes or a quarter of an hour before the last of our five hundred men was over. As, in addition, commanding officers possessed of this degree of intelligence, as soon as they had got across themselves, usually pressed forward at a trot without giving time for units to reform, it soon became a wild game of "follow my leader." I have more than once been galloping on, looking right and left down the cross lanes to try and discover which way the regiment had gone.

When eventually we had forded the Arghandab and got clear of the orchards, we found ourselves on an open stony plain, about 4 miles wide, from the right bank of the stream to the foot of the Khakrez range on the north-west. More westward, in the direction of the

caravan route to Girishk and Herat, the valley merged into open desert, and on this side we saw a large body of horsemen—probably escorting Ayoob Khan—disappearing at a gallop in a cloud of dust—with 5 or 6 miles' start over us. As we deployed, and cantered along in a direction parallel to the river, over excellent cavalry ground, the main stream of fugitives had already gained the mountains, and some other bodies issuing from the river-bed, turned back and made their way up-stream, under cover of the mass of vineyards and gardens on the left bank. Here neither could cavalry act nor infantry overtake them, and so the bulk of them escaped scatheless.

Some few hundred men in scattered bands being out in the middle, were caught and mopped up. One lot of forty or fifty, amongst whom were several regulars, gained the village of Fasl at the foot of the mountains, and took post behind a *sangar* on a rocky spur above it. As we could not charge, we had dismounted to dislodge them with carbine fire, and were rapidly turning their flank, when the brigadier, apprehensive that we might get drawn into too big a business, sent a peremptory order for our recall.

Marching back through the vineyards, where we lost a flock of captured sheep, turning a corner we ran against the first Afghan we had seen for a couple of hours, and who had probably been off to hide his arms and resume the *rôle* of a peaceful cultivator. "Kaun ho?" ("Who are you?") asked the nearest Sikh trooper. "Rayat i sirkar" ("Your humble servant"), responded the man, who evidently understood a little Hindustani. "Ah," quoth the *sowar*, "peshtar Ghazi ab bahnchūt" ("first a Ghāzi, now a blackguard"), and I only intervened in time to prevent his being cut down.

Our casualties were relatively small, 15 officers and 234 men killed and wounded, whilst the enemy's loss

did not, I think, exceed 1200 or 1500 men. They were, however, terribly demoralised, as when I had three days later to make a sketch of the ground traversed by the cavalry, I found none of the dead bodies had been removed, not even from the rocky knoll at the foot of the mountain at the village of Fasl—miles away. Those lying on the track followed by the Goorkhas showed by the tell-tale marks of the *kookries* that the old Scotch motto of "I mak' siccar" had been thoroughly borne in mind.

The aspect of the corpses after three days' exposure to an almost tropical sun was most ghastly. To anyone who knows how touchingly exact Mahomedans are in according religious sepulture to their relatives, the significance of this fact requires no comment. I ascribe their panic entirely to W——'s brilliant rush, which began and finished the battle, and brought home to them, by the suddenness of their defeat, the futility of any further attempt to stand against us.

Poor M—— of the Horse Artillery, who had been taken prisoner at Maiwand, was found dead in a tent adjacent to Ayoob's, when the camp was captured. He had evidently been kindly treated, and was probably murdered after the *sirdar's* flight. Apparently all the Bibles found amongst the captured baggage at Maiwand had been presented to him, as over a dozen were found there.

This same tempestuous advance which captured the enemy's camp had quite cut off the retreat of the tribesmen crowning the rocky peaks above the village of Gundi Moolah.

The 4th Goorkhas—who had been standing inactive in the reserve brigade, and were very cross thereat—espying this isolated body, asked leave to go and *shikar* them. Swarming up the rocks, they gained the

crest long before their British officers, and joyfully "sailed in" at the enemy.

These last, with truly Asiatic inconsistency, instead of fighting like rats in a corner and selling their lives dearly, made but a poor defence. As resistance had practically ceased, a British officer who climbed up had them disarmed and despatched under escort to the General for orders. Soon after they had disappeared out of sight a spattering of musketry was heard, and the *jemadar* in charge of the party returning, reported with a bland smile that the "Ghazi logue had tried to escape, so they had been obliged to shoot them all."

A glaring instance occurred of how some of our own officers, from long association with natives, become their dupes. During the retreat from Maiwand, a fine handsome-looking *chupprassi* belonging to the Political Agency disappeared. He was well known to most of the officers, his duty being to usher in visitors to his master. At the sortie of the 16th of August, when General B—— was killed, he was recognised at close quarters in the streets of the village, by A—— of the Quartermaster-General's department, fighting against us. The day after Ayoob's defeat he returned, stating that he had been kept a prisoner all the time, and was reinstated in favour by his master, who absolutely refused to believe a word against him. It is hardly surprising that an army, when dependent for information on such sources, should have been easily lured to its destruction.

For the next week the cavalry were encamped out near the Arghandab river, for the convenience of water and forage. A flying column pushed out to Maiwand, and various search-parties hunted the neighbouring villages for traces of the wreck of our army.

There were such masses of grapes everywhere, that they were to be had for the picking, most of the owners

not yet caring to show up. The vines are here planted in trenches, which can be flooded as required, and are trained up over wide earthen banks about 4 feet high, and very well this seems to answer in a rainless country such as this.

People at home, particularly those of the "Grand Old Man's" school, are so very fond of preaching about our high moral principles and unswerving adherence to our promises, that they almost seem to imagine that the Radical party at least is impeccable in this respect. Yet after the people of Kandahar, and, I believe, many of the tribes in the Koorum also, had been solemnly assured in *durbar* by the British Representative that under no circumstances would they be again placed under the rule of Kabul, upon the fall of the Conservative Government their successors deliberately ignored these promises. The mischief was that many, who on the faith of this assurance had thrown in their lot with us, had to fly the country on our evacuation of it, and that native faith in British honour was rudely shaken.

M——'s Brigade was the first to depart for India, and as my regiment was detailed to accompany it, we got off before the middle of September. As our camp was only 6 miles out, we made a double stage that day, overtaking the infantry at their first halt. Some few of our men when passing the town got leave to go to the bazaar to purchase sugar or other small luxuries for the journey. One of these, a very cheery Sikh, turned up at our camp with three uncommonly fine-looking Persian greyhounds. On asking how he became possessed of these, he replied he had bought them; but on enquiring as to the price, he replied with a deprecatory smile, that he had been "very anxious, very anxious indeed to pay for them, only he could not find the

From Kandahar to the Khōjak the road is extremely dreary, and for two or three days our already hard-worked horses had nothing but their grain ration; grass, or even straw, being simply non-existent. The ascent of the Pass is gradual throughout—from about 3500 at the foot, to 7000 at the crest of the Khōjak range.

Reaching Gulistan Karez, about 40 miles from Quetta, my squadron was detached with M—— to punish some of the Murree tribes, who had taken advantage of our reverse to raid a lot of our smaller, and even to attack some of our larger posts, such as Dargi.

The first valley we turned our attention to was a very high-lying one of Kawas—which, if I remember right, was at an elevation of about 7000 feet above the sea. Anyhow, at the end of September the nights were bitterly cold, and the single blanket we had marched down with was very insufficient. One at least of the surrounding peaks rises to over 11,000 feet. The great feature about this lovely valley were the gigantic fissures, clean as if cut with a knife, in some of the surrounding hills, and the thick woods, in places, of the finest *Arbor Vitæ* trees I have ever seen. Further up the valley was one village rejoicing in the truly Hibernian name of "Begorra."

No resistance was offered, and hostages were given by the chief, but the houses of one outlying hamlet whose people would not come in, and wherein some plunder was found, were made an example of.

It is extraordinary to what places the small Beluchi ponies—invariably unshod—can climb, and I have seen a man riding on a very steep declivity of sheet rock, where I would not have ventured even to lead an Arab.

Marching back by the Spin Tangi—an extraordinary chasm through the mountain, where the advance-guard

seemed to disappear into the bowels of the earth—news was brought to our General that by a rapid advance it would be possible to save the large stores at Harnai. These, consisting of both food and material, had been collected for the construction of the projected railway, and a very fair fort and two or three bungalows had been built. After Maiwand, this station was hurriedly evacuated, all our belongings being confided to the care of the local headsmen.

The story now brought to the political agent—which, by the way, proved inexact in all particulars—was to the effect that these stores were still intact, but that upon hearing of our approach the tribesmen could no longer be restrained from looting them.

It was settled that I should push on with the bulk of the squadron, followed by five hundred men of the 15th Sikhs in light order, upon whom we might fall back, if unable to hold our ground. Taking only half a dozen ponies for cooking-pots and spare ammunition, with the *syces* mounted, and a couple of riding camels for a servant and supplies for ourselves, we marched at 7 A.M., being given a free hand to accomplish the journey, estimated at 54 miles, in one day or two, as I deemed advisable.

By keeping on at something which, if a fast walk at the head of the column was a jog at the tail end, and giving ten minutes' halt every two hours, we had accomplished 30 miles by 1 o'clock, when we stopped an hour to water and feed.

Starting again at 2 P.M., and leading our horses for another hour, we mounted, and breaking into a slow trot, entered the Harnai valley about half an hour before sunset.

Here there were no signs of the tribal gathering which had been foretold, although we could see people

abandoning the villages and driving their flocks up to the mountains. Reaching the fort, we found it in such an indescribable state of dirt and wreck that it was impossible to spend the night within its walls. One of the *sowars* showed me a stick of dynamite out of which he had taken a bite, under the impression that it was some sort of barley-sugar, and I then noticed for the first time that the stony ground upon which we had dismounted was perfectly strewn with these.

It had evidently been completely gutted weeks previously, and tins of preserved meat, all with a sword-point through them, and smelling vilely, torn books, bottles, and dynamite cartridges littered the ground in all directions. The night passed quietly, but as there were numerous signal or bivouac fires burning on the hills a few miles to the northward, I took twenty of our freshest horses, nearly all of which were Arabs, and started at daybreak to find out if any gathering was there collected. All seemed so quiet, that on reaching the foot of a spur I left fifteen of my small party, and rode on another mile with five *sowars*. Here we suddenly came on a large flock of sheep, and some men perched up on rocks opened fire upon us. Two of the troopers, who were frontier Pathāns and born freebooters, offered to cut off the herd, so sending one of the remaining ones back to bring up the rest of our party, two of us dismounted with carbines, whilst the fifth held our horses. All went well, as, though our opponents shot two or three of their own sheep, they hit none of us, and on the arrival of the main body we successfully brought away the whole of the flock.

One packet of cartridges I took from a *sowar's* pouch proved on being opened to be Martini instead of Snider ones, but this, luckily, was not repeated in the next case. The neighbouring villages, when searched, were found

crammed with loot, from loaves of lump-sugar to bottles of hock. What between the sheep brought in and other supplies, both man and horse had a feast such as they had not been accustomed to for months.

The Sikhs arrived on the morning of the third day, and although I gave over as many "muttons" as they could eat, yet when on the fourth day the rest of the brigade came up, and I handed the balance over to Commissariat custody, there were still over four hundred left.

We made a couple of expeditions up side *nullas*, finding remnants of Government property in every house, but meeting with no opposition in any of them. One *ziārat* in the hills was adorned with quite a good collection of horns, chiefly *markhoor* heads. The river, which resembled a Scotch trout-stream, was full of small *mahseer*, which rose freely; and one evening, with a light trout-rod and fly, I got forty-four, some of which ran up to a couple of pounds.

After a week's repose we moved on again. At Kāch, I think it was, we were ambushed by forty or fifty men, who commanded a sharp cliff we had to struggle up and down again, the base projecting into deep water. They were soon driven off, we having only two or three men slightly hit; but the amusing thing about it was that, as soon as the firing began, some sick Goorkhas carried in *doolies* tumbled out of these, and, weak as they were, began to scramble up the hill.

On the side of the path up the cliff was an abandoned donkey, and one of our Pathāns, receiving permission, annexed this, and the ascent being hopelessly blocked above, he simply stripped, shoved the animal into the river, and swam down with it to the bottom of the pool.

In another couple of days we reached the comparative civilisation of Sibi, and the luxury of a railway, after

having been almost incessantly on the march for three months.

From Lahore, or rather Mian Mir, I had to proceed to the Jhung Fair to purchase remounts, and was much struck with my first experience of that part of the country, about 100 miles north of Mooltan. The district is dry and arid, with a rainfall of only 13 or 14 inches a year, and water is seldom found, away from the rivers, at less than 100 feet below the surface. Villages are consequently few and far between, and horses are therefore necessary, if not for existence, at least to keep up communications between neighbours. What with the dry soil and climate, and the long distances the foals and fillies are accustomed to trot at their mothers' heels, it is a country where, as the inspecting veterinary surgeon said, "The English thorough-bred will improve." Country-bred stock fetched higher prices than at any other Indian fair I have yet seen, and the best class of them were quite beyond regimental prices.

The men, however, most surprised me, as they are about the biggest-limbed and most powerful-looking lot I ever came across—far taller and broader than the average Englishman — though possibly their enormous turbans and loose-flowing garments may create some illusion in this respect.

It certainly was a unique sight to see these wild-looking, long-haired *zemindars* tent-pegging in splendid form—as it is the national game of these parts—with foals running whinnying behind the mares down the course.

After three months' leave out of India, I again found myself settled down in my old haunts in Central India, where, thanks to the rest the jungles had got for a couple of years, our hot-weather party shot eighteen tigers, more than a dozen bears and panthers, and

twenty *sambhur* or other "various." One somewhat curious jungle incident I witnessed occurred in the early morning before sunrise. I had left my horse about a quarter of a mile off, and walked forward to a point of the plateau where I had a good view over a fairly open stretch of stony undulating ground. On this I perceived a *sambhur* stag and six hinds, walking slowly towards some thick jungle about 500 yards ahead. Presently I caught sight of another yellowish-looking animal advancing in the same direction, and the deer, becoming aware of its proximity, pulled up and began to "bell," and I then for the first time realised that the new arrival was a tiger. The *sambhur*, far from bolting, walked along side by side and within 100 yards of him, barking incessantly. As the tiger *more suo* took down a deepish ravine, I thought I saw my chance, and started to run, although I was in sight of the deer, who kept along the top of the bank. They, of course, soon perceived me and scurried off for the covert, but what I had not expected was that they communicated the alarm to their natural enemy, whom a minute later I saw going off full gallop for the jungle.

CHAPTER IX

EGYPT—1882

HAVING obtained eight months' leave to travel in Persia —to do which officers were at that time offered every encouragement—I proceeded thither in November 1881, but it would exceed all reasonable limits to introduce so extended a subject into mere garrison reminiscences. Sailing from Bombay to Busrah by British India steamer, and thence by river boat to Bagdad, I visited Babylon, Ctesiphon and Seleucia. From thence, marching northwards to Nineveh, and then eastwards through the Koordish Mountains to Tabriz, near the Russian frontier, I returned south *viâ* Urmiah, Sulimania and Kermanshah to Bagdad, having covered about 2000 miles, and regained India by steamer.

Immediately afterwards being granted furlough to Europe, I was lucky enough to get through by the last train which ran for the time being from Suez to Alexandria, where the so-called massacre had just taken place. Thanks to this, I got included in the Staff of the expeditionary force which was despatched under Sir A—— A—— a few days subsequently.

Up to the eve of our departure it was arranged that the bombardment of Alexandria and the advance upon Cairo were to be effected conjointly by Britain and by France, and it was even settled that whilst that seaport should form the French base, the British were to operate from Ismailia on the Suez Canal. As

our allies, however, drew back at the eleventh hour, the Staff for the advance of the expeditionary force left London not quite clear how far this unforeseen contingency would prove subversive of the contemplated plan of campaign. We had received strict injunctions to travel out separately so as not to excite Continental comment, but as usual the whole story became public property within twenty-four hours. The despatch boat *Salamis* awaited our General at Brindisi, and as soon as we had assembled there we steamed off immediately for Cyprus, where we were to meet the Channel squadron conveying our landing party, which consisted of two battalions from Malta, and one of marines from England. Reaching Limasol Bay on the 12th July, we found the men-of-war and the troops, but no orders, and, to add to our perplexity, heard that the bombardment of Alexandria had already commenced. The instructions under which we had started were that the attack upon this town, and the occupation of the Canal, were to be effected simultaneously, and two urgent telegrams despatched by us to London failed to elicit any reply.

It was alleged that the cause of this fatal delay was that our Gladstonian Government were, as a matter of economy, employing the Ottoman telegraph line, as being a few pence a word cheaper than the deep-sea one, and that the Turks were purposely delaying our messages, whilst their experts hammered away endeavouring to decipher them. It was further said that the Admiral had not been informed that we were to act under his direct orders, whilst we had been warned to look to him for all instructions.

Lord K——, then an R.E. captain at Cyprus, was most anxious to accompany our force, and Sir A—— A—— was very desirous to obtain his services, on account

of his possessing the very rare qualification of a knowledge of Arabic, but the governor could not sanction his departure.

After a day's delay, our General resolved to proceed to Port Said on his own responsibility, this being in fact the course previously mapped out for him, as he had neither a reply to his telegrams from home, nor any means of communicating with the naval Commander-in-Chief at Alexandria.

Chartering a couple of light-draught trading steamers, as the *Northumberland* and *Agincourt* were unable to enter the Canal, we ran into Port Said the next forenoon, finding to our surprise everything perfectly quiet there, and even the band of an Egyptian regiment preparing to play on the square.

Here our General received a peremptory order from London to return to Cyprus, our Government having as usual decided on the half-measure of proceeding with the bombardment without disembarking any forces, but as A—— remarked, we could go back there *viâ* Alexandria, so we forthwith started along the coast. Before sunset that evening we were met by a gunboat, detached by the naval Commander-in-Chief, with orders to hurry up with the troops, as the city was in flames and landing-parties were urgently required; and going full steam ahead we arrived in harbour early the next morning.

En route, seeing a foreign man-of-war I asked a blue-jacket standing near me to what nationality she belonged. "Oh, it's only one of them blanked Dutchmen, sir," he replied with a disparaging air. One of his officers coming up just then and making some remark relative to "that German frigate," I turned to the sailor with, "Why, you told me that she was a Dutch one?" "Oh, sir," he answered, with surprise at my ignorance, "we always calls all that lubberly lot Dutchmen." I thought at the time how this

classification would have made the great Prince Bismarck's hair stand on end!

One great feature of the bombardment was the extreme cordiality displayed by the officers of the American men-of-war which were present. Whilst those of other Powers remained anchored in sulky silence outside, the Yankees steamed past our ships, playing "God save the Queen," and cheering. One of their captains boarded a battleship of ours with the remark: "Wal, I reckon we could not duplicate this business"; whilst another summed up the situation in, "Well, it's all Julius Cæsar, Auld Lang Syne, and Queen Victoria, but you gave them h——l!"

However good the naval gunnery practice had been, the effect was largely discounted by the faulty fuses which were then served out, as usual from motives of economy. Indeed one of the 80-ton gun shells was said to have been found inside the Ras-el-Tin Magazine, blind from this cause. Many of the broken trunnions and gun-carriages of the Egyptian batteries were also credited to the gun-cotton of the first landing parties, anxious to improve upon the average made by the fire of their particular ships; but certainly one most signal service was rendered by a torpedo party which, slipping past the terminus of the Main Station, blew away a couple of feet of rails, whereby thirty or forty locomotives, which had already got steam up, were cut off and captured.

We found upon arrival that there were a thousand men of the fleet ashore, under the command of Sir J—— F—— and Lord C—— B——, and admirably had they selected a defensive line which—owing to much of the rampart having been demolished to admit of buildings and railways—was by no means an easy thing to decide upon.

The Admiral published an energetic proclamation of

martial law in the Khedive's name, containing the significant announcements: "*Des ordres ont été donnés aux officiers commandant les patrouilles de fusiller tout individu pris en flagrant délit d'incendier les maisons. . . . Tout individu qui sera pris une seconde fois en flagrant délit de pillage, sera fusillé*"—and he proposed to send a battalion and a strong force of blue-jackets to restore order in the streets, where in many places the houses were yet blazing fiercely. Our General, however, deprecated this arrangement, as he said the sailors would perform this particular duty so very much better than the regulars, as they had no conscience in the matter, whilst he would take up the external defence of the town with his troops; and this division of duty was adopted.

As rumour had it that Arabi Pasha, reinforced by Bedouins, was going to attack us that night with 40,000 men, our three battalions were hurriedly disembarked and distributed along the most important points.

Two of the ships which had carried our regiments were unable to cross the bar, so our men had to be landed in driblets by means of some small steamers, and a brother Staff-officer of mine when marching up some of these parties had repeatedly to pass a guard of about thirty blue-jackets, under a midshipman. As the entire detachment upon each occasion turned out and presented arms to him, after he had been accorded this honour two or three times he went up and remonstrated, saying he was only a captain, and that he was sorry they should have been put to so much trouble. "Oh no!" responded the Middy, "it's no trouble at all; on the contrary, we rather like it."

In fact our light-hearted sailors regarded the whole affair from the point of view of a spree ashore, and construed the terms of the proclamation of martial law in the most liberal sense. I don't suppose it ever

entered into their heads for a single moment that the Arabs, or other ——, as they were generically termed, had any feelings worth taking into account in the matter.

At dusk the patrols started out on their errands of peace, generally with a Gatling-gun or some such rallying-point, and simply turned their fire loose down any street in which anyone happened to be visible. Indeed, I heard that upon more than one occasion two naval detachments were seen blazing from opposite ends of the same street, with a sublime disregard of their personal safety, at the miscellaneous crowd of Levantines, Arabs and Greeks, who were dodging about from door to door—and it certainly did not much matter how many of the scum of Europe got wiped out, though our sailors took only an impartially sporting view of the case. By the same process of reasoning, the preliminary marking of plunderers—by cutting off the hair above the right ear—was regarded as wholly superfluous, and invariably dispensed with.

One officer told me that his patrol had entered a big house whose door was broken open, and that they had found the furniture of the salon already sprinkled with kerosene oil. As a fire had broken out near at hand, he and his men had hastened thither to try and extinguish it, but before they had been gone ten minutes the building just quitted was in a blaze.

There was a well-known ex-Parisian Communard with the Egyptian revolutionary party, and doubtless to his instigation much of the wanton destruction must be ascribed. The *employés* of the Crédit Lyonnais Bank had fortified their building, and with a garrison of forty or fifty Montenegrins had escaped unscathed by the bombardment, and had successfully held their premises against the mob until relieved by our naval landing-parties.

One sharp night's work restored order and saved the few remaining undamaged edifices of the European quarter; nor did the much-vaunted attack come off either then or upon any subsequent occasion.

We had barely completed our preparations to meet the expected onslaught when a telegram was received from London forbidding the disembarkation of any troops save the few who might be necessary for police purposes. However, an urgent representation as to the impossibility of now making any retrograde movement had its effect, and events were allowed to take their course.

Our Headquarters were established exactly opposite the railway terminus, which appeared to be the centre of the zone most open to assault, and we made ourselves very comfortable in an empty and untouched dwelling-house, which seemingly belonged to a *bourgeoise* family. This had been so hastily abandoned, that all sorts of toilette requisites and boxes of bon-bons were still on the tables, whilst shelves and cupboards were full of articles of attire.

On the following morning our General made a minute inspection of the line of defence, and of the changes which might be necessitated under certain eventualities. The principal danger was obviously caused by the large and visibly disaffected Arab population, which normally exceeds 200,000 souls within the works, and the most urgent question was, how to keep them in check in the event of any serious extraneous attack.

A kind of Martello-tower, named Kum-el-Dikh, was so excellently adapted for coercing the slums which it dominated, that it had been garrisoned at the outset by a naval lieutenant and thirty or forty sailors, and it was determined that a couple of field-guns should be placed in position on the upper platform, to exert the necessary

amount of moral suasion. As it was considered a matter of urgency that this should be accomplished with the least possible delay, the R.E. officer in command prepared a memo, on the spot, detailing the requisite numbers and dimensions of the spars, ropes, blocks and tackle which were to be indented for from the Egyptian arsenal, and by means of which it was hoped that, with due diligence, the guns might be in position within forty-eight hours. Shortly after breakfast that same morning, when I was at work in the Staff office, the naval lieutenant in command of this post turned up with the enquiry as to whether there was any work for his men to do; to which I replied that he had better hurry up with the preparations for mounting the two guns. "But they are already mounted," he responded with becoming modesty, with, at the same time, the obvious consciousness of how well he had scored off the "sojer" officers.

In fact, the "handy men" had, goodness knows how, just bundled the guns of something like three-quarters of a ton up the narrow, corkscrew staircase, which no mere landlubber would have ever considered practicable for such an achievement.

Naval working-parties were conducted upon very different principles from those which prevail with regimental fatigue-parties. Instead of standing about, or even sitting and reading a novel, and leaving matters to the sergeant-major, their officers were invariably in their shirt-sleeves, and whilst superintending, were heaving and hauling with the best of their men. On the other hand, whilst these worked with a will, as they invariably did, there was a strong current of blankety-blanked expletives permeating the air. On my remarking upon this to one officer, he replied, "Well, yes, they do swear a tidy bit, and say they don't see

why they should stand guard all night, and work all day—but still they do it."

Their keen alacrity upon all occasions to undertake no matter what work was also particularly refreshing. It has been so often my lot as a Staff-officer to experience that when a regiment is unexpectedly called upon to find a detachment for some sudden duty, the order is somewhat grudgingly obeyed, surprise is expressed that there had been no previous notice, or difficulties as to the men's dinners, and other such items are raised. During the month, however, when as brigade-major I was brought much in contact with the naval force ashore, I found absolutely the contrary. Their people, one and all, simply jumped at the chance of doing anything, anyhow. Once, for instance, on my asking a middy in charge of a picket if he could take forward a field-gun to support a reconnaissance—"Of course we can, sir," he eagerly replied, whilst, "We'll haul it along somehow," broke from several of his detachment; and another of them added, "I know where there's a horse." In response to my query as to whether they had got rations in case they were kept out for the night, "Oh, we'll manage somehow, sir," was the cheery response.

I purchased a very good horse from one blue-jacket for ten shillings, which the owner, or at least the vendor, informed me he had got over there on the starboard side, moored stem and stern. Indeed, the poor animal was tied up inside an archway in the ramparts, by a complicated arrangement of running bowlines and clove-hitches sufficient to secure an average tiger. The horse, which was originally offered for five shillings and a bottle of brandy—which latter I had hard-heartedly to refuse—was a very fine Syrian Arab stallion, which had apparently kicked himself clear of the ignominy of

harness during Arabi Pasha's retreat from the city. I rode him for the next three months, and as no further claimant for the animal turned up, I was able to bequeath him as a handsome present to a brother officer when I sailed for England four months subsequently.

The Americans and Germans were the only two foreign nationalities who landed any armed parties for the protection of their respective Consulates. The officer in charge of the former detachment, upon being cautioned that he had better keep clear of complications and not join in any fighting unless his party was attacked, responded, "I reckon we'll be attacked!"

The most noticeable thing about the Teuto expletived Dutchmen, as our sailors persisted in them—was that every man detailed for duty ashore speak English. It is certainly a great tribute language, and one which many generations of Kaisers may well wait in vain to see accorded by the British tar to the tongue of the Fatherland.

There were many good stories current of the practical, if happy-go-lucky, fashion in which our sailors performed their unwonted shore duties. As they were ever anxious to have a shot at somebody, no matter who, and developed a decided tendency to fire before challenging, the novel and unmilitary practice of carrying a lantern when going the rounds was adopted when they were in question. Shortly after this system had been inaugurated, a colloquy was overheard of: "Who goes there?" "Rounds!" "What rounds?" "Visiting rounds," and then a stage-aside from the sentry, "Oh, I knew it was you, you ——, by your lantern."

Upon another occasion when relieving sentries, "Give over your orders," quoth the petty officer to the sailor on duty. "There ain't no blooming orders," responded the man; "you've only got to promenade about this here

adopted a 40-pr. for the purpose. I well remember when he and B—— came to report upon their having accomplished this, and some doubt was expressed by our General as to whether the recoil might not derail the railway waggon. "Oh no, sir," they cheerfully replied; "we ran the train out to El Mex, and put a couple of shells into a Bedouin encampment, and the truck stood it perfectly." I do not know what these nomads' feelings may have been at being thus utilised in the cause of science.

The same officer was most anxious to start off a run-away engine with a waggon-load or two of explosives into Arabi's camp at Kafr Douar, and some of his men were awfully keen on the experiment, as they were quite sure that they could manage to turn on full-steam and jump off the engine somehow!

Another characteristic anecdote was, when our 40-prs. on the Ramleh sand-hill were quite out-classed by the Krupp-guns opposed to them, we had to indent upon the Navy, and a 110-pr. was supplied. This was brought by rail to the foot of the knoll, and within 120 yards of the battery on the crest, but tug as they would, the strongest fatigue-parties absolutely failed to move the 8- or 9-tons of gun and carriage through the loose sand. In this dilemma a naval lieutenant volunteered to get the piece into position, and requisitioning a couple of cables, a huge spar to act as a bollard, and some tackle from the Egyptian dockyard, after smashing one cable, he successfully accomplished the feat by utilising the steam-engine, at what at first appeared to be an impossible angle. When the heavy piece of ordnance—a muzzle-loader—had been mounted in the battery and handed over to the gunners, these, when they came to sponge it out, found that it had been all this time loaded with a live shell.

When martial law was suspended, a distinguished

naval officer was employed as Chief of the Police, which was formed out of some of the Khedive's adherents. One evening, when a party of us were seated outside Abbat's Hotel—which was used as a sort of informal club after things had settled down a bit—the above-named officer rode past, followed by half a dozen mounted Egyptians. "There you go, Charley," shouted one of his friends after him, "swaggering about with an escort at your heels." "Well, I'll tell you what it is, my dear fellow," promptly responded C——; "if you had hanged and flogged half as many men as I have, you'd be d—d glad to have an escort also."

Some of the small Arab horses furnished from the same source proved most useful, and enabled us to extemporise some mounted infantry under the energetic superintendence of the present General H——.

Such signallers as had been recently on service in South Africa proved to be the only ones of any possible use, those belonging to regiments newly out from England being far too slow in their manipulation of the heliograph.

Things settled down quite uneventfully after the first ten days, and beyond occasional reconnaissances and some long-range artillery practice, nothing further occurred. The strong forts at Aboukir Bay were left severely alone, nor was their retention of any possible use to anybody, as they simply command the road to nowhere, while we held the fashionable resort of Ramleh, about midway between the city and that bay. The bulk of the Egyptian army was at Kafr Douar, a dozen miles distant—with our outposts in touch about midway—and the large but shallow lake of Mareotis closed all other line of advance upon Alexandria. French apologists for the massacre of their prisoners of war at Jaffa, and the poisoning of their own wounded during the retreat from Acre, are pleased to qualify our inundation of this tract

during the blockade of Alexandria, in 1801, as being one of those indefensible acts of warfare of which no other nation but Britain would be capable.

One of the numerous reconnaissances which were executed to keep the enemy amused and lead them to fancy that a serious advance from Alexandria was contemplated, was made a good deal of by some recently arrived "specials," and excited telegrams of the "reconnaisance in force" appeared in the English Press. One blue-jacket who had participated therein was overheard to spell out the very florid published account, and to remark "Well, they may call it a re-con-nais-sance, but I calls it a —— lark."

During the influx of senior officers and Staffs coincident with the advent of the expeditionary force, a game of general post ensued, and one man of the Naval Brigade ashore was heard to remark: "Well, there's seven —— Generals come, but I vote we stick on to our old one-armed ——"; and the gallant commandant, to whom this was repeated, declared that it was the greatest compliment which he had ever had paid to him in his life.

In the new shuffle of the cards I found myself transferred as Assistant Quartermaster-General of the cavalry division, and passed round to Ismailia, where I was upon the Staff of Sir D—— L——, with the lamented H—— S—— as A.A.G.

The Canal authorities—who had vainly protested against this international water-way being used for military operations, and had furthermore declared that five steamers anchored in Lake Timsah would block the navigation—flatly refused to pilot our transports in. These were accordingly boarded at El Guisr by naval officers, who took charge, and steered them in to their moorings. So far as I know, not a single *contretemps* occurred, and at one time 127 ships were anchored off Ismailia without in any way impeding the passage of the Canal.

For about a couple of weeks Kassassin was our head-quarters, during which time, although within 25 miles of our base at Ismailia, we were chiefly dependent for shelter upon tents captured from the Egyptians. In fact there was a complete break-down of all our more scientific and elaborate preparations.

The regimental baggage-carts, built entirely for strength, and forming a good heavy load in themselves, are just calculated to convey even a moderate weight, with well-fed horses, upon well-metalled roads. It was therefore scarcely surprising that when these were employed across deep sandy tracks, with teams still unfit from the effects of a sea-voyage and unsuitable forage, they simply broke down hopelessly. Our railway detachments also, however excellent their theoretical training may have been, were so sadly deficient in practice, that they derailed more locomotives than they ever brought forward, and until some of the cosmopolitan ex-engine-drivers had been re-employed, the line of rail proved of not the slightest use to us.

For a week or more we were entirely dependent upon the Navy for supplies, which were brought up by steam-launches, which our sailors had hauled up bodily from Lake Timsah to the Sweet Water canal. When, however, this was handed over to our engineers, their first proceeding was to open the sluices in order to cleanse it, with the result that—as it has a level of 8 or 10 feet over the salt-water lake, and our opponents had thoughtfully dammed up the channel above us—the lower part soon ran nearly dry, and was of no further use for navigation.

One amusing incident occurred after the skirmish at El Metemeh. A well-dressed Egyptian, issuing from a farm-house, attempted to walk past our outposts and was detained. The commander of the 1st Brigade, passing at this juncture, vainly endeavoured to interrogate

him, but he persisted in his feigned ignorance of any Latin tongue, and signified in dumb pantomime that he understood only Arabic. The brigadier, who was very wroth, exclaimed, "I believe, sir, you're a d—d spy! By G——! if you don't speak, I'll have you shot at three o'clock!" but just then something else claiming his attention, he rode off, dismissing the subject from his mind. The corporal of the guard, however, who had taken this last statement *au pied de la lettre*, marched his prisoner out at three o'clock to shoot him against a convenient sand-hill; upon which the individual, who proved to be —— Pasha, one of Arabi's principal adherents, plumping down on his knees, promptly confessed his identity.

At Kassassin we had a decidedly unsavoury experience. Our sole water-supply was from the canal, which, being dammed up both above and below us, was a tepid, pea-soup sort of mixture under the sweltering August sun. Some story having got about that a couple of Egyptian field-pieces had been thrown into it, a score of *sowars* of the native cavalry were detailed to explore the water, which was 4 to 6 feet deep, and stripping, they trod along the bed in line. No guns were discovered, though a good many Remingtons were brought to the surface, as well as six or eight corpses half-buried in the mud; but despite this discovery we had, *faute de mieux*, to continue to use this beverage.

The affair at Kassassin on the night of the 28th August 1882 was a curiously mixed-up sort of a business. The infantry Divisional General who commanded the camp had absolutely no proper outposts, and the consequence was that the cavalry were continually having to mount, and move out to check some reconnaissance or demonstration on the part of our opponents. It was not until Lord W—— himself came up, that a redoubt held by half a battalion and a couple of guns was

established on the ridge, about a mile to our front, and these vexatious alarms were put an end to. On one famous occasion, when the whole available troops had to turn out late in the evening to meet an advance in force of the Egyptians, the cavalry, who were in the desert upon the right flank of the infantry, received a vague verbal order to charge, when it was already too dark for them to see their objective; and the well-known picture of the household cavalry attacking an Egyptian battery was a pure artistic vision. One distinguished officer of the Life Guards, whose ardour carried him far ahead of his men, had a very narrow escape, as he found himself somehow in rear of the enemy's line, and returning, he just hit off the interval between a battalion deployed and a battery limbered up and retiring, and this I believe was the entire history of the guns.

Early in September, on a bright moonlight night, I was ordered to proceed with a squadron of the Dragoon Guards towards Salahieh, 15 miles north of Kassassin across the desert — from which quarter an attack was anticipated. Feeling more reliance in the pluck than in the scouting abilities of the dragoons, who were fresh from England, I asked the commandant of the 13th Bengal Lancers to let me have half a dozen Frontier Pathāns. Starting about 9 P.M., and steering by the North Star, we had barely advanced a mile when a report was brought in that a couple of the enemy's vedettes were visible upon a knoll to the right front. The ground was beautifully open, and just sufficiently undulating to limit the view, even with daylight, to a mile or so. Halting the main body, we trotted on to the spot, only to find that a couple of stunted shrubs were responsible for the alert. In the course of the next two hours we had quite half a dozen of these ridiculous scares,

and this was not to be wondered at when we consider what sort of preparation for night work a soldier has in an English barrack-yard. I had remarked pretty sharply upon one sergeant who had already given two false alarms, when upon cantering up to his party, which had sent in yet another report to the effect that a detachment of the enemy had just retired over the ridge, the non-commissioned officer triumphantly pointed to some horse-tracks clearly visible in the moonlight. I called the attention of one of the Pathāns to this, but he, without dismounting, and merely bending down slightly from the saddle, said, "Why, Sahib, those marks are two days old." This indeed proved to be the case, and I only quote it as an apt illustration of the relative values of the respective Services for this particular style of duty.

The expected attack did come off three days later, and so far took us by surprise, that our camp was shelled before the troops could get under arms. As soon, however, as we turned out, the Egyptians were in a considerably greater hurry to retire than they had been to advance, and we pushed them back with but little resistance until we got within effective range of their batteries at Tel-el-Kebir.

The most notable feature of the night-attack of the 15th September upon the entrenchments at this camp was that it is one of the very few which ever seems to have been accomplished exactly as it was planned. It was, however, impossible to have had an easier *terrain* to manœuvre over than this one, where we could advance in line, if need be, without encountering a single obstacle, and where, moreover, marching as we did, almost due westwards, it was particularly easy to shape our direction by the stars.

At Kassassin the railway runs between the practically unfordable canal, on the south, and a desert ridge whose

crest is perhaps half a mile from it, and with a command of 100 feet over it. This almost imperceptibly falls away to the north, till it merges into cultivated ground a dozen miles distant.

Our intelligence was so faulty, that whilst it was supposed that Arabi's entrenchments stretched across the entire angle between the canal and irrigated ground on his left, there was, as a matter of fact, a gap of some miles by which his whole position could have been most easily turned. There was, moreover, a strong advanced redoubt on the ridge, of which we had no suspicion, and which, most fortunately, the four Highland regiments passed by, unperceived and unperceiving in the dark. The entire brunt of the attack fell upon this brigade, which advanced unchallenged to within 200 yards, and rushed the position with the bayonet.

Seven batteries of field-guns were massed in the centre, to be employed in the eventuality of the first attack failing, and next on the right came two brigades of infantry, including the Guards, whilst the cavalry division *en masse* covered that flank. This latter force consisted of three regiments of British, and three of native cavalry, two batteries Royal Horse Artillery, and two weak companies of mounted infantry. No tents were struck until after dark, and we moved out independently of the infantry, who had preceded us, at 11 P.M., inclining slightly to the north of west, in order to gain a point about a mile from the left of the enemy's entrenchments, there to await daylight and developments. As a matter of fact, the officer charged with directing the column halted us, quite a mile short of our intended position, but although this was more than suspected, it was deemed the lesser evil to remain as we were, rather than to incur the risk of giving the alarm by advancing too far.

Towards daybreak, however, I was allowed to ride forward, and after feeling my way cautiously for three-quarters of a mile, I came across three dead horses, which I had seen killed by a shell during the preceding week, and which I knew had fallen quite a mile from the works.

I had just returned and reported this, and the order to mount had been given, when S——, the aide-de-camp, exclaimed, "Look, they're at it now," and 2 or 3 miles away, on the sky-line to our left front, broke out a flame of musketry. This almost immediately spread down their entire line of entrenchments, and most usefully indicated their position. It strongly reminded me at the time of the small gas-jets outside a theatre, flickering in the wind, broken here and there by the larger flashes of the artillery—all blazing away as hard as they could pelt to their front, on the off-chance of someone being there. We were in the saddle, and advanced at a nominal trot, which strangely resembled a gallop, encountering only in our front a hostile horse artillery battery, which fired a few rounds before it was ridden over and silenced by the 13th Bengal Lancers. Dawn was just breaking when, on the ridge above us to the left, we could see our opponents, whose flank we had turned, falling back in some confusion, whilst a British regiment—I believe the Marines—also somewhat disordered, followed up, both sides firing into one another at 200 or 300 yards' distance, whilst several mounted Egyptian officers were prominently visible, waving their swords and encouraging their men. Indeed, one distinguished General informed me that for the first ten minutes their infantry stood up quite as well as the Russians ever did in the Crimea.

At this juncture I was sent back to bring up a battery of horse artillery to enfilade the enemy's line, but by

the time we returned all resistance had ceased, and a continuous stream of fugitives was pouring off past us towards the north, and as most had thrown away their rifles, they were allowed to depart unmolested.

As we inclined to the left and topped the ridge, we found ourselves just above the Egyptian camp, which was in an indescribable state of confusion. Away to the south-west another torrent of disbanded fugitives was streaming across the canal bridge and scattering over the cultivated ground beyond, whilst others, mixed up with camels and loose horses, were wandering about without apparent aim or object amongst the tents.

One or two trains were disappearing in the direction of Zag-a-Zig, and another, crowded with men, was just getting under way below us, whilst some of the Indian cavalry, riding alongside and firing from the saddle, were exchanging shots with the fugitives through the windows. At this juncture some camels straggled across the line just in front of the engine, and a *sowar*, with great presence of mind, shot one of these dead across the metals, bringing the train to a standstill.

All the Generals and Staffs had gradually assembled at the canal bridge, whilst regiments "fell in" and their rolls were called. During this period the Highlanders gave a tremendous ovation to Sir A—— A——, whilst the Duke of C—— was also loudly cheered. After a brief rest to water and feed horses, the cavalry crossed the canal by the bridge and marched upon Belbeis; whilst the Indian Infantry Brigade, which had advanced along the south side of the canal, was also shoved along in pursuit, and occupied Zag-a-Zig without opposition that evening. Arabi Pasha was commonly supposed to have escaped on horseback, and to have joined the railway at Belbeis.

Here again our intelligence proved faulty, and instead of taking the shorter and easier desert road across the angle

formed by the canal (by which route, as we afterwards discovered, several Egyptian vehicles had escaped), we were directed to follow its bank round by Abassieh.[1] Some narrow wooden bridges across side irrigation-channels greatly delayed us, especially one over which the artillery had to be passed by hand. The result was that when we occupied Belbeis in the evening, not only was the horse artillery hopelessly obstructed in rear, but a couple of regiments of our scanty force had to be left behind to escort them. Our second horses and light kit not having caught us up, we had to fall back upon the contents of our wallets, and some odds and ends we succeeded in purchasing from the Armenian canal *employé*; but we luckily got plenty of ankering for our hard-worked horses, which had carried us forage rations for eighteen hours, more or less [illegible]

I remember noticing a Mounted Infantry man, as he got stiffly off his pony, with a face of anguish, and with both hands clapped to the seat of his badly-fitting serge pants, remarked to a pal as he straightened himself up, "I don't wish to ride again for a —— week."

During the course of the afternoon I met a well-known M.P., an ex-soldier and a V.C. man, who had somehow managed to accompany our force throughout, riding on the flank of our column, leading a spare horse. "But where is your groom, Sir H——?" I enquired. "Oh! by-the-by," responded my friend, with the air of having just remembered something, "I fear I have lost William. We were riding behind the Highlanders when the first volley came, and the mare bolted with him into the desert, so I fear he's lost!" William, a very juvenile, pink-complexioned stable-boy, with a pair of top-boots several sizes too big for him, turned up all right, I believe, at Ismailia.

On the following morning, the 16th September, we

[1] A village of the same name as the barracks.

marched upon Cairo with the few men we had available. There was no sign of the horse artillery and their heavy escort, and as the brigadier of the 2nd Brigade had ridden off to the telegraph-office, we left his command to follow, and advanced with only six squadrons of Dragoon Guards, and about a hundred and twenty Mounted Infantry. As it happened, the Brigade in question never caught us up, and instead of joining us upon the Abassieh plain, they continued along the canal itself right into the Cairo railway station, but as the preliminaries for a capitulation had been by then arranged nothing untoward occurred.

We followed the canal road for the first 20 miles, and our appearance proved to be completely unexpected, as we surprised one sleepy picket of half a dozen troopers upon the bank, and saw a foraging party of the enemy collecting supplies upon the opposite side. As we neared Cairo, and opposition was to be counted upon, we wheeled eastwards off the cramped, irrigated ground, and gaining the desert road near El Merg, we marched down across excellent cavalry country towards the capital.

It was about an hour before sunset when we came in view of the Abassieh fort and barracks, with a formidable array of white-coated infantry drawn up in front, but, from the position which they occupied, they were evidently intended for effect rather than for any serious resistance. We deployed into line in rank entire, so as to produce the greatest possible show, and halting at a couple of thousand yards from them, sent forward the late Sir H—— S—— —the Divisional A.A.G.—as a *parlementaire*. By dark all the preliminaries of a capitulation had been practically arranged, and the Staff rode into the cavalry barracks to discuss details.

Our negotiations—which were conducted in French—

proceeded in the small, paved guard-room of the quarters, whilst the handful of our division present halted about 1000 yards outside in the open, where officers and men lay down in the sand, holding their horses' bridles, and one squadron at a time was brought in to water their horses at the barrack-troughs. Some of the Egyptian officers sent for food of sorts for us, which we discussed, as well as the terms, seated upon wooden stools, around a very rough and dirty table.

About 10 P.M., whilst negotiations were still proceeding, a message was brought in that a person wished to see the General most urgently. Going out I found a neat brougham, whence issued two Egyptian officers, the first of whom, through his friend, who spoke French, announced that he was Arabi Pasha, and that to save further trouble he had come to surrender. I immediately conducted him in to Sir D—— L——'s presence, where, through the same medium, he repeated this, with the remark that the fortune of war was against him. "Tell him," said our General, anxious that there should be no possible misunderstanding over the matter, "that I give him no terms at all, and that he surrenders unconditionally." To this the Pasha bowed in assent, and went on to say that "He had never wished to fight the English, and had only defended himself when they attacked him." To this the General replied that he had nothing at all to do with politics, and was only there to carry out his orders. In acknowledgment Arabi again bowed courteously, and requested that his servants might be allowed to attend on him whilst he was a prisoner. "Tell him," repeated our chief, in the most uncompromising tone, "that he may have them, but that the guard will shoot him if there is any attempt at a rescue." To this the fallen Dictator bowed again, without either cringing or bravado; and in fact his demeanour throughout was that of a well-bred

gentleman, and produced the most favourable impression upon us all. He was at once lodged in the only other chamber of the guard-room, and an officer's detachment of dragoons was mounted over him.

We were busy up to 3 A.M. taking possession of the citadel, the preliminary step being its evacuation by the other garrison of two or three thousand men, for which we were only able to substitute a couple of weak squadrons. After this we simply threw ourselves down upon the flagstones of the guard-room and slept like logs.

Had the French Communard fallen into our hands during the first few hours of the city's occupation, it is probable that he would have experienced a similar fate to that meted out by General Gallifet to so many of his brother *pétroleurs* eleven years previously.

It had been agreed upon, that at nine o'clock the following morning, all the Egyptian troops quartered around Abassieh should depose their arms in the barrack-yard, and that leaving sufficient men to attend to the horses—of which there were several hundreds picketed in the stables—the rest might disperse to their homes.

Long before the stipulated hour, both cavalry and infantry soldiers swarmed up, threw their arms and accoutrements down in a heap, and scuttled off very much in the style of "devil take the hindmost," all apparently apprehensive that they might be detained for duty. There was an absolute lack of military ardour visible, and a striking unanimity exhibited to escape at any price from the trammels of service, and to leave their "bleeding country" to shift for itself, so far as they were personally concerned. By noon every single straggler had cleared out, and, in default of any supervision, some hundred starving horses broke loose, and were scampering, fighting and kicking, around the barracks. Stable-guards from the Indian cavalry had

to be requisitioned to water, feed, and, as rumour had it, to annex for their regiments the pick of the lot. For the next day or two, whenever any of us wished to go into the city, 3 or 4 miles distant, we just caught the first stray horse we could, saddled and rode him in, turning him loose on our return.

During the course of the day Lord W——, with the Guards and several other regiments, arrived by train, our horse artillery and second chargers caught us up something like twenty-four hours late, hotels and telegraph-offices opened out, and a deputation of notables proceeded to Alexandria to make their submission to the Khedive.

We shifted the Divisional Headquarters into an empty palace near the barracks, where we were installed amidst far more grandeur than comfort. There was an immense lot of gilding, tawdry French furniture, and silk curtains about, but only one bath-room, and not a single washhand-stand in the building, whilst the sanitary arrangements left a very great deal to be desired. Contrary to what one would have expected, all the grandeur was reserved for the reception-rooms, and there was no dream of Oriental splendour to be seen in the harem. The latter was most plainly furnished, with few tables, next to no chairs, and a good many shabby-looking divans. There were no gold-and-ormolu suites of the Renaissance period, and sombre chintz hangings were substituted for gaudy silken curtains. Neither here nor elsewhere was there a single bedstead, and the inmates presumably just roosted upon the divans.

The garrisons at Rosetta, Damietta and elsewhere submitted to the new order of things without incident, and undoubtedly had a properly officered brigade of Egyptian troops been then sent to Khartoum, the Mahdi would never have emerged from the deserts of Kordofān.

The British reorganisation of the Khedive's army gave Lord K—— his opportunity, as he was not only one of the very few discoverable officers who knew a word of Arabic, but he was amongst the very first ones to join. I well remember meeting him at the Hôtel Orient—whither, upon a polite intimation to evacuate the palace, the cavalry headquarters had been transferred—and how sad he was at having just missed the campaign.

A few route marches were made through the Cairo bazaar by way of overawing the natives, as a city of 350,000 alien inhabitants was—especially in view of the recent quasi-national and semi-religious movement—a factor always to be reckoned with, but absolute tranquillity prevailed throughout.

After the Khedive had returned to his capital, a big march past was held upon the Abdin Palace Square, for which a naval brigade was brought up. This passed off exactly as any other march past always does; but far better worth witnessing than this was the excursion of our sailors to the Pyramids. All the available donkeys had been chartered for this occasion, and to see some hundred blue-jackets navigating these with loud hails of, "Port there, you lubber!" "Starboard, you ——!" "Full steam ahead!" and "Ease her, Jack!" far surpassed in interest any mere ceremonial parade.

An amusing illustration of the way in which campaign rewards are distributed was that when despatches were being prepared, and honours were being revised, Divisional commanders were called upon to submit the names of all Staff-officers, and of two officers per regiment—which of course meant the colonel and his adjutant—out of some five-and-twenty.

One junior subaltern, who was on his way out to India from Sandhurst, acted as an extra galloper to his

father, who was in command of a brigade, and joined his regiment to perform recruit-drill wearing three medals! and a certain departmental commandant was gazetted to a brevet for distinguished services, when as a matter of fact he had, owing to illness, never sailed from Bombay!

I recollect being much struck by the remark of an educated Egyptian as to the then much-discussed question of the fate which should be meted out to Arabi Pasha. As all the calamities which had befallen the country were directly attributable to him, there was, whilst operations were in progress, an informal idea that he should be shot on sight; and even more mature consideration suggested that he should expiate the ruin which his revolt had brought upon Alexandria. It was, moreover, I believe, a fact that, prior to the evacuation of that town, he had brought out his suzerain—the Khedive—with the avowed intention of having him shot; and that it was only the intervention of the Turkish envoy — D—— Pasha, I think—which had saved his life.

The gentleman with whom we discussed this question, and who was certainly not a pro-Arabite, deprecated the idea of capital punishment, solely from the point of view that this would strengthen the revolutionary cause, and added: "Look at your religion! It would never have taken rise if the prophet Isa had not been crucified!"

The newly adopted short-service system was then more or less on its trial, and it cannot be said to have proved any great success, as, if system had anything to do with the result of the campaign, one can only say that we won rather in spite of than because of it.

To put four British cavalry regiments in the field, no less than fourteen had to be requisitioned for draughts of horses or men. One Highland regiment I knew had four hundred reservists in the ranks, and even then

landed with eight hundred and odd men, instead of the regulation 1100 all told. As they had left an almost equal number of immature youths behind them, they took the field with just about the same strength as a long service regiment would have done, but with half the men in an inferior state of training, and were equally without reserves to fall back upon had the war been prolonged.

Matters settled down so quietly that the cavalry Divisional Staff was broken up, and we returned to England with the Household Brigade at the latter end of October.

CHAPTER X

CENTRAL INDIA—1883-1884

RETURNING to India in 1883, I for the second time refused a permanent Staff appointment in the Quarter-master-General's department, as I never could make up my mind to exchange the saddle for an office-desk, and so I reverted to the command of my old regiment at Goona.

As the officers commanding each station of the Central India Horse were *ex officio* political agents for the surrounding districts, one gained in that capacity a considerable amount of novel and interesting experience. Whilst the territory for a considerable distance around belonged almost exclusively to the Maharajah of Gwalior, there were two considerable isolated districts, Seronje and Chuppra, appertaining to the Nawab of Tonk, planted like islands in its midst, and in addition to this there were half a dozen small Rajput chiefs owning suzerainty to Sindia, but who were quasi-independent of him and under our protection.

These latter were descendants of the former rulers of the country, who, although dispossessed of their towns, had nevertheless kept the field against their Mahratta despoilers until as late as the year 1822, when through British intervention a few villages of their ancient patrimony were restored to them to subsist upon.

One of these chiefs, the Rajah of Ragoghur, especially

interested me. He was a fine old man of eighty, of the bluest blood, whose family had of old formed alliances with the Rajahs of Jeypore, and one of whose ancestors had been Governor of Mooltan in the sixteenth century. It was very pathetic to visit him in a once fine, but now sadly dilapidated part palace, part hill fort, with the ruins of extensive fortifications enclosing a well-built but poverty-stricken town below, and to reflect that he had been brought to this pass because his father had been alleged to be "intriguing with the English!"

Whenever he visited Goona he made a long detour to avoid passing the town of Bujrunghur, because, as he said, it had once belonged to his family, and he would never enter it until he could do so sword in hand. He cherished with great pride his old family annals, and loved to descant on the past grandeur of his house, whilst it subsequently transpired that, although living, very much indebted, upon the thirty or forty thousand rupees of revenue which he drew, he was in possession of a very considerable buried treasure in gold *ashrāfis*. According to his records, just a century previously the town had a garrison of 45,000 men, and had successfully sustained a siege by the Peishwa in person, who, furious at his repulse, had destroyed gardens and mango-groves stretching for 5 miles to the ruined town of Ramnuggur. Before its eventual capture, at the end of the eighteenth century—when it succumbed to mining operations directed by the French engineer, Jean Baptiste—his father, who was then rajah, with a few horsemen broke through the lines of investment. Marching in three days to Sherepore, 160 miles north, he captured the family of the Gallic adventurer, vainly hoping thus to induce him to raise the siege.

His very jungly and hilly principality had a not wholly undeserved reputation for dacoities and cattle-lifting, but both the villagers and the Mogiahs—a

criminal tribe who swarmed in this State—were, so far as Europeans were concerned, particularly friendly, and invariably when shooting there I paid the latter to watch my camp. As an instance of their good feeling: Towards the end of the Mutiny, in 1858, an officer and two or three privates of the 95th Regiment had been killed in a skirmish on the Chopeit river, in Ragoghur territory. As an old comrade wished to erect a memorial over his friend's resting-place, should this be discoverable, we rode out to the locality to enquire, and found to our surprise that the graves of the three Englishmen were, five-and-twenty years after their demise, kept freshly plastered and whitewashed by the neighbouring villagers.

The Mogiahs, who are extraordinarily wild-looking, lean, and lanky specimens of humanity, usually clad in little but a loin-cloth, extremely skimpy turban, and a pair of dilapidated slippers, habitually carry long-barrelled, rickety-looking matchlocks, and a fid of lighted cow-dung to ignite their match withal. They are very good trackers, and know the habitat of every tiger, bear, or stag in their particular beat, but so far as my own experience goes they are arrant cowards, and skip up trees like squirrels if a dangerous animal comes their way.

How Mogiahs and Seriahs—an even more jungly, but more harmless, caste—ever manage to exist, always seems a bit of a mystery. Beyond scratching up a few patches of ground to sow Indian corn, neither of these two lots ever seem to indulge in agriculture at all; and whilst the latter earn a little food as woodcutters, or by collecting wild honey, gum, and other jungle produce, the only avowable occupations of the former are occasionally shooting a wild animal by sitting up over water, or by acting as watchmen for the protection of the village crops.



GROUP OF MOGLAIS.

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Still, even then, one did not hear of sufficient robberies to have assured the members of this tribe of a bare subsistence, and it is probable that they eke out a precarious existence by taking part in dacoities at a distance from their own districts, as, according to the Russian proverb, "A good fox does not eat his neighbour's fowls."

... explain that the Anglo-Indian term of "dacoity" ...eans robbery by a gang of four or more persons, ... Central India their bands often number forty or ...armed men.

...ogiahs and kindred castes have a curious code of ...ir own, and I remember upon one occasion a typical ...stance of this being disclosed during a case which was brought before me in my political capacity. One dark night in the rains a gang attempted a dacoity upon a petty *thakoor's* abode, but some of the latter's dependents being on the alert, the robbers were worsted, and retreated, followed up by the inmates of the house. One of the Mogiahs, who was too badly wounded to escape, entreated his comrades to cut off and carry away his head, so that his family should not get into trouble upon his account—a request which was promptly complied with, As it happened, several of the gang were captured with the head in their possession, and they could not understand why they should be committed for murder, because, as they explained, "Our *bhaie* (brother) himself asked us to cut it off."

Throughout Central India generally, cattle-lifting is, or was, so much a recognised institution of the country, that it might fairly be described as one of the industries of the population—who certainly enjoyed every facility to indulge in the pastime. What is called jungle—under which designation all uncultivated ground is included—varies in Central India from open undulating stretches

sparsely scattered with thorn-bushes, and covered with waist-high grass, to hilly, rocky, and well-wooded tracts. The trees—which at a distance much resemble English hardwood specimens—have, owing to the poverty of the arid soil, a generally starved and pinched appearance, save in the case of a few here and there along the edges of the larger water-courses. Throughout these natural woods, also, there is one continuous stretch of *bheer* grass, until this is either eaten or burned down, and this wild and uninhabited ground is as useful for grazing purposes as it is well adapted for baffling the search for a missing herd.

As everywhere throughout such deserted areas some hundred village cattle graze daily, under charge of perhaps a couple of men and three or four boys—who often see only portions of the herd throughout the day—the disappearance of twenty or thirty head may pass unperceived until after their return to the village at night. With twelve hours' start, the raiders can easily be 20 miles distant, and across perhaps a couple of frontiers, before daybreak has dawned. Cattle are but seldom carried off *vi et armis;* upon such occasions pretty sanguinary encounters often ensue.

Individual owners have all sorts of complicated private marks by which to identify animals; these range from brands on the neck or body to fantastic patterns of nicks on the ears, almost as complicated as a piece of crochet-work. Once it gets rumoured about that there has been a loss of cattle from any particular village, mysterious professional informers, who are locally designated *puniahs*, get into negotiations with the owners of the stolen beasts, and engage to discover their present whereabouts. The very fact of the existence of such a class of intermediaries proves the prevalence of this kind of theft, and there was an invariable scale of remuneration for such

identification at ten rupees a head. When the informer had marked down his game, he guided the rightful owner to the village, where the animals were pointed out, and there his mission ended. Had his identity been disclosed to the villagers at large, his occupation would be gone, and he would never again have been permitted to prowl unmolested around the country.

The owners would then demand the restitution of their cattle through the local authorities, or—in the usual event of the stolen property being in a different ruler's territory—through the British political agent, who adjudicates in all cases of what may be termed an international character.

As, however, it was always a point of honour with the complainants not to divulge the name of the informer, nor even that they had employed such a medium, they invariably concocted some story so palpably ridiculous that, although they might recover their animals, it was quite impossible to punish the robbers or receivers of the stolen cattle upon such flimsy evidence.

As an instance: upon one occasion a couple of villagers, who had identified and obtained restitution of a dozen stolen buffaloes from a village 100 miles distant, appeared to give evidence against the illegal possessors of the same. Both these witnesses swore positively that their cattle had been driven off by force before their eyes, and that they identified the four prisoners present as belonging to the gang who had done this. Upon my questioning these guileless deponents as to the exact circumstances, they stated that they had only seen the delinquents at a distance of "two or four" hundred yards—being afraid to approach nearer on account of their guns, and that they had never before seen them in their lives, but that all the same they were prepared to swear to their guilt. When asked why they had allowed four months to elapse before

denouncing these men, and how they had ascertained where their cattle were, they smiled deprecatingly, and remarked that "they were very poor men, and that the 'Huzoor' was their father and mother, and they but as dust in his eyes."

As the invariable defence is that these animals were bought at a neighbouring fair, and as the accused can produce all the inhabitants of their own villages to swear to this if necessary, it is generally impossible to secure a conviction. A considerable number of stolen bullocks are also sold to Commissariat contractors and quickly disappear from sight altogether in the form of beef. A curious trait amongst the average class of witness is that they, as a rule, have not the faintest idea of their own ages, a point which has to be noted amongst other particulars when recording their evidence. I have known quite young men, when asked how old they were, reply, "Oh, perhaps forty"; and when I remarked, "Why, you don't appear more than twenty-five," they at once acquiesced "Yes, it may well be as the Huzoor says"; and one met an expression of my surprise with the naïve remark, "Well, I don't remember being born!"

The worst is that the average Hindoo will never recount a plain and simple story, but invariably imagines however good his case may be, that with a little ingenuity it may be largely improved upon. The more educated of their class reduce perjury to a fine art, and not content with coaching up witnesses beforehand, they have all the incidents of the assault or tragedy, with which they intend to saddle some third party, acted beforehand upon the very spot which has been selected as the scene of the crime. By this means the various suborned witnesses are little likely to be caught out in cross-examination, as they merely depose to what they have actually seen enacted, and are able to reply with confidence to the

most searching questions as to where any other witness may have been at the time, and so forth.

I may as well cite one very typical instance of the state of things in Central India twenty years ago. In the course of a couple of days, five dead bodies were carried up on *charpoys* and deposited in front of my door, with loud appeals for justice. Three of the slain belonged to the Ragoghur State, whilst two corpses pertained to Gwalior territory, and all, as the regimental surgeon certified, had been killed by sword or bullet wounds. The story of the Gwalior people was, that on the preceding day, when their cattle were being watered at the river—which formed the boundary of their respective States—a gang of forty or fifty armed dacoits had swooped down upon them from the opposite side. The five herdsmen in charge had, however, fought so stoutly that, although only armed with sticks, they had repulsed the robbers. When it was pointed out to them that the deceased A, B, and C had been killed by gun or sword wounds, whilst they swore to sticks only having been used by their side, they confessed their inability to account for this.

The Ragoghur story, which at first carried a slightly less air of improbability about it, was, that some weeks previously fifteen of their village cattle had been stolen, and had been traced to this Gwalior village, and the owners had then applied for the restitution of their property to the *soubah* within whose jurisdiction it was. This magistrate replied in effect: "Pay up the customary fee (*dustoorie*) of ten rupees a head, and you may have them back." They continued with a certain appearance of truth: "We are very poor and could not afford so much, so we watched the village, and when the cattle came down to the river, five or six of us went down to separate our animals from the herd. The cowkeepers, however, gave the alarm, and sixty or seventy armed men swarmed

out from the village, and we, having only *lathis* (clubs), had to fly."

From this point all the witnesses got entangled in such a maze of perjury, that it became no longer a question of which side was telling the least improbable story, but as to whether there was a single word of truth being sworn to by either. Both sides were equally positive that their own party had employed only sticks, and propounded the theory that their enemies had themselves inflicted the sword-cuts and other wounds in order to get them into trouble. Whilst each party swore stoutly—something on the principle of the Kilkenny cats—that it was precisely their own deceased friends who had caused the casualties upon the other side, they respectively accused D, and E, on the one part, and V, W, X, on the other, as being responsible for the tragedies.

When, however, these men were indicted for man-slaughter, they were each individually enabled, through the united perjury of their several villages, to prove complete *alibis*—so far at least as mere swearing was concerned; and the case had to end with fining all implicated for rioting.

Another amusing instance was when a notorious dacoit, who had been captured by the Gwalior police, made, as they often do under such circumstances, a full confession. One episode, which evidently rankled deeply in his mind, was how, as he alleged, he had been betrayed by a Pathān *sowar* of our regiment, whom he named. According to his story, he and a dozen companions had looted fifty head of cattle, and were overtaken by daylight when driving these through the Central India Horse cavalry grass *rummah*, 8 miles out of Augar. Here they were surprised by a *sowar* of our guard who was going his rounds, and who, riding up to them, said, "I see you are dacoits; now pay me up fifty rupees, or I will gallop off and bring the guard down upon you." The robbers, as

was a case of *faire contre mauvaise fortune bon cœur*, acquiesced, but could only muster fifteen rupees of the required ransom amongst them, which the trooper pouched and rode off with. Half an hour later, however, he reappeared, followed by a mob of forty or fifty armed villagers, who beat them, went through their pockets, and despoiled them of all the stolen cattle, they being glad enough to get away with whole skins. When this was reported, I remember thinking that if the soldier named was an Afghan, the tale was probably true, as it sounded so thoroughly characteristic of that nationality. Sure enough, when I came to examine the roll, it proved that this man was a subject of the Ameer's, and that, moreover, he had been one of the guard over the grass-land at the time mentioned. However probable the story therefore appeared, as every one of the villagers cited flatly denied the statement from beginning to end, the accusation, being entirely uncorroborated, fell to the ground.

The ingenuous cultivators in such a case—who have no more conscience over retaining other people's stray animals than have more civilised persons over employing an accidentally acquired umbrella—are very astute about not guarding any such incriminating evidence in their own hands, but sell or exchange such articles to a stranger, or get rid of them at some distant fair.

I have been assured by native officers that in the case of even well-regulated native Courts of Justice both the suitors must, in addition to the prescribed fees, send a preliminary *douceur* to the judge. This does not necessarily influence the verdict, and the money is returned to the loser of the case; but if either omits this formality, he will infallibly receive an adverse decision. It is, in fact, a species of extra regulation purchase-money, and not more onerous than the enormous refreshers

which a plaintiff must pay in an English Court to obtain justice at all. It may be to the judge in the one case, and to the pleaders in the other, but they equally form an integral part of the legal machinery, and the result to the pockets of the public is precisely the same.

The Oriental custom of presenting *nuzzurs* to superiors is so ingrained in the Indian character, that in many native States one month's pay is deducted annually from all official salaries as a present to the Rajah — whilst receiving a bribe involves no moral turpitude in their eyes.

Although I use the term Indian, this is really a misnomer, as Hindustan is not a country but a continent, with more absolute existing differences in physical types, language, and religion, than are to be found in the whole of Europe.

I think that there are eighteen different languages, not dialects—which are deemed of sufficient importance for the Indian Government to offer rewards to officers for passing an examination in them—and these differ not only in grammar and vocabulary, but even generally in character and alphabet, from one another. The only one at all generally known throughout India, and commonly called Hindustani, or Urdu, *i.e.* camp dialect—is merely a modern *patois*, which has been described as "Hindui deluged by Persian and Arabic," and which is rendered indifferently in the Devenagari — a Sanskrit character written from left to right—or in the Arabic, which is inscribed from right to left.

Once when the by no means unusual event of the murder of a child for the sake of its ornaments had occurred in close proximity to our Lines (barracks), and several natives thereabouts had been arrested on suspicion, the real culprit, who was captured with the jewellery still in his possession, confessed his guilt. Upon my asking

the native officer who communicated this news, whether the other men who had been wrongfully locked up were yet released, he replied with a smile, "No, certainly not—unless they have paid up." "Paid up for what?" I enquired. "Oh," he answered, "a present to the *soubah* for his trouble in arresting them."

An amusing instance of the same official's mode of dispensing justice also occurred in my time. A couple of our cows which had strayed away in the dusk had bodily disappeared, and although the local authorities, within whose jurisdiction the surrounding territory was, had search made everywhere, no trace of them was for long forthcoming. At length my orderly, who felt himself more or less responsible for the loss, came to me with the story that the lost kine were to be found in a village a few miles distant, and craved permission to proceed thither overnight with a couple of his comrades, to watch the cattle when they issued out to graze in the morning. He did not find the missing cows, so he brought back instead the two headmen of the village, who he averred knew all about it. This being somewhat arbitrary, and not exactly legal, I sent these two men over with an apologetic letter to the *soubah* to explain how the mistake had occurred, and receiving back a very amiable reply, I dismissed the matter from my mind.

A month later the two missing cows turned up, in the last stage of emaciation, having been incessantly on the move in the interval to evade pursuit. It turned out that the information which my man had received, through some of those mysterious underground sources which we Europeans can never fathom, was correct enough, and that the missing animals had been originally in that village, where everything which passes is the public property of the entire community. It then transpired

that the modern Lycurgus to whom I had sent the two headmen arrested, had, *ultra vires*, but imbued with the idea that they ought to know something about it, clapped them both into jail, and intimated to their families that they would be kept there until the Sahib's missing property was restored. Almost a week after their return, the magistrate casually enquired from me if I would like these men kept in prison a little longer! Judging from results, this system, if a trifle arbitrary, was perfectly adapted to the requirements of the population, and the relatives had saved the police all trouble by hunting up the lost property themselves.

I recollect one high native official who, when expatiating upon the great administrative abilities of his Rajah, alluded to the stroke of genius by which he had kept matters quiet during the preceding monsoon. The inky darkness of the nights at this period offers such exceptional facilities to the criminal classes, that this is perhaps the greatest season for robberies in the whole twelve months. When I asked him how crime had been put a stop to, he explained that at the commencement of the dark nights His Highness had just had all the suspicious characters arrested and lodged in jail until the fine weather again set in. When I enquired how their families had meanwhile subsisted, he gravely replied that His Highness, with extraordinary generosity, had condescended to allot each of their "houses" one *seer* (2 lbs.) of flour a day, and seemed somewhat disappointed that I did not seem to realise the extent of such munificence.

The Thuggee and Dacoity Department, which was originally formed to grapple with the extraordinarily well-organised association of the Thugs, or Stranglers, was first employed in our part of Central India a quarter of a century ago for the suppression of dacoity and cattle-

lifting, but so far, however, as my own experience went, its presence there proved a very doubtful benefit to the population. This was due to the agents employed being natives of a low social caste, and from the very nature of their duties they were emancipated from any close supervision by their British superiors, whilst at the same time they were in no wise subordinate to local authorities. In fact, as this department was then constituted, it formed a species of secret police directly under the orders of the Government of India.

The only superintendent of this Department with whom I was brought directly in contact was a very plausible specimen of the low-bred Mussulman, who slunk about as if in constant expectation of receiving the toe of somebody else's boot in the seat of his pants. He was full of information, and professed to know of the existence of ten times as many bad characters in the district as any Resident on the spot had ever suspected. After a few months, during which he had zealously arrested a good many men against whom no particular evidence was ever forthcoming, we heard but little of him. Occasional copies of his letters to his own *chef de bureau* were sent on to us for information recounting the extreme state of anarchy under which we were labouring, which his superiors, living in the comfortable atmosphere of Simla, apparently swallowed down as guilelessly as a trout would a fly.

I happened to be away on leave when this worthy beguiled my *locum tenens* into making a forced march to surround the village of R——, where he averred there was a large gang of armed dacoits and much plunder collected. With great fatigue to men and horses, a night surprise was effected, only to find a dozen poverty-stricken and almost unarmed families of a wretched little jungle hamlet. I must here mention that a few

years previously the then political agent had imposed a fine of 500 rupees on the neighbouring village of G——, belonging to a different chief, for looting their feebler neighbours of R——, a quarrel having originated over some disputed grazing rights.

I rejoined my regiment a few days subsequently, and received a petition from the headman of R——, detailing how, a few hours after the departure of the troops, the *Ghiraie* official of the *Sirkar* (Government) had re-appeared, mounted upon the elephant belonging to the *dewan* of G——, at the head of two hundred villagers of that State, and that they had plundered, and in part burned down, his village.

It seemed so utterly incredible that a responsible Government official should countenance petty intertribal feuds, that I paid no attention to the story. A few days later came a second petition to the same effect, and saying that if the *Sirkar* did not give them justice and protection, they must die.

I should have paid but scant attention to this letter also, only, happening to mention to my *rasseldar* major that I was surprised that the plaintiff should persist in so ridiculous a tale, he replied, "Well, Sahib, they say in the bazaar that this is all true, and it certainly is a fact that the *Ghiraie* official is treated as a *bhaie* (brother) by the headman of G——, and lives there at free quarters." Upon further discussion of the question, we agreed that there might really be some truth in the story, so I determined to pay a surprise visit to the place, which was about 50 miles distant. Taking one of the sharpest of the native officers with me, I rode out there within the twenty-four hours, and we convinced ourselves that the tale was substantially true. Some houses had been burned down, the floors of others had been dug up in search of hidden valuables, and we were even able to trace the

elephant's tracks between the two villages, there not being another animal of that species within 40 miles. Briefly, this precious superintendent and the two principal men of the village were committed for trial: they were found guilty, and awarded seven years' penal servitude by the Resident of Gwalior, and when sentence was pronounced, the two villagers avowed openly in Court that in attacking and burning R——, they had acted by the *Ghiraie* official's orders! Nevertheless, upon appeal to the local High Court, a civilian judge—who, whatever he may have known of books, was profoundly ignorant of this part of the world—quashed the Resident's finding with various legal sophisms, and, to judge by the wording, very much on the grounds that the entire story was beyond his comprehension—as indeed it was.

The *Ghiraie* official was thus restored to the bosom of his department, apparently with the undiminished confidence of his superiors, and for years afterwards was treated as one of its brightest ornaments.

One night in the rains I had to requisition some ferrymen to convey myself and horse across a flooded river. Chatting with the head *mānji* as we crossed, he told me that they had made three trips that day with the belongings of a native official, and that they had not been paid a single pice. When I remarked that I wondered that his crew had turned out so promptly for me, he replied, "Oh! we well know that the Sahibs are always just to the poor," and that is just about the explanation of our hold on India.

Sepoys may in certain cases claim to be tried by a Court-martial composed of Native, instead of British, officers, but never by any chance do they elect to do this. I heard one case where an old *subehdar*, who was the President of a native Court, asked the adjutant confidentially, before the trial, how many months' imprisonment the colonel would like to see the accused awarded!

I have already alluded to the Khunjurs, who lead a gipsy sort of existence, subsisting by tinkering, poaching, and thieving, but who are always met with amidst most squalid and filthy surroundings, and, to judge by appearances, are habitually in the last stage of destitution. A curious sidelight upon their habits is that, as I have been assured, in the by no means uncommon event of all the male adults being arrested and carted off to jail by the local authorities, no matter how unexpectedly this may have occurred, there is always a settled rendezvous, usually in the jungle, where they will rejoin their families, it may be a week, or it may be six months hence.

Very different to them are the Brinjarras, a practically nomad tribe, and of yore the grain-carriers for almost the whole of India. They are a fine manly race, subsisting solely by the transport of corn, and, rain or sunshine, live all the year round entirely *à la belle étoile*. Not only do they invariably encamp at some distance from villages, but also quite clear of shade or trees; and it is probably a case of the survival of the fittest, as the specimens one sees are excellent samples of humanity. Even in the troublous times of a century back, their services were so indispensable to all parties, that they were invariably treated as neutrals; they were never plundered, and, at the worst, were forced to sell their grain to whichever force required it, but almost upon their own terms. Both in Wellington's despatches, and in accounts of Lord Lake's campaigns, frequent allusions will be found to their importance, and the inability of our army to move without their supplies.

As a rule, Brinjarras contract to convey so many *maunds* of grain from one point to another, the corn being sewn up in **W**-shaped bags, made to balance across the pad, and containing something under 2 cwt. for each load. These carriers occasionally march 600 or 700 miles from the point of their engagement to their destina-

tion. One curious feature is that, even in the rainy season, they never employ tents, although when halted for three or four weeks during the monsoon they erect rough wigwams of branches. Ordinarily their bags of grain are built up in L-shaped walls, 3 or 4 feet high, and 6 or 8 paces in length, each family having a separate block to itself: and in wet weather a canvas roof is stretched over this, projecting 3 or 4 feet on either side, and this narrow verandah affords the maximum amount of shelter which they habitually enjoy. Their cattle are picketed for safety close up to them, with long lines and foot-ropes. No girths or cords are used for their loads, which are simply balanced across the back, and the whole troop moves forward as a flock, without order or method, the bullocks grazing as they go. Unlike other caravans, they never load up before daybreak, nor get on the move until after sunrise, making about 10-mile stages, and halting for the night early in the afternoon.

It is sometimes very annoying to find a narrow jungle track blocked for a couple of miles by their beasts of burden—sometimes numbering a couple of thousand head —and indeed, in days of old, one hears of a hundred thousand in one herd. When, however, you are not pressed for time, it is very quaint to study the moving stream. Infants, cocks, hens, and earthen cooking-vessels are tied on the top of the grain-bags, fine, big savage-looking dogs trot alongside, and both men and women often beguile the tedium of their slow monotonous tramp by spinning cotton or flax as they dawdle along. All unmarried girls wear peculiar clashing anklets, in order to indicate to passing gangs of their *confrères* who are the marriageable maidens available.

On account of grazing requirements, they avoid cultivated ground as far as possible, and follow their own jungle-tracks, discovered by countless centuries of ex-

perience, and these are generally extremely direct from point to point. Where these branch off, one frequently sees curious little piles of stones, which doubtless convey whole messages in a language of their own.

During the monsoon (rainy season), when they bide for a few weeks at a time in more or less permanent camps—always planted upon dry, gravelly soil, miles from any village—they are great hunters of wild pig. Their dogs, which are celebrated for this form of sport, manage in the deep, sodden state of the ground to bring even a boar to bay, after a comparatively short run, when their owners close in and spear him. They so value their canine companions, that there is a saying that the Brinjarras will sell their children, but not their dogs. Some of these latter are very ordinary-looking *pariahs*, but there are others which are particularly fine upstanding animals, as big as a medium Newfoundland dog, and reminding one somewhat of a large-sized edition of a rough otter-hound. One of these which I acquired after considerable negotiation, at a fancy price, was extremely good-tempered, and one of the pluckiest animals I ever owned. He was, however, of no possible use to discover game and only serviceable to slip when once the terriers had found an animal. Upon one occasion, when working along the foot of a rocky scarp with the terriers, a few of the bigger tykes were being led along the top—all the feline race having a tendency to break up hill—the small dogs beginning to give tongue at some panther cubs which they discovered under a huge boulder, I next moment saw my Brinjarra hound coming straight down the rocks, dragging the coolie who had been leading him, on his face, after him. The wretched man, who to save trouble had injudiciously tied the rope round his wrist, landed on his head at the bottom, after a drop which would have

broken any European skull. Although he looked about as badly off as if he had been worried by a tiger, he was not seriously damaged, and with the present of a rupee, departed quite rejoiced to his village. The dog, as soon as he was released from the impediment behind him, dived in under the rocks, whence he presently emerged with a panther cub about two-thirds of his own size.

He eventually met an untimely end by a stray shot while hanging on to a bear's ear; and I think a plucky dog, who is not overawed by appearances, finds Bruin an easier foe to stop than he does a boar.

The latter will hold the "crown of the causeway" against all comers, and native *shikarris* have a proverb than an old boar will drink water between two tigers. I have known the case of one of them sharing the shade of the same tree with a tigress, of whose presence he must undoubtedly have been aware, but to whom he would not give way.

Once, when out in camp, I had sent the trackers in search of news during the early morning, whilst I myself was occupied in settling a village boundary dispute. My men returned in great excitement, saying that a fight was progressing between a pig and a tiger, so taking my rifle, I started for the spot, which was 3 or 4 miles off. Although we arrived too late to find either of the combatants, it was clear from the marks that this had been a drawn battle, and that the boar had marched off with all the honours of war. His would-be assailant had apparently not dared to close, but had circled round at a dozen paces from the old tusker, who, with his back to a thorn-bush, had boldly faced his foe.

Upon another occasion, when a boar and a tigress had been beaten out of a small island, the former broke away evidently quite fit, whilst the latter, when shot,

disclosed a long semicircular gash on the belly, which, had it been an eighth of an inch deeper, must have disembowelled her.

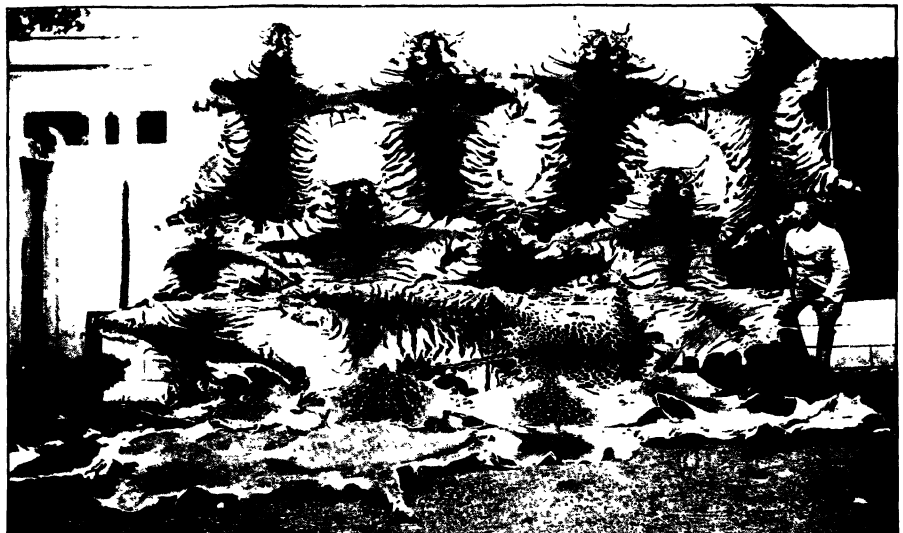
I had tallied up to my hundred and seventieth tiger without a single accident to either *shikarri* or beater, when ill-luck set in, and within three months two of my best men were killed. The first case occurred within 3 miles of our cantonment. A villager had been killed upon the preceding day, apparently without provocation, by a stray tiger, and we had turned out to search the surrounding jungle for it. As we reached our intended posts we heard the beat begin prematurely, so as there was a convenient thick bush in which I could post myself without trouble, I told my orderly to keep my second gun, and climb into a tree in rear of my post. In a jungle such as this was, what are dignified as trees are mere bushes, 12 or 15 feet high, in which a man can ensconce himself at perhaps 8 feet from the ground; but even such a height affords an immense advantage as to seeing and not being seen. I had taken my cartridges out and was climbing up, when, hearing a sort of gurgle behind me, I glanced back, and saw a tiger upon the top of my man not 40 paces away. Before I could jump down and shove in my cartridges, the gun in my man's hand went off with a bang, and dropping the poor Sikh, the tiger "woofed" away, I missing a snapshot at him. My friend, however, upon the right, who was as yet upon the ground, dropped the tiger by a lucky shot through the heart, at only about 6 or 7 paces. I use the term "lucky" advisedly, as the sportsman in question was a young Scotchman doing the "grand tour," who had never seen anything more formidable than a stag, and had only a light ·450 Express with him, which was absolutely inadequate to stop the rush of such a heavy, bull-necked animal as this.

My poor orderly, who never spoke, but who had a curious dazed expression when we picked him up, did not seem to be dangerously wounded, externally at least, and during the first two or three days in hospital appeared to be progressing favourably. Then all of a sudden he collapsed, and faded out in a way which seems peculiar to tiger accidents. I already mentioned that the gun in his hand had exploded whilst the beast was worrying him; and the marks afterwards showed that the stock had been taken into the animal's mouth, and that biting upon one of the hammers, the bent of the scear had broken—the piece being at half-cock—and thereby had fired off the barrel when in the tiger's jaws.

As an instance of the devotion which is often displayed by the good stamp of native soldier, the *sowar* whom I had attached to my young guest who killed this tiger was aloft arranging a perch in the thorn-bush for his reception when the first sound of the scrimmage was heard. Instead of remaining where he was, in comparative safety, he instantly sprang to the ground to stand beside, and to share the fate of, his "Sahib."

The next tragedy occurred a couple of months subsequently, during our regular hot-weather shoot in a very wild, rocky part of the country. The expected tiger not having been seen in our first beat, we tried a second one on chance, lower down the same river—which at this season was represented by a rocky channel with a few disconnected pools of fetid water scattered at long intervals along its bed, and with a fringe of rocks 20 or 30 feet high upon the right bank. On the opposite side there was a lot of scrubby thorn jungle, leafless at this time of the year, and a good deal of waist-high grass, which in the absence of shade must have been, one would think, intolerably hot to lie in. There being four other guns, I was walking in line with the beaters along the top of the

scarp when I got a glimpse of a tiger trotting ahead towards my friends, and just as I lost sight, four or five shots ensued, whilst immediately afterwards I saw a couple of bears, one of which fell dead, whilst the other disappeared. As was our rule in such cases, the beaters stopped, whilst two elephants on the lower ground advanced for orders. Upon their approaching the line of guns the last man who had fired shouted out, "Murgaya hānka lao!" ("It's dead, bring on the beat")—which was done. When we were within 100 yards of the end, feeling some incomprehensible idea that something was wrong, I know not why, I halted the line, and called out asking if they were sure that the tiger was dead. Just then, with a "Woof! woof!" the brute sprang up from the grass not 50 yards from the line of guns, and charged back through the beaters. There was naturally a wild scurry, mixed with a lot of shots from those who had firearms, and the animal was safely through and clear away, when I saw it charge into and roll over an isolated individual who was following along a pathway 150 yards in rear of the line. As he fell, I caught the glint of a gun-barrel, and it flashed across me that this must be a *sowar*. One of the elephants, which had lagged behind and was close to the spot, pushed up, and the *shikarri* in the howdah firing, the tiger relinquished its victim; but instead of continuing its flight it turned round, and, licking its lips, walked back deliberately towards the beaters. As a regular panic had ensued after the charge, and men had swarmed up any handy bush, and were festooned from the branches within arm's-length of the ground, a serious carnage seemed probable; so, exchanging my heavy 10-bore for an Express, I put up the 200-yard sight and fired, by the merest fluke breaking the brute's spine, which sank down on the spot and was quickly finished off.



TROPHY OF A CAMPAIGN.

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The catastrophe resulted from a whole chapter of accidents. A couple of bears happened to be on the move at the same time, and within 50 yards ahead of the tiger. No. 1 gun had fired at the latter, which galloped off towards No. 3, and he at that moment sighting a bear, had opened fire on it, causing the nobler game to stop and crouch in the grass, and No. 3 having sighted only the bear, fancied that this alone had been shot at, and reported its death when the elephants came up. Finally, our head *shikarri*, an old *duffedar*, who had been in at the death of about 500 tigers, had for once in a way disregarded his constant injunction to the beaters to keep together; and having got off his elephant, had remained behind to drink water, and when quite alone in the rear, had fired at and wounded the escaping tiger, thus bringing it down upon him. The poor old Sikh, who was well over sixty years of age, though terribly mauled, was perfectly conscious, and calmly and confidently faced his end. "Why should you grieve, Sahib," he said. "There is no mistake; it is all God's will. If my time of death has come, it has come"; and the fine old soldier died perfectly tranquilly, and, I think, painlessly, a couple of hours later.

This season I also had the honour of accompanying their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of C——, when they were guests of the Maharajah of Jeypore, for a tiger-shoot, which was arranged thoroughly in accordance with Oriental ideas. One of the penalties of greatness in India is that a distinguished visitor is never allowed to enjoy sport in a sportsmanlike manner, and his native host's one preoccupation is that neither risk nor fatigue should be incurred by the noble stranger. I really believe that an average Rajah would be greatly relieved if the latter were to express a wish to have the animal brought up in a cage to be shot from an arm-chair on the verandah. I

think it is at Bhurtpore that there is a picture of a celebrated General sitting in his tent and witnessing a *nautch*, whilst his army in the background is assaulting the fortress; and this about describes how a man of sufficient importance should comport himself according to Indian notions.

In this case a couple of tigers had been marked down in a dense bed of 12-foot-high reeds, which filled a wet hollow of some 300 yards long by 100 paces in breadth. This swamp was flanked upon either side by about half a mile of stony plain, sparsely scattered with leafless thorn-bushes, and beyond these again were ranges of low rocky hills. To cut off retreat to these, two solid walls of quite a couple of thousand swordsmen were drawn up within 80 yards of the covert, and extending to right behind the Royal box. As soon as His Royal Highness was in position, twenty or thirty elephants were put in at the far end to beat the patch out, but upon winding the tigers, they one and all bolted out again and again, until eventually they could not be persuaded to enter the covert at any price. Proceedings having thus come to a standstill, various attempts to fire the reeds were made, with indifferent success, as although a huge column of smoke issued from one or two drier spots, the vegetation was, as a rule, too green to ignite. We had been thus kept in suspense for a couple of hours, when suddenly, without the slightest warning, both tigers broke at a gallop, whilst within 30 yards of their tails appeared a hitherto unseen rush of retainers, who had chased them sword in hand out of the almost impenetrable brake. Taken by surprise as he was, His Royal Highness wounded both, which went slap for the encircling wall of men, roaring furiously. These, however, stood their ground unflinchingly, waving their swords and shields, and apostrophising the female ancestors of the animals, both of which stopped in their charge when within

a dozen paces of the line, turned back and were shot. It was an instructive illustration of how ready Rajputs are to risk their lives at the nod of their chief, and mercifully this object-lesson passed off without any damage being done to his plucky followers.

Within the Jeypore preserves there was another somewhat similar patch of covert, in close proximity to a small station on the Rajputana railway. One moonlight night, when the native *personnel* of the establishment were gathered on the platform awaiting the arrival of the mail train, a tiger was seen to trot across the line a couple of hundred yards away. Upon this the Baboo station-master shut himself up in the telegraph-office and wired off to headquarters: "Tiger jumping on platform; please arrange." Although the smaller stations are manned by natives only, still even the most economical Companies find it necessary to employ only European engine-drivers and guards, as in any unexpected emergency they alone can be relied upon for judgment and coolness.

We had a small jail, or rather lock-up, at Goona, to which dacoits and cattle-lifters were temporarily consigned, until they could be sent up under escort to be tried by the Resident at Gwalior. This prison was extemporised out of an old fortified dwelling-house, and for the sake of ventilation had an iron grille across an archway at one end of it. In the middle of the monsoon the native officer of the day reported to me that during the preceding night a cobra had got in through the railings amongst the prisoners, but that one of the latter, who was a snake-charmer, had caught the reptile before it had done any damage. That afternoon, seeing the prisoners at work, I rode up and asked for the man who had caught the snake, and one of their number shuffled up in his leg-irons, and putting his hand inside his canvas shirt, hauled out a jet-black cobra of quite 4 feet long. Although an

undoubtedly wild one, and only caught a few hours previously, the hooded horror never attempted to strike its captor, but kept gliding through the man's hands, forking its tongue and apparently quite contented. I noticed that the charmer never attempted to hold the reptile tight, but just let it slip through his fingers, changing his grip in a manner suggestive of going hand over hand up a rope. Whether its fangs had been extracted I know not, but in any case it made no attempt to use them. Presently, throwing the snake on the ground, he danced a piece of board in front of it, and, expanding its hood, it struck the plank two or three smart smacks. When I said that was enough, he made a few passes with his hand around the snake's head, picked it up unresistingly, and replaced it in his shirt.

I imagine the whole art of snake-charming consists in the handling, much as with a boy who knows how to tickle a trout, and I believe that these professionals prefer not to keep a *daboia*, a huge sluggish viper, nor a *krait*, a small, very active and dangerous species, because they say they are uncertain. Of course most reptiles exhibited by snake-charmers have had their fangs extracted, but for an extra rupee they will unhesitatingly handle one which possesses them; and undoubtedly even wild snakes seem compelled to issue forth, apparently mesmerised, and to dandle their heads in cadence to the tootling of their reed flutes. The whir of a mowing machine likewise attracts them, and many are thus killed on grass farms. Fortunately a snake must throw itself into its coil before it can strike, and in this position it has only a reach of about a quarter of its own length. The poison is temporarily exhausted by each bite, and much of its force may be also absorbed by clothing: I have heard, for instance, that broad-cloth, with silk underneath, may act as a perfect armour. Doubtless the occasional cases one sees

quoted in the papers, where some novel remedy has proved efficacious, are really ascribable to the full dose of poison not having been injected, owing to one of the above-named causes. When, however, a man has been bitten on the bare skin by a perfectly fresh cobra, humanly speaking, nothing can save him, and the end, if speedy—two or three hours—seems absolutely painless. In fact, if by means of stimulants or physical suffering you could keep a person awake, a cure would be effected.

One sees by the statistics that something like 22,000 persons die annually from snake-bite throughout India, chiefly in Bengal, and I have seen reflections passed upon our Government because they have done nothing towards mitigating this evil. The fact is, that whether owing to a survival of tree and serpent worship, superstition, or mere apathy, no ordinary native will kill a snake—nay, I have myself seen cases when they have interfered to save the life of one.

The abode of the Hindoo cultivator is about as dark and dimly lighted as the tool-shed in an English back garden, and much of its space is occupied by sacks of grain, billets of firewood, and labouring utensils. All villages and bazaars are pervaded by rats, which are only kept in check by mungooses and snakes, cobras especially, which subsist chiefly upon them and frogs. As a snake will always retreat down the nearest rat-hole when confronted by man, the owner of a hut is not only perfectly content that he should "go in peace," but, as a rule, puts down saucers of milk to propitiate the self-invited member of the household. Some fine morning when one of the family is groping in the dusk for a billet of firewood, he treads upon or lays hold of the reptile, is bitten, and dies in a couple of hours.

I recollect two cases in particular, when I was on a "Court of Inquest" upon people who had thus died

in the regimental bazaar, that it was deposed that a cobra had been regularly fed in the house for the past nine or ten months.

Although horses have an instinctive dread of reptiles, dogs, unfortunately, have no such fear, and unhesitatingly attack them, and many a good one I have lost in this manner. One evening when I was exercising some fox-hounds, they suddenly gave tongue in a low clump of bushes, and there I saw a huge cobra erect, with hood distended, striking right and left at them. The pack at once closed in, and next moment worried him into rags. The marks of the poison fangs are so minute, that it was difficult to decide which hounds had been bitten, but one of the best of the lot presently vomited, became extremely lethargic, and died a few hours subsequently; the head of a second swelled up considerably, but he was all right in a day or two; whilst a third one, which had a couple of ominous blood-spots on the head, was not a penny the worse. Presumably this was the order in which they had been bitten.

There is a reward, I believe, of 100,000 rupees for a cure for snake-bite still going begging, and it certainly seems a slur upon our boasted chemical science that an antidote to three drops of a colourless liquid is still beyond our reach. A quarter of a century ago, one of the most celebrated surgeons in the Indian Army was employed for three years experimenting, on behalf of Government, upon this subject, and at the end of that period he candidly reported that he was no nearer a solution than when he had begun. I heard that some of the cobra poison which had been sent to Paris, Berlin, and Vienna for analysis, was returned so absolutely dessicated that it formed a powder, and in this condition was injected into the leg of a fowl, the bird dying within a few minutes. In each case the analysis had only proved

the existence of two very simple chemical compounds, and there was always something impalpable which defied identification.

Although medically the existence of any antidote has been disproved, I must confess that I have a wholly illogical, and maybe superstitious, idea that some such remedy, or rather countervailing action, exists in the case of snake-charmers and mungooses. With the former this may possibly be from inoculation by constant handling, and in the latter, from eating their prey. I know nothing of the scientific aspect of the question, and only argue from results.

Once when in camp in a very out-of-the-way part of Central India, upon the edge of the Bheel country, I happened to be writing in my office-tent, when a snake-charmer came up and asked permission to exhibit before my wife, who was reading under a tree. Upon her presently asking me to come out and look, I emerged, but being anxious to finish an official letter, and seeing the usual show proceeding of the snake-charmer, squatted on the ground, tootling away on a reed pipe, whilst a cobra was making darts at his hands from a few inches distant, I remarked, "That is all nonsense; the snake has no teeth." The man, in reply, picked up the cobra by the neck, and with a morsel of stick forced its jaws open, and there the fangs were distinctly visible. Being in a hurry to resume my work, I was walking back to my tent, when, hearing a startled ejaculation, I turned round. The snake-charmer, who had turned as nearly livid as his natural complexion would admit of, chucked the snake into its basket, whilst he held up his left hand, from which blood was spurting at the root of the first finger. My wife, who had been seated within half a dozen paces, said that the man, turning to talk to me, had inadvertently approached his left hand too

near the serpent, which had instantly nailed him by a sudden dart. Evidently the accident was wholly unexpected, and having disposed of his snake, the man hurriedly dived into a dirty leather reticule, and thence extracted a snake-stone, which, wetting with his tongue, he applied to the wound. After this he drew out a black twisted root, much resembling pig-tail tobacco, which he nibbled at, and drew various hieroglyphics with it round the place. Within three or four minutes he became perfectly serene, remarking, "Khub! Pi liya" ("It's well. It has drunk it"), and a few minutes later he detached the stone, whose removal required some force, and which left a livid circle all around the spot of its application. When I enquired if the virtue of the stone was now exhausted, he replied that it only required to be soaked in milk for a night, to extract the poison, when it would be as efficacious as ever.

Upon our expressing doubts as to whether the snake really possessed its full venom, he at once said, "Let me prove this upon one of your dogs?" and when we declined this proposal, he suggested that we should experiment with a fowl. I often regret, from a purely scientific point of view, that we did not convince ourselves by this test.

I have been informed by doctors that the poison-glands may be removed even without drawing the fangs, but as both these grow again within a short space of time, I very much doubt whether any, so habitually careless as the lower class of natives are, would ever systematically have recourse to such operations. Anyhow, I am quite convinced that in this particular instance the whole thing was a pure accident, and that the man was in mortal terror when he was inadvertently struck.

A snake-stone is certainly a mysterious object, and is by no means of a mineral composition, but rather a secretion which occasionally forms on the palate of a

snake's mouth. For a fair-sized cobra of perhaps 5 feet in length, the stone is about the size of a man's thumb-nail, and of an oval shape. All snake-charmers keep one for their personal use, and once on my asking a rather wild-looking customer of this profession if all snakes acquired them after a certain age, he replied, "Not one in four hundred has it, and it is sent by God." The so-called stone resembles a piece of amber, and is exactly of the colour of the snake, as whilst that of a cobra is black, one from a *krait* is yellow. I may say, however, that English surgeons pronounce these stones to be absolutely valueless as an antidote.

My interest in this question having been excited, I took various opportunities of making enquiries during one winter's tour in Western Malwa. A petty Rajah, living upon the edge of the Bheel country, whilst professing his disbelief in these charms, averred that there was a plant known to the aborigines by which he had only a few months previously cured his *Rani*, who was quite unconscious from the effects of a cobra-bite; and I procured some of this root from him which I forwarded to the chief medical officer in Calcutta. A month or two later I received a letter, asking for a specimen or at least some leaves of this plant, in order to identify it, as it undoubtedly possessed some properties towards combating the effects of snake-poison. As it happened, when I received this letter I was just starting for the Pamirs, and had only time to forward it on to the Rajah, with the request that he would kindly transmit a specimen direct; but as this was my final connection with that part of the country, I have no idea as to what the sequel may have been.

A mungoose will succumb to snake-bite, and the tradition that when at large it can discover some antidote in the grass, was proved to be a myth by Dr. F——'s experiments. All the same, this animal seems to be to some

extent immune from the effects of snake-poison. In one rather cruel experiment a cobra was made to bite a mungoose underneath the forearm, and the jaws of the reptile were compressed to give the fullest power of injection of the poison into the circulation—a wound such as could never have been administered in real life. Even then the mungoose did not succumb for, I think, sixteen hours—whereas a human being would have died, probably, within sixty minutes—which shows that these animals are not so susceptible to the influence of the venom as creatures manyfold larger than themselves. Under natural conditions the mungoose's extreme activity, and his wiry bristling hair, must prevent his ever receiving anything like the full amount of the virus. Whilst I do not believe that these little animals will *de gaieté de cœur* invariably attack a very big snake, yet I fancy that they generally do so if at a loss for a dinner. Upon one occasion, when we were sitting in the Mess-house after breakfast, one of the gardeners ran up to say that a *tamasha* was in progress between a mungoose and a cobra. Repairing to the spot, we could only descry the former animal dodging about around a thick clump of prickly-pear, but as we approached too near, the mungoose, taking alarm, made off. On going up to the bush, we found a big cobra, so badly bitten about, although entrenched amidst the thorns, that he could not wriggle away, and we easily hauled him out with the crook of a walking-stick. Leaving him on the path-way, we retired to a distance, and presently the mungoose returned, trotted up to his antagonist, and, seizing him by the neck, dragged him off into the bushes.

Another day my gardener came to tell me that a couple of mungooses were attacking a snake in the garden. As this occurred upon the edge of the main road, some passers-by had, before my arrival, alarmed the animals, but on reaching the place there was a big 8-foot serpent

stone-dead. It was a rock-snake and non-poisonous, still the strength of such a reptile is very considerable, and the only marks visible were two minute punctures at the back of the head.

A lady at Indore had a family of tame mungooses, which upon a bright September day were seen dancing about in the high grass of the compound, whence a loud hissing was audible. Upon driving them off and beating down the grass with long bamboos, a large *daboia* was descried and shot. It then appeared that while the mother had kept the snake fully occupied in front, her promising offspring had been taking flying mouthfuls out of the plump sides of the viper, who had bites out of him in all directions, so that the shooting must have been quite a happy release.

In one instance when a fair-sized cobra had been captured alive, it was let loose in an empty room, where it wriggled round the walls, seeking for an exit, apparently quite unmindful of the three or four spectators standing in the middle. A tame mungoose—one of the larger slate-coloured species—which had been purposely starved for a day previously, was then introduced, and instantly upon his appearance the snake coiled itself up, expanded its hood, and placed itself on the defensive. The little animal trotted up and began circling round its natural foe, the reptile turning its head and following every motion of its antagonist. Suddenly the mungoose made a spring, and the cobra struck like a flash, but it was only a feint on the part of the former, who jerked back even quicker than the blow, and ere the snake could recover from the stroke, its head was pinned to the ground, with the teeth of the little creature fixed in the back of the skull.

Although one so very rarely sees a wild snake—their habits being nocturnal—yet one occasionally hears of some

friend having had a very close shave, and probably there are far more of these escapes than people are ever themselves aware of. The adjutant of my regiment, when hurriedly preparing for morning parade, had just sponged his face in the dim light of his bath-room when a servant, entering with a candle, disclosed a cobra wound round the side of his metal washing-basin.

It is doubtful if any amputation can be performed sufficiently quickly to prevent snake-poison from entering into the vital part of the system, but under such circumstances a man is always ready to grasp at any straw. An officer of my acquaintance, when sleeping with his hand hanging out over the side of his camp-bed, was awakened by a bite on the tip of his finger. Being fond of wood-carving, he had the utensils for this occupation lying about, and calling up the orderly on duty in the verandah, he made him strike with a mallet the chisel which he held upon the injured digit. The regimental surgeon, who was promptly summoned, dressed the wounded stump, but when he came to examine the amputated member, he found that the bite was the work of a rat and not of a snake.

One curious feature of Hindoo life is the number of Fairs which are held—some annually, for the sale of stock and merchandise, and usually in connection with festivals, but others which are purely religious only occur at intervals of several years.

For instance, there is one which is assembled every thirteenth year at Ujjein, and despite the long periods which elapse between each of these, the dates of their recurrence seem always to live fresh in people's memories, and crowds of pilgrims and *fakirs* flock thither from the most remote parts of India. The state of the moon determines the propitious day for bathing in the Seepra river, and upon that occasion quite a million of

people are usually collected, and an outbreak of cholera is the natural result.

Amidst the extraordinary collection of humanity which one finds assembled under such circumstances, the variegated samples of *fakirs* are the most noticeable. One particular caste of these, termed Agheers, are terribly loathsome specimens of humanity. They are credited with devouring human corpses, and possibly the modern term of "ogre" is derived from their name.

That some of these devotees practise extraordinary self-denial is incontestable, but, on the other hand, many adopt this life merely as a cloak for laziness or sensuality. Not infrequently one sees instances where in pursuance of some vow a *fakir* has held his fist clenched until the nails have grown clean through the hand, and other cases where a man has held one arm erect above his head until the joints have become rigid, and the arm has withered away into the semblance of a fowl's shank-bone.

Once I remember seeing a *fakir*—who, in an absolute state of nudity, obtruded himself on a breakfast party—get a stout bamboo splintered over his shoulders without shrinking or wincing, and he might verily have been a wooden image, so insensible did he appear to pain. Very many instances are known—and I have seen several myself—where a solitary hermit lived in a cave or a ruined archway in the jungle, literally cheek by jowl with wild beasts. Indeed, in one case, the natives averred that the *fakir* actually watered from a well a couple of tigers which inhabited the same half-acre of corrinda jungle, and it is pretty certain that in any case these beasts could not otherwise have been able to drink within 2 or 3 miles of the place.

Another of these recluses, who was said to be the son of a wealthy banker in Indore, deserted his haunts because

a tiger was shot which usually lay up in a patch of wild arrowroot within 100 yards of the shallow cavity in the rocks which he inhabited. Once when enquiring my way from a *fakir* whom I met upon a jungle path, he reproached me for taking animal life; but when I retorted that by shooting one tiger I saved the lives of a hundred sacred cows, it appeared that this had never before entered into his calculations.

Upon another occasion, when riding *dâk* along a little-frequented road, I saw a figure far ahead of me going through some strange gymnastic performances, and on approach it proved to be a devotee making a pilgrimage by prostration. This consists of the man measuring his length upon the ground until his forehead touches the dust, when, rising, he places his feet on the latter spot for the next genuflexion. In pursuance of some vow, a man will occasionally undertake a journey of some hundreds of miles in this manner. From curiosity, I cantered on till well out of sight, when, wheeling off the track, I took post behind a clump of bushes, whence I could see that the prostrations were being most accurately executed, although not another soul was anywhere visible.

Not far from Baroda there was, in 1868, an insignificant rising amongst the Bheels, which was speedily suppressed by the armed police and some of the *Guaicowar's* levies. I do not know that the disturbance was caused by any particular grievance, but these children of nature were led astray by a prophet who had arisen amongst them, termed the *Bhuggat*, who professed to be immortal and invulnerable. In the encounter which ensued, two British police officers, who were celebrated shots, were successively confronted by the fanatic, dancing about, and waving a couple of swords within 50 yards of them. As one of these officers missed, and the other got a misfire, the effect was most demoralising amongst their men, but one of the

two getting a second chance, dropped the leader, whose fall pricked the bubble, and his followers dispersed.

Many of the annual fairs, ostensibly in connection with a religious festival, at which a certain amount of offerings to the temples, and ablutions in sacred pools, take place, are really maintained for purposes of trade.

In some of these held in the more remote parts of the country, native rulers grant special remissions of import dues to enhance the attractions of the *mela* by the exhibition of cheaper merchandise, and villagers within a large area around make their purchases for the ensuing twelvemonth on such occasions. The large cattle-fairs, such as Pokhur, Pottesar, or Jhung, are excessively dusty, dirty, and noisy re-unions, but extremely interesting from the motley gathering met with at such places. Occasional elephants, with horses, camels, bullocks and buffaloes in their thousands, are there for sale, whilst one meets dealers of every nationality of the many races scattered between Kabul and the Deccan. The scene is generally a dead, open, treeless plain, thick with dust, and beyond a few sorts of main streets which are kept open, all else is jumbled up together without order or method. The tents are invariably dirty, dilapidated, and carelessly pitched, or more frequently merely a little protection is extemporised out of cotton sheets propped up somehow, whilst the animals are picketed around, or tied up to the nearest carts. The bazaars which spring up to minister to the wants of man and beast are always the best arranged and the most picturesque feature in these assemblages.

When purchasing regimental remounts on such occasions, one has an extremely novel, though somewhat trying, experience. You are always accompanied in these cases by a dozen of your men, to take charge of animals when purchased, and one or two native officers or non-

commissioned officers to assist you generally, and, above all, to conduct the bargaining—at which a Britisher is of no more use than a Gentile is in a money transaction with a child of Israel. After tremendously adverse criticisms have been audibly passed by your following generally as to the appearance, breeding, and soundness of the horse you wish to acquire, these are countered by the most florid praises of the quadruped in question on the part of the dealer, who calls every god in his mythology to witness that only a few minutes previously he had refused an offer of a thousand rupees for the animal. Your spokesman rejoins that, merely as an act of charity, the generous and valiant Captain Sahib Bahadur condescends to offer two hundred rupees for the brute. The whole of this haggling is conducted at the pitch of the voice, which speedily gathers together a crowd ready to gape at anything in the nature of a *tamasha*, at which they may assist free, gratis, and for nothing.

After excessive vociferation from both parties, the leader of the debate on your side having ultimately raised his bid to three hundred rupees, some of your *sowars* rush at the animal, loose it from its pickets, and despite all remonstrances, and even a show of opposing its removal *vi et armis*, proceed to march it off. The vendor follows, protesting that he can never part with it for such a derisory sum, that he only owns one hoof, *i.e.* a quarter share of the colt, and that he will appeal for justice against its forcible removal. Indeed, they occasionally raised such an outcry that I fully expected the police to appear on the scene, and felt quite inclined to make a clean bolt of it myself to the seclusion of my tent. However, native officers have a rare instinct of knowing how far these pretensions are to be seriously treated, and you get your remounts at quite twenty-five per cent. less than any Englishman could ever succeed in acquiring them.

Very different is a horse deal with an Arab merchant in one of the Bombay stables. The proprietors of these establishments are, as a rule, quite disinterested in the matter, and act as a sort of lodging-house-keepers, being paid for the keep of each string of horses by the merchants, and receiving a fee of one gold *mohur* upon each transaction from both buyer and seller. The merchants whose steeds are being looked over sit, apparently unheeding, whilst you have one horse after another of their lots looked at, handled, and cantered bare-backed by one of the numerous riding-boys hanging about the yard. When you have made a selection, you stroll up to the owner, and, with a gesture at the animal in question, place your hand underneath the fold of his cloak, when he touches your palm, each finger signifying one hundred rupees and a bent digit fifty. You then in turn, through the same medium, make a bid, generally of from one-half to two-thirds of the price which he has notified, which, according to the rules of the game, he rejects with a shrug, and saunters away seemingly engrossed in telling his beads. After a decent interval you again drift together, and the same pantomime is re-enacted, the price being diminished and the offer raised, until a bargain is effected or the deal dropped. I believe the idea is to withhold from the knowledge of the bystanders the lowest figure to which the owner has come down, as, in the event of no sale taking place, this would lower the starting-price for the next bargain.

If the mode of haggling over the transaction in either case is absolutely dissimilar, so also is the character and disposition of each class of horse thereby purchased. Whilst country-bred—*i.e.* Indian—horses are, as a rule, decidedly vicious, Arabs are about as amenable and tractable as dogs; and the bad reputation they usually enjoy on the score of stumbling is largely attributable to

their own docility. Owing to this, they are but seldom regularly broken-in or taught their paces: they are just simply saddled and mounted. Although country-bred horses are very commonly vicious, it is generally in the biting or kicking line, and once in the saddle, a rider is quite safe, and finds his mount pretty easy to manage.

Very different indeed is it with a buck-jumping *waler*, upon which even an acrobat would fail to balance himself. In the 12th Bengal Cavalry riding-school, one Australian remount, after disposing of his rough-rider, continued bucking until he had deposited the saddle, with the girths still buckled, upon the sand of the arena. I have heard the story from an eye-witness, and its truth was vouched for in the Anglo-Indian Press by two officers, who signed their names to the account.

Although the reverse of bloodthirsty, natives often exhibit an extraordinary callousness with regard to human life. In one murder case, in Central India, two of the accused deposed that they were only travellers, and were perfect strangers to both the victim and the actual murderer. The latter, whom they had met at a well, had proposed to them to come and help him to kill a man, for which he would pay them a rupee apiece, to which they had consented.

On my asking a prisoner, accused of murder, what had induced him to kill this unarmed villager, who was acting as his guide, he replied, indifferently, "As he walked in front, carrying my bundle, the idea came to me, what a beautiful sword-cut his neck offered." "Well?" "Bus ghirpurra" ("That's all, he fell"), he concluded.

I recollect hearing a case of extraordinary native ingenuity, disclosed in the prosecution of a baboo telegraph clerk. The opium crop in Western Malwa is as valuable as these fields in flower are beautiful, and during the season there is, or was, an immense amount of specula-

tion in connection with the very fluctuating price of this product in the Chinese market. Some of the large native firms at Rutlam and other centres had expensive, and almost hourly, telegrams of *le cours de change* transmitted to them. Despite all departmental regulations on the subject, there was evidently considerable leakage somewhere in connection with these, and minor dealers, who had no known sources of information, frequently forestalled the recipients of these messages upon the local exchange.

I forget how the discovery actually came about, but it certainly transpired that one *bunia*, in a small way of business, was, somehow or other, invariably in possession of the very latest information on the subject. His shop was in the bazaar of the town, next door to that of a sweetmeat-seller, and every morning the small daughter of a native telegraph clerk used to turn up and ask for some specified number of pice-worth of sweets. The *bunia* alongside, squatted behind his goods, could overhear all that passed, and the number of pice-worth of sugar-plums ordered proved to be the number of points in the latest opium quotations.

The pestilent and only openly-disloyal class of the Hindoo community, the Bengali baboo, enjoys as little honour in his own country as is proverbially accorded to prophets.

The meetings of the Indian National Congress, however much puffed up they may be by editors of vernacular papers who make their living by taking this line, pass unremarked by the vast mass of the population, or are regarded with apathetic indifference by the remainder.

I once asked a fine old Punjabi, *apropos* of the Congress, how he would like to be governed by this class, should the British clear out of India, to which he pithily replied: "Well, Sahib, if that were to happen, within six months of your departure there would neither

be a two-anna piece nor a virgin left in all Bengal." Persons of this breed, who are extremely clever in an imitative "simiesque" fashion, have very retentive memories, make apt pupils, and being able to obtain an excellent education at the public expense, pass by thousands all the public examinations. Once they have thus qualified for Government employment, their one idea is to obtain an official berth, or, failing that, one in a railway, municipality, or some public Company office.

As we educate about twenty times as many persons as can ever be accommodated with such appointments, the unsuccessful applicants hang on from year to year, growing more soured, indebted and discontented.

They form, in fact, a class similar to the Russian Nihilists, whose evolution is due to analogous causes, and who are almost exclusively recruited from ex-students disappointed in their hopes of becoming *Tchinovniks*. These, in virtue of the certificates they hold, are too proud to work, even if too poor to live unemployed, and become discontented and dangerous; whilst the baboos, although equally dissatisfied, confine their agitation to declamation.

Popular representation applied to India is a Western myth, and we should not forget that if the natives of the land were as capable as our own race, a hundred thousand Europeans would not now be in the country, much less ruling nearly three hundred millions of natives. Orientals may rebel in the future, as they have in the past, but it will be to replace one dynasty by another, and not to inaugurate a republic or to attempt a Jacquérie.

The Indian Foreign Office is, perhaps, next to that of the Pay Department, the most unpopular in all India, and it certainly has the most unhappy knack of needlessly rubbing up the wrong way pretty well all our

feudatories, more especially the smaller ones who cannot make themselves heard.

For instance, I have repeatedly known European firms in Bombay or Calcutta write to political agents to obtain payment of their bills from some small independent chief. Personally, I always refused to have anything to say to the matter, and informed the applicant that I was not a bill-collector, and that they should confine their dealings to ready-money transactions. But whenever the creditors applied to the Foreign Department, I received orders to call the attention of the Rajah to this, and to preach him a little sermon upon the evils of indebtedness. The consequence is, that the visit of the British Representative to one of the average petty chiefs, who are in a chronic state of debt, comes to be regarded as no less unwelcome than the advent of the bailiffs or of the tax-gatherer.

This has been repeatedly but vainly urged in letters to Headquarters, and a simple notification in the *Gazette* that tradesmen or money-lenders must deal with independent Princes entirely at their own risks would put matters upon their proper footing. There would be far greater cordiality between Rajahs and our representatives, if the latter were ordered to leave the internal administration of these principalities severely alone; and even a case of maladministration might be a useful object-lesson, that our more irksome form of government in British districts has the compensating advantage of justice, or at least of law.

At present it is exactly the contrary, and it is our Headquarters which oblige their Residents to have a finger in every pie, and to pose perpetually on the high moral platform. It is but a few years since the foremost of all the Indian rulers was officially put upon his defence over a diamond transaction with a common Jew, and,

judging by the sequel, with the result of earning his undying resentment against ourselves.

I knew of one neighbouring Rajah who, in the space of a quarter of a century, had three times become practically bankrupt. The creditors, who were invariably the same firms of money-lenders, were upon each occasion officially informed that this would be the very last time on which they would receive Government help to recover their claims; but the political agent was in each case forced to undertake the liquidation. The result, of course, was to make every one regard official assurances as valueless, and to induce the belief in the native mind that the bankers could square matters as they pleased with the British agents. I have also known a petty Rajah refused permission to go for a few weeks' change of air to Bombay, on the ground that he should not absent himself too much from the supervision of his own territory, and there was a fine touch of irony about it, inasmuch as this precept of abnegation was preached from Simla!

I have frequently heard it asserted that no mutiny in the future is possible, and have often been asked how our native troops would comport themselves if opposed to Russians. As to the former belief, although the chances of such a rising seem at the moment a negligible quantity, yet old officers have frequently informed me that they were on equally friendly, and even more familiar, terms with their men in pre-Mutiny days than we now are. In addition to this, the indebtedness of the men, and the lack of power accorded to regimental officers—both of which causes predisposed to the Mutiny—are quite as bad, if not worse, than they were in 1857. This is chiefly owing to changes in social habits, the more frequent absences of officers from their regiments on leave, and the prolonged sojourns of all the heads of the military administration, out of India proper,

in the absolute seclusion of hill stations, where they soldier only on paper. This, combined with the fact that the old saying, "Once on the Staff, always on the Staff," is acted up to in the very fullest sense, creates a feeling of antagonism, rather than of *camaraderie*, between regimental and Staff-officers, and the latter get hopelessly out of touch with the feeling of the rank and file. Until the principle is rigidly enforced, that an officer must revert for at least five years to regimental duty, after having been an equal period on the Staff, no reform in this direction can be expected.

But I have already digressed widely from the point in question, and cannot now quote some very pointed instances of the absolute ignorance of the requirements or feelings of the rank and file evinced by Headquarter orders.

It is, however, only in connection with the chance of our being in difficulties with some foreign Power that any of the discordant elements within the Indian Empire could prove of any serious menace to our security.

As above remarked, India is a continent, and one cannot see where, amidst their divergent nationalities, they could ever find amongst themselves a figure-head under whom to combine. Half a century ago there was still the glamour attached to the Delhi court, which had ruled there for centuries, and Brahmin sepoys as well as Mahomedan *sowars* were content to acclaim the Emperor, if only as a rallying-point at the outset. Now, even this puppet king has disappeared, and amongst the native princes there is probably not a single one who would condescend to submit for a single day to the leadership of any other member of their hierarchy.

As to the question of the capability of the better class of our native army to face European troops, one can reply most unhesitatingly in the affirmative, so long at all events

as we are not fighting a losing game. Our sepoys would undoubtedly fight better in an offensive than in a defensive campaign, and it is as true now as it was in the days of Clive, that "to stand still is danger—to recede, ruin." Were we to remain entrenched behind the scientific line of the Indus, our native army would be more than half-beaten before a shot was fired, and India could be saved only by British bayonets. The more ignorant the natives are, the greater is their respect for our acumen, and if they see that we have confidence in ourselves, they will have confidence in us. Pathāns, Sikhs, and Goorkhas can out-march, shoot better, and live upon scantier fare than the more civilised European races, whilst they instinctively acquire great *esprit de corps*. From the circumstances of their enlistment, however, there can be no sentiment of patriotism on their part: there is no such word in their vocabulary; they soldier for a livelihood and for no other reason. They are faithful to their salt, and nothing more, whilst the strongest feeling of all with them is the love of their family, home, and plot of ground. Many a would-be recruit, failing to get into our army, enlists in that of a Rajah, whilst it not unfrequently happens that whilst one brother is in the British, another member of the same family is in some native, service. Each would probably, if called upon, fight equally well for his master, even if arrayed against one another; but beyond the sentiment of duty, fortified by a reasonable prospect of success, there can be no further motive to animate them.

Whilst our native troops would be absolutely contented but for the chronic and ill-advised encroachments upon their already scanty pay, still they have no sufficiently brilliant prospects within view to induce them to sacrifice all which they value to support what they might consider a beaten cause.

History repeats itself, and the story of the wars in

Hindustan in the eighteenth century shows that whilst the native rulers relied upon their disciplined battalions to fight, they could count only upon their own feudal retainers to remain staunch in the hour of defeat. The regular brigades, trained and officered by European soldiers of fortune, such as De Boigne, Perron, and Thomas, fought splendidly, but once fairly beaten they invariably accepted service with the victors. The loyalty of native princes must also be largely discounted on similar principles, and their attachment to us must naturally always be subordinate to their own self-interest. They can, however, be always more easily influenced by friendship to our own Royal House than by any abstract ideas of attachment to our country, or the cause of Imperial unity; and there can be no doubt that the presence as Viceroy of a scion of our own Royal Family would better establish our position in India than the annual folios of Government resolutions, and even more than many additional British battalions.

As I have myself seen in Turkestan, Russian sway admirably blends itself with local requirements. There is less commercial progress, and far more latitude is given to local rule, or misrule, as the case may be. There is no valid reason to suppose that this system of government would prove a whit more distasteful than our own domination in India, where the vast majority of the population only asks to be permitted to live its own life in its own way, in peace and quiet, and it would certainly prove more popular with the feudatory chiefs.

As even an angel from heaven with despotic powers would find it difficult to reconcile the many discordant elements which can never amalgamate, and as each class will always shape its line of conduct by its own self-interest, so we must trust to our own right hand alone to retain the Empire which our forefathers won by the Sword.

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