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SPORT IN MANY LANDS.

THE MODERN PLAYMATE.

A BOOK OF
Games, Sports, and Diversions for Boys of all Ages.



Outdoor Games.

PLAY-GROUND GAMES.

HARE AND HOUNDS.

IN playing this game one boy (or in a long course two), represents the Hare, and the rest the Hounds. The hares carry with them bags full of paper torn up very small, which they scatter behind them as they run, to represent scent, and by this the hounds trace them up and endeavour to capture them. The hares, of course, endeavour to mislead them by all sorts of doublings and twistings, or by going over difficult country.

A very good plan, if the hares have time, is to get among gorse or thistles, to make two or three feints of starting off in different directions, and then re-

turning on their tracks some way back, to make a fresh start in quite another direction; or, if they wish to be very clever, to come round again to one of their false starts, and go on from thence. There is no limit to the dodges a skilful hare will try to bother the hounds. If there be two hares, they must not separate under any circumstances: for all the purposes of the game they are to be considered as strictly only one individual.

The hounds will find a little organization and discipline a wonderful assistance to them in baffling the tricks of the hare. A captain and whipper-in should be chosen, the former to lead and direct, and the latter to bring up the rear. As long as the scent is strong, the whole band will go somewhat in Indian file, merely following their captain; but when he is at fault he must sound the horn, which he carries *ex officio*, and call a halt. The whipper-in thereupon takes up his post at the point where the scent is broken, and the others sweep round in a great circle, covering every inch of ground, to discover the lost trail. Sometimes the captain and whipper-in carry white and red flags respectively, and use them to mark the points where the scent is broken.

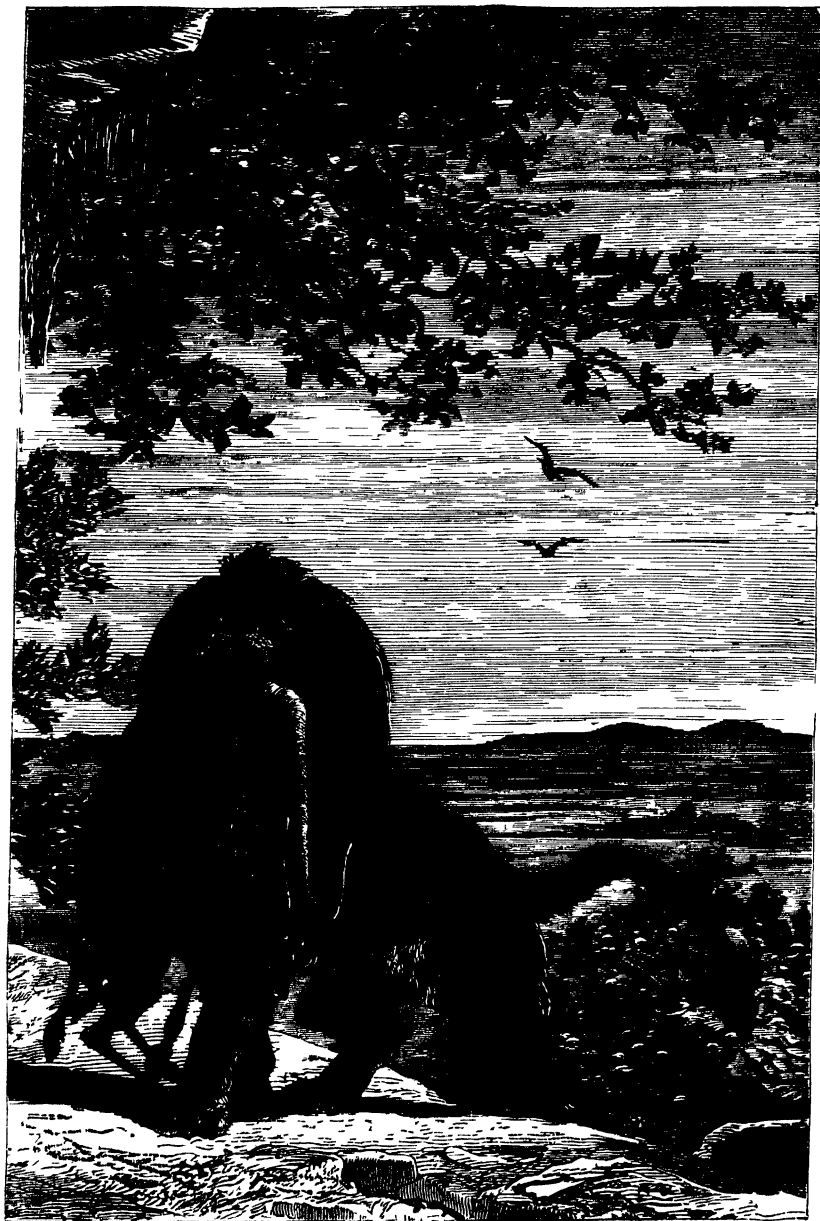
The hares should not be the swiftest runners, or they would never be caught. Endurance, pluck, and a readiness of invention are the great points in a hare. The more he trusts to his head and the less to his legs, the better the chase. The hares are generally allowed ten minutes or a quarter of an hour's law, according to circumstances. They should take care to survey their ground before they go over it, or they may get themselves into all sorts of difficulties. A pocket compass will be found an invaluable companion both to hares and hounds. From twelve to fourteen miles is a good run; but some little training and practice are requisite before such a long course can be covered.

At first some considerable difficulty will be experienced in keeping up even a moderate pace; but after a time the pace will come of itself; that is, with practice, and a little care in the article of food—avoidance, for example, of too great indulgence in puffs and tarts, and similar anti-condition comestibles.

Pace is one of the first requisites for a good run, but it should not be carried to extremes: a good slinging trot of from five to six miles an hour over good ground, and something less on bad, is quite enough to try the endurance of the best runners. Above all, too much pace should not be put on at first: if there be any to spare at the finish, put it on by all means, but for the first mile or so steady going should be the order of the day.

If at the end of the day's sport a boy feels himself feverish, knocked up, and unable to eat, he may be sure he is getting harm rather than good, laying up for himself sickness rather than health by his exercise. Either the pace has been too much for him, or he is not in proper condition. In the former case he must restrain his ardour for a time at least, and be content to take a little longer time over the work; if the latter, in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases out of a thousand, it will be from over-indulgence in food; and he must make up his mind either to be a little more temperate, or a little less athletic.

Many boys are under the impression that light boots are the best for these long runs; but this is a great mistake: the feet get terribly beaten on hard soil, and in mud or over ploughed fields light boots are almost worse than none at all. A pair of good solid broad-soled lace boots, with thick worsted socks, are the only wear for the feet. Short six-inch gaiters—unless knickerbockers, which are distinctly preferable to trousers, be worn—will be found a great protection, and will serve to confine the flapping ends of the trousers,



Front.

A MIGHTY HUNTER.

SPORT IN MANY LANDS

EUROPE, ASIA,
AFRICA AND AMERICA.

ETC., ETC.

BY

H. A. L. CARRIS

"THE OLD SHEKARRY,"

AUTHOR OF "THE HUNTING GROUNDS OF THE OLD WORLD," ETC., ETC.

WITH ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY ILLUSTRATIONS.

"I cannot rest from travel, I will drink life to the lees"

LONDON AND NEW YORK:
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MEMOIR OF MAJOR LEVESON.

THE author of "Sport in Many Lands," Henry Astbury Leveson, was born on the 18th of June, 1828, and died at Brighton on the 7th of September, 1875. Few men have led such an adventurous career. When stirring events were occurring in any quarter of the globe, he was ever among the first to volunteer to take part in them. On many occasions his wish was gratified. The records of more than one of England's big and little wars would not be complete without a grateful mention of the dashing and useful services of Major Leveson.

At the age of seventeen, young Leveson obtained a commission in the East India Company's service, and sailed for Madras. It was in India, at that time a still more romantic and alluring country to an adventurous disposition

than it is now, that he developed his hunting tastes, and acquired much of his experience in wild sport. During this early period of his career he became renowned as a tiger slayer, a "pig-sticker," and a successful hunter of many kinds of large and savage game. He spent some time at Hyderabad, and in the traditions of the Deccan Hunt his name and his fame are still remembered.

After passing nine years in India, he found himself in England at the outbreak of the Crimean War. He at once volunteered to serve in the coming campaign. He was appointed to a post on the Turkish staff, and immediately proceeded to the seat of war in the Danubian provinces. During the advance of the Turkish troops upon Bucharest he did good service as a light cavalry officer, by effectively harassing the rear of the retreating Russians. From Bucharest Major Leveson returned to Constantinople, whence he started afresh for Anatolia to assist in the military survey of the country between Kars and Alexandropol. For his accuracy and promptitude in this duty he received the thanks of General Guyon (Korshid Pacha). Shortly afterwards he was appointed by Lord Raglan to the general staff of the Turkish division, under orders to pro-

ceed from Varna to the Crimea. Major Leveson was the only English officer thus employed.

Upon landing at Old Fort he superintended the disembarkation of the division, and was subsequently engaged in the affair at Boulganac. He also took part in the battle of the Alma, storming the hill with the centre division of the French troops. A ball passed through his fez, but he came out of the action unhurt. A little later he commanded a brigade of the Turkish army in the countermarch to the south side of Sebastopol, and eventually assisted in the occupation of Balaclava. On October 8th, 1854, he was in command of a Turkish brigade, attached to the French force under General Sol and General Monet, when ground was first broken in front of Sebastopol. Shortly afterwards he superintended the construction by the Turkish troops of a series of earthworks and batteries between the village of Kadekoi and the camp of General Bosquet's division. Major Leveson received the thanks and warm approbation of the French Commander-in-Chief for the rapidity and skill with which this work was performed.

On the 5th of November he was present at the battle of Inkerman. The Turkish division to which he belonged

was not engaged in this action; but, unable to remain passive while hard fighting was going on, he attached himself to the 63rd Regiment, and with it was hotly engaged throughout the day. Major Leveson's horse was shot under him, and he himself received a severe blow on the hip from a fragment of shell. He succeeded, however, in retaking from the enemy a French brass gun and two powder-waggon, which the Russians had previously captured. Throughout the campaign he was in the habit of sending home a succession of graphic letters describing its progress. Two days after Inkerman he wrote:—

“We fought a desperate battle on the 5th, and gained a dear-bought victory. I am, thank God, all right, although my horse had one of his legs shattered, and I received a severe contusion on the hip from the fragment of a shell. It is, however, merely a severe bruise, and I shall be all right in a day or two. An old friend of mine, Lieut.-Colonel S— of the 63rd Regiment, was killed at my side. I was with his corps, my division not being engaged. I was one of the first up, and I retook a French brass gun and two carriages for ammunition which the Russians had taken from the French. The Russian dead seemed

to me at least four to one of ours, and they had time to carry off lots of their wounded. They have received very large reinforcements, and their army is something between eighty and a hundred thousand strong; rather formidable, is it not? To oppose this force we have but fourteen thousand English troops and about thirty thousand French. We have some Turks, but they are not worth much, and as yet have done nothing but eat and rob. This victory has cost us the eighth of our number, and many more would ruin us. They say that we are to receive a reinforcement of thirty thousand French troops. I hope they will arrive soon, as our numbers are getting beautifully small, and 'a dale aisier to muster,' as an Irish corporal was heard to say as his company told off only twenty-three men out of eighty that went into action. We began (or rather the Russians did) the fight at five o'clock in the morning, and it lasted for twelve hours, for it was near five when firing ceased. The officers had more than their share of killed and wounded; they lost an unduly large proportion. The French behaved well, but, somehow, the brunt of the battle always falls upon the English, and we pay the piper. There will be many a house of mourning when the *Gazette*

is published, but at present we hardly know all our loss, and that of the Russians can never be exactly known. They lie in hundreds unburied yet, and, indeed, many of their wounded are on the field still, for we have not had time to remove them. They are a barbarous lot and deserve little or no pity. Their wounded men frequently fired on our soldiers while the latter were giving them to drink, and they kill all our wounded when they get the chance. I saw one of our men take a fearful revenge on some of them. One out of a heap of wounded Russians fired a shot at one of our soldiers when his back was turned. He came back, and not finding the culprit, he bayoneted all the wounded he found near. I had the pleasure of settling a few of their officers, for after my horse was struck I took a sergeant's rifle and went with the skirmishers of the 30th. We were following the Russians, who were in full retreat, when I noticed their officers turning round and trying to make their men stand. Finding this was the case, I kept my rifle for them only, and cut two of them over, as well as a bugler who was trying to sound a call. I took his bugle, and will send it to my uncle as a trophy if I get a chance. This was the only way I could find out the officers, who dress

like the men. I did not feel my hurt much until night, but I am now very stiff, which will wear off in time. I must now turn in, or rather on, for I have had but the ground and my blanket for a bed since I set foot in Russia. I am quite used to it now, and sleep as well as I did on that horrid machine that took up half the room in M—. The proverb is true that ‘use is second nature,’ for now mother earth serves me for a bed, a table, a chair, a writing-desk, and a pillow; for I always pile up a heap to go under my head, though I prefer sand, when I can get it, as being more comfortable, and I manage to write a letter without tearing up quires now.”

Major Leveson was present during the whole of the siege of Sebastopol. He was engaged in several sorties and volunteered for both assaults. He also served with the Turkish artillery at the battle of Tchernaya. In 1855 he was sent to Eupatoria, to report upon the fortifications there, and in October of the same year he accompanied the Turkish troops into Anatolia, and on the expedition under Omar Pacha to relieve Kars.

In November he distinguished himself in the affair on the Ingur river, and was subsequently dispatched to survey the

country between Suchum-Kaleh and Kutais. For his able maps and plans of this district, which were sent to the British Government, he received the thanks of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe and of Lord Clarendon. At the close of the campaign he was recommended by Sir William Codrington, Commanding-in-Chief in the Crimea, to the Secretary at War for future reward. For his services during the campaign he received the Turkish war medal and three clasps, as well as the British medal and clasp for Sebastopol. He was also recommended for the Legion of Honour.

Major Leveson, whose opinions were as independent as his character was resolute, was a keen critic of the inaction and mismanagement that were displayed in high places at the commencement of the campaign. His view of the circumstances, formed at the moment and on the spot, is of course in many points open to correction by the light of subsequent fuller knowledge of the different facts. It is, however, worth while to give it here, if only to show that he was not a mere fighting soldier of fortune, but that he thought out the problems of war for himself and was capable of striking with his head as well as with his hand. In March, 1855, he wrote as follows:—

“Disgusted as we all are here with the manner things have been going on of late, I intend in my present letter to try and point out in a cursory manner what I consider are the glaring faults that have justly aroused the indignation of the public at home, and the present visible discontent in the allied army.

“It was one of Napoleon’s great maxims (and a more true one never was uttered) that ‘Better *one* bad general than *two* good ones.’—In my humble opinion the army from the beginning has been labouring under the great disadvantage of having two leaders, and although it must be said that the utmost goodwill has appeared to exist between them, yet events have hitherto shown that each (perhaps imperceptibly to himself) has been pulling his own way; indeed, it could not be otherwise, for as well might one body have two minds.

“In fact, it appears to me that the allied armies are like two partners in a game of whist, each playing his own game, and trying to win with his own hand against Russia with a dummy (Austria). Let us hope, in spite of the disadvantage we are labouring under, that we hold in our two hands trumps enough to win the odd trick (Sevastopol). Now for

a review of what I take to be the fatal errors that have been made since the beginning of the campaign.

“ After the experience we ought to have had of the fatal unhealthiness of Varna from the fearful mortality of the Russian army in 1828, was it expedient in us to send our fine fellows there to perish miserably by disease, as several thousands did ? when, had it been determined to aid the Turkish army under Omar Pacha, a single division sent at once to the field of action or Schumla would have been much more efficient than our whole army inactive, encamped on those pestilential shores. How much better would it have been if, instead of this ‘seemingly unnecessary’ step, the combined army had been landed at once on the shore of the Crimea without wasting as we did the precious time at Gallipoli and Varna ! Then the enemy, unprepared, had not had time to strengthen Sevastopol, and it must have fallen an easy prize to our arms ; our brave fellows would have been saved from the pestilence of Varna, and the heavy loss we have sustained up to this time from the enemy and the fearful exposure to the climate. This was a fatal error ; but it was not the only time that *unnecessary delay* allowed our prize to escape when almost within reach, for

again, after our having landed in the Crimea, and having conquered the enemy at the battle of the Alma, why was not advantage taken of the victory? Why did we remain until the third day on the field? The troops of the enemy were in perfect *déroute*, and had we followed them we might have entered the town with them. Fatal delay! It is said that the French general wanted to pursue them at once; but no—Lord R. would not take advantage of the victory, he must remain three days to bury the dead with the whole army, although a couple of battalions aided by the fleet could have done it, and also embarked the wounded, in a much shorter time. Why were we obliged to lose the advantages we had gained, by delaying, to bury the Russian dead, when the Cossacks could have done it?

“ Having arrived before Sevastopol and the siege having been determined on, why was the place not properly invested according to the commonest rules of war? was it necessary to extend our lines to Balaclava, when the Bay of Kamiesch would have answered our purpose as well? for had we not taken up such an extended position, we had troops enough to invest the approaches of the place; and the garrison of the fortress, then not numerous, and un-

defended by their present works, could not have held out for any length of time ; while the army outside, dispirited by recent defeat, was not in a state to do us much harm. At that time a successful *coup de main* might have been attempted without much fear of the result. The Russians had not proved such formidable foes that the victors of the Alma need have dreaded the result of a general assault, aided by the fleet. But no, delay again was the cause of our misfortune ; we allowed the enemy to collect his scattered army, to gather reinforcements, to throw up outworks and batteries on the land side, which was before undefended, and when our batteries opened fire on the 17th of October, we found we could not hold our own.

“ Then followed the Balaclava affair ; and I may mention a few points that there appeared to me to have been wrong :—

“ 1st. The redoubts occupied by the Turks were useless.

“ 2nd. Had it been intended that the ground should have been occupied, there should have been simple epaulements, armed with field batteries, which could have been withdrawn when the place was untenable, instead of heavy pieces of position.

“3rdly. Was it advisable to trust our British guns with a few raw Turkish conscripts of a month's service (though many of fifty years of age), alone in an unsupported position, without any of our officers or men to look after them? Had we had the same number of our own indomitable Highlanders, or as many devil-may-care Zouaves, in the room of those undisciplined Turkish peasants in the unsupported redoubts, would they not also have been sacrificed to no purpose, the enemy having ample means and overpowering numbers? Poor wretched Turks! their officer mounted his horse and ran away first, and they followed; but what could be expected from them when even their Government would not punish the cowardly scoundrel who showed them such an example? With regard to the results that followed, and the glorious bravery of the British cavalry in that unadvised and hopeless charge, I shall leave them to an abler pen to describe and explain.

“The day after Balaclava we repaid the Russians a portion of the debt we owed them, and Sir De Lacy Evans gave them a lesson they are not likely to forget.

“The battle of Inkerman followed, and to the stern bulldog courage of our British infantry did we owe not only our

victory, but our very existence in the Crimea. This alone has not failed ; we are not indebted to the superior generalship of our chief, Heaven knows !—In all the exposure to the rigour of the Russian winter, in the arduous duties of this unexampled campaign, with sickness, famine, and death stalking through our camp, their invincible courage alone has kept them up, and it is grievous to think that the greater part of their sufferings might have been avoided, or, at any rate, greatly alleviated, had we only had a chief with more energy and forethought.

“ Since the battle, what have we done ? The French daily grumble louder and louder at our want of action, and with good cause too. Is Lord Raglan waiting until some peace is patched up, that our batteries are not ready ? Why is it that we are not ready to open fire as soon as our ally ? England has not stinted us with the means, but it is mismanagement that has been our scourge, and has almost proved the ruin of the expedition. The future has a brighter aspect. The troops are in good health and spirits, though much discontented with the delay. The weather still continues fine, and the works are getting on. We ought to be ready to open fire from all our line of attack on Tuesday

next, the 2nd of April, though I am not very sanguine as to the result, as the enemy have a fearful number of guns now mounted. Omar Pacha and his Turks are to come here very shortly, and we may expect to begin the fun in earnest then, as his divisions can take up a part of our line of defence, and leave our troops to aid the assault. The railroad is getting on famously, and it is certainly very creditable to the managers and engineers. It will be completed up to Lord R.'s head-quarters in the course of a few days, and is already in use as far as it goes.

"We are bombarding the city rather heavily just now, and, indeed, the firing has been rather heavy for the last few days."

While Major Leveson was serving with the Turkish contingent, the following testimony to his ability and zeal was sent by the Turkish Commander-in-Chief to the British Ambassador.

"TO LORD STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE.

"MY LORD,—

"I have the honour to bring to your notice Major H. A. Leveson, of the Indian Army, who has served with the Ottoman forces since their first landing in the Crimea, and who has on all and every occasion exhibited

great zeal and ability in the performance of his duties, and in maintaining the discipline of the division to which he is attached. He was present at the battle of Inkerman, where he was the first to retake a French 12 lb. brass howitzer, which had been taken by the enemy on all its horses being killed. I consider him to be an active, intelligent, and meritorious officer, and of great experience, derived from former Indian campaigns, and have thought fit to advise your Lordship of this, as it was through your instrumentality that his services were rendered available to the Ottoman Government, and placed at the disposal of H.H. the Seraskier, to whom I have written, recommending that they should be employed on a more extensive scale, as I am convinced that he will do credit to whatever situation he may be placed in.

“I am, my Lord,

&c., &c.,

(Signed)

“OSMAN PASHA,

“Commanding-in-Chief Ottoman Troops.”

It is interesting just now to observe that though Major Leveson, in his correspondence, spoke in favourable terms of some of the Turkish generals, he was by no means enamoured of the Ottoman service. In a letter dated September, 1854, he says :

“From what I have seen of the Turkish service, I do not like it, and shall quit it as soon as the campaign is over. I believe, as a body, they are the most detestable race of people under the sun, and I think that their kingdom will

soon pass away into other hands." And speaking of the battle of Balaclava, he says that the Turks, who held the redoubts on that occasion, "all behaved in an infamous manner, and bolted without hardly firing a shot, leaving the guns to the Bears. The lieutenant-colonel in command was the first to run. He mounted his horse on the approach of the Russians, and told his men to save themselves as they best could." Major Leveson, however, was fully aware of the many merits of the Turkish private soldiers, for in another letter he remarks: "I know that the men are good soldiers if properly led, and that they will follow me, as they have ten times more confidence in us (English officers) than in their own officers."

In 1856 Major Leveson returned to England. During the next three or four years he made several sporting excursions to different parts of the world, some of the incidents of which are related in this volume, and others in his previous works.

In 1860 the Italian Revolution took place, and Major Leveson lost no time in joining Garibaldi. In June of that year he sailed from Genoa for Messina, and, in September, entered Naples with the victorious Garibaldian forces. The

campaign was so brief and bloodless that he had little chance of distinguishing himself. Garibaldi, however, showed that he appreciated Major Leveson's energetic character, and, on more than one occasion, gave him proofs of friendship.

When the short Italian campaign was over, Major Leveson again returned home.

For the next year or two he occupied himself with sport, and with writing and publishing one of his works. In 1863 he was appointed Colonial Secretary at Lagos, on the west coast of Africa. While he held this appointment, an African chief, at the head of a large armed force, committed serious aggressions upon the British territories around Lagos. There were no troops in the colony, and Major Leveson, on account of his previous military experience, was ordered by the Governor to raise a small native corps. Major Leveson threw himself into this work with characteristic energy. In one short week he levied, armed, drilled, and roughly disciplined a modest force of Houssas. With forty men of this rapid and raw levy, armed only with old flint firelocks, he defeated and dispersed a hostile body of natives, fifteen hundred strong, and armed with European cannons

and muskets. To induce his new-fledged soldiers to do their duty, their leader was obliged to dangerously expose himself. Just as he had assured his little but, to the colony, important victory, he was struck by an iron bullet, which entered his head just below the right ear, shattered his lower jaw, and remained embedded in the bone. The medical resources of the colony were unequal to the extraction of the ball ; the wound refused to heal, and the continuous agony and want of sleep from which he suffered, severely affected his previously robust health. On the 8th of February, 1864, therefore, he was invalided home. The skill of the greatest European surgeons of the day was, however, powerless to relieve him. Sir W. Ferguson, Nélaton, and other eminent operators attempted to trace and take out the bullet, but always in vain. To the last day of Major Leveson's life the unhealed wound remained a constant source of trouble and suffering to him, which he bore to the end with untiring patience and fortitude. As some compensation, a grant of £500 was voted to him by the colony, and a similar sum by Parliament. His weakened state, however (his iron constitution, for the time, was at last shattered), caused Major Leveson to lose his valuable

appointment. He lost it through gallantly doing his duty, and the British Government never conferred another upon him.

Two or three years later, Major Leveson, who always stoutly held that difficulties were only made to be overcome, and much of whose career is a proof that in his case the belief was not an extravagant one, volunteered to attempt, single-handed, a negotiation with Theodore of Abyssinia, for the release of Consul Cameron and the other English captives detained at Magdala. But it was determined to send out an armed force under Sir Robert Napier, to condignly punish the Abyssinian sovereign, and Major Leveson's rather startling proposal fell through. He, however, accompanied the expedition, and remained with it throughout the campaign ; the last military expedition in which he took any part.

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From this brief sketch of Major Leveson's military career, it will be seen that he was an experienced and resolute officer. It will however, be rather as an intrepid and successful sportsman than as a soldier that he will be remembered.

His military services would have been a chief, as well as a meritorious, feature in the career of another man. But in Major Leveson's case, brave, energetic, and dashing as were his services under arms, the fame of the soldier was overshadowed by that of the hunter.

Many another bold *sabreur*, long since forgotten, has doubtless acquitted himself in the field as gallantly as the subject of this brief memoir, but it will be long before the prowess of a hunter will again become such a household word among sportsmen as was, and still is, that of "the Old Shekarry."

In the intervals of his other occupations he found time to range nearly the whole world in quest of sport. On the Bavarian and Italian Alps, by the marshes of many a French river, in German forests ; over the hot plains of the Deccan, amid the mountain ranges of the Himalayas, in the Wynaad, the Nirmuhl, and other teeming jungles ; on the Bhowani, the Cauvery, and many another Indian river, to far Thibet ; through the deserts of Asia Minor ; up the passes of the Caucasus ; in various districts of savage Africa ; and across that wide sweep of western prairie, the endless antechamber of the Rocky Mountains, Major Leveson wandered for

months at a time in search of wild and savage game of all kinds. His excursions were as successful as they were adventurous. With rifle, spear, and hunting-knife he killed in these different hunting-grounds more game, and of a more varied description, than has probably ever fallen to the bag of any other sportsman.

On one occasion he accompanied Jules Gérard, the famous French lion-killer, on a most interesting hunting trip in Algeria. M. Gérard was a sincere admirer of Major Leveson's achievements, and sought his permission to translate one of his books, "The Hunting-Grounds of the Old World," into French. It was readily given, and in 1862 a French translation of that work was published in Paris, with the following preface from M. Gérard's pen :—

" Mon ami, le Major Leveson, surnommé le vieux Chasseur, m'ayant autorisé à faire connaître en France les belles chasses qu'il a faites dans l'Inde, je me suis empressé de profiter de cette gracieuse autorisation. J'espère que, même en dehors du monde du sport, ces récits intéresseront le lecteur.

" JULES GÉRARD."

" 1862."

Possessing an iron frame, nerves that never betrayed him, and the gift of an unerring aim, Major Leveson was fortunate enough to add to these qualities a fluent and graphic pen. His contributions to various periodical publications under the *nom de plume* of H. A. L., or "the Old Shekarry," describing his sporting excursions in all parts of the world, are well known. They teemed with daring adventures and hair-breadth escapes, but they were invariably written with an unconscious *naïveté*, and a straightforward absence of egotism, that showed that their writer was unaware that the perils he was depicting were such as few even of the world's picked men would have cared to face.

Besides his contributions to periodical literature, he wrote "The Hunting-Grounds of the Old World," "The Forest and the Field," "The Camp Fire," and "Wrinkles ; or, Hints to Sportsmen and Travellers upon Dress, Equipment, Armament, and Camp Life." This last little book has become a standard work of its kind, and is generally considered invaluable to sportsmen. He also published "England rendered Impregnable," a work full of novel but clever and by no means extravagant suggestions. The *Times*, in speaking of one of his works, observed : "A sincere devotion

to his art elevates Major Leveson into a kind of troubadour of hunting crusades ; gives eloquence to his pictures of forest scenery ; and no mean grace to the improvised songs with which he was wont to beguile the evening after a day's sport." And the *Saturday Review* paid him a just compliment by remarking : "'The Old Shekarry' is essentially a sportsman, and not a butcher of game. His object has been not to slaughter for the sake of slaughtering, but, save in the case of animals hostile to man, such as tigers and rogue elephants, to kill as much as was necessary for the supply of himself and his followers, and no more."

Some, perhaps, may ask, *cui bono* such earnest and continuous pursuit of mere sport ? What fitting end can be gained by such life-long devotion to the killing of wild animals ? It may be replied that Major Leveson, though gifted, as his writings show, with an observant mind and no small share of imaginative enthusiasm, was essentially a man of action. When circumstances were favourable he proved that this craving for physical excitement was capable of a wider scope than could be found in what must be acknowledged to be the pastime of sport. In the Crimea, in the Principalities, in Italy under Garibaldi, at Lagos, in

Abyssinia, he showed that the more earnest, the more important the purpose of the stirring action of the moment, the higher rose his energy, his courage, and his enterprise; and if, when the world was at rest, and battle fortunately absent from its stage, he followed the dictates of a daring nature, and sought in the boldest and most adventurous forms of sport the outlet which war no longer afforded him, it would be hard to blame him.

It is not given to all men to be perpetually satisfied with the monotonous routine of business, or with the empty and effeminate amusements of fashion. After all, wider and more full of the fresh generous air of life than the red-tape existence of the careful official, or the petty and frivolous pursuits of the Park lounge, is the adventurous career of a fearless wanderer like "the Old Shekarry." It is such as he who by the influence of their deeds, and the emulation excited by their example, have endowed the nation with that tone of manly vigour, that moral ozone, which has contributed so much to the prestige and reputation of England.

An epitome of his career would not be complete without mentioning that when this country was disquieted by the long silence of Livingstone, Major Leveson characteristi-

cally volunteered his services to Earl Granville, as chief of a search expedition. Lord Granville referred him with a strong recommendation to the Royal Geographical Society. But the reputation of "the Old Shekarry" was, perhaps, a little too dashing for the mild sages who then ruled at Burlington House, and the search was vainly entrusted to other and far less experienced hands.

After his return from Abyssinia he never enjoyed really sound health again. The wound in his head was perpetually breaking out afresh, and the constant hæmorrhage from it did much to weaken a frame that, once of iron, was now suffering from the effects of the repeated hardships to which it had been exposed. From these effects alone, possibly, he would have recovered. Had he never, perhaps too gallantly, taken the field at Lagos, he might have been alive and vigorous to this day. But the African bullet at last did its work. All through 1875 Major Leveson was gradually sinking, and, after much pain borne with his accustomed resolution, he died in the autumn, prematurely worn out by wounds and exposure, at the comparatively early age of forty-seven.

H. F.

SPORT IN MANY LANDS.

SPORT IN MANY LANDS.

CHAPTER I.

DEER-STALKING AND DRIVING.

Her Majesty's Buckhounds in old days—The horns of the red deer—The rutting season—Hinds—Fawns—Dimensions of the red deer—Its food—Deer forests—Deer stalking—The slot—Deer-driving in Austria—A *jager's* costume—A sumptuous luncheon—A day's sport.

RED DEER.

LONG before the Norman Conquest, the Saxon Thanes had their chases and deer-parks, and in those days wild red deer were common all over Merrie England, and stag-hunting was not only the great recreation of our early kings and nobles in time of peace, but also a national pastime in which the people were indulged on high days and holidays. During the Civil Wars, and more especially whilst the Roundheads were in power, the parks and deer preserves of England were more or less devastated by the people, and in many places red deer, which were common in the land, became extinct through wanton destruction, so that in the present day, out of the three hundred parks in England, only about thirty contain red deer, and they are in a semi-domesticated state. The exhilarating sport of following the stag with horse and hound has for centuries been a pastime dear to the English people; but the chase of the wild red deer seems to be gradually dying out from amongst us, for even in the New Forest, in Hampshire, the royal red deer is found no more, and it is years since Her Majesty's

SPORT IN MANY LANDS.

Buckhounds, with Davis on his grand old grey, Hermit, at their head, was wont for a time to forsake the hunting-cart, and to come down each spring and show the world what stag-hunting really was,



A ROYAL HEAD.

when a thousand horsemen were sometimes to be counted at the meet of the Royal Hounds, and the gathering attracted here the *elite* of the hunting world from all parts of the kingdom. Since those days, the red deer have been shot down, and the sylvan glades of Exmoor know them no more.

The stag, or red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) is of a tawny brown colour, deepening to black along the ridge of the back during the summer months; but as the hair grows long during the autumn, it assumes



STAG'S HEAD, WHEN HIS HORNS ARE SHED.

a greyish hue, which again changes to a reddish brown as the long winter coat falls off.

The stag produces a new head of horns every year, and his age is indicated by them. The first year he has only a horny excrescence covered with a thin skin; during the second year the horns come out, and are straight and single; the third year they have two antlers, the fourth three, the fifth four, and the sixth five. At six years old, when the fifth head has grown, he is said to possess a

full head, and now becomes "a royal stag." A fully developed horn has a *brow*, *bay*, and *tray* antler, and two points also at the top. The first three are termed the *rights*, the two points the *crockets*, the horn itself the *beam*, the width between the tips the *span*, and the rough part at the junction with the skull the *pearls*. During the first year a stag is called a *calf*, the second a *knobber*, the third a *brock*, the fourth a *staggard*, the fifth a *stag*, and the sixth a *hart*. The female is called the first year a *calf*, the second a *hearse*, and the third a *hind*.

The horns of the stag are cylindrical, having the branches, more or less in number, according to the age of the animal, pretty regularly distributed both to the right and left. When a stag is ten years old, the antlers flatten out and become more or less palmated, throwing out points resembling fingers. When these are arranged in a circular shape, the stag is said to carry a *round head*. The horns are shed annually in the spring, first becoming loose, and then dropping off entire; but not always simultaneously, for there is sometimes a short interval between the shedding of one and of the other antler. This gradual loosening of the old horns is produced by the progressive internal growth of the new horns, which forces them out of their sockets, so that at last, the tops of the new horns becoming slightly prominent, the old ones fall by their own weight. A good-sized pair of horns weighs about twelve pounds. On the horns being shed, an excrescence, containing a considerable quantity of blood and covered with brown down, appears for a day or two, and from this the new antlers protrude, gradually assuming their natural shape according to the age of the animal. The horns attain their full growth and solidity in about three months, up to which time they are covered with a skin, as shown in the engraving, which promotes their growth by facilitating the conveyance of nutriment to them; but when the horns have reached maturity, the animal clears them of this skin by rubbing them against the branches of trees.

Soon after the new horns are grown the period of pairing begins, and the stags leave the recesses of the forest in search of the hinds.

At these periods they become remarkably fierce and restless, flying from place to place, and uttering a deep guttural bellowing, their note of defiance to each other. The females, whom they call with a loud tremulous voice, at first avoid them, but are at last overtaken. Should two stags approach the same hind, a combat *à outrance* im-



STAG'S HEAD, SHOWING TILL YOUNG HORNS

mediately takes place. If nearly equal in strength they threaten, paw the ground, set up terrible cries, and rush impetuously one against the other, fighting on their feet and knees, and giving and parrying blows with great agility and consummate skill. This combat never terminates but in the death or flight of one of the rivals and the conqueror remains master of the seraglio until driven away by another more powerful competitor, who assumes the possession of all his privileges. Sometimes the younger stags run cunning, and

seek the hinds whilst the old ones are fighting, but this is rarely the case, as the hinds prefer the old stags. Stags are very inconstant, having often several females at a time ; but when a stag has but one hind, his attachment to her does not continue above a few days, then he leaves her and goes in quest of another, with whom he remains a still shorter period, and in this manner he passes on from one to another, scarcely eating, sleeping, or resting for two or three weeks, the extent of the rutting season, when, having worn himself out and become enfeebled and thin, he retires from the herd to recuperate and restore his exhausted strength ; but he rarely recovers his former robust condition until the following spring. The roaring or bellowing of the stag becomes stronger, louder, and more tremulous as he increases in age, and in the early part of the rutting season it may be constantly heard the whole night long.

The hind does not begin to breed until three years old, and then goes about eight months with young. The usual season of parturition is May or the beginning of June, when she generally brings forth one fawn—very rarely two—the body of which is covered with white spots on a yellow ground. At six months old the young change their appearance, and the rudiments of antlers appear. The calf never quits the dam during the whole summer, and the hinds are very assiduous to conceal their young in the most obscure retreats, as the stag is their avowed enemy, and would kill them if he came across them. The hind's young do not desert their mother when they cease to suck, but continue to attend her as long as she lives ; and as they—*i.e.*, the females among them—in their turn bear each of them offspring, the old hind is often accompanied by several successive generations, who continue to remain together and form a herd, headed by some patriarchal old stag.

The dimensions of the red deer are as follows :—Height at shoulder, 3 feet 11½ inches ; girth at shoulder, 4 feet 7 inches ; height from top of head to fore foot, 5 feet 6 inches ; length of antler, 2 feet 6 inches ; from top of antler to ground, 7 feet 10 inches ; gross weight, 308 lbs. The age of the red deer is about forty years ;



THE CHALLENGE.

but some old writers say that he lives to be three times that of man, and that "there is strong evidence for believing that this popular belief has some foundation in fact, as many very old men have known particular deer all their lifetime, and have had the same knowledge handed down to them from their fathers, and even their grandfathers."

The favourite food of red deer is grass, leaves, fruit, and buds ; but in the winter, when none of these can be got, they are compelled to eat moss, heath, lichens, and the bark of young trees.

In England, in consequence of the cultivated state of the country, red deer are almost unknown in their wild natural condition, except a few on the moors and forests which border on Cornwall and Devonshire ; but in Ireland, on the mountains of Kerry, they are still in the normal state, whilst in the Highlands of Scotland they abound in vast numbers, some of the herds counting as many as two thousand head. The large tracts of land in Scotland on which red deer are preserved, which are called "forests," are not, as might be supposed by the uninitiated, densely wooded lands, but consist of mountainous districts covered with heather, and intersected with deep glens and corries, morasses, and patches of pasture-land. Some of the largest of these forests belong to the Marquis of Huntly, the Dukes of Sutherland, Athol, Leeds, Richmond, Portland, the Earl of Dalhousie, the Marquis of Bute, Lord Breadalbane, and Lord Fife. Besides these, there are the deer forests of Balmoral and Invercauld, as well as others on the western isles. These forests comprise many hundred thousand acres of land devoted almost exclusively to deer, as no sheep are ever permitted to intrude, and even grouse are not always protected, as their presence often interferes with deer-stalking. In Scotland deer are killed either by driving or stalking.

Deer-stalking is an art not to be learnt in a day, as it requires a considerable knowledge of woodcraft, besides coolness, perseverance, great endurance, prodigious powers of exertion, combined with the gifts of a steady hand and a quick eye.



The deer-stalker should not only be able to run like an antelope, but he should possess the bottom of an Arab horse, to enable him to keep the game in view; he should be able to creep like a leopard, and to run with his back bent almost double, and at a pinch to wriggle himself along the ground, *ventre à terre*, like an eel. He should be able to wade or swim torrents, to keep his footing on slippery, water-worn stones, remembering, if he does fall, to keep his rifle dry, whatever becomes of himself. He should never go *rashly* to work, keeping always *cool*, *wary*, and *steady*, never allowing any untoward circumstances to interfere with his equanimity and self-possession.

Before commencing operations, he should carefully survey his line of route, marking any cover that inequalities in the ground, or bushes, rocks, &c., might give. I need not add that temperance and moderation go a long way to keep *the hand in* and the nerves steady. When I first began deer-stalking, my Mentor endeavoured to instil the following general rules in my mind, and several years' subsequent experience has proved to me that his theory is correct. Be on your ground betimes in the morning; consult the clouds, and keep well to the leeward, even if you have to make a circuit of miles; be silent as the grave; when you step on stones or dry leaves, &c., tread as lightly as a ghost; keep under cover; exercise extreme judgment in approaching your game, which is a happy mixture of wary caution combined with prompt decision and boldness of execution. Memo.—All this is useless if you do not use straight powder.

There is no animal more shy or solitary by nature than the stag. He takes alarm from every living thing in the forest; the slightest sound, be it only the fall of a leaf or the scratching of a grouse, will scare and set him off in a moment. Except in certain embarrassed situations, *they always run up wind*, their great security lying in their extreme keenness of scent, for they can smell a taint in the air at an almost incredible distance.

When a hart is disabled and run down by dogs, and he feels that

he cannot escape by speed, he will choose the best position he can, and defend himself to the last extremity with his antlers. Powerful dogs may pull down a full-grown stag when running and breathless, but not a *cold hart* (one that has not been wounded), for when he stands at bay, he takes such a sweep with his antlers that he could exterminate a whole pack, should they attack in front only.



STAGS IN WINTER.

Deer, like many other animals, seem to foresee every change of weather, for they leave the hills and descend into the plains whenever any rough weather is about to take place.

The system of following deer in the middle of the day, when they naturally rest after feeding all night, is not beneficial to a forest. It is much more difficult to get near the best stags when they have taken up a position of rest than it is at dawn, when they are straggling back from their night's banquet; and they are more easily

alarmed by frightened grouse and ptarmigan during the day. Their position is, moreover, guarded by straggling hinds and small stags, and for one shot you will get at midday you will get three at dawn, and with less disturbance of your stock of deer on the ground. Some people, who dislike going out before dawn, call the early shot a poaching system ; but for filling a larder with venison, and keeping your deer quiet, the shot at dawn and in the evening is the best. During the day the deer should be undisturbed if the stock is to be kept on the ground, and they should be hunted by deerhounds as little as possible.

The following are some of the terms generally used in deer-stalking. The deer's haunt is called his lair ; where he lies, his harbour ; where he rolls, his soiling-pool ; where he breaks through a fence, his rack ; if he goes to water, he takes soil ; if he heads back, he is blanced ; if he lies down in water, he is said to be sinking himself.

Any sportsman well versed in woodcraft can distinguish the slots of the stag from those of the hind, as the foot of the stag is better formed, and the impressions of his feet are rounder and farther removed from each other. Again, he steps more regularly, and brings the hind foot into the impression made by the fore foot. The hind takes shorter steps than the stag, and her hind feet do not strike the track of the fore feet regularly, the stride being generally shorter and spread out wider. It requires some experience, however, to distinguish the trail of a young stag from that of a hind. Stags of six or seven years have their fore feet much larger than their hind feet, and as they grow old the sides of their hoofs become worn and rounded off.

There are certain signs by which a sportsman well versed in woodcraft can tell the nature of his quarry by the slot. Thus, although there is apparently very little difference in the formation of the hoof of a stag and that of a hind, the slot or imprint which one animal leaves behind it on the ground is very unlike that left by the other. The chief difference is, that the stag in walking



DEER STALKING IN SCOTLAND

presses the two divisions of the cloven hoof together, which the hind does not ; and whilst the impression left by the stag's hoof is sharp and well marked, that of the hind is blurred and indistinct. The peculiar manner in which a stag treads on the ground, presses the points of the hoof forward into the soft earth, and causes a long *narrow ridge* to rise all along the centre of the slot. The hind, which treads with the divisions of the cloven hoof comparatively wide apart, leaves a much *broader* division. Again, the slot of a stag is less pointed and more obtuse in its curvature than that of a hind, and a stag in walking points his hoofs outwards, which a hind does not. The length of the stride, too, is an important consideration, as the stag takes a much longer step than the hind, and from the length of the step an experienced deer-stalker is enabled to distinguish the age of the stag. Thus, a stag that covers 18 inches in his step, will carry ten points on his head, whilst a hart of fourteen will step about 20 inches. There are other distinctions by which the trail of a stag may be distinguished from that of a hind : he bites the blades of grass clean off ; she pulls and breaks it. Nor must another very distinctive peculiarity be omitted. The fecomets of a stag are always united in a mass like a bunch of grapes, whilst those of the hind fall separately as with sheep. Their state will also tell how long it was since the animal passed along the trail.

DEER-DRIVING IN AUSTRIA.

"The gay green wood! 'T is a lovely world,
 With beauty that's all its own;
 And pleasant it is in the summer-time
 To roam through that world alone."

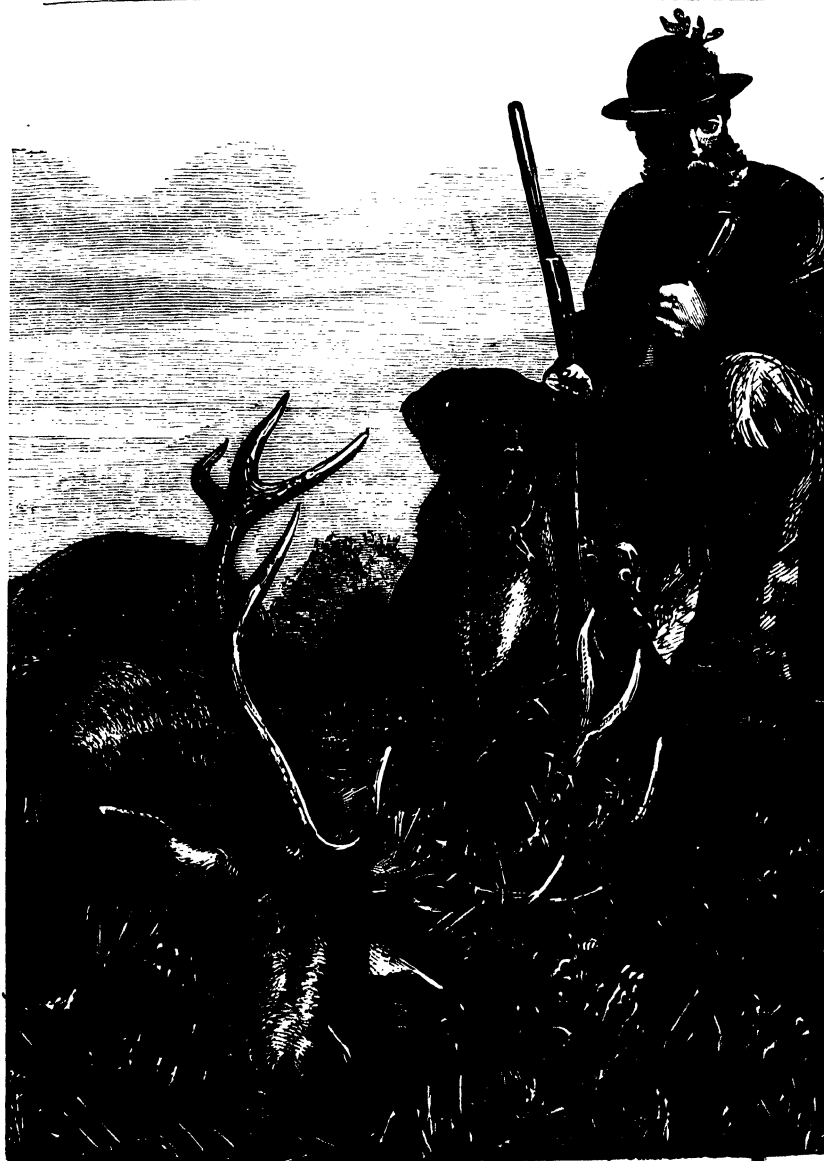


AUSTRIA is essentially a land of sportsmen, as each of the nationalities that compose the empire have a certain innate speciality or *forte* peculiar to the race. Thus the Hungarians are world-renowned horsemen, and as bold cross-country riders may be seen following the Pardubitz stag-hounds as in a Pytchley field; the Bohemians are celebrated for their skill in the art of venery and their knowledge of woodcraft; and the Tyrolese are famed marksmen and mountaineers

Naturally such a combination produces numberless ardent votaries of St. Hubert, and as the land abounds in all kinds of game, which for centuries has been rigidly preserved by the lords of the soil, there are few countries in Europe that offer such inducements for sportsmen.

In the latter part of September, my friend Elliot and I were staying at the Hotel Noelbeck, Salzburg, to recuperate, after a pretty severe tramp in the Tyrol, when we were invited by an eminent physician, one of our Vienna acquaintances, to join him and another sportsman at a grand battue that was to take place near Engel-

hartzell, on the Danube ; and two days afterwards three of us found ourselves comfortably located at the Hirsch, where we were joined by the *Jäger-meister*, under whose direction the drive was to take place. As one or two of the Archdukes were expected to be present on this occasion, besides a great gathering of noble sportsmen from Vienna, we did not anticipate getting much sport ourselves, as the big-wigs would naturally be posted in the places where the game was most likely to break ; but it was a fine chance of seeing a battue conducted on a large scale, and as luck would have it, the arrangements were made so that all the guests got a fair chance of sport. Early in the morning of the eventful day there was a great assembling and marshalling of the company, each of the guests appearing in *jäger* attire of some kind or other, which generally consisted of a loose grey Tyrolese coat and trousers garnished with green binding and large buck-horn buttons, Hessian or long Russia leather boots, and green "Tegern See" hat ornamented with either eagle's plumes or the tail-feathers of a black cock. Most of the sportsmen had very short double-barrelled small-bore rifles, with short stocks most artistically carved and ornamented, and fitted with all kinds of elaborate back-sights and hair triggers ; consequently our long-barrelled Purdeys and Westley-Richards rifles, grey wideawakes, Norfolk jackets, and breeches and gaiters, were somewhat out of keeping with the rest ; but luckily they attracted the attention of our host, to whom we were presented by the Doctor ; and he, with that urbane courtesy which appears to be innate among the Austrians, desired his head forester to see that the strangers were posted in a good position. Then, with a friendly nod, he continued to give his directions about the drive. Many of the sportsmen had their own *jäger* and personal attendants with them, but they were all ordered to join the line of beaters, or guard certain defiles through which the game might attempt to break instead of passing along the line of ambuscades. The foresters, evidently, were well up to their work—there was no confusion ; and the sportsmen being posted at certain intervals with most concise and



AUSTRIAN JAGER.

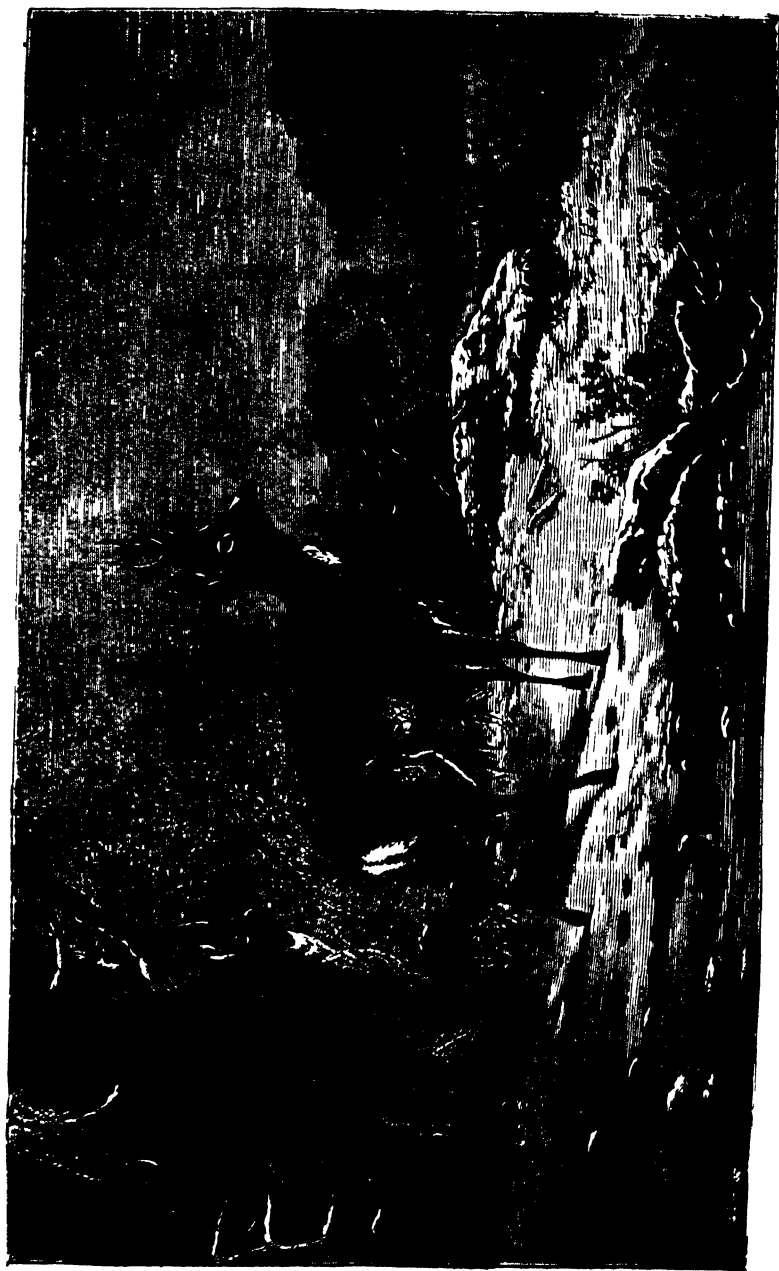
plain directions to shoot only straight to their front, horns sounded, and the drive commenced. The line of guns was stationed along one side of a prettily wooded ravine, where clearings had been made which the game would have to pass, within sight of the sportsmen, when driven into the gorge from a circuit of forest some miles in extent. In some places regular stands, screens, and mounds had been raised, that commanded an admirable view of the ground before them, but which could not be seen by the game until they crossed the open ground in their front. Our party were posted in some rocky ground almost at the head of the ravine, the Count himself taking the extreme end, so that although the game had to run the gauntlet of the whole line of guns before we got a chance, still we had certain compensating advantages of position, as the ravine narrowed considerably at our elevated station, and whatever animal escaped the sportsmen below had to pass within easy shot of us before it could gain the crest of the hill. Our host was the last on the line, so that all his guests got a fair chance at the driven game before he did; but, notwithstanding this courteous concession, I am by no means sure that any sportsmen in the line made a heavier bag than he did.

We had not been at our station more than an hour when—crack, crack, crack! went the rifles below us; and then a dropping file-firing followed; and, from our elevated position, we had a bird's-eye view of the whole proceedings, and now and again could distinguish the dun sides of deer, and the puffs of rising smoke as the guns were discharged from the different ambuscades. Pipes were laid down, and, with rifles in hand ready for action, we waited impatiently. A slight rustling sound was heard in the bushes, which added to the excitement, and a fine dog-fox came creeping up: the Doctor out of politeness motioned us to fire; but we both had enjoyed too many good days' run after the varmint race, to harm one of them with shot, and we shook our heads at the notion, when he let drive and missed, but one of the Count's friends rolled him over with slugs. Then came a roebuck, which stopped a moment to breathe, and stood



DEER-DRIVING IN AUSTRIA.

with trembling limbs and heaving flanks, as if bewildered, within fifty yards of our station ; and Elliot dropped him with a bullet through the shoulder. We now heard a rushing in the cover, and three red hinds passed within easy range of us, but they, by the rules of venery, were allowed to go free. They were followed by a wounded boar, who tore along champing his tusches with rage, foaming at the mouth, and bleeding from half a dozen gunshot wounds. Crack went the Doctor's rifle, and round swung the boar, snorting a vicious defiance towards our position, which his keen olfactories had winded ; and he looked as if he was about to charge in our direction, when Elliot and I, firing almost simultaneously, doubled him up in a heap, and "poor piggie" subsided. A rattling of stones and a crashing through the bushes now betokened the approach of deer, and another troop of hinds tore by, followed by a good stag, with wide-spreading antlers, evidently sorely wounded. I fired a double shot as he passed at speed across the vista in front of our station, the first of which made him wince, and the second brought him to his knees ; but he sprang up again, and was making his way after the hinds with great difficulty and pain, sometimes falling to his knees, and then, by a strong effort, recovering his feet, when the Count gave him a right-and-left, which tumbled him over, and he was plunging about on the ground when one of the *jäger* rushed up, seized his antlers from behind, and drove home a small dagger behind the ears, where the back of the head is set on the neck—which is the usual mode of administering the *coup de grâce* to a wounded stag in Germany—and in a second life was extinct. Strange to say, this stag had received seven wounds, four of which seemed fairly placed about the shoulder and withers, any one of which must eventually have proved mortal ; yet such was his strength and tenacity of life that he managed to scramble up a steep hill before he fell. Several foxes, and an innumerable number of hares, now made their appearance, but we let them go unscathed, waiting for nobler game ; and shortly afterwards another party of hinds came tearing wildly past, and in their rear were five stags, who,



ROE-DEER.

winding the blood of the dead boar, swerved round towards our ambuscade, and offered easy shots. Elliot dropped the leading hart with a right-and-left behind the shoulder, and I managed to score another with a lucky shot that penetrated the throat just where it joins the head, when he sprang high up into the air, and dropped dead, the spinal cord having been severed. After this came a whole porcine family, and several roe-deer; and two of the former and three of the latter came to grief in front of our ambuscade. The fusilade below us now gradually ceased, and a fanfare of hunting-horns was the signal to cease firing and collect the game. In front of our station were found two good-sized stags, a fine old boar with good tusches, and four roe-deer, which we thought was a pretty fair bag for three guns; but when the game was all laid out for inspection, we found some of the other parties had been much more successful.

We now adjourned to a sumptuous luncheon, laid on a beautiful bit of short turf under the greenwood shade; and divesting ourselves of our rifles, we enjoyed one of the pleasantest *al fresco* repasts I ever sat down to. The Doctor, who had been suffering for some time with a malady peculiar to the Fatherland, but also well known to most sportsmen, viz., *Bier-durst*, or a craving for malt liquor, recovered his pristine form after disposing of his sixth mug of the clear, sparkling, amber-like nectar for which Austria is famous; and especially directed our attention to the *blue* and *brown* (boiled and broiled) trout, the Danube Schroll, the salmi of Huchen, venison pasties, wild boar's head, capercaillie hen, woodcock, grey teal, or ortolan, quail, and snipe *pâtés*, which, with a profusion of *pièces de résistance*, were temptingly laid out before us, flanked with a goodly array of Gumpoldskirchin, Bisamberg, Vœslaw, and sundry delicate and luscious Rhine and Hungarian wines, including both the Ausbrussh and Malzchlap Tokay, beverages fit for the gods, that one reads about but seldom sees, for the vines which produce these wines only grow on the southern slopes of the Hegy-allia hills, in Northern Hungary, and the vintage is rarely sold. After

we had done ample justice to the good cheer, pipes were lighted, and hunting yarns told, until a *mort* was sounded on the horns, and we went to the place where the game was collected. The bag consisted of eleven stags, twenty-three roe-deer, nine hogs, five foxes, a badger, and a hundred and sixty hares, which we thought was a very good day's work ; but we were told that the same drive the year before had been very much more successful. Having thanked our host for our day's sport, we retraced our steps for the village of Engelhardzell, and the next day returned to Vienna by steamer.



DEAD HARE

CHAPTER II.

CHAMOIS AND IBEX-STALKING.

The Chamois—Its habits—Its timidity—The chamois hunter—Ischl—Meeting an old friend—Preparations for a sporting excursion—Alpine Lakes—A night in the mountains—A sportsman's dish—A chamois-stalk—The Bavarian Alps—Severe climbing—A herd of chamois—The Italian Alps—Mountain quarters—Ibex—Disappointment—The "living roses of the Alps"—*Citrus*—Ibex again—A buck killed—Return to Turin.

THE chamois (*Rupicapra tragus*) is no goat, being of the true antelope genus, and the only specimen of that tribe indigenous to Europe. It is larger and more strongly built than a roebuck, a good buck often weighing from 50 to 70 lbs. The head, which is admirably constructed for uniting strength with lightness, is ornamented with graceful black horns, about 7 inches long, which rise from just above and between the eyes, and slant forward, forming almost a right angle with the forehead. Their points are very sharp, and are bent back and downwards, and are solid except at the base, in which fits a bony substance that forms part of the skull. The horns of the buck chamois are thicker and heavier than those of the doe, and whilst hers have a semicircular bend towards the back, the points of the horns bend inward. The head is carried very erect, the ears are pointed and constantly on the move, and the eyes are large and full of intelligence. The engraving represents the head of a chamois buck about three years old.

The hair of the chamois varies in colour with the seasons of the year. In summer it is a reddish brown, in autumn a dark ash, and in winter almost black. The nose, the hair on the forehead, the belly, and inside the legs are of a yellowish tan, and there is



HEAD OF THREE-YEAR-OLD CHAMOIS BUCK

always a black stripe extending from the corners of the mouth to the eyes. The chief food of the chamois consists of the young sprouts and buds of the lichen and the mountain herbage. The rutting season commences in November, and at this season desperate battles take place between the rival bucks for the favours of the does. The period of gestation in the doe is twenty weeks, and in May the young chamois make their appearance, and when a day old are not to be caught.

They are generally found in herds of fifteen or twenty, the old males remaining alone, except during the rutting season, when they join the herd, from which they expel all the young males. They are very keen of scent, sharp-sighted, and vigilant, uttering a shrill whistling sound when alarmed, which signal sets the whole herd in motion, and they spring from rock to rock and run along almost inaccessible scarps with the greatest ease and security.

There is no animal so timid as the chamois, and few that have the organs of sight, hearing, and smell so keenly developed. They often become aware of the hunter's presence long before he perceives them, and then with a sharp whistle of alarm they dash along the mountain ridge with a velocity that must be seen to be imagined. The agility of the chamois is proverbial, and the roughest ground, or even rocks of almost perpendicular steepness, seem to offer no impediment to their headlong course. They can stand with all four hoofs together, poised on a pinnacle of rock rising thousands of feet in the air, and scamper at speed along narrow ledges of smooth rock where no hunter dare follow.

"A chamois, when dashing down the mountain, will suddenly stop as if struck by a thunderbolt some yards from the spot where recent human footprints are to be found in the snow, and, turning scared away, rush off immediately in an opposite direction. A rolling stone or a spoken word at once attracts their attention, and they will look and listen to discover whence the sound has come for an incredibly long time, gazing fixedly in one direction, quite immovable; and if it happens to be towards something in your neighbour-



THE CHAMOIS HUNTER

hood that their attention has been attracted, you must lie still and close indeed to escape their observation. The eyes of the whole herd will be fixed on the spot with a long steady stare, and as you anxiously watch them from afar, they almost look like fragments of rock, so motionless are they. You begin to hope they have found no cause for alarm, when, 'Phew!' the sharp whistle tells they have fathomed the mystery, and away they move to the precipitous rocks overhead."

The chamois hunter, to be successful in his calling, must be a man of no ordinary nerve, for he has often to venture where few dare follow. Quoting the words of that experienced sportsman, Mr. Charles Boner, "He is accustomed to have Death stalking beside him as a companion, and to meet him face to face." His departure for the mountain—an unknown region hidden in cloud, and mist, and mystery, his absence for whole days together, his startling accounts of the wildness, the silence, and the solitude, and then occasionally the going forth of one alone who never returned,—all this gave a dim and dread uncertainty to the pursuit; and where uncertainty is, imagination will be busy at her work. His very countenance, his widely-opened eye, always on the watch, even this must have awakened strange surmises of sights more fearful than he had yet heard of.

The chamois hunter has been thus vividly described:—"A tall man, gaunt and bony, his brown and sinewy knees were bare and scratched and scarred; his beard was black and long, his hair shaggy, and hunger was in his face; the whole man looked as if he had just escaped from the den of a wolf, where he had lain starved, and in daily expectation of being eaten. But it was his eyes, the wild, staring fixedness of his eyes, that kept mine gazing on him; the bent eagle nose, the high fleshless cheek-bones added to their power. There was no fierceness in them, nor were they greedy eyes, but they were those of a man who had been snatched from a horrible death, and in whom the recollection was not effaced, nor likely to be. They were always wide open; the whole creature

seemed vigilant, and awaiting at any moment to wrestle with fate. But this was observable in the eyes alone, not in the other features, for the nostrils were not distended, nor the lips clenched, as they must have been to harmonize with the meaning that was in his eyes." "He is a silent and reserved man," say they who have made the acquaintance of the chamois hunter. Who can wonder at it? Who shall tell the wondrous sights he has seen? Who knows, when he returns at night to his hut in the valley, with the good chamois lading his *Rucksack*, who knows how close the hunter has been that day to death?—by what twig, or accidental stone, or other of God's good providences, he has been saved on the verge of the spiky gulf a thousand feet deep? They can only know it from the hunter's own mouth, and he has long since ceased to regard them as marvels, or things worth relating.

Ischl, more than any place I know, combines the gaieties of a capital with the recreations of country life. Those who prefer society will find balls, concerts, a casino, and, indeed, every kind of dissipation, whilst the lover of nature will be enchanted with the great variety of wild and grand scenery. It is the *beau idéal* of a sportsman's head-quarters, for in the surrounding forests are to be found red deer, roe, wild boar, capercailzie, and black game, whilst chamois are not scarce on the higher ranges, and there is the finest of fishing on the lakes and rivers. The principal fish are trout, grayling, and char. It is a glorious place for those who love the *dolce far niente*, for there is always plenty of agreeable company to help one to do nothing.

I passed some days at this delightful watering-place, doing as other people did, bathing, drinking *molke* (whey) early in the morning, whilst listening to the strains of an excellent band, strolling about the woods, in the society of some of the most amiable of the fairer sex, dining *al fresco* under the shade of an overhanging rock, and joining some *réunion dansante*, or musical party, in the evening. I never once thought of the old fellow bearing the scythe and the hour-glass, for I met with several genial companions whose tastes

assimilated with my own ; and, as we were all more or less creatures of impulse, and there seems to be a certain subtle agency, or magnetic influence, by which our feelings become communicated to each other, I was truly happy.

By a stroke of good fortune, I stumbled across an old friend, Herbert l'Estrange, who had served in the Confederate cavalry during the war, and had borne an active part in many of Stewart's raids, and we agreed to have a cruise together amongst the mountains. A day being devoted to preparation for the trip, alpenstocks were got, arms, ammunition, and portable cooking-canteen looked to, and some tins of *pâté de fois gras* and rice bought, in case of any scarcity of provisions *en route*. Leaving our heavier baggage at the hotel, we only took with us a few changes of underclothing, light mackintosh cloaks, and travelling-rugs, with three of Cording's waterproof blankets, without which I never travel, as they form the best substitute either for tents or bedding.

All being satisfactorily arranged, we left Ischl soon after day-break by a good road, winding along the right bank of the Traun, and, after a walk of about three hours, arrived at the village of Steg, on the Lake of Hallstadt, which is about five miles long, and something less than two broad. Here we took a boat, and pulled over to the village of Hallstadt, where we put up at the "Grüner-baum," a very homely but comfortable inn. After a substantial breakfast upon *Saibling* (char) fresh from the lake, *Blangesotten* (trout boiled in vinegar and water), and *Gemsfleisch-braten* (boiled chamois stakes), we clambered up to the Rudolphsturm, an antique-looking tower perched on a projecting rock, about a thousand feet above the village, from whence we had a magnificent view of this wild but gloomy-looking lake.

After dinner, several guides, hearing of our intention of making a trip to the mountain, presented themselves ; but, at the solicitation of our Kellnerinn, a buxom-looking damsel, who did not scruple to show herself *passionnée* for my handsome companion, we engaged a very intelligent and likely-looking young fellow, named Karl, as our

guide, and his cousins, Hans and Heinrich, to carry our baggage. They did not belong to Hallstadt, but lived in a *châlet* near the Tannen Gebirge, a high mountain between the Dachstein range and Berchtesgaden.

After an early breakfast, accompanied to the pier by our host, who wished us *Waidmanns Heil* (good sport), we left Hallstadt by boat, and landed at the embouchure of the Gosau, near an aqueduct which conveys the brine from the mines to the salt-works at Eben-see. Here we entered a narrow, wild-looking glen, fringed with pines, and, making our way along the banks of the stream, passed through the village of Gosau, and halted about two miles beyond for lunch, at a *Gasthaus* kept by a smith. The landlord of this establishment was a friend of our guide, and we proposed taking him with us, but, unfortunately, he was away from home, so we had to make the best of our way without him.

An hour's walk through the pine forest brought us to the Vorder See, a romantic-looking little lake, at the south-east extremity of which towered the Thorstein, a mountain, over 9,000 feet high, with glaciers rolling down ravines in its sides. Continuing our route, after four hours' sharp up-hill walking, we came to the Hinter See, another small Alp-locked lake, the waters of which are of a peculiar pale green colour, except under the shadow of the overhanging cliffs, where they appear almost black. Here we put up at a small *Sen hütte*, and, lighting a fire, made our preparations for passing the night comfortably. A hot supper was soon before us, for Karl manufactured a *Schmarren* (a cake, like an Indian chapate, of flour and eggs fried in butter), whilst I made a *rechauffé* of *Gebackenes Huhn*.

Having done justice to our good cheer, and washed it down with a hot brew of whisky toddy, concocted with great skill by L'Estrange, Karl told us some of his adventures whilst poaching in the Baiern Gebirge, and afterwards he and his companions commenced singing "*Fodeln*," and "*Schnadahupfn*," gipsy-like chants peculiar to the mountaineers of Styria and the Tyrol. We then

rolled ourselves up in our blankets on some new hay, and were soon asleep.

Afoot at daybreak. After a substantial breakfast we made a start, and in two hours reached the Gosau glacier. Then commenced a stiff ascent up the Dachstein ; but our progress was slow, as we had not yet got into climbing condition, and it was nearly noon before we arrived at the summit. We were amply repaid for our exertions by the grandeur of the panorama which then lay before us ; for the atmosphere was very clear, and the outlines of even the most distant ranges were clearly defined against the blue sky. At our feet lay the Karls Eis-feld, a vast waste of glacier ice, which formed a striking contrast to the sombre-looking rocky precipices that enclosed it, or the dense forests of dark fir, from amidst which towered gigantic snow-clad peaks. To the northward were the lakes of Hallstadt, Aussee, and Grundlsee, the peak of the Knippenstein, and the Traunstein and Schafberg in the distance ; to the eastward rose the Kammer mountain and the Hohe Gjadstein ; to the south were the Gosau lakes, the valley of the Enns, in which the river was seen for miles, glistening in the sun like a silver thread, the Ritterstein peak, and range upon range of the Styrian Alps ; and to the westward, in the foreground, was the Hohekrutze ; whilst, stretched out in the distance, were the Tannen Gebirge, the peak of the Ewiger Schnee, the Steinernes-meer, and the treble-headed Watzmann, which towers over the Königsee in the Berchtesgaden. There is an intense fascination in such scenery, where all is still, and the mysterious silence that reigns is never broken, save by the war of elements or the rumbling of avalanches.

From the elevated position we had attained, a very extensive horizon presented itself ; and we sat admiring the sublime scenery for more than an hour, my companions indulging in a pipe, whilst I swept the country with my field-glass, in the hope of discovering chamois. It was, however, too late in the day, and none were to be seen. So shouldering our rifles and baggage, we made the best of our way down a rather steep ridge, and after about four hours'

smart walking, arrived at a verdant-looking valley formed by a hollow in the side of the mountain, where we found a log hut occupied by a couple of herdsmen, to whom Karl was well known. Our hosts evidently did not expect company, and their domicile at first sight did not present a very inviting appearance ; but, like good-natured fellows, they at once set to work to clear up the place and make us comfortable. A heap of new hay was laid down for us in one corner, on which our rugs were spread, a cheerful fire blazed on a clean-swept hearth, the cooking-pots were cleaned, a *Schmarren* made, and I set to work upon the *pièce de résistance* of the repast, a huge "*Pilau*," after an idea of my own, of which, as it was considered a *chef d'œuvre* of culinary talent, I give the recipe. When the rice has been well washed, throw it in a large pot full of boiling water. After fifteen minutes' hard boiling it will be nearly cooked. When it is so, take it off the fire, and pour in a large cup of cold water, which suddenly stops the boiling, and has the effect of causing each grain of rice to separate from the others ; then strain it well ; and whilst the water is running off, melt a large lump of fresh butter in another pan, to which mix a small tin of *pâté de fois gras*. When the rice is well strained, put it again on the fire, add the butter and *pâté*, stir it up well, and allow it to steam for a couple of minutes, shaking the pan every now and then to keep the contents from burning, and you will have a famous dish with very little trouble. When you have any fowls or game, put butter only with the rice, and you can then save the *pâté*.

After supper, to which we all sat down and did ample justice, a brew of grog was made, pipes were lighted, and a solemn consultation was held as to our prospects of sport. By the advice of the herdsmen we resolved to try the Schneewandkogel mountain in the morning, as a fine herd of chamois had been seen two days before. This being decided, citherns were taken down, and songs were the order of the night, our hosts, notwithstanding their somewhat rough appearance, being accomplished musicians, and, joined by

our boys, they sang some plaintive mountain melodies with great taste. By particular desire, Herbert and I struck up some of those spirit-stirring Confederate songs that used to ring on the night air by the James River, on whose banks many of the light-hearted singers now sleep in a nameless grave. Being somewhat tired with our day's work, about eight o'clock we turned in, previous to which I opened the hut door to have a look at the night. The little I could see of the horizon was clear, the stars shone brightly in the firmament, and there was every prospect of fine weather on the morrow. We were stirring long before daybreak in the morning, and having an early breakfast (for it is inadvisable to commence hard work on an empty stomach), we set out under the guidance of Franz, one of the herdsmen. The stars were still brightly shining, but the darkness was waning, and a peculiar reddish effulgence on the eastern horizon announced the approach of day.

When we arrived at the foot of the mountain, Karl and I crept up one side, whilst Herbert, accompanied by Franz and Hans, took the other, so as to command both sides of a ravine the head of which was considered almost a certain find for chamois at this time of the year. As the day advanced the mist and vapour vanished, and the outlines of every peak were seen in bold relief against the sky. As the foreground grew more distinct, whilst looking below amongst the larchen, I saw three chamois leisurely browsing on the young branches, quite unconscious of our presence. Although far out of shot, there was every prospect of my being able to get within range, for the larchen afforded excellent cover, and what little air there was stirring blew up the ravine. Desiring Karl to remain motionless and watch their movements, I disencumbered myself of my *Rucksack*, and with noiseless steps crept towards them, hardly raising my head lest I should attract their attention. This was not easy work, for it is difficult approaching game in such situations. After some very careful stalking I got within three hundred yards' range, and, peering through a clump of larchen saw that they had all stopped feeding, and were gazing



inquiringly in my direction, which long experience told me was a certain sign that suspicion was aroused. I lay motionless and watched their proceedings, for under the circumstances I knew it

was impossible to get nearer. At last I distinguished a buck, from his horns being thicker and his coat somewhat darker than the others; and, arranging my sight, I brought the fine bead of the fore-sight against his shoulder, as he was staring at the very bush behind which I lay, as if he knew from the taint in the air that danger lurked there. I pulled trigger, and with a bound in the air he fell down dead. With a shrill whistle the rest bounded away; but, without showing myself, I slipped another cartridge into my rifle, and by a lucky shot rolled over a doe with a bullet through the neck, as from sheer curiosity she stopped a second as if inquisitive to know what intruder had disturbed their mountain solitudes. Karl was thunderstruck at the performance of my rifle, for he had never seen game killed at such distances, and he had no idea of the range of a Whitworth small-bore and the quickness of loading of a Westley-Richards breechloader. Having noted well where both chamois fell, I reloaded, and found the buck lying dead; but the doe had moved away, although I knew that she was hard hit, from the numerous patches of blood, and the slots showing that the toes of the fore feet were very widely spread, as if she was weak and giddy, and had difficulty to keep on her feet. Following up these signs, I soon saw her staggering slowly along, very sick indeed, and a second bullet entering just behind the shoulder, put her out of her misery.

Having gralloched and cleaned the chamois, the buck of which weighed about fifty pounds, we put them in our *Rucksäcke*, and clambered along the crest of the hill, where we expected to meet Herbert and the rest of our people; but although we waited for some time, and swept the country round with our glasses, we could not get sight of any of them, so we began to descend the mountain, skirting the crest of the ravine, and expecting every moment to meet them. Whilst thus engaged, Karl caught sight of a solitary buck chamois browsing on some herbs between two ridges of rock just below the crest on which we were standing. To slip off my *Rucksack* and lay down full length, with my head craning over

the brink of the scarp, was the work of a few seconds. He was within range, but it was a long shot, so I took off my felt wide-awake, and placing it on a boulder of rock, rested my rifle upon it, and taking a steady aim, fired. "It was too far," exclaimed Karl; "but no; sec, he staggers!" and his face lighted up—for we could sec, from his slow, unsteady movements, the buck was badly hit. I felt sure my shot had told, for I was as steady as possible, and I knew from long experience that my rifle was one of the best that was ever turned out by my friend "the worthy Bishop." We had to go along the ridge some distance before we could descend, and then it was ticklish work clambering down the face of the scarp with my long heavy rifle. However, at last we managed it, and had just reached the bottom when a sharp whistle was heard, and three doe chamois went bounding up the side of the mountain. My rifle was slung on my shoulder at the time, and they were far out of range before I was ready to fire, so we went on towards the spot where the chamois was standing when I fired. There we found loose hair, and the aromatic herbage on which he was feeding was in places wet with deep crimson blood. The bullet, after passing through him, had flattened on a large stone, for the splash of the lead was very plain. We followed up the trail for a few hundred yards, and found him dead, with his fore-quarters half hidden in a clump of latches, where he had fallen whilst making a last effort to escape. He was not so large as the first I had killed, but had fine horns, and I felt very pleased with my success. Karl having cleaned him, slung the body over his shoulders, and we made the best of our way up to where we had left our *Rucksäcke*. Slinging the venison on to our alpenstocks, we turned our steps homeward, much surprised at not meeting Herbert or any of his party. When we arrived at the hut, late in the afternoon, I found that my friend, in the dark, had sprained his ankle so severely that he was not able to put his foot to the ground, and it was with great difficulty that Franz and Hans managed to get him home. I was very sorry for this untoward accident, as it did away with all chance

of his killing a chamois, on which he had set his mind. However, he was not one to be down-hearted, and he made up his mind to remain and make himself as comfortable as he could in the hut until he was able to get about. As his ankle was much swollen and inflamed, I prescribed cold-water bandages without and hot grog within, which gave him considerable relief, and enabled him to sleep during the night.

Dinner over, Karl related our exploits and the extraordinary powers of my rifle, and after some improvised songs we turned in, *happy as chamois hunters after a good day's work.*

In the next three days I killed five more chamois, and we then proceeded to the Königsee in the Berchtesgaden, where we had a capital day's sport, and by good luck I managed to kill three fine bucks. Unfortunately I was then obliged to return to England, and could not accept many invitations I received to different shooting parties; but I have since heard that as many as thirty chamois were killed by Count Harrach and his friends in a single day.

CHAMOIS-STALKING IN THE BAVARIAN ALPS.

The London season was on the wane, and the time at hand when every weary toiler whose duty or greed did not tie him to the shop, the house of St. Stephen, a public office, the Stock Exchange, or barrack square, is contemplating a move either to the country or to the Continent, as a change from his ordinary occupation, when the old momentous question once more arises, *Where shall I go?* The hour of freedom is at hand; which way shall I wend my steps? The man who has not a yacht, or a salmon river, an amicable country cousin to cultivate, a wife to consult, or a troop of daughters to get off, naturally meanders in thought over the sea, and considers what unvisited continental capital promises most fun at this

season of the year. Perhaps visions of Baden and Homburg flit across his mind as he muses on the past, but they are no more, and he must seek "fresh fields and pastures new." I was just in this predicament, but to add to my perplexity, an old wound was rankling and threatening trouble, so I did not feel up to much exertion, whilst my physician had not simplified matters by the impracticable advice he gave me for my guinea: "Take your meals at regular hours, go to bed at eleven, and only drink a pint of *sound sherry* to your dinner." In my calling of life it was simply impossible to attempt to follow up this *régime*; for supposing the first two articles in the instructions could be carried out, where—bar miracles—is the sound sherry to come from? Committing the doctor's advice to the winds, I resolved to prescribe for myself the same treatment that the wide-awake farmer gives his land, viz., "rest for a change." I believe that allowing the mind to lie fallow for a season is the best way to get good crops of work out of it. I hold that a good spell of the *dolce far niente* acts like strengthening medicine upon the faculties, and that there is nothing like a long fit of downright unadulterated laziness—call it relaxation if you like—for recruiting the mental *physique* and brightening up the ideas. To carry out my prescription properly, the patient must not only be able to abstain from work cheerfully, but also acquire a certain degree of perfection in the art of doing nothing. As no man can thoroughly enjoy a holiday if he has plenty of them: so the real benefit as well as the keen pleasure of a spell of supreme laziness is reserved only for the busy and laborious, who snatches repose as a respite from work. Then a month's saunter amongst strange scenes, men, and manners, with a friend who can be grave and gay at the right times, leaves a green and pleasant oasis to rest the mind's eye upon whilst memory lasts. In a pleasure trip, a good cheery comrade is the great element of happiness, but beware of a fellow who has "no go" in him, who makes mountains out of mole-hills, and who cuts up rough at what cannot be avoided. *Mais revenons a nos moutons.* I was cogitating upon

my proposed but yet undefined cruise, when I bethought me of my old friend Elliot, a kindred spirit lately returned from India, who, after wandering about the German baths in search of health, was now located at Salzburg, and had lately written me to join him in a trip after chamois amongst the Bavarian Alps. The wire soon informed me of his whereabouts, and I arranged to meet him on the fifth day at Hotel Nelboeck in Salzburg.

The next morning I started for Cologne by steamer from London Bridge, my sole *impedimenta* being a couple of mule trunks, long enough to contain the barrels of my gun and rifle; and after a pleasant trip up the Rhine to Mayence, took train the remainder of the distance, arriving at Salzburg in good time for dinner. Elliot and our good host, to whom I had written, were on the look-out for me, and the former had obtained permission for us to have three days' shooting in the royal preserve from some influential friend at Munich, and the Ober-jäger-meister had been asked to give any assistance we might require.

Starting from Salzburg in a *calèche* with a pair of horses, a very pleasant drive of about fifteen miles brought us to Berchtesgaden, the scenery in the route being very beautiful, as the road winds round the base of the Untersberg Mountain, and then passes through the narrow defile of "the overhanging rock." After leaving the village of Schellenberg, the valley opens out, and the snow-clad double-headed Watzman Mountain rises in all its sublime majesty above the village of Berchtesgaden. The Königsee, or King's Lake, is about three miles farther on, past the village, and here the scenery is grand beyond description, the pine-clad mountains rising perpendicularly from the water, upon which they cast a peculiarly weird-like shadow.

We spent the greater part of the day in sight-seeing, visiting the *jagt-schloss*, or hunting-box of the King of Bavaria, and the glacier of the ice chapel, and we had hardly got in the post *Gasthaus*, at Berchtesgaden, when rain set in, which continued until noon the next day without intermission. This was rather a damper

to our spirits, as it would not do to go up the mountain in wet or cloudy weather ; but I took advantage of this delay in our expedition to send to a *châlet* on the Tannen Gebirge for my old guide Karl, and his cousins, Hans and Heinrich, who had been my companions on a former occasion. Karl and Hans made their appearance the next day, delighted at the prospect of another tirp—Heinrich was away. Karl, who had grown into a fine specimen of a Tyrolese mountaineer, introduced his wife, who was no other than the buxom Kellnerinn of the Grünerbaum in Hallstadt, which was my head-quarters on a previous occasion, and a better-looking couple was scarcely to be found in the Salzkammergat. I need not say how glad I was to see my trusty henchman again by my side, for I had proved his mettle on several occasions, and knew him to be thoroughly trustworthy.

The third morning after our arrival at Berchtesgaden, the weather promising to be propitious, we made a start under the guidance of one of the assistant *jäger* of the Royal Ober-jäger-meister or head forester, and, accompanied by four stout mountaineers to carry our stock of provisions, &c., made our way to the *Senn hütten* or *châlet*, where the herdsmen remain during the summer months to avail themselves of the mountain pasturage. Here a small but comfortable hut was placed at our disposition, and the occupants of the *châlet*, the *Sennerinnen*—a fair sprinkling of good-looking dairymaids—brought us any quantity of milk and butter. The evenings are cold at the altitude we had attained, and a blazing fire looked comfortable. To add to our enjoyment the other occupants of the *Alm* joined our party ; a brew of punch was concocted, and as night drew on, the old hut rang again with *Schnadahüpfl* songs and *Jodeln*, accompanied by the cithern. A dance followed, and long before we separated for the night, good fellowship was established between our party and the other occupants of the *Alm hütten*. Two hours before daylight we were afoot and making preparations for a start, after having done ample justice to a substantial breakfast ; and an hour after our departure we

were slowly progressing up a romantic and wild-looking gorge, with lofty overhanging cliffs on either hand, and as the day broke we found ourselves at the head of the ravine, where a wall-like mountain ridge, apparently as straight as a house-side, seemed to offer an insuperable obstacle to our farther progress. On a nearer approach, however, we found—under the *jäger's* guidance—a point where there was an indentation in the mountain-side, and up this we clambered in Indian file, our alpenstocks constantly coming into play. The toil to us was very severe, but the mountaineers strode up without showing the slightest fatigue, although they were laden with heavy *Rucksäcke*, and we had only our rifles to carry.

After stopping several times to gather breath, we gained the summit of the ridge, where we were told the chamois often frequented. Alas! all appeared blank. Most anxiously and carefully we examined the numerous gorges and corries that opened to our view, and swept the horizon with our field-glasses and telescopes. Not a sign of a chamois was to be seen. This was somewhat disheartening after our exertions, but nothing was to be done to mend matters, so we crept silently along the ridge, halting from time to time and peering into the somewhat misty-looking chasm below. Just as we attained an isolated crag that rose from the steep side of the mountain, the rattle of a stone attracted the quick ear of Karl, who motioned us to stoop low so as to conceal ourselves as much as possible. Again a slight sound was heard, and in the twinkling of an eye a herd of some twenty chamois, led by a fine old buck, passed in review order before us, at a distance of about 120 yards. As the foreground was very steep, only their heads, necks, and the upper part of their bodies were visible above the larchen; but they were near enough in all conscience, and I was about to aim at the leader when the *jäger* motioned me not to fire. Although the wind was blowing towards us, they had evidently caught the taint in the air denoting the presence of man, for I heard the sharp whistle of alarm pass more than once from front to rear, and they trotted slowly and hesitatingly along with every sense upon the stretch, for



FLOCK OF CHAMOIS.

although evidently aware of our intrusion upon their domains, they were yet unconscious of the whereabouts of their enemy.

Catching Elliot's eye and seeing that he was ready, I threw up my rifle and brought down the leading buck with a shot just under the ear, and as the herd were rushing backwards and forwards in consternation, I hit a second fairly grown buck in the small of the back. Elliott had dropped a fine buck, and had severely wounded a doe, which was rolling over and over down the mountain, evidently unable to stop itself, until it disappeared in a cleft in the rock. The guides started in pursuit, and soon descried the chamois lying dead in a crevice, from whence, with the aid of a rope, it was very speedily recovered. Elliot now lighted his pipe with great gusto, for the deprivation of the soothing weed was to him the one great drawback to supreme happiness when out stalking. Karl and the *jäger* gralloched the game, and fastening the legs together by the back sinews, prepared them for slinging. We then drank the *deoch fala*, or death drink, and lightened our packages considerably by demolishing a prodigious amount of luncheon. The day was now well advanced, so, shouldering our rifles, Karl and Hans, each carrying a couple of chamois, led the way, and we retraced our steps down the steep hillside, which from the top as much resembled a precipice as it did the side of a wall from the bottom.

No description that I can give will portray the surrounding scenery so well as the mighty Minstrel of the North, who says :

" I've traversed many a mountain strand
Abroad and in my native land,
And it has been my lot to tread
Where safety more than pleasure led.
Thus many a waste I've wandered o'er,
Clomb many a crag, crossed many a moor ;
But by my halidome !
A scene so rude, so wild as this,
Yet so sublime in barrenness,
Ne'er did my wandering footsteps press,
Where'er I happ'd to roam."

As we went along, we had ample opportunity of admiring the

strength and activity of our mountaineers, who, with a brace of chamois each, and heavy *Rucksäcke*, managed to keep ahead of us the whole way down, although we had only our alpenstocks and rifles to carry. We received a hearty greeting at the *châlet* from the *Sennerinnen* and shepherds, and after a hot supper and a glass or two of grog had put us in good order, we got up another concert and dance, the extemporaneous verses of which bore reference to our skill as marksmen. During the dance, the dancer, who leads off the figure accompanied by the cithern, sings a couplet or two and then returns to his or her place, and one after another take up the song. The rest keep time during the dance by a castanet-like snapping of their fingers, every now and then bursting into a peculiarly wild cry. These gatherings serve to promote good fellowship, and he who cannot sing his "*Schnadnapfist*" in reply, is heartily laughed at by the rest. During the night heavy rain fell, and it continued the greater part of the next day. The mountain was also so hidden in cloud and vapour as to leave no hope of the weather clearing up, so we returned to our old quarters at Berchtesgaden the following morning.

IBEX-STALKING ON THE ITALIAN ALPS.

He only who has lived amongst the mountains, and participated in the perilous excitement of ibex and chamois-stalking, can form a notion of the feelings of delight that the old hunter experiences when a sudden turn in the road reveals to him the glistening peaks of a snow-clad range towering high against the deep blue sky. The heart thrills with exultation at the idea of being once more amongst such scenes, with his trusty rifle on his back, creeping up steep lichen-covered ravines, or stepping along narrow ledges of rock, where the sweet-scented, delicate edelweis grows. He recalls

to mind the happy days spent on the Alm among the mountaineers, the red-letter days of glorious sport, the pleasant returnings from the chase, the *jödler* of the shepherds, the dances with the buxom *Sennerinnen*, and pictures to himself the hearty greetings with which he will be welcomed by his old associates. It was with these pleasurable sensations that, in company with my good friend Carlo Martini, I left the village of Cogne, escorted by a corporal of the King's *gardes-chasse*, who had received an order from Le Chef du Cabinet Particulier de S. M., giving me permission to shoot in the royal preserves. The districts of Cogne, Campiglia, Val, Savaranche, and Ceresole comprise the King's hunting-grounds; and here the game is strictly preserved, sign-posts being set up in different places, with the inscription, "*Défense de chasse*," whilst in every valley keepers and *gardes-chasse* are stationed to prevent poaching. This district is well stocked with chamois; but its chief attraction in the eyes of a sportsman is that it is now the only spot in Europe where the steinbock, or bouquetin (*Capra ibex*), is still to be met with. Being ambitious to shoot a European ibex, I made up my mind not to fire at any other game, so as not to lose a chance; and having promised the *gardes-chasse* a considerable *douceur* in case of my getting a shot, they became as anxious to insure success as I was myself. According to the report of one of their number, three *boucs* had been seen very lately on the glacier De Tragio, above the Châtelet du Poucet, on the eastern slope of the Grivola; so, after a solemn consultation, it was determined to make the châtelet our temporary head-quarters, and we were now *en route* for this destination, three mules carrying a goodly supply of comestibles and bodily comforts, as well as rugs and waterproofs. The corporal, before leaving Cogne, sent to gather information from one of his mates stationed at Carasole—a village in the valley d'Ozca, south of the Grand Paradis—but his messenger had not returned when we started.

We found the châtelet excellent mountain quarters; and our appetites were gratified with the luxury of an unlimited quantity

of rich milk and cream, and bowls full of delicious *brousse*. As we did not leave Cogné until close upon noon, it was too late to think of doing anything more than a cursory survey of the hillside with our telescopes until two of the herdsmen came in, when, to our great gratification, the favourable report concerning the ibex was confirmed by both; and one of them offered to guide us to a spot which, he said, was a sure find early in the morning, as he had constantly seen their fresh tracks on the soft snow, showing that they had passed soon after sunrise. Highly gratified with this encouraging news, after a plentiful supper and a glass of hot grog all round, a quantity of new sweet hay was spread, and, rolling ourselves in our rugs, we slept most comfortably.

At three a.m. the corporal and his party, who had passed the night in a kind of loft at the back of the chalet, awoke us, and we found some delicious *café au crème* and a huge *Schmarrn*, or omelette, ready, and, after we had done ample justice to the good cheer, we set off for the glacier. The air, at this early hour, was somewhat chilly; but the exercise of walking at a good pace kept us warm, and I was delighted to find the weather as clear as could be desired, for the sky was cloudless and the stars shone brightly. But dawn was rapidly approaching, and already the glistening mountain peaks stood out in bold relief against the bluish-grey background. After about an hour's steady walking up a somewhat steep ascent, through patches of flowering saxifrage and boulders of rock covered with soft green mosses, we entered the upper snow regions where vegetation disappears. Still we travelled on, and after a stiffish burst, which tried our climbing powers very severely, we gained the crest of a high ridge which formed one of the lateral sides of the glacier. Here, in three or four places, the clefts in the side of the mountain were filled with deep snow, which does not melt even at midsummer, and where the ice forms small glaciers. At the foot of these diminutive glaciers, where there is often a low terminal moraine, flow small mountain streams, caused by the melting of the ice, on each side of which are strips of luxuriant

herbage, the only signs of vegetation at that altitude. These are the favourite feeding-grounds both of ibex and chamois, and, according to our guide's account, one or other of them was a certain find for *boucs* in the early morning.

One of these snow gullies lay just below us, and a troop of seven chamois were quietly browsing close to the edge of the glacier ; the other two feeding-grounds were considerably higher up the ridge. Having carefully reconnoitred the ground with my telescope, and made sure that no ibex were lurking near, I proposed to make a move to the higher altitudes, but my companion, Carlo, was dead beat, and decided to remain where he was and have a smoke until I returned ; so the corporal, one of the herdsmen who served us as guide, and myself, commenced clambering along the steep ridge, keeping just below the crest, so that we could not be seen from the glacier side of the slope. After about an hour's scramble over boulders of rock and beds of hard frozen snow, we came to a huge level slab under an overhanging cliff, and here our guide bade us wait whilst he divested himself of his *Rucksack* and shoes, and crept on all fours to the brink of the scarp overlooking the glacier. He had hardly taken a momentary glance when he began to wriggle back, and I could tell by his action, as well as from the sudden lighting up of his face, that the game I sought for was in sight. When he joined us, he said he could see three ibex, one of which had fair horns, but they were far out of shot, and were making their way towards the head of the glacier at a good round pace, so that it was useless for us to attempt to get near them. This was somewhat provoking after all our trouble, but it could not be helped : we had got to the ground too late in the day, and the game was off to a higher altitude. Slipping off my boots, I fastened a rope round my waist, threw the other end to the corporal, who made it fast to his belt, and crawled to the brink of the precipice, which was somewhat ticklish work, as it sloped downwards and was covered with short slippery moss that afforded very insecure foothold. From this point I had, at any rate, the satisfaction of seeing the game I had



THE BOUQUETIN, OR IBEX OF THE ALPS.

come so far in search of; for at about six hundred yards distance a good-sized buck and two doe ibex were trotting leisurely up the steep side of the mountain with as much ease as if it was a macadamized road, and I watched them through my telescope get over a terribly rough bit of ground in five minutes that would have taken me an hour at least.

Having watched the game until it disappeared behind a distant ridge, we took a pull of *eau-de-vie*, and made the best of our way back to the place where we had left the rest of our party; but they had decamped for the lower regions, and it was not until we approached the Alm that we caught them up. They had seen two troops of chamois, but no ibex, and had not fired a shot. Although we had come back empty-handed, we passed a very jovial evening, and the corporal related some of his adventures with poachers, several of whom he had shot down at various times. In some parts of the Alps constant mountain warfare was maintained between poachers and the *gardes-chasse*, and in these encounters many a stalwart forester has "gone under," and many a bold mountaineer has found a nameless grave amongst the latschen.

The evening was very sultry, and just before we turned in I noticed the mercury in the barometer had fallen considerably, whilst the thermometer indicated a degree of heat that seemed extraordinary when the altitude of our domicile was taken into consideration, so I felt sure that a storm was brewing; and later on in the night I was not surprised to hear loud claps of thunder, and to see a dark mass of gathering clouds rolling onwards until they obscured the highest peaks, where they soon commingled in conflict, as the almost blinding flashes of forked lightning darting from beneath them plainly indicated. In the mountains the pulse of nature becomes tempestuous only a very short time before the storm breaks, and often but little warning is given. On the brightest days mists will suddenly rise in muffled shapes, like sad ghosts, wrapping the whole range in their cloudlike folds; and should the hunter be thus overtaken in the pathless mountains, if



GOLDEN EAGLE.

the fog lasts he may look upon it as his shroud, since in such cases, lone and cut off from human aid, nothing is to be done but to lie down and wait until the vapours lift, and the chances are that in the meantime he will be frozen or starved to death. This is, perhaps, the greatest danger in chamois hunting, although a steady hand and foot, with a perfect absence of "nerves," are also absolutely necessary. He has often, in the pursuit of his calling, to scramble along narrow ledges of rock or ridges overhanging precipices, when, if he were to allow the peril to cloud the brain, he would be lost to a certainty. Luckily, mountain training not only begets strength in every limb, but it also endues the mind with self-reliance, and when difficulties present themselves the whole frame thrills with exhilarating excitement, that, despising danger, enables the hunter to surmount obstacles which to the uninitiated appear impossible. The herdsman who served as our guide was a splendid specimen of an Alpine mountaineer, and, although he carried a heavy *Rucksack*, he always kept ahead, and continually put both the *gardes-chasse* and myself to shame by his daring agility and endurance. He skipped up steepes we toiled heavily over, and took in his stride chasms and crevasses that we hesitated about crossing at all; yet, having had a good deal of practice in the Himalaya and the Tyrol, up to this time I had imagined myself to be a pretty fair mountaineer, until I found my powers so vastly exceeded by this simple peasant, who evidently got over the ground with very little fatigue or trouble, whereas the corporal was quite done up, and I myself felt that I had had quite enough for one day.

As rain fell heavily during the night, and storm clouds still threatened when we got up in the morning, it was considered advisable to defer our intended expedition after the ibex until the weather became more settled; so we remained in and about the *Alm-hütte* all day, amusing ourselves as we best could by playing *écarté*, shooting at a mark, or talking to the *Sennerinnen*, when they could find a few minutes to spare from their multifarious duties. The "living roses of the Alps," as some enthusiastic tourists call

these hardworking dairymaids, are seldom endowed with much personal comeliness; for the *beauté du diable* of youth soon becomes obliterated by constant exposure to all the vicissitudes of climate, and at an early age they have a premature weather-worn appearance, which, added to their *noli me tangere* costume, that resembles that of a man from the waist downwards, does not enhance their feminine attractions, and whilst in their company one is apt to forget their sex. They are, however, as a rule, cheerful good-natured lasses, full of irrepressible spirits, fond of a joke, and hospitable to a fault; for I have often known them to put themselves to a great deal of inconvenience in order to make their guests comfortable. The mountaineers themselves are a powerful and handsome race, not particularly learned, and somewhat superstitious, but with head and heart in the right place. They have no illnesses worth mentioning, and rarely require a doctor, except in cases of accident; but it is, nevertheless, true that the same district that can boast of some of the finest specimens of the human race, as regards muscular development, also produces a great number of *crétins*, or idiots, and poor creatures affected with incurable *gottre*. I can attribute no cause for this state of things in such a healthy region, unless it is that these people drink "snow water" that may be more or less impregnated with injurious earthy deposits deleterious to the constitution, or that the disease is generated by "in-and-in" marriages between blood relations, which is very prevalent in valleys more or less isolated from the rest of the world. In some of these valleys, it is said that one in seven has some distortion or swelling in the throat, whilst one intellect in fifty is more or less deranged. This is a sad proportion; but, from the number of unfortunates I have fallen in with in these parts, I cannot think it overrated.

Towards evening the clouds cleared away, and when the sun set there was every indication of favourable weather for the morrow's expedition. My friend Carlo had no ambition to make a second expedition, and the corporal had received a message that obliged

him to return to head-quarters ; so Guiseppe the herdsman, and I, started alone as soon as the moon began to rise, which was about two a.m., and we got over the ground much quicker than we had done on the previous occasion, so that we arrived at the first feeding-place before the day had broken. I could easily have got within a fair shot of a troop of quite twenty chamois, who, even at that early hour, were afoot and feeding ; but I had come so far expressly to kill an ibex, and did not care to pull trigger at any other game until my object was accomplished. My companion looked at the troop with a wistful and somewhat imploring visage, and his mouth evidently watered at the idea of a roast haunch, for he whispered beneath his breath, "Should I not like to have the picking of the ribs of that fat doe that is so very near us and offers such an easy shot !" But I was above temptation, and bid him lead the way to the higher feeding-grounds. On arrival there, my self-denial was amply rewarded, for the buck ibex we had previously seen, and three or four does, accompanied with their young ones, were quietly browsing beneath us like tame goats. They were perhaps two hundred feet below us, and the buck seemed to be about a hundred and twenty yards from the base of the scarp. Although the distance was not great, the ledge of rock on which we were standing was so sloping, and offered such insecure footing, that it was an awkward matter to get the muzzle of my long-barrelled rifle to bear in his direction. As soon as I got into firing position and felt steady, I gave a low whistle not much louder than a marmot would emit, but it produced the effect I anticipated ; for the buck raised his head, and stood motionless, with the exception of his ears, which moved forward as if to drink in the sound ; and bringing the fine bead of the rifle to bear against his fully-exposed shoulder, I pulled the trigger, and the moment the smoke cleared away, to my intense gratification, I saw him floundering on his back, with his four legs pawing the air. Fearing, however, lest it should escape or roll into some inaccessible crevasse, I fired a second shot, aiming at his chest, when he rolled over and lay per-

fectly still. If I had had a breech-loading rifle I might have had a fair chance of killing a doe, as the others, panicstricken at seeing



"THE BUCK RAISED HIS HEAD."

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Although my quarry was dead, I doubt very much if I should ever have obtained his horns and skin if it had not been for my stalwart guide Guiseppe, who, knowing the ground, soon found a practicable path by which we could descend to the almost inaccessible place where he lay. As it was, we had to use the axe very frequently to cut steps in the steeper slopes, and to knock away the icicles formed by the drippings from the snow above. At last, however, we accomplished the descent, and making a circuit under the cliff-like rocks amongst the *débris* that had fallen from above, we reached the spot where the ibex lay, and took the spoils, consisting of the skin, head, and horns, leaving the flesh, as it was too rank for food.

Having washed our hands in an ice-cold snow-stream, we lightened the *Rucksack* by "lining the inner man" with the greatest portion of its contents; and when our meal was over, Guiseppe, making a compact bundle of the ibex spoils, slung it to the end of his alpen-stock, so that he could carry it over his shoulder. This arrangement completed, we started on our return journey, reaching the *Alm-hut* at about three in the afternoon, where we received the congratulations our success had earned.

The next day was devoted to chamois shooting, and my friend Carlo was lucky enough to get a brace of young bucks, whilst I had to content myself with a tough old ptarmigan that was stupid enough to stand still after I had missed him once, and gave me a second chance, when I nearly cut off his head with a rifle-ball. We made an unsuccessful attempt the next day to stalk a troop of chamois on the eastern slope of the Grivola, and were returning home, somewhat mortified with our ill luck—for we had three times come across our game without being able to get a shot—when, as we were passing along a lichen-covered slope under the shady side of a precipitous rock, I heard the peculiar shrill whistle of a chamois, and I was just in time to knock over a fine buck, with a shot through the neck, that sprang up from a hollow about fifty yards in front of us. I fancy he must have been asleep until our talking alarmed

him. He proved to be an old buck, with thick, wide-spreading horns, which subsequently I considered good enough to have mounted as a pair of carvers, as a *souvenir de chasse* for my esteemed friend Mr. Baily. This was our last day's sport in this district, for the weather again became unfavourable; so we made the best of our way to Cogne, and from thence by the valley of Aousta to Turin.



GREY PTARMIGAN AND YOUNG.

CHAPTER III.

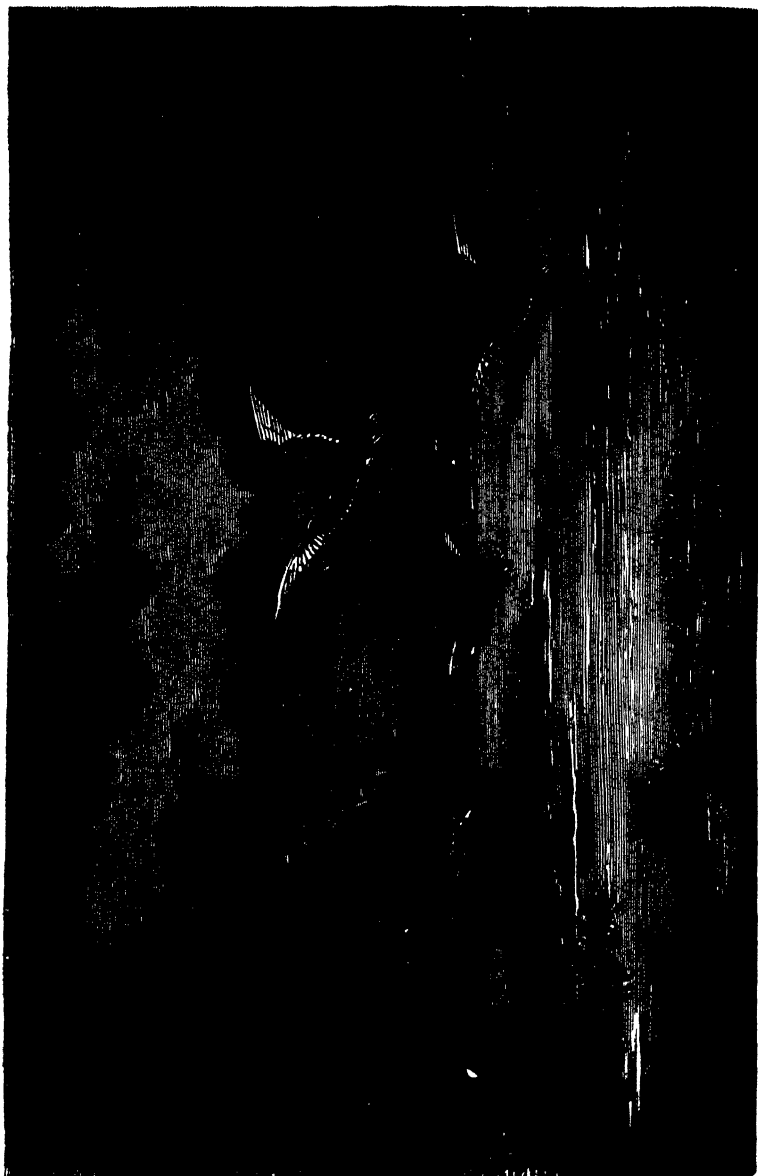
WILD-FOWL SHOOTING.

Cunning of wild fowl—Night-work—Necessary qualities for a fowler—Duck-shooting huts—French *hutti*ers—The marshes of the Somme—A shooting-punt—A fowler's equipment—Wild geese—"Long Tom"—A *hutti*er's home—Decoy ducks—A good bag, but poor sport.

TOWARDS the end of October and in the beginning of November, when the cold weather generally sets in, all birds of passage, including wild fowl of different kinds, woodcock, snipe, and plover, begin to arrive and distribute themselves throughout our island and over the Continent. All appear to come from the same direction, travelling against the wind, large flights rarely arriving unless the breeze is sharp and bracing. Wild fowl on their first arrival evince much shyness in settling themselves in the tide-ways and estuaries round the coast, and the first comers may be often seen reconnoitring and making short excursions over the land, flying very high in companies of twenty or thirty together, in a double line like an arrow-head, before they select any particular district for their winter quarters.

Wild-fowl shooting may be said to commence in the month of November, although frequently large flights of widgeon and other species of wild duck arrive in this country much earlier. In some parts of Scotland wild geese have made their appearance before the oats have been taken in, and at such times have committed considerable havoc amongst the grain, but this is a somewhat rare occurrence.

No wild bird is more wary or cunning than wild fowl that have



THE ALARM SIGNAL.

been frequently disturbed, and I have known a flock of wild duck to remain on a sheet of water a whole winter, notwithstanding they were constantly harassed and shot at. Whenever a gunner came in view, they would assemble out of range, in the middle of the reservoir, or, if they were approached in boats, they would rise out of shot, and, flying high, absent themselves until the coast was clear.

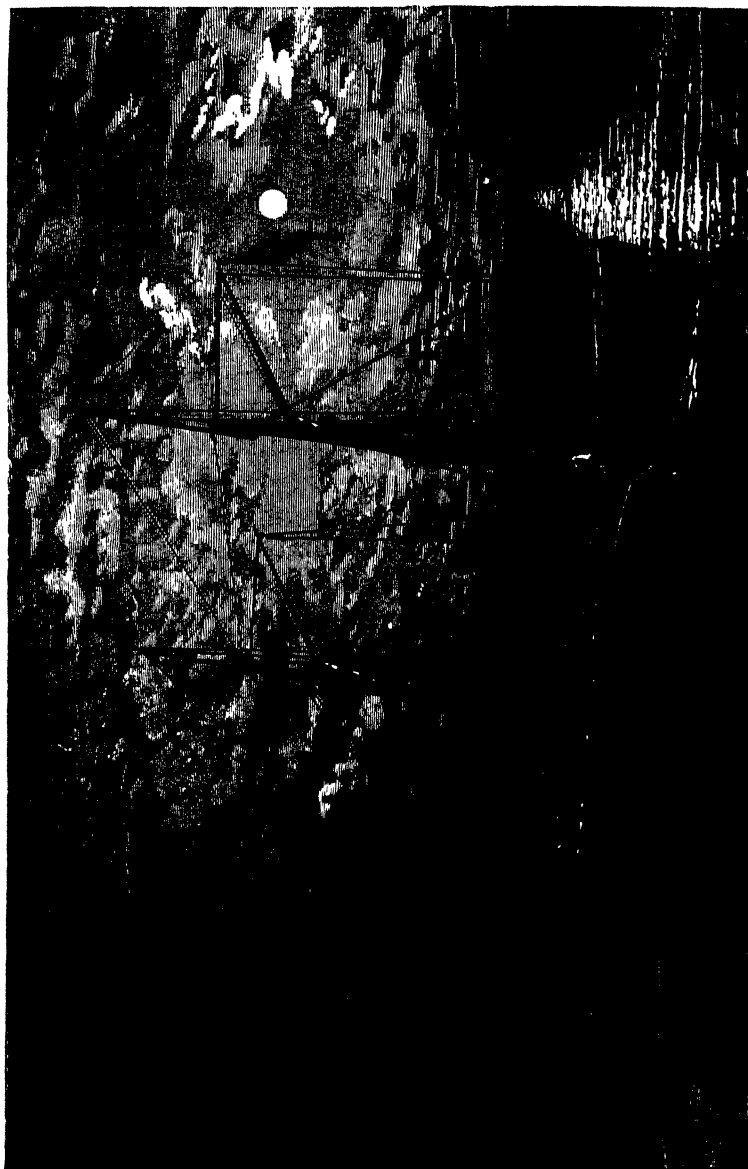
He must be an enthusiastic sportsman indeed who systematically pursues wild-fowl shooting at night as a diversion, as there is no sport so uncertain, or more calculated to try his endurance, his patience, and his constitution. In grouse or partridge shooting the sportsman is, at least, dry, and has the amusement of seeing his dogs work ; in covert shooting he is cheered by the joyous cry of his spaniels ; and in snipe shooting, although he pursues his sport in cold weather, he can, at any rate, keep himself warm by exercise, whilst the chance of a snap-shot always keeps him on the alert. Not so, however, the wild-fowl shooter's lot. His pursuit is not only carried on at the coldest part of the year, but also during those hours when others are enjoying the comfort of a blazing fire or nestling snugly in their beds. No cheerful conversation of companions enlivens his dull dreary waiting hours, no merry cry of his dogs excites his interest by their instructive sagacity. With him all must be stillness ; even his dog couches silently by his side, as he stands, sits, nay, sometimes lies on the frozen ground, listening for the coming flight that in the darker hours are somewhat less wary than in the daylight. Even supposing the fowl to have arrived and alighted, they may have settled down far out of range, and the wild-fowler then has but the choice of two proceedings : to wait freezing in the hope of their approaching within shot, or to wade perhaps thigh-deep in ice-cold water until he can get near them ; but this must be done with no little caution—any unusual noise in the water, even the splashing made by his dog if he is not perfectly steady and under command, may cause his ears to be saluted with the “Quack, quack !” of alarm, and he has the mortification of seeing the whole flock moving off to some distant part, or hearing the flutter of their

wings as they take themselves off to a more secure locality. Thus his hopes as regard that flight are over, and he has only to chew the cud of disappointment and wait in silence for the chance arrival of another. At times small flights will arrive and depart in quick succession, and the fowler may, perhaps, kill a duck or two from each if he has luck ; again, he may keep a watchful vigil the night through, and return home without having seen or heard a pinion.

The fowler must be as hard as nails, with a constitution that can defy the bleak cutting wintry winds, the soaking rain, and driving sleet ; he must be prepared to remain for hours shaking and shivering in his punt, or perhaps, worse still, immersed up to his knees in water, and bent double in a bed of rushes. Supposing the sportsman to have a commodious hut constructed to wait in, and properly trained decoy birds, or a large punt and plenty of rugs, wild-fowl shooting by night may be indulged in with a certain degree of comfort, but even then it is always a very uncertain and precarious sport, that tries both the patience and the constitution ; and, in my opinion, even under the most favourable circumstances "*le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle*," if any other kind of game is to be got. Duck shooting from huts is very extensively resorted to on the French coast, but few, if any, *chasseurs* pursue this sport as an amusement ; it is purely an affair of business, and hundreds of the poorer classes of peasants obtain their livelihood by it during the winter months. It involves scarcely any outlay beyond ammunition, a gun, a pair of *marais* boots, and requires but little skill in shooting, all the shots being sitting ones, and at short ranges. The huts, which are generally built in the summer season, are warm, dry, and comfortable, being sufficiently large to contain two persons and a dog. The usual places selected are small reedy islands, or promontories commanding a view over a large extent of water, which are known to be exactly in the line of flight of the wild fowl ; and this is easily ascertained by the practical fowler, as it is a curious fact that year after year birds come and go in precisely the same direction, as if the road was marked out in the heavens for them to pursue. They have also

certain lines of flight at night and morning to and from their feeding grounds, and good sport may often be obtained by observing the direction they take, and awaiting their flying over at certain marked spots.

The French *hutti*ers generally go to their huts half an hour before dark, and remain in them all night. They seldom kill any other wild fowl than the common wild duck and teal, as widgeon will not drop to the call of the decoy ducks. From three to five decoy ducks are generally used, and these are tied by the leg, in the water, to stakes driven in for the purpose. The birds used as decoys, although tame and domesticated, are of the wild breed, the eggs being taken from the nest and hatched under hens, and they consequently retain the exact size, shape, and call of their species; hence their efficiency for the purpose for which they are used, and for which the tame variety will not answer, as their wilder brethren will not drop to their call. When a new frost takes place, the *hutti*ers break the ice and keep the water open for some distance, and at such times their decoy ducks sometimes attract large flights, which settle on the open water, and a good raking shot amply repays the fowler for his trouble. Some few years ago, I became practically acquainted with the French system of shooting wild fowl with decoys, as practised in the marshes of the river Somme, which during very severe winters are the resort of all kinds of wild fowl. In the early part of December I started on a fishing and fowling excursion in a small schooner yacht with auxiliary steam-power, which belonged to a gentleman living at Dieppe, to whom my friend Cameron and myself are indebted for unlimited hospitality and a very jolly cruise. Monsieur Morel was a great fisherman, and perfectly *au fait* in all the detail of piscatorial art in so far as it related to deep-sea fishing, and our craft was accordingly admirably provided with all kinds of rods, lines, and nets. Cameron affected to take to fishing more than shooting, as the weather was extremely cold, and the cabin with its cosy fire and spirituous comforts was always handy, and he really was not fit for any hard work, his health having become completely



A NIGHT HAUL.

broken by his cruel incarceration in Abyssinia. We had been old friends in India, and after the Crimean War had made several shooting expeditions together on the eastern shores of the Black Sea and in Asia Minor, when it would have taken a right good man to keep up with Duncan Cameron in a tramp across country, and a clever scholar to get the best of him in an argument or classical lore. He was comparatively a wreck after his return from Abyssinia, and his health was too much broken to allow him to take much bodily exertion, consequently I did not press him to accompany me upon my wild-fowling expeditions, whether in the punt or ashore. Our crew consisted of a skipper, engineer, four men, including the cook, a most important personage, and two boys, one of whom, Jean, generally accompanied me in my trips. He was rather an odd fish, and in consequence of his nose having been so badly broken by falling down a hatchway that that organ had assumed almost as many twists as a corkscrew, he was usually hailed as "*l'anguille*" (the eel) by his mates. He, however, was a hardy, enduring, light-hearted Breton, who never knew what it was to be tired, and an excellent hand in a punt, either for pulling in a sea-way or creeping up to a flight of fowl. Morel had anchored our little craft between St. Firmin and Le Crotoy, in the *embouchure* of the Somme, and whilst he and Cameron were engaged in fishing, I and Jean took the punt for a turn amongst the wild fowl, which were flying about in all directions. Amongst a rare gathering of various kinds of duck, widgeon, teal, curlew, godwits, and sand-pipers, with the aid of my field-glass I detected a flock of barnacle geese, and as they loomed large on the water, I determined to give them my first attention.

The question was how to get near them without being discovered, as they were more or less surrounded by a flock of mussel ducks. My punt was just over twenty-four feet long, with good beam in proportion, and remarkably buoyant. She was admirably built and finished, being copper-fastened throughout, and had a strong elm bottom, ash timbers, Norway deal sides, and well-fitted withy deck, which, after being well tarred, was covered over with tightly

stretched canvas, which adhered firmly, and gave considerable additional strength, without adding much to the weight. Round this the bulwarks were attached, being about four inches forward and gradually declining to two aft, and the stern was covered with stout copper, so as to preserve it when poled through shallow places. The whole punt, both outside and in, was painted a greyish slate-colour, so that it was almost undistinguishable at a short distance. The centre opening was about six feet and a half in length, and fitted with a waterproof tent-like covering, so that the occupant could lie down comfortably at full length. The mast was about ten feet long, and fitted into a socket securely fastened to the bottom; and when under sail, I carried a brown cotton canvas foresail, sliding gunter mainsail, and leg-of-mutton dandy.

Two iron spindles fitting in brass sockets were let into the gunwale on each side, and either the oars or short paddles worked upon these props by means of stout leather loops fixed to them. The gunwale and sides of the boat against which the oars worked were covered with sheep's skin, so as to muffle all sound—a very necessary precaution when the birds are wild. In the bow, upon a swivel that worked in a brass socket reaching to a block at the bottom of the boat, and to which was attached a strong spiral spring to ease the recoil, was a double breech-loading gun made by Fuller, with plenty of metal at the breech, having a gauge of about an inch and a quarter, which, with a heavy charge of powder, threw six ounces of shot from each barrel, so as to make a very pretty pattern at ninety yards; and I had besides a double 8-bore Westley-Richards, and a good stock of Eley's long-range green-wire cartridges to stop cripples. I was admirably equipped by Mr. Wilson, the proprietor of Cording's waterproof establishment, then in the Strand, now in Piccadilly, with a most complete fowler costume, which was not only light and comfortable to wear, but also impervious to cold and wet, a great desideratum for wild-fowl shooting when the sportsman is constantly exposed to all weathers, as well as the spray washing over him. The wild-fowler, when punt-shooting, should

be careful to have all his under clothes made comfortably large of warm woollen material, paying special attention to having lamb's wool socks, flannel shirt and drawers, with the chest and pit of the stomach further protected by a long chamois-leather waistcoat with sleeves attached. Over this should be worn a long waterproof jacket, reaching a little over the hips, with pockets outside, and having inside the sleeves a second arrangement, which fastens with an elastic band or buttons close round the wrist, and prevents cold or wet from going up the arm. For very inclement weather, or when there is likely to be a sea on, breeches or rather pantaloons of the same waterproof material are required, and these should fit loosely over the knee, but fasten rather closely over the calf and instep. The nether extremities should be clad in Cording's yachting boots, which are admirably devised so as to serve as a boot and gaiter combined. The upper part of the leg is made of stout flexible waterproof cloth, whilst the foot is covered with leather, and along the centre of the sole are four rows of thick flaxen-thread stitching, which swell when wetted and prevent the wearer from slipping. The most suitable head-gear for wild-fowl shooting is a well-ventilated "sou'-wester," of the same colour as your punt, with a peak fore and aft, and a woollen back-piece to fasten round the back of the head and under the chin, so as to protect the neck from the cold and prevent it from coming off, with two holes on each side corresponding with the orifices of the ears. At the bottom of my punt I had an inflatable air-bed, which was not only most conducive to my personal comfort, but also a precaution of safety, as in case of a capsize it would have proved an effective life-buoy. As a protection against the cold, rain, and sleet, I had a good supply of blankets, rugs, waterproofed on the outside (another of Cording's specialities), which kept Jean and me tolerably cosy and warm whilst waiting for a shot, even when the temperature was enough to freeze one's nose off.

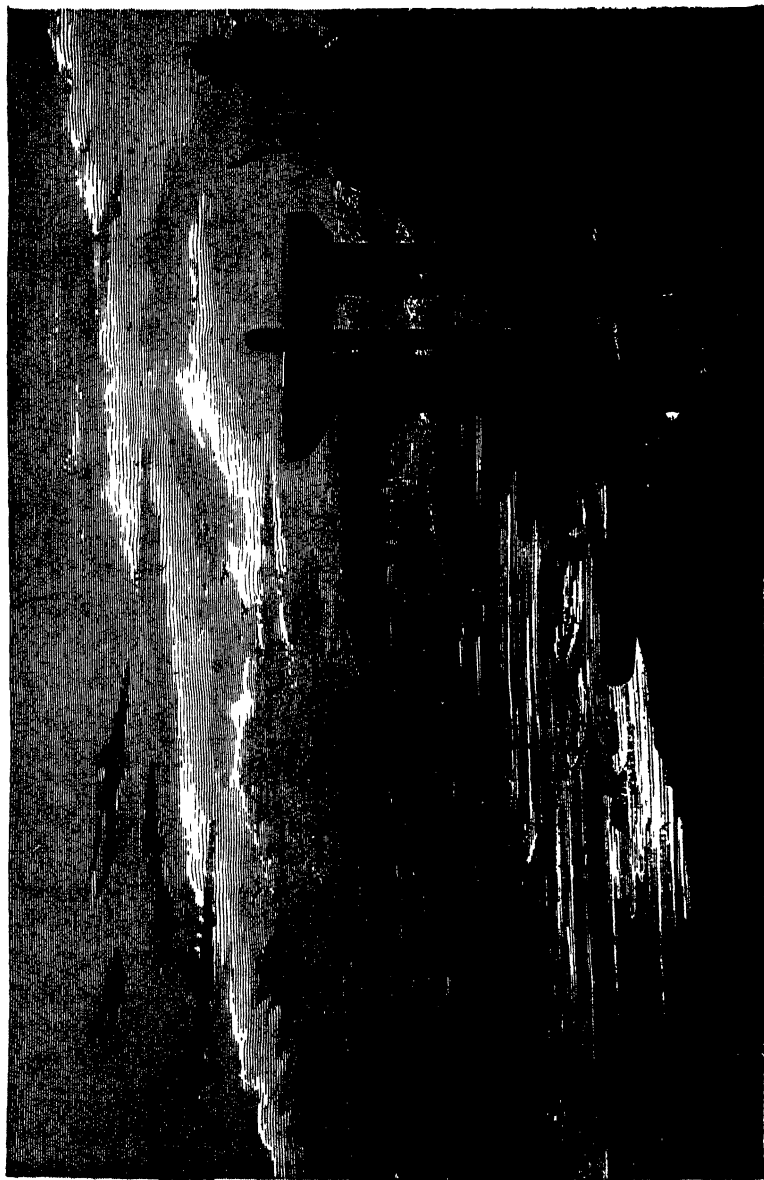
In all wild-fowl shooting the whole paraphernalia of the punt and dress should be of the least distinguishable hue, and long experience



CRIPPLE STOPPING.

has shown that a greyish slate-colour is about the best for general work. Jean was provided with a pair of mud-pattens, which consisted of thick pieces of flat board, somewhat bevelled off fore and aft, in the centres of which the leathern sandals with straps and buckles were attached, that fastened round the feet and kept them in their place, so that the wearer could walk or rather glide over the soft mud in comparative safety. In some places the false ground is coated with long coarse grass, and much resembles the *terra firma*, so that it is very apt to deceive and engulf the inexperienced if unprovided with mud-pattens. I had also a landing-net, which proved very useful in picking dead and wounded birds from out of the water, and although I had an admirably broken retriever almost always with me, when in the punt I rarely allowed him to go into the water to recover the birds, as he made us so wet on his return. Master Harry, my canine friend and constant associate, was a very knowing card, and could keep his watch on the look-out for a flight of wild fowl as well as we could ourselves, for whenever he saw a flock, or heard the sharp whistling of a flight of widgeon, he would awake us by a low whimpering, the import of which I well knew. His usual post in the boat was at my feet, which he kept warm with the heat of his body and long coat, and, unless at my bidding, he rarely moved, so that I found him no encumbrance, whilst at times he proved very useful in recovering game.

Having given some account of my gear and companions, I shall proceed to describe our doings in French waters. Except when a very strong northerly wind is blowing, the marshes at the mouth of the Somme are easy of access to the gunner having a seaworthy punt; but at times the tide runs very strong, and a rough chopping sea gets up in an incredibly short time, which, if he is not careful, will swamp his craft, unless it is constructed with air-chambers. During the winter months the little islands, creeks, and bays are very favourite resorts of widgeon, mallard, pintail, shovellers, teal, and curlew, whilst occasionally, when the weather is more than ordinarily severe, large flocks of geese and wild swans are not unfrequent



DUCK-SHOOTING WITH DECOYS

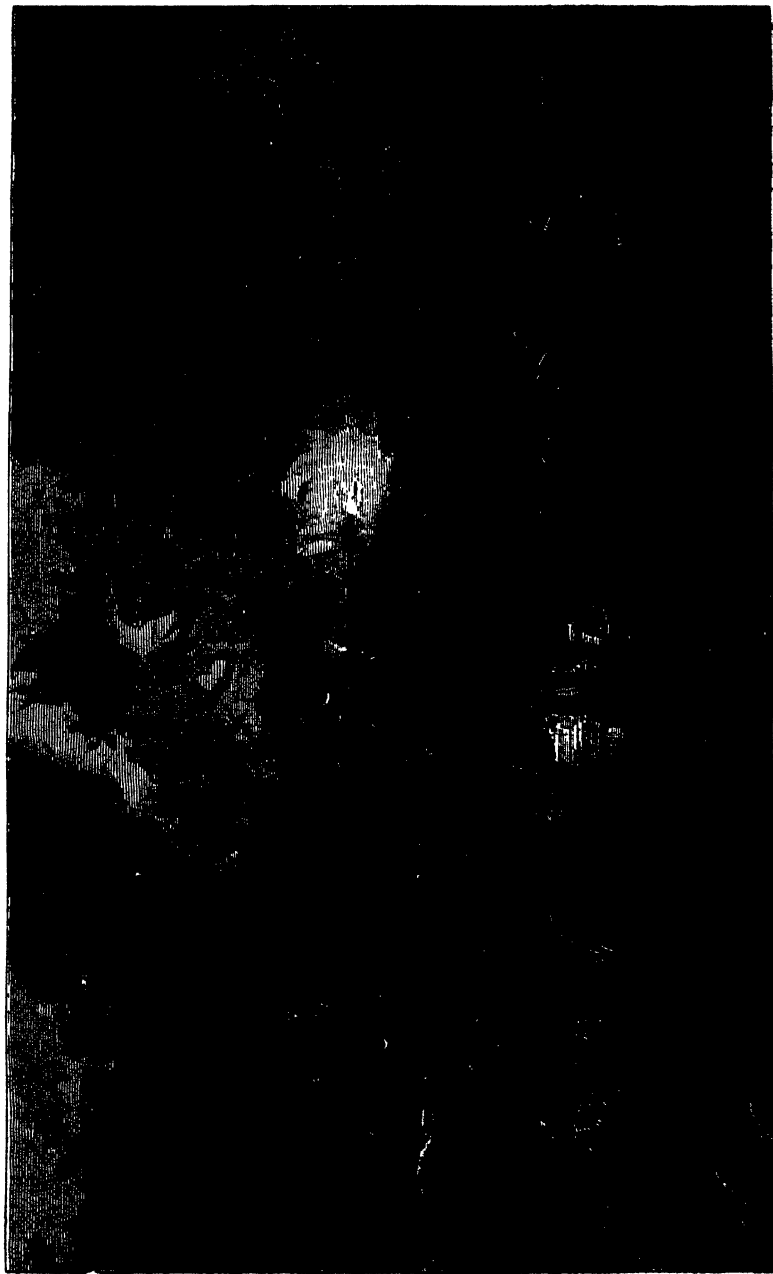
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DUCK-SHOOTING WITH DECOYS

visitors. When we left the steamer, the sea was tolerably smooth, although the day was dark and lowering as if dirty weather was brewing; but hardly had we pulled in shore than a strong breeze got up and the water became lumpy, and if it had not been that hundreds of wild fowl were visible, and nice little clusters were temptingly gathered on the mud flats—for the tide was receding, and it was nearly low water—I should have returned on board. As it was, I determined to make the most of the opportunity, and take my chance of getting back. Luckily I had a good supply of eatables, and a good-sized keg of *eau de vie*, snugly stowed in a watertight compartment fitted with sliding panels in the bulkhead, as well as a well-arranged cooking stove, and a store of coffee, tea, and such like comestibles. Feeling myself tolerably independent under the circumstances, I pulled well in shore, and taking advantage of a sheltering promontory, managed to paddle round a patch of high reeds, which was almost within long range of the geese. There we unexpectedly came upon a small flock of teal, that got up one by one with a whistle that I was afraid would have alarmed the geese, but fortunately they were too much engaged in feeding; and, after waiting a little while, under cover, Jean noiselessly paddled towards them, whilst I, lying my full length at the bottom of the boat, brought the sight of my "Long Tom" to bear upon them, and raked them with a right-and-left at about eighty yards distant. I waited until I saw them gathering together, with outstretched necks, before I pulled the trigger of the first barrel, and the second discharge swept through them just as they were rising from the water, so that the double shot committed great havoc. Without, however, waiting to see the result, I reloaded, and was in time to get a second right-and-left among the survivors, who, with a cloud of duck, were making a circle round their wounded companions, before taking their departure; a number of splashes in the water followed the report, and I knew that considerable execution had been done; so we paddled up to collect the killed and wounded, and, after stopping a few cripples and winged birds with my Westley-Richards, I found we



WILD-FOWL SHOOTING WITH A STALKING HORSE.

had brought to bag nine geese and twenty-three ducks of various kinds. The wind had by this time increased almost to a gale, and, as the tide came in, the water became so broken and rough that I determined to run ashore and take refuge in any habitation I could find—as a mixture of snow, rain, and driving sleet was anything but pleasant. On looking round, not a house was to be seen, for the mists creeping up, our horizon had become very circumscribed, and I had just made up my mind to run my punt upon the nearest mud-bank, when I found that I was pretty close to a large flock of widgeon, whom I could hear making a continuous whistling noise, although I could not see them. As we turned round a small point, I caught sight of them feeding, and directing Jean to paddle gently towards them, I got to within sixty yards of the nearest outlying flock before I fired, and the whole swarm flew close over the boat, when I snatched up my Westley-Richards and let drive both barrels right in the thick of them.

Although many cripples got away in the fog, we picked up twenty-seven widgeon and five pintail, and we were looking out for some stragglers when a distant voice hailed us from a small island covered with reeds. I immediately turned the punt's head in the direction from which the call appeared to proceed, and shouted, for we could see no one; and, guided by an answering "Halloo!" I found myself in a little creek, on the bank of which a *huttier* had established his ambuscade. Having heard from Morel a good deal about the skill of the French duck-decoyers, and their mode of calling down flights of wild fowl by imitating their different cries, I determined to take advantage of the situation, and make myself acquainted with their method. Running my punt ashore, I soon fraternized with the occupants of the hut, for they were two, "the *chasseur*" and "his dog," which appeared to be a cross between a setter and a *poodle*, and a very intelligent animal he was, in spite of his cross breed. Fine snow was falling fast at this time, and we were invited to enter the hut, and remain for the night, if we could put up with the scant accommodation,

Having plenty of prog with us, we closed at once with the offer, and, after hauling up the punt alongside the hut, transferred its contents inside, where we proceeded to make ourselves at home. We were rather closely packed, as the interior of the hut was not more than ten feet by eight, but the roof was water-tight, and we stuffed up the embrasures so as to keep out the cold, and made ourselves very comfortable. After an abundant supper and sundry tins of hot grog, the *huttier* showed us his *modus operandi*, which was extremely simple. He had a double set of decoys, consisting of three drakes and four ducks, as his hut was situated on a narrow neck of land, and commanded a considerable extent of water on both sides. On each of these two ducks were picketed, being fastened by the leg to a cord fixed to a leaden weight which was thrown into the stream about eight yards from the shore, and so arranged that the ducks could swim round in a circle about three yards in diameter. Two of the drakes were allowed more liberty, being fastened with a long string by the leg to a peg driven in or near the edge of the water, whilst the third one was kept in the hut, and only let out now and again with a light cord secured to his leg, so that his occasional intrusion amongst the ducks might arouse the jealousy of the other drakes, and cause them to vociferate when from any cause the quacking had momentarily ceased.

The decoys were all in position when we arrived, but the howling of the wind and the roar of the sea prevented our hearing whether their calls were answered, whilst the darkness of the night prevented our seeing anything. We therefore gave up all idea of shooting, and, wrapping ourselves in our rugs upon the clean straw, slept for some hours like tops. Towards morning I was awakened by the *huttier*, who bid me get my gun, as he had heard flocks of duck whistling overhead, and our decoys were trying hard to get up a flirtation with the wild birds by calling lustily. Finding the night had cleared up, and the fog lifted as the moon rose, I was soon on the alert, and, slipping out with my rugs, I ensconced myself comfortably with my bed and rugs in the punt, and, training the gun

so as to bear on the water, I waited patiently until a rush of wings, followed by a flapping and splashing in the water, announced that a large flight had settled close at hand. "*Gardez-vous!*" exclaimed a voice from one of the embrasures, and bang went a young cannon



RUFFs

from the hut. As the flight rose, I let drive right and left, and followed it up with the "cripple-stopper," and "splash, splash, splash!" and "thud, thud, thud!" was heard as the stricken birds dropped heavily in the water or on the mud. Out sprang the *huttier* and his dog, and in a couple of minutes the former was in his dingy, that lay concealed in a patch reeds, whilst the latter was swimming off

about and retrieving the dead and wounded. Master Harry joined in the fun, and we were just launching the punt to assist, when a loud report sounded at no great distance, which I knew, from the ring, proceeded from the brass signal-gun on our steamer. Three and twenty duck and teal had fallen from our united discharges, which I begged our host to accept, with half a napoleon and a flask of powder; and then bidding our host adieu, we got all our gear into the punt, and made the best of our way to the steamer, the skipper of which continued to fire his gun and burn blue-lights until we made our appearance. On account of the bad weather, Morel had been rather anxious, fearing that my little craft might have been swamped. So, when the tide served, he followed us up the river, and anchored about a mile from the *huttier's* location. It was four a.m. when I got on board, and terribly cold; so after a glass of hot grog, and a good warm by the cuddy stove, I was glad to find myself once more comfortable in my snug bunk. We had been very successful, and killed a large number of birds; but there was very little real sport in our proceedings, and, if we had not had luck, we might have undergone a good deal of hardship and exposure to very little end. I do not like to make a toil of a pleasure, and I do not think I could be again tempted to face a nor'-wester in a punt on a dirty, cold winter's night, if I were sure of bagging a ton weight of wild duck; "*mais chacun à son goût.*"



CHAPTER IV.

HOG-HUNTING IN INDIA.

The Boar described—A Royal sport—Hints on riding Hog—The different characters of Hog—The qualifications of a trained Hog-hunter—Riding-ground described—The Deccan hunt—The *modus operandi*—Wrinkles to Tyros—Spears and hunting-gear—The opening day of a tent hunt and its festivities—The assembly—The cover-side—The sounder reared—"Gone away"—The chase—A "yawner" thins the field—The race for the first spear—The struggle—A double—The charge—The tusks won—Rules of the Deccan and Nugger hunts.

"DUM SPIRO, SPERO."

THE wild boar has ever been classed amongst the noble beasts in the most ancient annals of venery; and well he deserves to be so, as none amongst the animal creation has a better right to be styled a *cavalier sans peur et sans reproche*. Although apparently a coarse, rough, sulky, insolent-looking brute, with a cunning narrow-slitted eye, from which he casts furtive, scowling, and malignant glances, he is gifted with rare metal; and no one can fail to admire his courage, as, regardless of odds, he unflinchingly charges his enemy, maintains his gallant bearing to the close of the contest, and meets his death like a hero, without a cry or a plaintive groan escaping him.

The engraving on the next page represents a "sounder" of wild hog; and it must be allowed that it requires a great stretch of imagination to realize the fact that all the different breeds and castes of the porcine race, which are annually exhibited at the cattle shows, are of the same race; for it is almost impossible to trace any resemblance between those gentle, gluttonous, fat, sleepy, bacon-yielding animals, and the formidable tusked monster that roams the



A "SCUNDER" OF WILD HOG.

jungle at his pleasure, and concedes not his right of way even to the lion himself—yet unquestionably they came from the same stock; and if again placed in the same condition, their offspring would, after a few generations, become indistinguishable.

The adult wild boar is generally of a brownish black, which, as years go by, changes to a greyish slate-colour. He has also bristles of considerable length about the head, and a shaggy kind of mane. They stand from 25 to 40 inches at the shoulder, have a short head, broad flat forehead, short pricked ears rather round at the tips and lying close to a very muscular neck. The eye is long and narrow, with much display of the white when enraged; and the tusks, in a full-grown boar, average from 5 to 9 inches in length.

Hog-hunting, as carried out in India, is a truly regal sport, being the incarnation of all that is exciting, and it may be said to combine all the attractions of fox-hunting with the excitement of steeple-chasing, heightened by that intense fascination which the presence of danger only can inspire. It is a sport *sui generis*, for it can be compared to no other. In stag or fox-hunting, man plays but a secondary part in the game, as the hounds *find, follow, and kill*; but in hog-hunting it is widely different. The hunter himself searches for his quarry; he scrambles amongst rocks and ravines clothed with dense jungle to track up the boar, and, when it is reared and fairly started, he has a perilous pursuit before him over an unknown country abounding with holes, rocks, stones, nullahs, steep precipices, and rugged mountains.

After the hunter has surmounted more or less of these obstacles, and by dint of hard riding comes up to close quarters with the boar, he has to depend solely upon his coolness and skill in managing his horse, to prevent their being ripped, as well as upon his dexterity in his handling the spear, so as to kill the enraged and desperate animal who shows fight to the last gasp, and who is never conquered until he is slain.

The great secret in attaining success in the hog-hunting field is to *ride straight*, as there is scarcely any ground that a hog can get

over where an Arab horse cannot follow. Press him from first to last at the best speed your horse is capable of, *so as to blow him on the first burst*, otherwise he will gain his second wind and run for miles, and there will be tails shaking and heaving flanks amongst those who are in at the death. Those hogs found in hilly countries, that have to take long journeys every night to and from their feeding-grounds, exhibit far greater speed and endurance than those bred in the plains, being in far better training for running.

Remember always to ride *with the butt of your spear down and the point well forward, almost in a line with your horse's ears*, so that in case of a fall it is not likely to hurt either your horse or yourself. If you once lose sight of your hog, the chances are that you will not see him again, as he is a cunning brute, and escapes by taking advantage of the inequalities of the ground or some dried-up water-course.

When closing up with your hog, try and get to his near side, so as to be able to use your right arm freely, and when he begins to tire and his speed to slacken, or when you see him champ his tusks (which prognosticates malicious intent and mischief brewing), touch your horse with your left heel, and spring him alongside of your game at the best pace he can go, taking care to have the point well directed, so that the impetus of your rush drives it well home behind the shoulder-blade and out of the chest. Remember not to let go the butt-end; and, keeping your horse well in hand, pass your antagonist at speed, *wheeling off at the moment* of delivering the thrust, so as to withdraw your spear and avoid a charge. If this is skilfully done the chances are that you will get away scot-free, and leave your enemy rolling in the dust in his last agony. Should the wound not prove mortal, circle round and charge him again at speed as he stands at bay, but be careful how you act, or you may come to grief.

Sometimes it happens that the leading spears are thrown out and balked of taking the first honours by the boar's doubling sharp round; and, in that case, the second line get a fair chance of taking

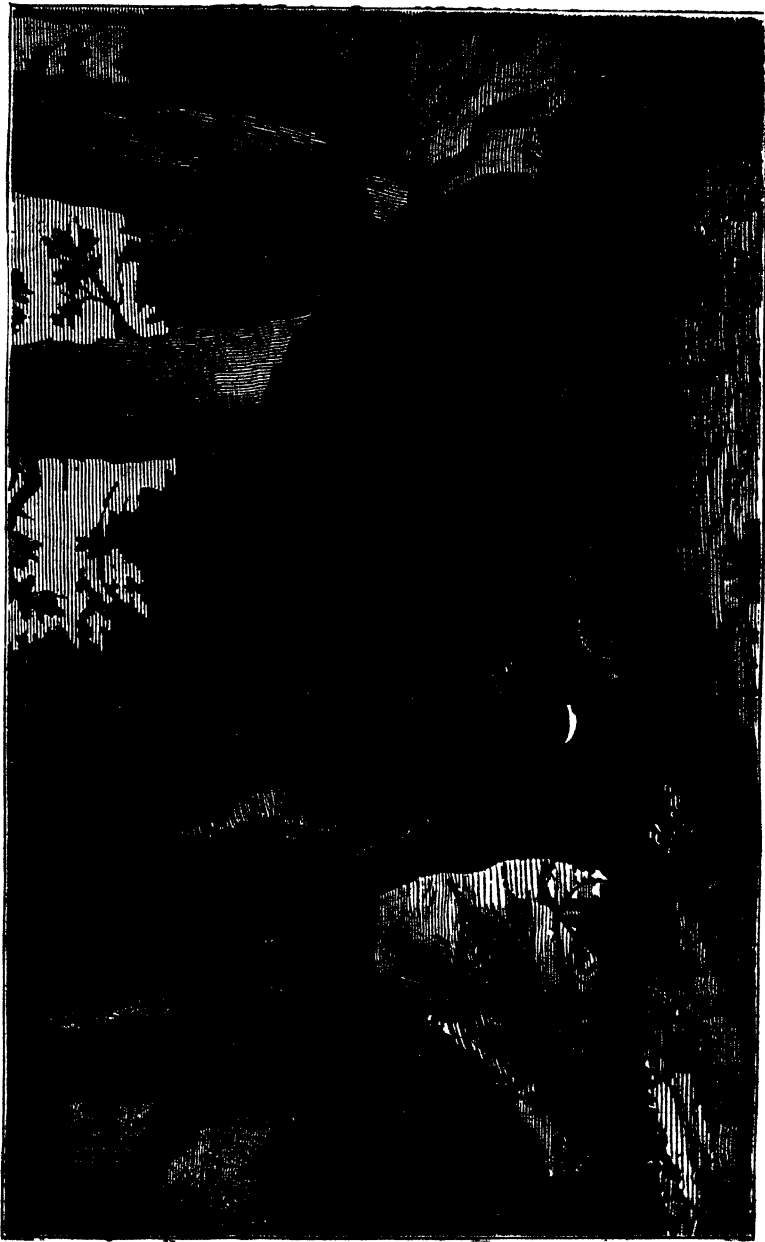
the spear. The great advantage of having a thoroughly trained horse, with a good mouth, now shows itself; for "the spear is never lost until it is won," and, by wheeling sharply round, the advantageous position may again be gained.

The hunter who has accustomed himself to handle his spear with his left hand equally with the right, possesses a great advantage over a rival who can only work with his right hand. Thus, when his opponent has the *spear-hand*, or is riding close on the near side of the boar, ready to spring his horse and take the first blood, instead of jostling his adversary, he dashes up to the off side, and gains an equal chance of getting the spear, being ready to take advantage of the slightest swerve the animal makes if he should attempt to double.

Old boars are proverbially cunning, and after having been once hunted are very difficult to dislodge; for very often neither noise, nor even the sight of the advancing beaters, will make them budge from their lair and take to the open ground. They break back and charge the line of beaters time after time, and frequently manage to escape in that manner. An old boar "stot" is broad, and deeply indented, from his weightiness of body; the imprints of the toes are round, thick, and often far apart from one another, whilst his stride is very long in comparison with the rest of the "sunder." The engraving represents an old boar whetting his tusches on the rough bark of a tree, and at the same time scratching his chops and rubbing his head,—an amusement which all the porcine race, in common with the clan Argyle, are particularly partial to.

One of our most famous Indian hog-hunters thus describes the different dispositions of the porcine race:—

"There are various kinds of hogs which may sometimes be met with in one morning: I merely allude to their difference in disposition. The young boar is active and incautious, and goes off with amazing speed; fights well, but, from want of sufficient length of tooth, has not the same chance as more aged ones, and, I think, feels the spear more—*i.e.*, dies sooner. The boar full grown affords



AN OLD BOAR.

much finer sport ; but the grunter, just on the turn, is the one to make a man's blood run brisk. His exertions to save his life, tempered with caution, would surprise a fox-hunter, methinks ! The only way to come up with one of this class is, to press him very hard the moment he bursts, when he will most likely slacken his pace after about a mile. The moment he sees you have the speed of him, he will turn, and then is the time to give him the blow. A hunter should always keep the hog about ten yards ahead of him, a little on the right, so that, the instant he perceives him waver in his direction, he may have him under his spear hand ; for hogs in general turn down on the hunter when they come to the stop. This is the time a man's eye and horsemanship tell : if he has a good eye on the hog, and a correct hand on his horse, he does his business for him, and at the instant he delivers his spear into the small of the back (every man has his favourite spot to strike at—mine was always the small of the back, as being the most vital), he has his horse off to the left. The force of the blow checks the hog, and the right spur, well put in, takes off the horse. People generally get their horses cut at this critical moment. If they miss their aim, the hog gets in on them ; and, unless they have already got their nag away, they get a nasty cut, which sometimes proves fatal, always annoying.

A thoroughly trained horse is a *sine quâ non* in hog-hunting ; and a high-caste Arab makes the best hunter, as he is the most courageous, the most enduring, and the most sagacious of our Indian breeds of horses, and is consequently the more easily broken and trained. He should be

“ Full of fire and full of bone,
All his line of fathers known ;
Fine his nose, his nostrils thin,
But blown abroad by the pride within !
His mane a stormy river flowing ;
And his eyes like embers glowing
In the darkness of the night ;
And his pace as swift as light.”

No horse will make a good hog-hunter that cannot do his couple

of miles at a fair racing speed ; and the faster he can get off at the commencement of the run the better, as the boar who has been feeding heavily during the night is not in running condition early in the morning, and generally gets blown after being pressed hard for a mile. When he flags, the horse who is in better wind begins to outpace him ; and the rider, springing him up alongside, is enabled to drive the spear well home behind the shoulder-blade, and passing on at full speed, the boar's fore quarters swing round, and he generally rolls over. The horseman, by simply keeping fast hold of the butt-end, extracts the spear as the horse moves on, and, wheeling round his horse, is prepared for eventualities, having his point ready. If the hunter attempts to make a *waiting race*, and allows the boar to go his own pace, the chances are that he will be beaten in the long run. Some rival will take the first spear, or the boar, getting his second wind, will escape. "Bul-bul"—the *sobriquet* of Nightingale of the Nizam's service, one of the best spears in the Deccan—used to give a tyro this advice—which he carried out to the letter himself—"Ride straight, make running from first to last, keep your spear point well forward, and never say die." Both the horse and his rider must be gifted with no ordinary qualifications to win the spear of honour in a well-contested field ; and even the finest turn of speed of the horse is unavailing if the rider cannot handle his spear with dexterity, or if either of them have a particle of "the white feather" in their whole composition. A famous old sportsman, Harry Hieover, used to say that, as relates to man, "there are three attributes indicative of a bold manly character, namely, *bravery*, *courage*, and *gameness*." I conceive each separately may be looked at in something like the following light. If we see a man breast a wild and heavy sea, with the hope of saving the life of another, we should call him a *brave* fellow. If we saw another rescue a fellow-man from the attack of others or from the grasp of a ferocious animal, we should admire his *courage*. If we saw a weak, small man, evidently overmatched by a powerful antagonist, but fighting on under every disadvantage, trusting that his determination would

eventually bring him off triumphant, we should admire his *game*. Bravery may, I think, be somewhat closely defined as braving the evident risks of life in cases where personal effort, though it may aid, cannot secure our safety ; courage, by facing danger in situations where we have only our own nerve and resolution to carry us through ; and game, the patient suffering and endurance of bodily hurt and pain in either case.

As with men, so in horses, may be found the three characteristics of "high caste;" namely, bravery, courage, and gameness, although they may seldom have the opportunity of showing them. We hold a horse to be *brave* who will leap at any obstacle he may be put at, not knowing what may be on the other side, or who will take his rider in full confidence up to any dangerous animal. We extol the *courage* of a horse who, on the field of battle, amid the roaring and flashing of cannon and the rattle of musketry, will force his way through opposing hostile ranks, reckless of all dangers. We speak of the *gameness* of a horse who, although wounded to the death, will carry his rider until his strength fails him, and he drops ; or, again, we frequently hear that such a horse or mare was beaten twice or three times between Tattenham Corner and home, but finally won by a head. This is the *ne plus ultra* of gameness, as a horse so situated must have gone in severe distress ; but, the moment he in some degree recovered his powers, he willingly came again and won. Such running is a proof of a generous and willing nature, a voluntary defiance of distress, and *gameness* of the highest order. A perfect hog-hunter must have all three qualities combined.

It is an axiom in the creed of a hog-hunter that a well-trained horse can follow and come up with a boar over any kind of country, and, as far as the jumping is concerned, or even in the scrambling over bad ground, the rule holds good ; but there are certain exceptions : for instance, a sounder of hog, when hard pressed, will unhesitatingly throw themselves down the scarped bank of a nullah a dozen or fifteen feet deep, pick themselves up uninjured by the fall, and continue their way ; whereas such a drop would bring a

field of horsemen to grief, if they were to attempt to follow. Again, some parts of the country are so intersected with rocky corries and ravines that riding hog is impracticable; whilst other districts are so covered with prickly pear and thorny bushes that a horse would be lamed for a month after galloping a mile across country.

Before going further, it would perhaps be as well to give some idea of the nature of the country over which hog are hidden and speared. The "meidans," or plains, the best riding ground we have in the Deccan, are generally more or less covered with rank "rumnah" grass and low bush, which hides dangerous holes made by snakes, bandicoots, rats, and other vermin. These often occasion the most terrific spills; for, when getting over the ground at a rattling gallop, it is seldom that either man or horse can see them in time to avoid them. Again, all our Indian riding ground is more or less intersected by *nullahs*, which is the Anglo-Indian term given to the beds of streams or channels, whether they have water in them or not. These sometimes impracticable obstructions have generally steep if not overhanging and shelving banks; and, in nine cases out of ten, they are too broad to be "*leapable*." They, moreover, frequently have beds of rough, loose shingle, boulders of slimy rock, deep sand, and sometimes quicksands, which cause cut legs, sprained fetlocks, and ricked shoulders. The best advice that can be given in riding over such ground is to ride straight, and follow the same line as the hog, who, *unless very hard pressed*, is sure to select the easiest place for crossing a nullah; and wherever a boar can lead, a horse can generally follow. Perhaps the most awkward nullahs to cross are those which are only a few feet wider than a horse can leap, on account of the small space at the bottom scarcely giving the horse room to recover himself; but an experienced rider can generally form a pretty fair idea of the breadth of the obstruction, by marking the time it takes the hog to reappear on the opposite bank. A clever rider, on a thoroughly trained horse, will ride without slackening his pace almost to the *edge* of a nullah; where his horse, which is perfectly in hand, and accustomed to turn

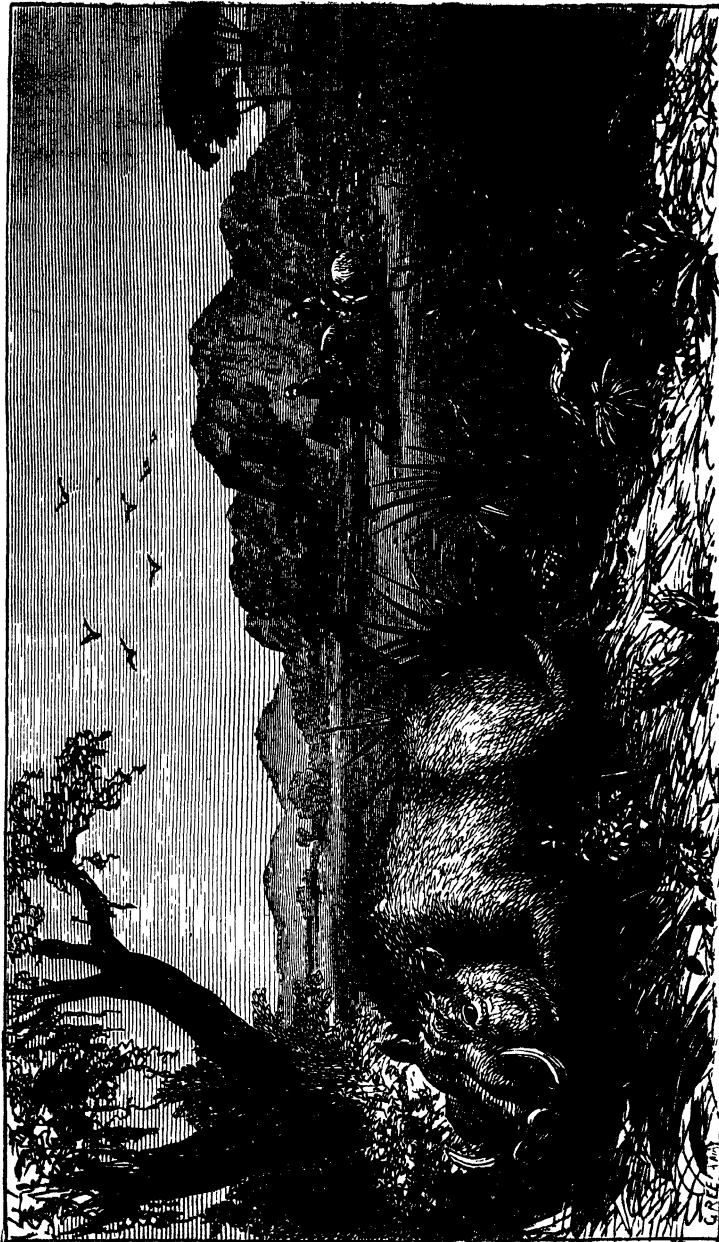
round a spear, will "luff up," in case the leap is impracticable, and not much time is lost in seeking for an easier place, and making "an in and out"—

"Look before you leap if you like, but if
You mean leaping, don't look long,
Or the weakest places will soon grow stiff,
And the strongest doubly strong."

Pulling up is out of the question, if not impossible, when your horse's blood is up; besides, it often happens that nullahs, like "sunk fences," are indistinguishable to man or horse until they are close upon them; and then, should the chasm be deep and wide, and the rider not have got his nag well in hand, the chances are that one or both will come to grief; but—

"No game was ever worth a rap
For a rational man to play,
Into which no accident, no mishap,
Could possibly find its way."

The Deccan hunts have for many years maintained a very high *prestige* in the annals of hog-hunting; and the different gatherings that have taken place at Poonah, Arungabad, Hyderabad, Jalnah, Elichpore, Sholapore, and Nagpore, have generally been well attended, and have produced most brilliant sport. At whatever station the "snaffle, spur, and spear" fraternity met, the tent club was sure to comprise nearly every officer in cantonment, not on duty, who could muster a decent nag, or who loved good cheer and jovial company. Every rank and every branch of the service was fairly represented at these social gatherings; and some of the most daring leaders and wisest statesmen India has produced have also been famous as the best spears and the hardest riders across country. General Outram—the Bayard of India—the only man, with the exception of Colonel Skinner, who ever speared a tiger to death from his horse—was famous, in that country pre-eminent for good sportsmen, as the boldest horseman, the best spear, and the most experienced large game hunter, long years before he carved his way



HOG-HUNTING.

to fame as a general and a statesman with his sword and his pen ; and the natives still cherish and revere his memory as a sportsman, and extol his daring deeds in the jungle and the hunting-field, although they may have forgotten the many important services he rendered the country.

The following is the system usually adopted by the famous Deccan Hunt, which, in the palmy days of hog-hunting, maintained the highest *prestige*, and was ever celebrated for the boldness of its riders, even in a land pre-eminent for the excellence of its sportsmen.

The most experienced of its members being chosen Master of the Hunt, had under his orders a gang of some twenty shekarry scouts, whose sole occupation was to find out the favourite feeding-places of hog, and the patches of jungle they generally resorted to at day-break ; and to him was entrusted the general management of the hunt, and all the arrangements for the beat.

The hog-hunters having assembled soon after daybreak, as noiselessly as possible, at the jungle-side, the master pairs them off in twos and twos, great care being taken to match the rivals for the spear as equally as possible, due consideration being given to the experience of the riders and the goodness of their cattle ; for the great excitement of hog-hunting is not the actual killing the boar, but the great emulation and spirit of rivalry that is engendered in winning the spear of honour from a worthy competitor.

When the line of spearmen have got well under cover, the signal is given for the line of beaters, who are under the guidance of the shekarry scouts, to advance. In some jungles it is best to beat silently, and in others, where the bush is thick, it is advisable to make use of tom-toms and other noisy instruments, cholera-horns being sounded only when the game is known to be afoot. We shall suppose ourselves at the jungle-side waiting for the hog to break, and listening intently to the shouts of the beaters, who are evidently approaching the open ground, and driving the game before them, as we can tell by the discordant squirl of the cholera-horns being

heard at both ends of the line. Suddenly the yells become louder, and one distinguishes the "*view halloo*" "*Soor, jata hy*" (There go the pig). Then comes the anxious moment, and the line of horsemen, waiting spear in hand as if impatient for the fray, peer through their cover, and seek to distinguish the old grey boar from the female and younger branches of his family. Loth to leave his stronghold, and somewhat sulky at being disturbed so early in the morning, he is sometimes difficult to dislodge, and oftentimes breaks back and charges the line of beaters, but at last he makes a rush for the open, and is seen trotting leisurely along, followed by the rest of the sounder, a short distance in front of the beaters. A report from a pistol, or "the alarm" on the bugle, announces to the line that the quarry has broken fairly in the plain, and when the master of the hunt considers the quarry has gained sufficient law, he gives the word, and the bugle sounds "the advance," which is the signal for the line of horsemen to emerge from their cover and contest the spear of honour.

The old boar, who up to this time has been grunting savagely, scarcely appears to quicken his movements until the hunters begin to close upon him, when he bounds away with a speed that no one who has not been an eye-witness would conceive. Then comes the exciting moment, the rush for first blood, and a score of gallant horsemen, with heads up, bridle-hands down, and the points of their spears kept well forward, charge at full speed along the plain. Then comes into play the experience and coolness of the old hunter, mounted on the best blood of Nedjed, who, enjoying the chase as much as his rider, follows, *con amore*, every swerve of the boar, and forging slightly ahead, gains the near side, and enables his master, by leaning forward in his saddle, to drive his spear well home behind the shoulder-blade, and cause the quarry to roll over on his back in the dust. If the spear-point has penetrated the heart, the grey boar dies—as the brave do—in silence, not a moan escaping him; but should the vital spot be missed, woe unto ye that follow if you are not ready for, in the twinkling of an eye, the infuriated

monster picks himself up, and cocking his head on one side knowingly as if to take aim, with a wild roar, and open-mouthed, charges the nearest of his antagonists, and unless the onset is promptly met on the point of the spear, the chances are that one or two horses will be badly ripped, and their riders besmeared with gore.

The boar is one of the most courageous and fearless of forest animals, and when severely wounded, in his desperation, I have seen him charge, utterly reckless of life, against my spear's point, forcing the shaft through his body until he could bury his tushes in the flank of his antagonist's horse. Neither the lion nor the tiger will ever willingly attack a solitary boar, unless they can pounce upon him unawares, which is not often the case, as he is desperately cunning, and can detect the taint in the air at a great distance. His tenacity of life is also very great, and I have seen a boar receive a dozen severe spear-wounds, some of which completely transfixed the body, before he finally bit the dust. The best places to spear a boar, so as to reach a vital spot, are just behind the shoulder-blade, low down, when the point enters the heart or lungs, along the ridge of the spine, when he becomes more or less paralysed, or if possible, just where the head and neck join.



NUGGER HUNT SPEAR-HEAD.

The engraving shows the Nugger Hunt spear-head, which is now generally used all over India. It is somewhat in the shape of a myrtle-leaf, but the curves are very gradual from point to shank, so that it penetrates easily, and is withdrawn without difficulty. Another great advantage of this shape is that the edges and point can be easily ground, and afterwards sharpened on a hone. The Deccan Hunt spear-head, which has four edges, is much used by sportsmen on the Madras side, and some prefer it to that of the Nugger Hunt, because the orifice of the wound it makes is some-



NO. 1. STARTING FROM THE CAMP.

what larger and allows the blood to flow more freely. It is, however, rather difficult to sharpen, which is a drawback in the bush. It is almost unnecessary to add that all spear-heads ought to be made of the best tempered steel, and any showing the slightest appearance of a flaw should be discarded.

A stout male bamboo sufficiently tapering, and with knots pretty close together, makes the best spear-shaft, but when this is not procurable, a close-grained well-seasoned ash-pole is not a bad substitute. Bamboos for war spears ought to be cut at the close of the hot season, when the sap is in the roots, and they should be hung from the rafters with a 14-lb. weight fixed at the bottom for some months, to dry straight and season. The natives say that if bamboos are cut at the new moon, they will endure for any length of time; if at full moon, that they will decay in two or three years; and that if cut by daylight, then they will get dry-rot before they can become seasoned. They therefore select the straight-growing bamboos in the day, and fasten cloths round them, cutting them at night. Although this theory is common in several parts of India, and long experience has proved it to be a correct one, I could never obtain any satisfactory reason why such should be the case. It is, however, certain that in the low lands of tropical countries no attentive observer of nature will fail to witness the powerful influence exercised by the moon, not only over the seasons, but also upon animal and vegetable life, and few people are better aware of this fact than the Carib mahogany-cutters of Honduras, as timber cut at the proper time of the year is twice as valuable as that cut out of season.

The spear ought to be well balanced, and it is usual to have the butt weighted with lead for that purpose. In the Bombay and Madras Presidencies, hog-spears are generally 9 feet from the extreme point of the blade to the butt, and this was the regulation length both of the Nugger and Deccan Hunt Clubs. In Bengal many sportsmen use a spear about six feet in length, weighted with nearly 2 lbs. of lead at the butt. Holding this about a foot and a



NO. 11. THE MASTER POSTS THE SPEARS.

half from the lead part, they are accustomed to use it like a javelin, or to job down when the horse gets alongside the boar ; whereas, in Madras and Bombay, hog-hunters use the spear like a lance, but carried loosely in the hand, so as to allow free play to the wrist in directing the point of the spear. Throwing the spear is considered most unsportsmanlike, on account of the numerous accidents that have taken place both to men and riders by the spear turning on coming in contact with the ground. No sportsman would throw his spear at a charging boar if he had not his horse's heels to carry him out of danger in case he missed ; besides which, he would have to pull up and dismount to recover his weapon, and in the meantime the boar is either killed by others, or gets clear off, if he happen to be alone. An experienced hog-hunter directs the point of his spear, and allows the force of his horse's rush to drive it home. In receiving a charge when the boar comes down upon him, he merely holds the point steady, without raising his arm, and lets him run upon his spear—the pace of both sending it in most effectually. The hunter ought never, if possible, let go his spear, but, after delivering a thrust, bring it out again as he wheels round. For this reason spear-heads should be small, being more easily recovered than large ones that get jammed between the ribs.

The best rig for a hog-hunter is, perhaps, a very easy and loosely cut blouse, of any stout material of neutral colour, reaching some three inches below the hips, and with wide shirt-like sleeves fastening at the wrist, which allows the free action of the arms, and yet is not likely to catch in anything ; leather, corduroy, or moleskin breeches, and "Napolcon" boots, which will protect the knees from thorns.

The best head-gear is a fore-and-aft hunting-cap with a 2-inch brim all round, built very strong, so as to protect the head in case of a cropper, and covered with a well-twisted slate-coloured turbaned or cotton-padded cap-cover, as a precaution against sun-stroke. Hunting spurs with short necks, and rowels uppermost, and filled with chains and buckles, are best for hog-hunting purposes, and a serviceable 7-inch blade hunting-knife that can be carried in a



NO. III. THE SIGNAL TO RIDE.

belt, and worn behind in the hollow of the back, often comes in handy at an awkward pinch. In an inside left breast-pocket should be carried a small flat case, containing lint, plaster, cotton bandage, silk, and a few surgical needles, in case of the boar taking liberties either with man or beast.

I shall now endeavour to portray the usual routine and the different incidents of sport in one of these famous gatherings that took place at Jhoolam Ali durgar, a somewhat famous Mussulman shrine, about fourteen miles from Secunderabad, the head-quarters of the Hyderabad subsidiary force.

For some days previous to the day of the club meeting, Captain Malcolm, the Assistant Resident, then the Master or Captain of the Hunt, had gathered every possible information as to the whereabouts of the different sounders of hog from the native scouts and shekarries in his employ; and, in accordance with his directions, the hunting camp was established near the shrine, which was at a convenient distance from the cover intended to be beaten. Here a large double-poled mess tent was pitched, fitted with punkahs and every adjunct of Oriental luxury and comfort. On each flank rose smaller tents, *routees* and *bachobas* of every kind and description, belonging to the different members of the hunt; and behind were picketed long lines of high-caste Arab, Mahratta, and Deccan-bred horses, many of which were celebrated in story, and showed honourable scars of previous tussles with the grey jungle boar. The opening day of the hunt was devoted to good cheer and revelry, the caterer and *chef de cuisine* being Dr. Riddell, the celebrated gastronome; and round the bright polished teak tables a merry party had gathered together to enjoy the good things of this life, and talk over the arrangements for sport. No one who has ever been present on these festive occasions can ever forget them; and even now, after this lapse of time, the sluggish blood rushes through my veins when I recall to mind the enthusiastic, unalloyed happiness and pleasurable excitement that thrilled through every soul, when, after the cloth was removed, and the usual loyal toasts drank, the Master

with the huge silver loving cup in hand, commenced the opening lay :—

THE MASTER'S TOAST.

Pledge me woman's lovely face,
Beaming eye, and bosom fair,—
Every soft and winning grace,
Sweetly blended, sparkles there.
Is there one whose sordid soul
Beauty's form hath ne'er adored?
From his cold lip dash the bowl,
Spurn him from the festal board.

Pledge me next the glorious chase,
When the mighty boar's ahead,
He, the noblest of the race,
In the mountain jungle bred.
Swifter than the slender deer
Bounding over Deccan's plain,
Who can stay his proud career,
Who can hope his tusks to gain?

Pledge me those who oft have won
Tusked trophies from the foe,
And in many a famous run,
Many a gallant hog laid low.
Who, on Peeplah's steepy height,
And on Gunga's tangled shore,
Oft again will dare the fight
With the furious jungle boar.

The loving cup having gone round, the Master gave out the programme of the morrow's proceedings, and *paired off the spears*, matching each couple as evenly as he could, taking into consideration their prestige, experience, and the quality of their cattle.

This matter arranged satisfactorily, Tom Morris's chant of "The Boar" followed, and then every one round the table gave a song or a hunting yarn, and kept the game alive until midnight, when the Master broke up the party by starting the closing chorus :—

HURRAH! HURRAH! ONE BUMPER MORE.

FILL the goblet to the brim,
Fill with me and drink to him
Who the mountain sport pursues,
Speed the boar where'er he choose;
Hurrah! hurrah! one bumper more,
A bumper to the grim grey boar!

Hark, the beater's shout on high!
Hark, the hunter's shrill reply!
Echo leaps from hill to hill,
There the chase is challenge still!
Hurrah! hurrah! one bumper more,
A bumper to the sturdy boar!

Ride, for now the sounder breaks,
Ride where'er the grey boar takes,
Struggle thro' the desperate chase,
Reckless death itself to face
Hurrah! hurrah! one bumper more,
A bumper to the fearless boar!

See, the jungle verge is won,
See, the grey boar dashing on!
Bold and brave ones now are nigh,
See him stagger, charge, and die,
Hurrah! hurrah! one bumper more,
A bumper to the fallen boar!

Although these merry meetings were famed throughout India for the joviality and the good fellowship which they engendered amongst sportsmen, dissipation was by no means encouraged, although in those days men, as a rule, drank deeper than they do now. The most stupid of popular errors is the constant association of Bacchanalian revelry with sporting pursuits, as if there was any possible natural connection between hard drinking and hard riding. Nothing can be more absurd than this preposterous combination, as it is an incontestable fact that drinking and dissipated habits are incompatible with sporting pursuits, which require qualifications that no drunkard ever has. Well-strung nerves, strength, condition, a quick eye, a ready hand, cool calculating courage, and great determination are the characteristic requirements of the true sportsman, and what habitual drunkard ever possessed these?

Early the next morning, the shrill bugle sounding "the réveille" woke up the camp, and shortly afterwards a strong muster of sportsmen, clad in hunting garments of every shape and hue, gathered round the breakfast-table. Before the late-comers had finished their repast, "the boot and saddle" sounded, and the Syces, each carrying a couple of spears, brought up the horses ready saddled and



NO IV. THE SOUNDER REARED.

covered with *jules*, whose excited temperament showed that they anticipated the sport with as much pleasure and eagerness as did their riders. Our illustration, No. I, represents the scene in camp, when "the assembly" sounded, and the hunters, mounting, followed the Master to the cover-side, that might be from two to three miles distant from the camp, and which was carefully watched by our native scouts and trackers.

The Cover-side.—The hunters being told off in pairs, accompanied the Master, who posted them like a chain of vedettes along the cover-side, in situations where they will be as little exposed as possible, so that they were not likely to scare the hog and cause them to break back on the beaters. Here each man dismounted, and remained on the *qui vive*, maintaining the utmost silence, and not even indulging in the fragrant weed lest the keen-scented game should wind it. On these occasions, although the hunters have half an hour to wait before the signal is given for the drive to commence, they must not on this account be careless; for one can never know whether some outlying sounder may not be close at hand; or the game may be on the move, and come out of their own accord before a beater has stirred, and, if the cover is not carefully watched, may steal away unobserved.

No spear may leave his post on any pretence whatever until the preconcerted signal on the bugle is given. Should a sounder break from the cover near him, he hoists his hunting-cap on his spear as high above his head as he can,—the signal that "the game is afoot" or "gone away;" and every hunter who sees the sign repeats it, so that the whole line is apprised, and the Master orders "the alarm" to be sounded on the bugle, upon which each man mounts and waits impatiently for the sound of the next signal, "the advance" or "ride," when the whole line dart impetuously in pursuit. Our illustrations represent the critical period at the cover-side. No. II. shows the Master, and his galloper or aide-de-camp, posting the spears previous to giving the signal for the "hankwa" or "beat" to commence. No. III. represents the scene at the exciting moment



H. BIRD

NO. V. TALLY-HO AND AWAY.

when the Master orders "the advance" to be sounded, which he only does when he sees the hog have fairly broken cover, and have gained a certain *law*, five hundred yards lead being always allowed, and sometimes in favourable riding ground nearly half a mile, so that every spear may get a fair start. Then is heard the spirit-stirring cry, as sweet to the ears of the true sportsman as the warbling of Malibran or Patti; and in a few minutes the grey backs of the sounder are seen above the grass and low scrub as they make their way before the beaters, with the old boar champing his tusches and looking viciously inclined as he trots along in the rear of his porcine family. Plate No. IV. represents a sounder of hog "breaking cover," a sight once seen never forgotten.

The sounder is reared, and last of all to emerge into the open is the mighty grey boar, who suddenly stops in his quick dog-trot to listen. How motionless he stands, as if rooted to the spot! and had you not seen him in motion, you might have taken his dark form to be a protruding rock or a mass of earth. Still he stands as immovable as when he stopped, with his head still pointed in the direction in which it was while moving forward; and, if your field-glass is a good one, you will see that he is scowling back inquisitively from the extreme corner of his knowing-looking brown eyes. He need not turn round to look, for his fine sense of hearing detects danger; and, as he snuffs the breeze, his susceptible nose discovers to him the nature of his enemy by "the taint in the air." His ears point backwards, for some unusual sound has attracted his attention; then he gives a sharp whiff, up goes his tail, and away he starts right ahead at his old dog-trot, grumbling audibly as he speeds through the bushes. The sounder, being now dislodged from their cover, made across the plain at full speed, and the line of converging horsemen pressed forward with a mighty rush. The best mounted and the boldest riders soon drew ahead; but for a short time the hog held their own, and made strong running in a bee-line for some distant hills, which if they could only have reached would have saved their bacon. Vain hope! the loud tally-ho's and



NO. 11. THE STRUGGLE FOR THE FIRST SPEAR.

hoarse shouting of their pursuers sounded nearer and nearer in their ears, and louder and louder the old boar grumbled his displeasure.

"They came with the rush of the southern surf,
On the bar of the storm-girt bay;
And like muffled drums on the sounding turf,
Their hoof-strokes echo away."

Scared by these unusual sounds the sounder separated, and each hog took a line of his own, and was followed by a group of horse-men, who slowly, but surely, gained upon their quarry. Our illustration, No. V., gives a fair representation of such a scene: the hog is still full of running, and the pace is too good to last. Although the "meidan" was comparatively good riding ground, rolling stones and holes had occasioned some ugly spills, and riderless horses and dismounted spears were to be seen every now and again. A broad nullah, full of water, now came into view; and into this the boar dashed without the slightest hesitation, vanishing for a few seconds, and reappearing on the opposite bank, a little lower down the stream, apparently rather refreshed and invigorated by his bath. Several of the leading horsemen evidently knew the country; and as the stream was not more than 15 feet from bank to bank, and leapable, they pulled their horses together, got them well between their thighs, and crammed them at it.

' Good Lord! to see the riders now
Thrown off with sudden whirl;
A score within the purling brook,
Enjoyed their 'early purl.'

"Some lost their stirrups, some their caps,
Some had no spears to show,
Some few, like Charles at Charing Cross,
Rode on *in statu quo*."

The field now became more select, and although the boar still held his own in the van, and was as yet unscathed, several of the porcine family had succumbed and bit the dust; whilst it was "bellows to mend" with a good many of the horses, as this being the first run of the season, several of them had been short of work, and were more or less out of condition. Four or five were still seen pushing along their jaded horses at their best pace after the boar, whose open mouth, heaving sides, foam-covered flanks, and faltering



NO VIL THE BOAR AT BAY.

action, showed that he was blown, and almost run to a standstill. Two noted hard riders, Nightingale of the Nizam's Service, and Shortt of the King's Own, who were well to the front, now closed rapidly upon the boar, and as they rode almost knee to knee, their struggle for the spear was watched with intense interest. They appeared to be very evenly matched ; and as they were not more than a couple of spears' length from their quarry, who was staggering about from side to side with exhaustion, it seemed certain that one or the other would obtain the much-coveted spear of honour ; but the race is not always to the swift, and the spear is anybody's until it is won, for the chances of the chase depend very much on the manœuvring of the hog, which may give the spear to hunters who had been hopelessly left far in the rear. In this instance, when apparently it seemed certain that in another stride or two the spear would be taken, the hog made a sudden double, swerved off past the left of Bul-bul, the near horseman, and viciously charged Captain Madigan, who was following up at some distance in the rear, knocking his jaded horse's legs from under him, and suddenly disappeared in an almost dry water-channel, one of the ramifications of the nullah previously crossed. For some time the hog remained unseen as he travelled along the winding bed of one water-channel and up another, but at last he was sighted by one of the hunters, who gave a loud yell and raised his spear, which brought up his enemies *en masse*, when, scared by their cries, he again scrambled up the bank and took to the flat, and his two former pursuers, Nightingale and Shortt, owing to the superior condition of their cattle, were again pounding away side by side in his wake. The boar, again terribly distressed, once more tried to double round ; but as he swerved off to the left, Bul-bul, who was mounted on a thoroughbred Arab chestnut mare, made a rush and buried the blade of his spear deep into his brawny neck, and over the monster rolled ; but in the twinkling of an eye he was again upon his feet, and charged straight at Shortt, who, wheeling round, received him on the point of the spear, which, entering between the shoulder-blade and neck, pierced the heart and



NO. VIII. DEATH OF THE BOAR.

ended his career. Our illustrations represent the struggle for the spear, the last charge, and the death of the boar, being sketched by Mr. H. Bird, the nephew of Colonel "Buxey" Bird, who was always a great gun at Hyderabad meetings, and a recognized authority on all kinds of sport.

The following rules were strictly enforced in the Deccan and Nugger Hunts :—

1. The Master of the Hunt must be implicitly obeyed by the whole Club when in the field, and he has the sole direction of the Hunt and the selection of the country for the meet.

2. The strictest silence is to be maintained at the jungle-side, and when members are once posted they must not mount or leave their cover until the hog have broken and the bugle has sounded "the advance."

3. No followers whatever, or spare horses, are to be allowed at the cover-side.

4. When two or more boars break, those who wish to contend for the spear of honour must ride after the largest, and no sow must be pursued if there is a boar in the sounder.

5. The slightest puncture with the spear's point, if it draws blood, constitutes "the first spear," and the owner is entitled to the tushes.

6. Every member taking "a first spear" is expected to follow up his hog until killed.

7. Disputed spears to be decided by the Master of the Hunt.

8. Disputes, or claims for "the first spear," are to be settled on the spot by the Master of the Hunt, who decides the case according to the judgment of the majority of riders present. Should there be any doubt upon the subject, the tushes to be divided.

9. In order to prevent accidents through carelessness, any rider jostling another intentionally, or carrying his spear improperly, shall be fined a gold mohur ; and repeated inattention to this rule shall, if brought before the notice of the Committee, render the offender liable to be disqualified from riding for the spear of honour.

10. All fines go to the Hunt Fund.

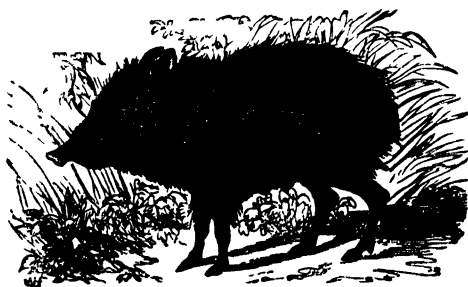
11. Any member shooting a hog in the tract of country ridden over by the Hunt, shall be liable to expulsion from the Club.

12. The messing arrangement shall be managed by the Committee chosen by the members amongst themselves, the Master of the Hunt for the time being President. Two picnics and two balls shall be given by the Club every season.

A sportsman who would be an adept in hog-hunting must possess strong nerves, a good eye for country, keen sight, firm seat, light hand, and more especially a bold heart and a cool head.

Add to these qualifications a fair judgment of pace, a certain dexterity in handling the spear, and an intimate acquaintance with the habits and extreme cunning of the boar, and you will have an accomplished hog-hunter, such as no other country in the world but India can turn out.

It is considerably over a quarter of a century since I took my maiden spear, yet there are times when every incident of that memorable day comes vividly before me, and in my mind's eye I see the well-remembered forms of my old associates in the forest and the field, and think I hear their joyous voices resounding in my ears, for some of the most jovial nights I ever spent were at these gatherings, at which were collected the boldest riders, the greatest sportsmen, and some of the most distinguished officers that India has produced.



CHAPTER V.

BEAR-HUNTING.

The black sloth-bear of India—White ant eating—Honey stealing—The black bear's habits—Courage of the she-bear—The Sheveroy Hills—A bear haunt—Posting our party—Two successful shots—Knocked down by a bear—An exciting wrestle—Bruin gets the worst of it—The Humalayan or snow bear.

THE common black sloth-bear (*Ursus labiatus*) is to be met with in most of the hill ranges throughout India; and, although he is a mere pigmy when compared to "Old Ephraim," the grizzly of the Rocky Mountains, he is by no means deficient in pluck; and bear-hunting is, consequently, a favourite pursuit with Anglo-Indians, there being just enough danger in the sport to give it excitement.

The black sloth-bear of the plains, as he is often called to distinguish him from the hill or snow bear of the Himalayas, is a powerfully-made animal, about 6 feet in length from the muzzle to the tail—that appendage being only 3 inches long; while he stands about 3 feet in height at the shoulder, and his girth round the biggest part of his body is about 4½ feet. When in good condition his weight would be rather over 3 cwt. Like all the rest of the *Ursidæ*, he is a Plantigrade—that is, he plants the whole sole of his foot on the ground in walking—consequently his movements are comparatively slow, and he has not that easy movement bestowed upon the *Felinæ*, and cannot spring on to his prey or bound away from danger. His head and teeth are not nearly so massively made as the tiger's; his skull is elongated, and his jaws do not possess that

vice-like strength that all the cat tribe are gifted with. He has a deep broad chest, and very muscular and powerful fore-arms, but his hind quarters droop and appear to be somewhat weak. Bears vary very much in shape. Some are long and low, whilst others have short bodies and great length of limb, but all have most formidable-looking claws, those of the fore paws being curved, and 3 inches long; and these claws possess independent movement, each being capable of distinct motion, like the fingers of the human hand. Bears, both male and female, are covered with long glossy coats of thick black hair, without any wool or undergrowth at the base, and both sexes have a light cinnamon or dirty white horseshoe-shaped patch on the chest, reaching from the throat to between the fore-arms, which forms an admirable mark for the hunter to aim at, as a bullet planted in the centre of this goes straight to the lungs and heart, and proves instantly fatal. Both male and female have also grey muzzles, and often a light-coloured blaze up the snout and on each side of the jowl. When the bear is young his fur is generally very long and thick, and in much finer condition than in old animals, and the hide then, if properly tanned, forms a very handsome rug. In walking the toes of the fore feet are turned in, whilst the gait is clumsy and often ludicrous in the extreme, for as the creature jogs along he swings his body in an odd fashion to and fro, rolling his triangular and cunning-looking head from side to side at the same time. The carcase, when stripped of the hide, looks so like that of an immensely muscular stoutly-built man, with short bandy legs, that the natives often call the bear Adamzáda, or "the son of man," from the Hindostanee words "Adam," a man, and "záda," born of; and, indeed, he often appears to be a burlesque on the *genus homo*.

As a rule, he is not carnivorous, and does not kill for the sake of flesh, his principal food being the wild fruits of the jungle, pulpy roots, honey, and insects such as beetles, wood-lice, and particularly white ants, which the prehensile form of his lips and snout enables him to pick up and devour with wonderful dexterity and rapidity. I have on several occasions surprised and killed, or mortally wounded,

a bear when digging for white ants in a hole almost big enough to bury himself, which his huge claws and powerful fore-arms enable him to make in an incredibly short time, having been attracted to the spot by the peculiar noise that he always makes whilst sucking up the grubs of the white ants from their tunnelled repositories in the earth. I have also occasionally caught him when up a tree, plundering a wild bees' nest, and watched him gnawing away the wood if the hollow containing the comb was too small to admit his paws, until he had made the opening of sufficient size, when, utterly regardless of the stings of the defending bees that swarmed round in hundreds, he would scoop out the wax, honey, and young bees, and devour the whole mass indiscriminately, after which he would leisurely descend and roll himself on the ground to rid himself of any of his tiny antagonists that might have settled upon him. His strong sharp claws enable him to make his way up the trunks of trees to positions most difficult of access, where his keen scent enables him to detect the presence of his favourite food, and he displays great acuteness and perseverance in reaching the nest containing the sweet repast. Nature has been very bountiful in her supply of food for this class of animals, for almost in every jungle, at different times of the year, many species of trees and bushes produce wholesome and palatable fruit in their season, and the earth supplements the supply by many juicy and nourishing roots. Thus the sweet luscious flowers of the mhoua are a favourite food for all vegetable-feeding animals and birds; whilst the plum of the wild ebony-tree, the wild mango, the bhir-berries, the bean of the giant bauhinia creeper, and many other jungle bush fruits, together with wild yams and arrowroot, are also much relished by the various denizens of the forest. When roused in thick bush the bear often rises upon his hind legs, or rather squats upon his hams to listen, and when in this attitude he stands over 7 feet in height. Bears generally inhabit caves and deep fissures in the rocks, where they can remain in the cool during the heat of the day; and, except in very remote districts, they do not leave their midday retreat until

near sunset, when they travel considerable distances during the night in search of food, returning to their caves at daybreak. Any sportsman who can read signs will easily discover if a cave is inhabited by bears ; and, having assured himself that such is the case, his best plan of proceeding is to place himself either on one side of the path leading up to the cave, or in some elevated spot that commands an unobstructed view of the entrance, early in the morning, so as to await their return. During the rains or in cool or cloudy weather they may often be found feeding in the jungle during the daytime, or hunting for bees' nests and wild fruit ; but if alarmed, they generally try and make for their cave. A bear's temper is very uncertain: sometimes he will bolt away as soon as he winds 'man's presence, whilst at others he will boldly dispute his way and charge without provocation. As a rule, the female is more courageous than the male, and she will often fight desperately in the defence of her young. Bears generally live in families consisting of a pair and their young, but I have known several families live in one cave, as if they were gregarious.

BEAR-HUNTING ON THE SHEVEROYS.



HAD been staying some days on the Sheveroy Hills with Burton, enjoying the hospitality of the coffee-planters, when intelligence was brought that a very Agapemone of bears had been discovered in some low hills close to the foot of the Sheveroy range. It was therefore decided that we should beat up their "diggings," and having assembled the villagers, who professed to know their haunts, we distributed the usual allowance of grog and tobacco, and gleaned all the information they could give us as

to the game in that part of the country. After I had heard all their opinions, I made up my mind to take up a position on the hills where the bears were said to be an hour before the first appearance of dawn, and to await their return to their caves, as in this part of the country, during the hot weather, bears roam about the jungle in search of food all night, and return to their caves in the morning, where they remain during the intense heat of the day, issuing forth again at sunset. They live chiefly on the wild fruits of the jungle, and white ants, which latter insect they devour in thousands by scraping a hole with their claws and sucking them out of their nest. They are also passionately fond of honey, and show themselves wonderfully sharp in finding out wild bees' nests, climbing lofty trees in search of them.

The next morning we were all up, and equipped for sport by 2 a.m., and, after a substantial feed, started for the bear hill on foot,

as the villagers said the route was difficult for horses. At this season of the year the night is not at any time dark, and we managed to get along very well in Indian file, although the path was very narrow, and in some places we had to crawl along on our hands and knees. We arrived at the foot of the hill some time before sunrise, and here I halted the party, which numbered about twenty coolies and villagers; and, telling Burton to keep as quiet as possible, I went forward to reconnoitre, accompanied by Googooloo, the mulliarry, and two villagers who knew the bears' caves.

Although the hill was not more than 800 feet in height, it was very steep, and the ascent was the more difficult on account of numberless rocky crags which were entwined with thick bush. At last we managed to climb up the dry bed of a watercourse, where we noticed the fresh traces of bears in many places, and after a good deal of scrambling up ledges of rock we arrived at the summit, which was a small tableland covered with tufts of coarse grass and large boulders of rock.

As we were going along, Googooloo suddenly stopped, gave his usual grunt to attract attention, and, tapping me on the shoulder, pointed out two bears at the foot of the hill. With the aid of my glass I could see they were very busily engaged in digging up the earth; so, setting the mulliarry to watch their movements, I went on to the caves, and, after a careful examination, found seven entrances, five of which bore marks of being inhabited by bears. I sent one of the villagers and Googooloo to bring up the rest of the party as quietly as possible, so as not to disturb the game I knew was afoot, and by the time they arrived I and the other villager had managed to block up the two smallest entrances with stones and pieces of rock. I posted Burton on a rock which commanded the two entrances of the largest cave, and the coffee-planter by another. The other two I guarded by some of the villagers, who were armed with matchlocks, and I dispatched half a dozen others to different elevated peaks, from which they could survey all the surrounding country and signalize if they saw any game.

When all were posted in their assigned places, I went with Googooloo to the mulliarry, who was watching the two bears, and he pointed them out to me in the same place we had first seen them. Accompanied by Googooloo, carrying my second gun—an eight-gauge smooth-bore—I stole down the hill as gently as I could, making for a large rock which appeared to me to be within a short distance of the place where I had seen the bears.

I was some time before I could make my way to it, as the bush and underwood were thick, and we had to make our way through dense masses of entangled creepers. At last we gained the rock, and Googooloo's quick eye soon discovered our friends still hard at work scraping up the earth of the ant-hill. We stole gently up, seeking the cover of rocks and bushes, until I got to within fifteen paces of them, still undiscovered. Watching their movements until I got a fair opportunity, I planted a rifle-ball behind the shoulder of one, which rolled over and over on the ground in the agonies of death, and then gave the other the contents of my second barrel, which took effect about the small ribs, tumbling her over for the moment. She, however, soon got up again, raised herself on her haunches, uttering a peculiarly melancholy cry, and looked round in a most woebegone manner. This position offered me a splendid shot, and I finished her career with a ball from my second gun.

Having ascertained that both were dead, Googooloo climbed a large tree that was near, and fastened the mulliarry's turban-cloth like a streamer to one of the highest branches as a landmark for the coolies, when they came to collect their game. He also cut off a claw from the right forepaw of each bear, so as to mark it as mine, a precaution the gang always took, in consequence of an individual having obtained a deer, which I had undoubtedly shot, at a battue some time previously, and, to the intense disgust of all my people, allowed him to appropriate and carry off.

As we were leisurely returning up the watercourse towards the caves where Burton and the rest of the people were posted, I heard a rolling of stones and a curious grunting noise close behind us. I



BEARS EATING THE MAHOURA FRUIT.

jumped on a large boulder of rock, and saw three bears making their way slowly up the watercourse in the same direction we were going. I immediately made signs to Googooloo and the mulliarry to hide, and I crouched behind the rock until they were past, as I wished my friends to get a shot, and they were evidently bound their way.

These three had barely passed when Googooloo pointed me out two others making their way up the hill by the same route. Standing behind a rock so as not to alarm them, I let drive right and left as they passed within a few paces of me, both shots telling well behind the shoulder. They were both badly hit, and each must have imagined the other was the cause of his injury, for with a ferocious noise they immediately attacked each other, and closing in a hug, rolled down the hill some short distance. I followed with my second gun, and found one dead and the other leaning over him in a very deplorable condition. He was too far gone to take any notice of my approach, although he continued to make a fearful moaning, which I put a stop to by a shot behind the ear, which finished his career.

I had just commenced reloading, when I heard a loud straggling volley from the top of the hill where my friends were posted, and almost immediately it was followed by a shriek from the mulliarry, whom I saw make a spring into the jungle just in time to avoid the charge of a huge female bear that came rushing down the watercourse in a most furious manner. I was directly in her path, and with a roar she made right at me, when I let drive at her head with my only barrel that had not been discharged, but it failed to stop her headlong charge downhill, and she knocked me down and was on me in the twinkling of an eye. The slope of the hill was steep, and we both of us rolled over and over several times until I was almost breathless, when Googooloo rushed on her with his bill-hook and endeavoured to attract her attention. Luckily she could not bite at all, as my shot had smashed her snout and lower jaw to pieces; but she kept me locked in her embrace, and squeezed me

more roughly than affectionately. My head was well protected with a bison-skin cap ; and getting a tight grasp of her fur on each side, with my arms underneath hers, so that she could not do much injury with her claws, I regularly wrestled with her for some time ; and although I brought my science to play, and threw her on her back several times, by giving her the leg, she never let go her hug, and I was almost suffocated with the quantity of blood and froth that came from her wound and covered my face, beard, and chest.

Googooloo made frantic hits at her from time to time with his billhook, the only weapon he had, but I ordered him to desist, as his blows did not appear to do the bear much harm, and I was afraid of catching one. At last Bruin appeared to be getting weaker, and I saw her wounds and loss of blood were telling ; so after a little trouble I managed to draw my knife, and drove it up to the hilt in her body under the armpit. She gave me an ugly hug, and fell over on her side, pulling me with her. It was her last effort, and I picked myself up quite out of breath, but not much injured, having only received a slight claw on the loins, and another rather more severe on the instep. I drew my pistol, which I could not manage to get at before, to give her a *quietus*, but it was not wanted—the game was over, my antagonist was dead.

Being covered with blood and dust from head to foot, I must have presented a comical appearance to Burt on and the rest of the people who came rushing down in pursuit of the bear, which had been slightly wounded before she fell in with me. He had met the mulliarry *en route*, who said he had seen me killed ; and no sooner did Googooloo get sight of this individual than he sprang on him like a tiger, for his cowardice in running away, and we had some difficulty in releasing him from his clutches, and preventing him from being strangled. One of the coolies brought me the water-skin, and I washed the blood away from my person, and threw off a part of my soiled clothes. I then bandaged up my loins and foot, which latter bled considerably, and was very painful when I walked, as the claws had penetrated gaiter, boot, and stocking, entering the

flesh to the depth of half an inch. Having arranged matters as I best could, I managed to scramble up the hill, though I had some difficulty in doing so, as the back of my head, arms, shoulders, and knees were considerably bruised and raw in places, and I felt shaken and tired after my encounter.

When I arrived at the caves I found that Burton had killed two bears, and the coffee-planter had caught a young one alive. We remained there about an hour and a half longer, when another female and two half-grown cubs came rolling along, all of which bit the dust before our united volley. The planter also went after two others which were seen climbing up the hill, but were deterred from coming near the caves, having taken alarm at the firing. He killed one and severely wounded the other, but somehow or another managed to lose it.

The sun had now risen high above the horizon, the breeze had died away, and not a breath of air was stirring; a mirage was seen spread over the plain, out of which the wooded hills rose like distant islands. The sultriness was getting more and more oppressive, and it was intensely hot before our coolies had managed to collect the game at the foot of the hill, which consisted of eleven bears, besides the little one caught alive,—not a bad day's work for three guns. Finding myself stiff and sore from my bruises, I mounted my pony, and rode to our bungalow at the top of the Sheveroy Hills, leaving the others to continue their sport, whilst I had my foot looked at by the doctor, and got fit for work again.

There are two kinds of bears found on the Himalayan range. The first is the ordinary black bear of the plains, previously described; and the second is the Himalayan, or snow bear, which is only found in the higher regions. They measure about 9 feet long, stand about 40 inches at the shoulder, and are covered with shaggy hair, which varies both in length and colour according to the season of the year. The winter coat, which is long, and of a greyish or dirty yellowish shade, falls off in the summer, and is replaced by a shorter and much darker one, approaching a reddish

brown, that lengthens and grows gradually lighter as the cold season again approaches. The female and cubs are generally light-coloured, the latter having a circle or collar of white round the neck, which diminishes as they grow older, and finally disappears. In April the female generally gives birth to two cubs, which, when born, are scarcely larger than rats, and of a tawny yellow colour. Within a month their eyes open, and in three months more they attain the size of a poodle dog, and are very playful, always wrestling together. Up to this time they are in considerable danger of being devoured by the male, if the mother does not guard them most carefully. They remain in the den with their parents until more offspring are born, when they are driven out to shift for themselves. Bears attain maturity at about five years of age, and the duration of their lives is estimated at over fifty years. In winter, snow bears retire to caves and clefts in the rocks, where they construct a kind of litter or bed of brushwood and moss, and, without becoming torpid, sleep for days together. At this time the Puharries say that they cast the skin from the soles of their feet, but I cannot vouch for the fact. In the spring, when the snow begins to melt, they emerge from their dens, and feed upon young and tender shoots, grass, berries, roots, insects, and herbs. In summer-time their favourite food is fruit and honey, in autumn acorns and grain, and at such times they go very long distances to forage. The bear is rarely wantonly ferocious, but when molested and wounded, or when awaked suddenly from sleep, he becomes a dangerous opponent, as he seldom shows any lack of courage. Rising on his hind legs, with head erect, he endeavours to close with his assailant, and strikes tremendous blows with his forepaw, invariably aiming at the face or head, and inflicting most ghastly wounds with his powerful claws. Although a carnivorous animal, the Himalayan bear feeds more on vegetables than flesh, rarely attacking cattle or animals unless when forced by hunger.

Yellow wolves, hyenas, jackals, black-eared foxes, and dholes or wild dogs, are common in some parts of the range; but as their

nature and habits much resemble those of their brethren of the plains, I shall not enter into them. I have frequently come across packs of the latter animals in the birch forests, and watched them hunt down gooral, or burrul, always running against the wind, and often chasing by relays.



CARRYING HOME THE GAME.

CHAPTER VI.

TIGER, PANTHER, AND LEOPARD-HUNTING.

The game-killing tiger—The cattle-lifter—The man-eater—The panther—The leopard—The cheetah—A man-eating panther—"Mechau" shooting—"Moat" shooting—Ravages committed by tigers, panthers, and leopards in India—Village shekarries—Shekar elephants—Howdahs—Mahouts—Value of a shekar elephant—A Hyderabad shekar expedition—Our party—A tigress and two cubs—An elephant charged by a tiger—A dance of vengeance—Bear-spearing—Riding down a leopard—Speared to death—An exciting adventure with a man-eater.

ALL forest creatures, with very rare exceptions, are afraid of a man, never voluntarily intruding upon his presence, and invariably beating a retreat if they can do so unmolested. None of the feline race, with the exception of confirmed man-eaters, which are few and far between, will attack man unless provoked, and the taint even of his footstep in the forest will often make them turn aside and leave the neighbourhood.

Although the Carnivora, as a rule, are a cunning, skulking, cowardly, and bloodthirsty set, yet their characters and temperament vary considerably, as some of them, when wounded, exhibit the most reckless, desperate courage, charging fearlessly against their assailants until the last gasp, and others die like curs, without making an effort to resist. The great secret necessary to ensure success in this kind of shooting is *never to pull trigger unless certain of striking the game in a vital spot*, and, again, *always to keep a shot in reserve*, in case of a wounded animal charging. I need not say that extreme coolness is as much required as accuracy of marksmanship, and any one who feels "that even he has nerves" had better confine his attentions to game that will not retaliate when wounded.

These animals are all very tenacious of life, and the hunter should always endeavour to shoot them either through the brain or the heart. I have often dropped them stone dead with a bullet right between the eyes, or by aiming just behind the shoulder-blade as the fore-arm moves forward in walking, when, if the heart is missed, the bullet will most likely penetrate the lungs.

THE TIGER.

There is, in my opinion, only one variety of tiger, although this animal, like all others that I am acquainted with, is subject to slight variations of appearance, that may generally be more or less accounted for by his peculiar habits, which vary according to the locality and the nature of the country he ranges over. In many parts of India over which I have hunted, the natives recognize three kinds of tigers, which they distinguish according to their habits and range, by the following names:—First, the *lodia bagh*, or game-killing tiger; secondly, the *oontia bagh*, which lives chiefly upon domestic cattle; and, thirdly, the *admee khane wallah*, or man-eater, which latter, happily, are few and far between.

The *lodia bagh*, or game-killing tiger, such as is shown in the engraving, lives chiefly in the hills and fastnesses of the forest, where he subsists upon deer and other wild animals, rarely showing himself near the haunts of man, and retreating immediately he discovers his presence. The *lodia bagh* may be again subdivided into two classes, from their different modes of killing their game. The first prowls about the forest and tracks up his quarry by scent, approaches him stealthily under cover, springing upon him when un-awares, or running him down by a succession of gigantic bounds from which even the speediest deer can hardly hope to escape. The second class of game-killing tigers depend more upon their cunning than their speed in circumventing their prey, and are accustomed to lie in ambuscade, by water, or in runs frequented by



THE GAME-KILLING TIGER.

different kinds of deer. His usual retreat in the hot weather is to some ravine amongst the hills where pools of water remain all the year round, and here, under shelving masses of rock, or under the shade of overhanging trees, he makes his lair, and lies in wait for any forest creature that may come to quench its thirst by day or night. The regular game-hunting tiger is a small light-made beast, very active and enduring, and his skin is most beautifully and distinctly marked, the black stripes being very close together. He is always very shy and retiring in his habits, and from constantly living on the *qui vive* is very difficult to approach and bring to bay.

The *oontia bagh*, or cattle-lifter—so called because his faintly striped coat resembles in colour that of a camel—is a much larger and heavier animal than the game-killing tiger, being very fleshy, and rarely in the condition to undergo any great exertion. Thus when systematically pursued by hunters, he may be overtaken and beaten out of cover time after time; but a regular game-hunting tiger, once lost sight of, is rarely again to be fallen in with.

The cattle-lifter, in the cool season, follows the herds of cattle whenever they go to graze, keeping as much as possible under cover so as to escape their guardian's observation, and then striking down any straggler that may approach his ambushade, which is generally on the skirts of some jungle, in which for a time he has located himself.

In the hot weather he secretes himself in some cover of high reeds, or karinda or tamarisk thicket, which are usually found along the banks of the partially dried-up rivers, and lies in wait for cattle coming to drink. Watching his opportunity, he kills a bullock by seizing him in his massive jaws by the nape of the neck, as, unaware of danger, he is grazing on the green herbage found by the side of the stream, and with the aid of the fore paws, which serve as a purchase, he generally manages to dislocate the neck in a moment, and drag him into his cover; the whole affair being so quietly and expeditiously managed that the herdsman rarely discovers his loss until he has collected his cattle to drive them home.



THE CATTLE SLAYER

The engraving opposite represents the death of one of these wholesale plunderers, whom I shot just as he was about to spring upon a bullock tied up as a bait.

Of course a lazy marauder of this kind also kills a good many head of deer when they come to drink near his ambuscade; but as a rule, as long as he can get cattle, he does not trouble himself to hunt for them.

A single tiger will kill a bullock or buffalo every five days, if he gets the chance, often eating the hind quarters the first night, and hiding the remainder in a bush to consume at his leisure. Should he have been fired at, or disturbed on his return to his quarry, he becomes cunning and far more destructive, killing a fresh bullock whenever he wants food; and I have known tigers that have become so suspicious that they would not return to an animal they had killed, although they had only lapped the blood, and the bullock was almost untouched. On the other hand, I have known of a tiger returning day after day to the carcase of the ox he had killed, and picking the bones clean, notwithstanding he had been twice fired at by a native shekarry. A family of tigers, viz., a tiger, tigress, and two grown-up cubs, are terribly destructive, often killing two or three head of cattle in a day, the young tigers, for practice sake, under their parents' tuition, striking down as many of the herd as they catch in their way.

Of course the damage sustained by these wholesale depredations is immense; but as tigers, as a rule, do not confine their attacks to the herds of a single village, but distribute their favours with impartiality over a whole district, they are allowed to live "on sufferance," notwithstanding their haunts are perfectly well known to all the different village herdsmen. Cattle-lifters seldom molest men, and as long as they confine their attention to occasional bullocks, the apathetic natives are too inert and cowardly to beat up their haunts and destroy them themselves, and when some wandering Englishman on the look-out for sport finds himself in the neighbourhood of their villages, unless their cupidity and avarice overcome



DEATH OF A CATTLE-LIFTER.

their natural laziness, in most places they are very unwilling to give any information about tigers, lest they should be compelled to give up their usual occupations and be employed in beating the jungle to drive them out.

The Government reward for every full-grown tiger's skin produced was 50 rupees or £5 a head in the old day, and this to some extent served to cover part of the expenses of a hunt; but of late years, by the extreme parsimony of the administration, this reward has been reduced to half, consequently tiger-shooting has now become a very expensive game, and as a rule the sportsman will find himself about 100 rupees out of pocket for every tiger he bags.

Man-eaters, luckily for mankind, are neither numerous nor invulnerable, but there are several instances on record of villages having been abandoned on account of the ravages that these terrible scourges of mankind have committed. All animals have a natural innate dread of man, but if any of the *Felidæ* by any chance once happen to taste human blood, either from being rendered desperate by hunger, or by pouncing upon a man by mistake, they acquire a relish for human flesh, and abandon the chase of all other animals. With their change of living their character and habits entirely alter, and they become desperately cunning, skulking and prowling round villages with a noiseless step until they get the chance of springing upon some victim from behind when unaware and defenceless, and carrying him off into the forest before he can raise a cry, so that often scarcely a trace of the ruthless deed remains to give a clue as to the cause of his disappearance.

In India we have three distinct species of the *Felidæ*, inferior in strength and size to the tiger, that are often mistaken one for the other, and indiscriminately called panthers, or leopards, notwithstanding they are entirely distinct animals, and differ most essentially both in appearance and habits.

These three species are:—the *Felis pardus*, the true panther, Hindi “*taindwa*,” the *Felis leopardus*, the leopard, Hindi “*bor bucha*,” and the *Felis jubata*, the hunting leopard or cheetah, Hindi “*cheeta*.”



A FAMILY OF MARAUDERS.

The panther is by far the largest and most powerful of the three species, as it frequently measures 8 feet in length from the nose to the end of tail. He has also a well-defined bony ridge along the centre of the skull for the attachment of the muscles of the neck, which is not noticeable in the leopard or cheetah. The skin, which shines like silk, is of a rich tawny or orange tan above, and white underneath, marked on each side with seven lines of rosettes, each consisting of an assemblage of five or six black spots, in the centre of which the tawny or fulvous ground of the skin shows distinctly through the black. The extremities are marked with horseshoe-shaped or round black spots. Few animals can surpass the panther in point of beauty, and none in elegance and grace. His every motion is easy and flexible in the highest degree; he bounds among the rocks and woods with an agility truly amazing,—now stealing along the ground with the silence of a snake, now crouching with his fore paws extended and his spotted head laid betwixt them, while his chequered tail twitches impatiently, and his pale gooseberry eyes glare mischievously upon his unsuspecting victim.

The panther is much more active than the tiger, making immense bounds clean off the ground, which the tiger rarely does; furthermore, he can climb trees with great agility. The panther, as a rule, is more courageous than the tiger; and, although he does not weigh half as much, his powers of offence and defence are scarcely inferior, and when a large male panther takes to cattle-lifting or man-eating, he is a more terrible scourge than the tiger, inasmuch as he is more daring and cunning. That good sportsman Captain Forsyth states that "a man-killing panther devastated the northern part of the Seoni district, killing (incredible as it may seem) nearly a hundred persons before he was shot by a shekarry. He never ate the bodies, but merely lapped the blood from the throat; and his plan was either to steal into a house at night and strangle some sleeper on his bed, stifling all outcry with his deadly grip, or to climb into the high platforms from which watchers guard their fields from deer, and drag his victim from there. He was not to be baulked of his



MASTER JACKO IN JEOPARDY.

prey ; and when driven off from one end of a village, would hurry round to the opposite side and secure another in the confusion. A few moments completed his deadly work ; and such was the devilish cunning he joined to this extraordinary boldness that all attempts to find and shoot him were for many months unsuccessful. European sportsmen who went out, after hunting him in vain all day, would find his tracks close to the door of their tent in the morning." The Seoni panther is not a solitary case, several other man-eating panthers having committed similar depredations in other parts of India. Their usual retreats in the day-time are amongst low rocky hills, overgrown with low bush, and full of hollows and caverns, where they hide when pursued, and from which they issue after nightfall, and prowl round the neighbouring villages in search of prey, retreating to their fastnesses before daylight. They care little for the neighbourhood of water, and only drink at night, even during the hot weather. The black panther is only a variety of the same animal, as I once killed an ordinary female panther, and found two young cubs in the cave from out of which we smoked her, one of which was black, whilst the other was tan-coloured and spotted. In holding the skin of a black panther or leopard up to the light, the spots are always more or less perceptible, being more intensely black than the rest of the ground colour.

The leopard is smaller in proportion, and shorter-limbed than the panther, which it much resembles both in form and colour, although the marks on the body are somewhat different, being generally horseshoe or crescent-shaped, and placed much closer together, especially along the ridge of the back. Whilst the former often preys on cattle, and is a dangerous antagonist to man when unarmed, the latter chiefly confines himself to sheep, goats, dogs, and such small animals, although instances of his having attacked adult human beings are not uncommon. I have known villages where children were regularly carried off by leopards if they ventured to sleep outside the huts, even in the main street. The tiger and panther will rarely touch anything that they have not killed them-



A NIGHT MARAUDER.

selves ; but the leopard is by no means so particular, and I have on several occasions lost haunches of venison and saddles of mutton that were tied up to the branches of the tree under which my tent was pitched, high out of the reach of village dogs or jackals, that were carried off by leopards allured by the smell of the meat during the night, as I could tell by the footsteps of the marauders the next morning. The leopard is an admirable climber, and will often take to trees when pursued by a pack of dogs, or when lying in ambush for monkeys—his favourite food. The engraving (p. 133) represents an incident of this kind, when, attracted to the spot by the screams of "Master Jacko," I was enabled to shoot his antagonist through the head and secure his beautiful skin. The leopard rarely exceeds 7 feet in length, and stands about 26 inches in height at the shoulder. Very few sportsmen have sojourned for any length of time in the jungle without having been annoyed by these nocturnal depredators carrying off their dogs, and on several occasions I have lost a canine follower in this manner. The illustration (p. 135) represents a night alarm caused by the appearance of a leopard in camp ; but luckily his presence was discovered before he could do any harm, and a double discharge of buck-shot from an eight-gauge gun in the back of his head ended his career. The cheetah is smaller, again, than the leopard, but stands high in proportion to his length, which rarely exceeds 7 feet, being 4 feet 6 inches from the nose to the base of the tail, which appendage is $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet long. The *Felidæ* generally have broad rounded paws, armed with sharp, hooked, and completely retractile claws, which can be protruded at will. The foot of the cheetah differs from all the rest of the cat tribe, being long and narrow, and the claws are only partially retractile, and therefore become worn and blunted at the points. The limbs of the cheetah seem formed for speed, being long and slender, whilst the body is slight compared to that of the leopard, and much drawn in at the flanks. The general colour of the cheetah is a light tan or fawn, covered with round black spots, and a distinct black stripe passes from the inner angle of the eye to the corner of the mouth ; the



MECHAUN SHOOTING.

muzzle is black, and the head rounder than that of the leopard, whilst the male has a kind of mane along the neck and shoulders.

"Mechaun" Shooting.—The most common way of killing all kinds of feline animals is by shooting them from a "mechaun," or platform built in a tree, about 15 feet from the ground, and hidden from observation by freshly-cut branches. This arrangement is constructed in that part of the forest which these animals are known to frequent, and around it, within easy rifle range, are picketed three or four young calves, who, crying for their mothers, attract the spoilers to the spot, when the sportsmen may kill them from their place of concealment, with very little danger to themselves, as shown in the engraving. There is one strange peculiarity about most forest creatures, which is that, however quick they are to detect danger, they seldom or never look up, unless their attention is directed by any unusual noise—hence the advantage of building the mechaun in a tree.

"Moat" Shooting.—Another plan, which is often adopted for killing game of various kinds during the hot season, is the construction of "moats" or ambuscades near the pools where the signs show that wild animals are accustomed to drink. When I was likely to be located in the same spot for any length of time, and had to provide my people with food, I generally built a moat on piles some little distance in the water, as shown in the engraving, so as to command the different runs by which the game approached; and lest the taint of human footprints in the moist ground should arouse the suspicions of, or scare away, the game, I never allowed any of my people to draw water from the part of the pool they frequented. Should I not have had time to construct such an ambuscade, I used to dig, within a few feet of the edge of the water, when practicable, a hole about 8 feet long, 6 feet wide, and 4 feet deep. Heaping the earth all round like a crenelated wall, and having spread waterproof sheets and a carpet in the inside, so as to be as comfortable as possible, with four of my people—two of whom always kept on the look-out—I have passed many a night,



MOAT SHOOTING.

and killed almost every kind of game. The worst feature of this kind of shooting is that sleeping in the close proximity of water renders one very liable to catch fever; and the minor evil is that unless you keep on a broad-brimmed hat, with a mosquito veil that will protect your face and neck, you will be severely punished by these small vermin, and not get a wink of sleep, which will unfit you for the next day's work. The party who are going to watch for game at night should go to their ambush at least an hour before sunset, as during a drought many animals come to drink at that time, and the utmost caution should be used in moving about after dark, as there may be other creatures besides the hunters on the look-out for game.

Beating or Driving.—In some forests it may be advisable to beat for large game, and I have often made large bags by taking my station at the head of a ravine, and making the line of beaters drive the animals towards me. Previous to beating, the ground should be reconnoitred, and a good deal of judgment is required in selecting a position that commands the different runs up which the animals may come, and it is absolutely necessary to maintain the strictest silence, and remain as much as possible concealed. It is very unadvisable on these occasions to fire random shots at very long ranges, as the chances are that the report of your rifle may prevent other game from coming near you, and lose you a fair chance. Great care must be taken, also, not to fire in the direction of the beaters.

The most certain information as to the presence of tigers, or indeed any of the feline race, is given by monkeys, who, directly the enemy stirs, give their well-known cry of alarm, as a warning to the unwary, and continue making a harsh shrieking noise as long as he remains in sight. The peculiarly discordant cry of the *kola balloo*, or solitary jackal, also frequently betrays his whereabouts, as this animal, who, from old age or infirmities, is incapacitated from hunting with his fellows, lives upon what the tiger leaves, and gives notice to his master of any stray cattle that might serve him as a meal.

In Central India, where trained elephants are tolerably numerous, the dense covers are beaten with a line of elephants, and many tigers are thus brought to bag, the sportsmen being either mounted in howdahs on elephants, or posted on some elevated ground towards which the game is driven. A good steady shekar elephant costs about £300 to buy in the first instance, and about 80 rupees a month to keep, so that very few military men possess them ; consequently coolies hired by the day are generally employed as beaters, every other man in the line having a firearm of some kind, or a tom-tom.

The line of beaters, keeping up a perpetual noise, rouse the tiger from his lair and drive him past the ambuscades behind which the sportsmen lie hidden. When it is possible, elevated ground should be selected for these posts, which command an extensive view of the surrounding country, and watchers should be posted in trees round about the lair to signalize when the animal breaks, and which direction he is making for. These must keep a careful watch, for a tiger that has been hunted before grows very cunning, and when alarmed, instead of breaking boldly forth, skulks from bush to bush and creeps along very close to the ground, taking advantage of every patch of cover that lies in his way. Sometimes, when the bush is very thick, and he lies close, it is advisable to use rockets to scare him, and make him break into the open. But occasionally even this does not answer, and the tiger will break back through the line of beaters in spite of everything



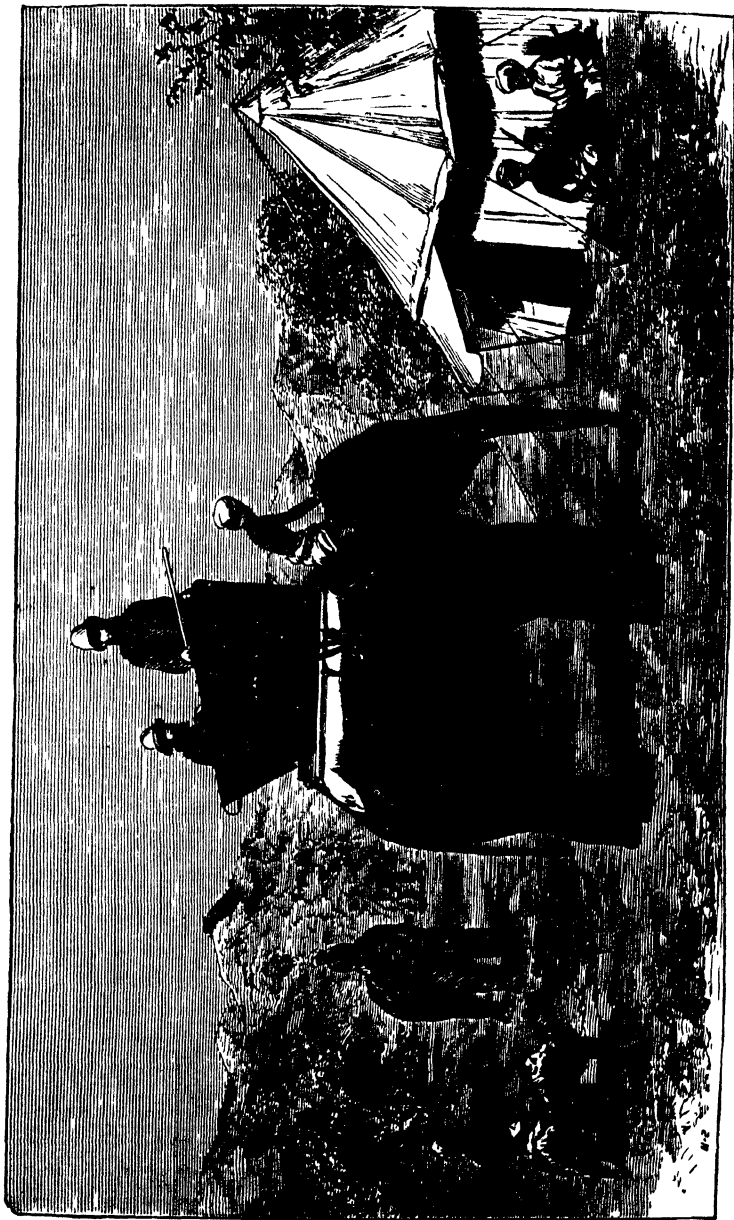
SKULL OF TIGER.

TIGER-SHOOTING FROM THE HOWDAH.

The most favourable time for hunting of all kinds of large game in India is during the hot season, as by April or May most of the

grass and rank undergrowth is burnt up in the jungle, and the intense heat of the sun has so dried up the face of the country that the water supply is reduced to its lowest ebb ; consequently the *Felidæ*, driven by thirst, leave the denser forest, and seek the lowest valleys, where pools of water remain all the year round, or frequent the karinda and tamarisk thickets, that afford dense and extensive cover in the immediate neighbourhood of most of our rivers in the Central Provinces and the Deccan. The ravages that tigers, panthers, and leopards commit amongst the cattle in India must in the aggregate amount to some hundreds of thousands of pounds sterling per annum ; for in many districts the inhabitants suffer a loss exceeding a lac of rupees, or £10,000, in the course of a year. Although in almost every village there is a professional shekarry or hunter, he is generally so inefficiently armed with an untrustworthy matchlock as to be unable to cope with his wary antagonist ; but when he hears of a bullock having been struck down, he proceeds to the spot, and, taking post in the nearest tree, watches by night for the return of the marauder, who, although he may kill and drink the blood during the daylight, never feeds before sunset. Sometimes, if he does not bungle at his work, and can get his matchlock to go off, he may succeed in killing or mortally wounding the tiger ; but, with his wretched weapons, the chances are that the spoiler escapes unscathed, and becomes far more cunning and suspicious than before.

The village shekarry never attempts the system generally adopted by Europeans of tracking up the gorged tiger to his mid-day lair, and driving him out, either with beaters and rockets, or, where the jungle is sufficiently open, with a line of elephants ; but in many cases he will be able to give much useful information as to his habits and usual resorts, therefore his co-operation should be secured, and a few rupees will not only loosen his tongue, but also induce him to accompany the tracking party to mark him down. To stalk a tiger on foot in dense cover is often quite impracticable ; as, where there is thick undergrowth, the hunter can rarely see three



A SHEKAR ELEPHANT.

yards before him, whilst every step he takes is seen and heard by his suspicious antagonist, who can, if he choose, travel round him and take him in the rear without the slightest sound betraying his movements. When the country is covered with high grass, it is almost impossible to drive out a tiger even with a strong gang of beaters ; besides this is dangerous and uncertain work, and in many cases the tiger will break back through the beat without giving the sportsmen a chance of a shot. Under these circumstances, little or nothing can be done without the aid of trained elephants, when the quarry can be tracked and followed up to his midday lair, and killed with comparatively little danger.

A thoroughly trained and steady shekar elephant is invaluable to a sportsman, more especially for beating jungle or high grass ; but unbroken or timid ones are worse than useless, as, in the event of a wounded tiger charging, they become ungovernable, and their riders run great danger of being smashed against the overhanging branches of trees.

A well-broken shekar elephant will beat for his game like a pointer, making his way noiselessly through the brushwood, searching the densest thickets foot by foot, and, at the command of his mahout, throwing stones into the watercourses where tigers are likely to conceal themselves. When the tiger is afoot, the sagacious animal stands ready at the word of command, so as to allow his master to shoot, and should the animal be wounded and charge, he will stand his ground with the most unflinching courage, as if trusting in the sportsman's coolness and accuracy of aim. Sometimes they display over-eagerness in seeking to kill the tiger themselves by trampling them underfoot ; and in such a case the rider is liable to be pitched out of the howdah in the struggle. Generally speaking, when mounted on a well-trained and steady elephant, the hunter is exposed to very little danger, and I know of ladies having killed tigers in this manner. I cannot, however, say that I am partial to this kind of shooting, not finding much excitement in it ; moreover, I never feel sure of my aim when seated on a jolting elephant, and

for my own part much prefer the more sportsmanlike proceeding of killing my game on foot, and giving him a fair chance of defending his skin. I may, however, observe that I never myself possessed a thoroughly trained shekar elephant; and although I have frequently had at my disposition elephants belonging to Government or native friends, I never felt myself quite safe when travelling at any speed across country in a howdah. Although perhaps endowed with as much nerve as the generality of men, I always felt out of my element in a howdah; and notwithstanding I have been out tiger-shooting upon elephants some scores of times, I always felt far more afraid of the elephant taking fright and bolting, or falling down bodily to the bottom of a ravine, or smashing the howdah and its occupants against the overhanging branches of trees, than I ever did of the tiger.

Every man, let his nerve be what it will, must naturally feel alarm in his first crossing a difficult country; but after a time, with further experience, the feeling to a certain extent wears off, as he begins to understand the method by which the elephant descends and ascends places that seem, for so ponderous and clumsy-looking an animal, actually impracticable. It is not even reasonable to expect a person, unaccustomed to that sort of thing, to believe in the perfectly surprising powers of this huge animal until he has actually seen them exercised. Let the reader imagine himself seated in a large box on the back of an animal 10 feet high, weighing some three or four tons, on the edge of a nullah with steep banks some 10 or 15 feet deep, down which he is about to clamber after a wounded and perhaps infuriated tiger; and if the situation does not try his nerves, he is more than mortal. Riding over the stiffest country is a mere joke to it, for there you feel that you have a certain command over your horse; but, when in a howdah, you are helpless, and have to depend entirely upon the *sang froid* of the mahout or native driver, and his capability of managing and controlling the elephant's movements. This he does with an iron instrument, sharp at the point and the crook. This

being pressed with the point to his head, is a signal for him to go forward ; on either ear with the crook, to wheel to the right or left ; and on the forehead, to stop. By the management of this instrument, accompanied by certain words of command, the paces and the direction of the elephant are regulated. The hind legs of the elephant differ in their peculiar formation from any other quadruped ; as, instead of doubling them under him when he lies down, he extends them behind him as a man does when kneeling. The struggle which horses experience in rising from the ground is by this arrangement avoided, as when he wishes to regain his legs he simply draws his hind feet gradually under him, and his enormous weight is levered up without any perceptible effort. Owing to this beautiful mechanism, and the extraordinary development of muscle of the legs and feet, together with his wonderful sagacity and instinct, the elephant is one of the most sure-footed of animals ; and he can ascend and descend the most precipitous slopes, carrying a howdah upon his back, with the greatest ease. His method is simple enough. On descending, he drops his hind quarters to the ground, while he stands erect on his fore legs, taking each step with the greatest caution ; on ascending the reverse takes place, dropping on his fore whilst erect on his hind quarters ; and in this manner, slow but sure, he ascends and descends places that no horse could, even with the best and boldest rider on his back. When he cannot find a safe foothold, he sets to work making it artificially by beating an indentation in the earth with his broad and heavy foot ; and when the fore feet are withdrawn, the hind feet are inserted in the same place. From the spongy formation of the sole of the foot, the tread of the elephant, even when going his usual pace, a fast swinging walk, is quite inaudible ; and, when travelling over loose sand, where a horse would sink fetlock deep, an elephant's footprints would be scarcely perceptible.

With respect to the best kind of howdah, there are various opinions. They are made of as many shapes and sizes as the buggies on the Calcutta esplanade, and as nondescript ; but perhaps



MUSTER OF ELEPHANTS FOR BEATING.

the most convenient one for shekar purposes is shown in the engraving (p. 142). On each corner of the front part of the howdah should be constructed a perfectly secured gun-rack, and it is a good plan to have a block of wood some 3 or 4 inches in thickness screwed on the floor, having holes cut out in the shape of the butt and heel of the gun-stock, stuffed and padded with leather, to prevent the possibility of accidents happening from the guns shifting by the jolting motion of the elephant. Some sportsmen take large-bore pistols with them, in case of the tiger charging the elephant, and coming to close quarters with the occupants of the howdah; but, to be effective, the muzzle must be placed close to the tiger's head, and care must be taken not to hit the mahout, who is far more exposed to the brunt of the attack than the hunters in the howdah. Insignificant as the mahout may look perched straddle-legs on the elephant's neck, and dancing from side to side at every stride, he has unquestionably by far the most difficult and arduous part to play in the hunt, and he ought to be a man of tried courage and *sang-froid*; for in the first place he is at no great distance from the ground, the top of his head being much lower than the howdah, whilst his feet hang down nearly to the bottom of the elephant's ears, so that he is far more exposed to danger from a tiger charging than the occupants of the howdah. Again, he is unarmed except with his iron crook; and, unless he has perfect confidence in the skill of his master as a marksman, he is not likely to bring his elephant properly up when in momentary expectation of the charge of a furious tiger, who is as likely as not to spring and hang on to the elephant's head. The elephant, like the horse, soon finds out what his rider is made of; and however staunch and well trained the animal may be, he cannot be expected to be steady and go ahead when the mahout is trembling and in a state of "green funk." Many an elephant that turns tail and "takes to his scrapers" at the very smell of a tiger, might be brought well up to the scratch by a really good plucky mahout; and, after he has seen a few tigers killed without any accident happening to himself, he becomes per-

fectly fearless when in their neighbourhood, and seems to enjoy the sport. The late Captain Forsyth, who had much experience in tiger-shooting from the howdah in the Central Provinces, gives the following interesting account of the wonderful sagacity and staunch courage of a perfectly trained elephant :

“A strange affection springs up between the hunter and his well-tried ally in the chase of the tiger ; and a creature seeming to those who see him only in the menagerie, or labouring under a load of baggage, but a lumbering mass of flesh, becomes to him almost a second self, yielding to his service the perfection of physical and mental qualities of which a brute is capable, and displaying an intelligent interest in his sport, of which no brute could be thought to be possessed. No one who has not witnessed it would believe the astonishing caution with which a well-trained elephant approaches a tiger, removing with noiseless adroitness every obstacle of fallen timber, etc., and passing his huge bulk over rustling leaves, or rolling stones, or quaking bog, with an absolute and marvellous silence ; handing up stones when ordered, for his master to fling into a cover ; smelling out a cold scent as a spaniel roads a pheasant ; and at last, perhaps, pointing dead with sensitive trunk at the hidden monster, or showing with short nervous taps of that organ on the ground that he is somewhere near, though not actually discovered to the senses of the elephant. Then the unswerving steadiness when he sees the enemy he naturally dreads, and would flee from panicstricken in his native haunts, perhaps charging headlong at his head, trusting all to the skill of his rider, and thoughtless of using his own tremendous strength in the encounter—for a good elephant never attempts to combat the tiger himself. To do so would generally be fatal to the sport, and perhaps to the sportsman too ; for no one could stick to an elephant engaged in a personal struggle with a tiger, far less use his gun under such circumstances. The elephant’s business is to stand like a rock in every event, even when the tiger is fastened on his head—as many a good one will do and has done.”

It is not one elephant in a thousand that is so thoroughly good in tiger-shooting as this; and such as are, command very high prices in the market. From £200 to £400 is now the value of a thoroughly first-rate shooting elephant, though much sport may be had for one purchased for the smaller sum. Captain Forsyth says: "It is difficult to buy horses at a fair, but the difficulty is ten times greater in the case of elephants. Every one connected with the keeping of elephants (and camels) is by nature and training from his youth a consummate rascal, and the animal himself is subject to numerous and often obscure vices and unsoundness." Elephants differ as widely in their "points" as do horses, and it is very difficult for an uneducated eye to distinguish these, particularly in the fattened-up condition the animals generally carry at the fair. Furthermore, and fortunately enough for us, a native's ideas of good points in an elephant (as in the shape of a horse) differ *in toto* from ours. He looks not at all to shape, or good action, or likelihood of standing hard work; but first of all to the presence or absence of certain accidental marks—such as the number of toe-nails on the foot, which may be five or six, but not four—the tail, which must be perfect and with a full tuft—and the colour of the palate, which must be red without spot of black. Some of the best elephants I have known failed in each and all of these points. Then a female or a tuskless male is of small value to a native, who wants big white tusks. A rough high action, and a trunk and forehead of very light colour, are greatly in request by the native buyer, who looks entirely to show, and covers up every part of the animal except the face with an enormous parti-coloured cloth. For sporting purposes we look for a small well-bred-looking head and trunk, and a clear confident eye, devoid of piggish expression, fast easy paces, straight back and croup, wide loins, and generally well-developed muscle—a great test of which is the girth of the fore arm, which should measure 3 feet 8 inches in an elephant 9 feet high. A very tall elephant is seldom a good working one, and generally has slow rough paces; so that in a male, 9 feet—or a female, 8 feet 4 inches

at the shoulder—should not be exceeded ; a smaller animal than 8 feet 2 inches will be under-sized for tiger-shooting purposes. A female makes the best hunting elephant when she is really staunch with game, as her paces and temper are generally better, and she is not subject to the danger of becoming “must” and uncontrollable, as male elephants do periodically after a certain age. But females are more uncertain as regards courage than males, and it is a risk to buy the former, untried, for shooting purposes. Most *muknas* (tuskless males) can I believe be relied on to become staunch with tigers when properly trained and entered ; and for my own part, if buying an entirely untried elephant, I would always select a *mukna*. They are generally more vigorous and better developed than tuskers, though not usually so tall ; which may be accounted for because young tuskers, after their sharp little tusks begin to grow, prick the mother in the process of sucking, and are consequently driven off by her and allowed to shift for themselves, whilst females and *muknas* continue to be nourished by her until she has got another young one.

All elephants intended to be used in hunting tigers must be very carefully trained and entered to their game. A good mahout or driver is very difficult to obtain. They differ as much in their command over elephants as do riders of horses ; and a plucky driver will generally make a staunch elephant, and *vice versâ*. The elephant should first be accustomed to the firing of guns from his back, and to seeing deer and other harmless animals shot before him, in company with a staunch companion. He must not be forced on at a tiger, or a hog or bear, which he detests even more, until he has acquired some confidence, though in some few cases he will stand to any animal from the very first. When they have seen a few tigers neatly disposed of, most elephants acquire confidence in their human allies, and become sufficiently steady in the field ; but their ultimate qualities will depend much on natural temperament. The more naturally courageous an elephant is, the better chance there is of his remaining staunch after having been mauled by a tiger—an

accident to be avoided as long as possible. It will occur at times, however, in the best hands ; and then a naturally timid animal, who has only been made staunch by a long course of immunity from injury, will probably be spoiled for life, while a really plucky elephant is often rendered bolder than before by such an occurrence.

The finest sport I ever had in shooting from a howdah was in the Deccan, whilst quartered at Secunderabad. Having obtained a fortnight's leave, I was staying at Chuder Ghaut, near the city of Hyderabad, with a first-rate sportsman, Captain Mounsey, who had lately retired from the " King's Own," and had established himself in a somewhat palatial mansion near the Residency, when we received invitations from the Shahzada Mir-fet-Ali, and Abdoola-ben-Ali, the chief of the Arab and Puthan contingent, to accompany them on a pleasure and shekar party at Shah-nugger, which was some twenty miles distant. Otter and Madegan of our host's old corps, Blake of the 36th N.I., and Doctor Riddel, from Bolarum, were also asked to join the party; and having sent our horses, tents, baggage, servants, and shekarries on before, early one morning we found ourselves at the village where our native friends were encamped.

The camp was pitched under the shade of a fine peepul grove, and at first sight resembled a great fair, as on one flank quite a large bazaar was established, where, from the hubbub and clamour of voices, it might be imagined that a good trade was being carried on. A large double-poled tent, with luxurious furnishings, serving as a *dewan khana* or reception-hall, occupied the centre of the position, and separated our tents from our native friends' encampment ; and in the rear were picketed over a dozen fine-looking elephants, a long line of gaily caparisoned native hackeries, and several Persian and Deccan-bred horses, fattened up with ghee and jagherry until they looked in the condition of prize oxen. We received a most cordial welcome from our native friends, who were attended by a large suite, including several *taifas* or nautch girls, and a band of native musicians, and sat down to an excellent breakfast, at which our prospects of sport were discussed. The Zemindar of that dis-



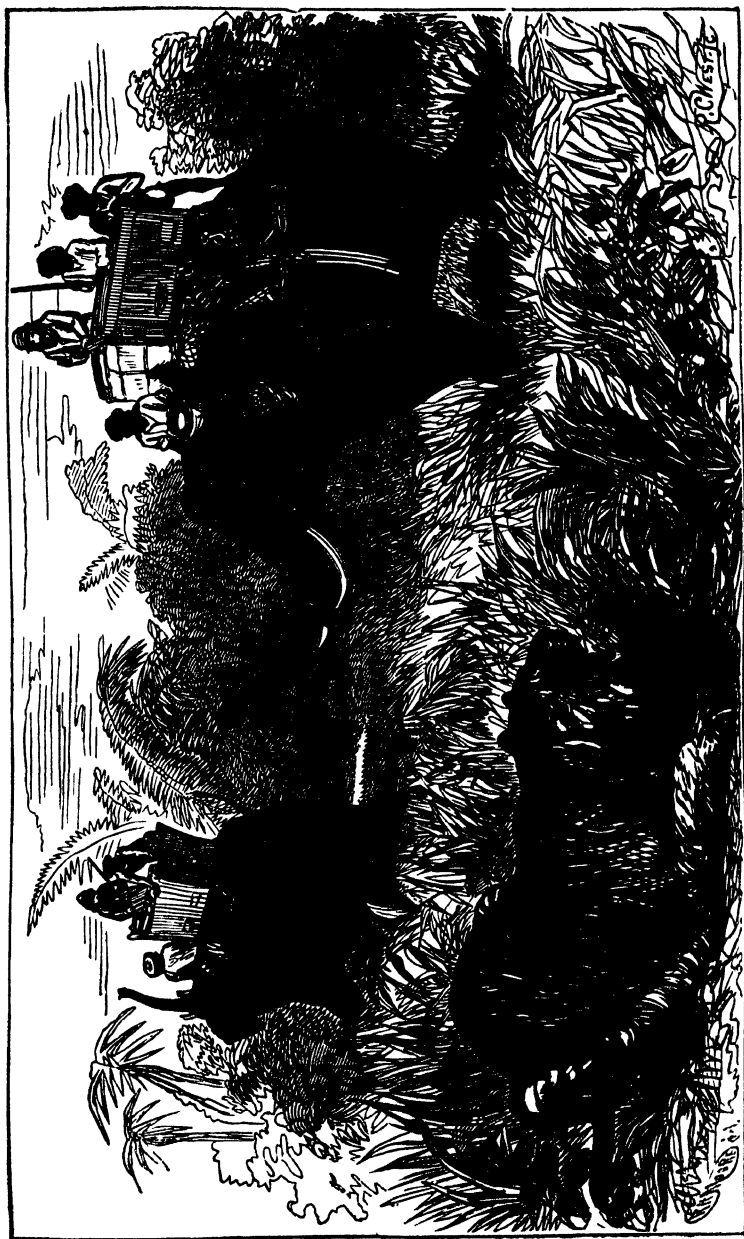
A PANIC-STRIKEN ELEPHANT.

trict, who was present, informed us that he was **very** glad that we had come, as there were several tigers **almost** in the immediate neighbourhood, and that scarcely a day passed without some of his villagers losing their **cattle**. As native reports as a rule are not **very reliable**, Otter, who was a great linguist, in the course of the **forenoon** had several herdsmen up, who professed to know the whereabouts of tigers, and questioning them each separately, found their evidence to tally in the main ; so it was determined to commence operations the following morning with a grand beat. In the meantime it was necessary to survey the ground and determine the line of country we intended to drive ; so Blake and I, mounting our horses, with a couple of our own shekarries and some villagers, made a reconnaissance of some likely-looking low hills ; whilst Otter, Mounsey, Madegan, Riddel, and our native friends on pad elephants, went to examine a nullah, which was said to be the usual haunt of a family of tigers who had committed terrible depredations on the villagers' flocks and herds. On our return to camp, we had every reason to be satisfied with our prospects of sport, as we had seen several fresh traces of tigers, bears, and hog, whilst the other party had found a broad ravine, clothed with dwarf jungle and intersected with several nullahs, the sandy beds of which were covered with tigers' footprints of many dates, from a week old to fresh pugs made that morning. The Zemindar, having assembled the herdsmen of several of the surrounding villages, gave directions that scouts should be sent out in all the most likely places, and all information sent in at once to camp. He also arranged that at day-break a line of watchers should be posted in trees on the lateral hills, commanding a view of the ravine we intended to beat, so as to notify the movements made by the tigers, and their line of retreat ; and a large body of sowars and matchlock-men were to take post at both sides of the head of the ravine, to drive back the game in case it should attempt to steal away unobserved. The next morning, as we were getting up from breakfast, information came in that several tigers had been marked down, and that all the watchers

were at their posts, and in fact that only our presence was necessary for the game to commence. We were to take the field with a line of ten elephants, six of which, intended for our use, carried howdahs, and were considered sufficiently staunch for any kind of game we were likely to meet with; whilst the others, bearing pads, each accommodated half a dozen natives, and sundry boxes containing refreshments. We now stored rifles and ammunition in the howdahs, and paired off, Mounsey riding with the Shahzada, Otter with the Zemindar, Doctor Riddel with Abdoola, whilst Blake, Madegan, and I had only our shekarries with us. We made a somewhat imposing appearance as we filed out of the village; and forming line as soon as we got into open country, we were soon traversing a fine game country. We first passed a grass-covered maidan, studded with custard-apple bushes, and here we put up great numbers of partridges, hares, and ravine antelope; but they were allowed to go unscathed. Then a couple of sounders of hog were reared, and, as the ground was rideable, "visions of first spears" crossed our minds, and sent the blood coursing through our veins, and we registered a vow to have a spin across country in that district before we were many days older. We were jogging quietly along on the extreme right, when we heard a sudden commotion at the other end of the line, followed by the angry trumpeting of an elephant, which gave warning that game was afoot, and very shortly afterwards a tigress and two nearly full-grown cubs sprang out of a patch of dense cover by the dry bed of a watercourse thickly overgrown with reeds and long rumnah grass. Crack, crack! went five or six rifles, and the cubs were soon disposed of; but the tigress was but slightly wounded, as she crouched low in the high grass, and presented very little chance of a fair shot. However, enraged at the pain of her wounds, and her maternal feelings being roused at the death of her young, with a shrill scream of anger she boldly charged our line, and, springing open-mouth at Mounsey's elephant, seized his ear in her teeth and left the marks of her claws pretty deeply scored on his shoulder. Luckily old Hyder was a staunch and well-trained tiger-hunter, and

undismayed by the suddenness of the attack, with an angry screech he shook her off, and pirouetting, gave her a kick that nearly knocked all the breath out of her body, as for a moment she lay motionless as if quite bewildered ; and Mounsey and the Shahzada, taking fair aim, let drive, when she rolled over once or twice, stretched out her limbs, and expired.

The game being hoisted on pad elephants, the line was reformed, and shortly afterwards, on passing through a patch of low bush, a magnificent tiger sprang out of some high reeds in the dry bed of a watercourse, and I had a fair right-and-left shot ; but, unaccustomed to shoot from a jolting howdah, I missed clean, and a perfect shower of bullets rattled round about him as he dashed across the open. Although he was manifestly hit, from the short sharp yelps he gave, he continued to bound along through the bushes until he passed in front of Madegan's elephant, when he had to cross the open bed of a watercourse, and a second discharge rolled him over, dead, as we thought ; but on hurrying up to the spot he was nowhere to be seen, having vanished, as it were, into the ground. Closing up our line, we tracked him by his pugs to some dwarf date-trees and custard-apple bush, when, as we were beating the banks of a nullah, Madegan espied him stealing away furtively behind some reeds, and let drive at him, when he crouched, evidently sulky and meaning mischief. Madegan ordered his mahout to press forward, but he had no heart in the game, which did not add to the steadiness of the beast he was driving, who, upon winding the tiger, gave a scream of alarm, turned tail, and fairly bolted. Blake and I now hurried up, and this time I should have got a fair shot had not my elephant accidentally hurt his foot against a sharp stone, and proved so fidgetty that I could hardly keep my feet by laying hold of the sides of the howdah, much less take a fair aim ; so I reserved my fire, and Blake's elephant, charging boldly up to the crouching tiger, gave him the chance, and he hurriedly fired a right-and-left, which wounded the infuriated beast, but did not disable him ; for, before the smoke had cleared away, with a hoarse angry roar, the monster bounded on a



TIGER-SHOOTING FROM THE HOWDAH.

low bank, where he stood for an instant with every hair straight on end, and lashing his sides with his tail ; and then with a terrific guttural growling noise, he sprang on clean to the elephant's forehead, and, with claws and fangs fastening on his head and ears, dragged him to his knees. The poor beast screeched piteously, and made frantic efforts to shake off his relentless foe, whose hind claws were lacerating his trunk most dreadfully ; and the huge brute, staggering from intense pain, tried to kneel down and crush him ; when my elephant, as if suddenly awakened to a sense of duty by the cries of distress emitted by his companion, pluckily rushed up ; and, although I felt somewhat afraid of hitting my friend's elephant or mahout instead of the tiger, the case was critical, and as I brushed by I planted a right-and-left just behind the top of the shoulder-blade ; and Blake, who never for a moment lost his presence of mind, leaned over the front of the howdah, and almost simultaneously lodged the contents of his second gun in the nape of his neck, when the brute relaxed his hold and fell to the ground writhing in his last agony. Hardly was Blake's elephant freed from the worrying gripe of the tiger, than, excited by rage mingled with revenge, he coiled up his trunk, and, uttering a terrific trumpeting noise, knelt down, and literally lifting the prostrate carcase on his tusks, chucked it on one side, and commenced dancing a war dance upon it, to the utter discomfiture of the sportsman in the howdah and his attendant, who had to hold on like grim death. The mahout was dislodged from his seat, but, retaining his hold of the ropes, eventually regained it, and guns, rifle, and all the loose gear were pitched on the ground before the frantic animal could be quieted and forced away from the carcase by the other elephants. The sight was ludicrous enough for the spectators, but Blake did not seem to see any fun in it, and to add to his discomfiture, the stock of a valuable gun was broken in the fall, a loss not easily made good at an up-country station.

After this little episode we beat some high-grass country for some hours, but only found an occasional sounder of hog or a few

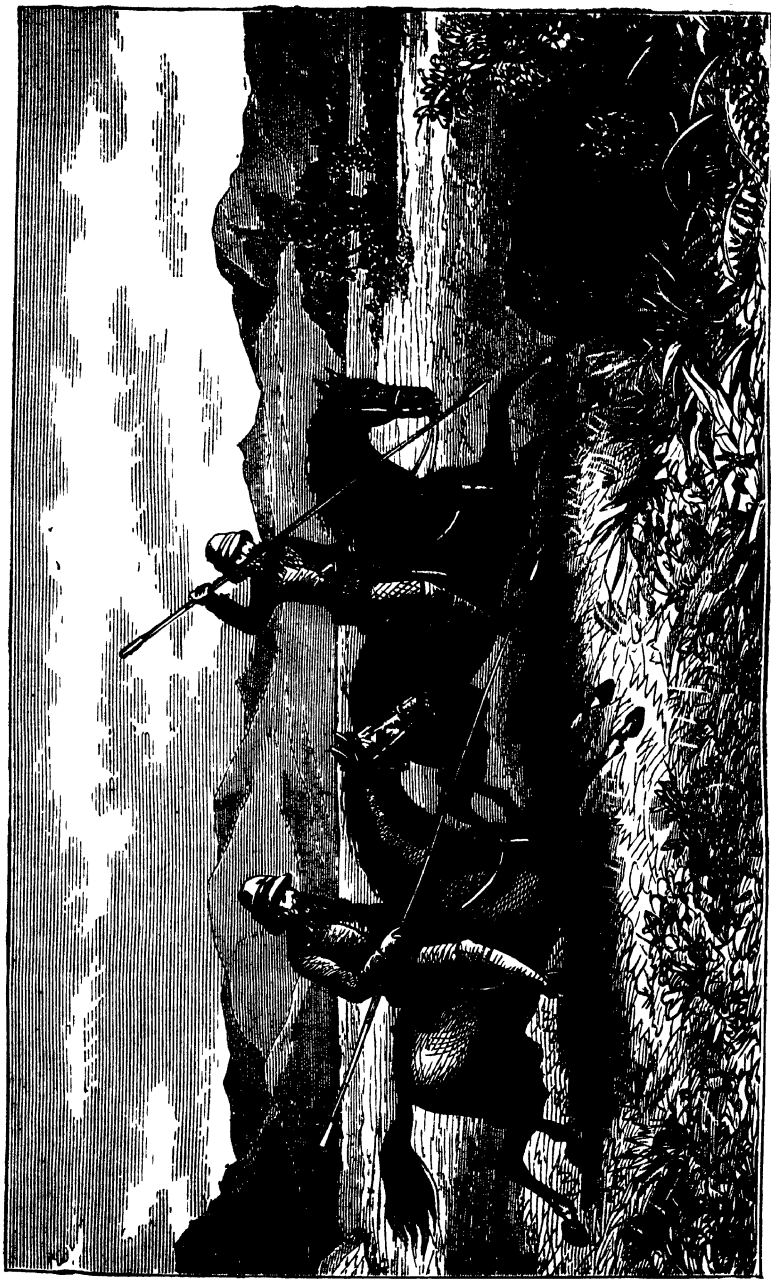


AN "UGLY CUSTOMER."

stragglings antelope; so we returned to camp fairly satisfied with our first day's work, and finished the night with a *burra khana* (great dinner) and a nautch.

There were sounds of revelry in the camp throughout the live-long night, and the nautch was prolonged until the small hours, consequently few showed up at the usual time in the breakfast-tent, notwithstanding one of the shekarries of the Zemindar of Bhoonghir brought in intelligence that a leopard and several bears were marked down. However, somewhat later in the forenoon Nightingale, of the Nizam's Irregular Horse, joined our party, and as he had only three days' leave and seemed very eager to commence operations, Blake, Madegan, and I agreed to accompany him to the Manjharra Hills, where the game was said to be.

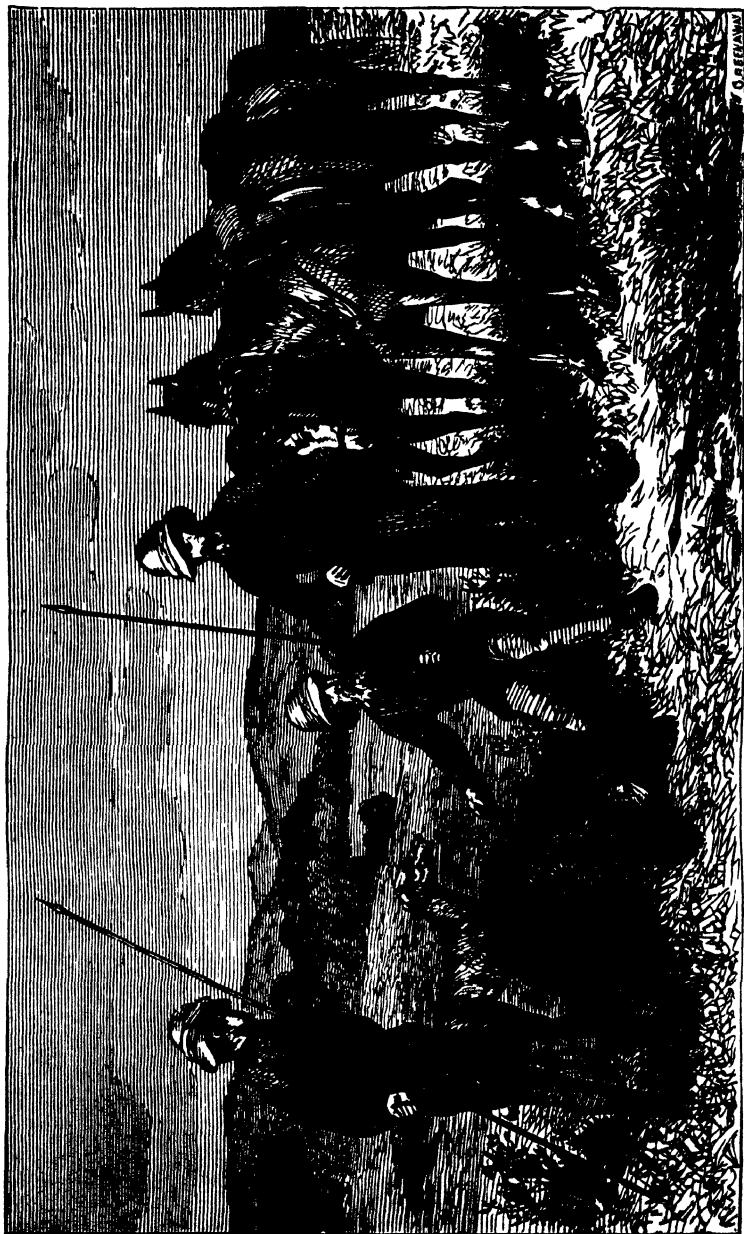
We took five elephants with us, one of which carried a couple of small hill tents, provisions, stores, liquor, and our servants, whilst our syces followed with our horses and boar-spears. We had four immensely powerful dogs—a cross between a huge Polligar dog and a Bringarry bitch—that stood over 30 inches in height and possessed indomitable pluck, but very little amenability to discipline, and at Bulbul's suggestion it was determined to course the bears into the open and spear them from our horses. We marshalled our elephants in line soon after leaving the camp; and in passing through a date grove Madegan killed a couple of hogs out of a sounder that broke away from almost under his elephant's feet; and Bulbul and I secured a couple of ravine deer that, scared at the elephant, ran, as if bewildered, across our line. The ground was very much broken and almost impossible to ride over, or we should have mounted our horses and tried some pig-sticking, as several hogs broke away within easy range of us; but, having enough pork for food, we did not molest them. As we were passing a temporary hut belonging to some toddy-drawers, who make a kind of spirit called "rakkee" from the fermented sap of the date, one of the men told us that the bears constantly came down from the hills during the night and early morning, and emptied their toddy-chatties; and that very



BEAR-HUNTING WITH THE SPEAR.

often they might be found half-drunk in a neighbouring thicket, which he offered to show us. Under his guidance we wheeled off to the westward, and soon came to a patch of thick cover where the bears were said to congregate. Hardly had the elephants got into cover than one of them trumpeted, and a couple of bears started up from under the shelving bank of a dry watercourse, one of which Blake hit very hard, but failed to stop ; and they both set off at a good round pace for their fastness in the hills, which were about three miles distant. As they got over the ground much faster than we could follow on the elephants, on account of the overhanging trees, as soon as we got into the more open jungle again we mounted our horses, and, changing our rifles for hog-spears, gave chase. After a spurt of about a mile we came in sight of them again ; and Nightingale, who was mounted on a magnificent little Arab mare, got the first spear, and with Blake's assistance soon "skivered" the old male, who made a terrible row before he succumbed. I and Madegan made after the female, and my horse, excited at the chase, although he had never hunted a bear before, carried me right up without the slightest hesitation, and enabled me to drive the spear right home behind the near shoulder, and out of the chest, which grassed her at once, and with a low wailing moan she stretched out her limbs and expired. When she was dead we found that Blake's bullet had entered the fleshy part of the haunch and come out of her side, without, however, disabling her, and from which wound she would doubtless have soon recovered, as bears, being very tenacious of life, soon get over very severe wounds. Having hoisted the game on the elephants, we made the best of our way to Oomrapett, where we encamped.

Oomrapoor is a small village of only a few dozen huts, but beautifully situated near the bund of a fine tank, surrounded by low wooded hills. Several small streams flow from the high background into the lake, and a somewhat larger one issues out of it and forms the principal head-water of the Beckullair river, which flows into the Kistnah at Wojerabad. The surrounding country is



DEATH OF THE BEAR.

very hilly, and the jungle was said to be alive with game of different kinds. The head men of the neighbouring villages of Bustarpully, Venkalapoor, Mullapully, and Sydapoor had all assembled to welcome us, they having received information of our coming; and, as supplies of different kinds were plentiful, we sent to the Shahzada and begged him to join us. After we had heard all the native authorities had to tell us about the game of the district, we gave them their *congé* and a bottle of *eau-de-vie* apiece, which we called "Bulbul's cholera mixture," so as to ease their consciences, if they had any, about drinking the liquor forbidden by the Prophet, and then we adjourned to the tank to perform our ablutions before dinner. Whilst we were disporting among the lotus-leaves close to the edge, for we dare not venture out of our depth on account of weeds, we heard a howling on the bund, and three or four women came running along with their brass chatties in their hands, screaming "Bagh! Bagh!" (a tiger, a tiger). As we had no guns with us, our situation might have been awkward; so, snatching up our toggery, we made tracks for the tents. We were not long getting into our clothes, and were just ready for a chase, when some of the villagers informed us that the intruder was only a cheetah who was constantly prowling about the village. Being now fully equipped and on our mettle, we determined to make a few casts round about the bund of the tank, where he was said to have taken refuge; and Bulbul and I, taking our hog-spears, mounted our horses for the chance of a run, whilst the others got on the elephants, with their rifles. The ground below the bund of the tank was covered with a second growth of low jungle, chiefly composed of custard-apple bushes and date-palm, so the elephants, who were in line pretty close together, could easily make their way through it. Scarcely had we commenced beating than a rustling in the cover ahead and the angry trumpeting of one of the elephants gave notice that the game was afoot, and shortly afterwards Madegan caught sight of him crouching behind the bushes and endeavouring to steal away. I saw that if we could only get him out of the narrow strip of

jungle and make him break into the open, we should have a very fair chance of spearing him, as the tank lay between us and the hills, and maidan in front was tolerably good riding ground, although more or less covered with rumnah grass and baubliool bushes.

I did not anticipate much chance of getting the spear myself, as my friend Bulbul was admirably mounted on a chestnut Arab mare of great repute as a hog-hunter, whilst I had only a galloway 13'3" in height. "Habesh" was, however, a very plucky little beast, and would follow a hog *con amore*; but he had never yet faced any of the *Felidæ*, and I felt uncertain how he would act. As the elephants were carefully beating every yard of bush, we were not much afraid of his making back; so we rode into the more open ground, in order to be prepared for a spurt when he should be driven out of the cover. From the continuous noise made by the elephants it was pretty certain that the quarry was somewhere just in front of them, and he was evidently somewhat sulky at being disturbed, for now and again his tail was seen waving amongst the bushes, and low angry growling was heard.

The line of elephants had now almost got to the farther end of the cover, and every rustle in the bush was listened to with anxiety. At last, with a short angry roar, he sprang into the open, and then we saw at a glance that it was not a cheetah but a fine male leopard. Bulbul and I immediately gave chase; but for the first half-mile, although we were going our best, we scarcely held our own, whilst the leopard seemed to be getting over the ground without any exertion to himself. As we got farther out into the plain the ground became harder and more open, and my companion, making a spurt, forged ahead, and began to gain ground, and I soon saw that if the pace continued for any length of time I should "not be in the same field with them at the death." I therefore carefully husbanded my little nag's strength—who, with his ears laid back, was pulling like mad, jealous of being outpaced,—and edged off to the left, where there was a clump of nymn-trees and a date tope, which I thought our quarry would most likely make for. In the meantime Bulbul

had steadily crept up to within a few spears' length of the leopard, who was beginning to show symptoms of distress, for his pace slackened and his tongue was hanging out of his mouth ; and a few moments more must have decided the affair, when suddenly he disappeared in a blind nullah. The horse my friend was riding was a thoroughly-trained hunter, or both would have had a nasty fall of 8 or 10 feet ; but the little Arab, as if aware of his danger, wheeled sharp round when he saw the game vanish, and saved himself. The sudden jerk, however, snapped one of the stirrup-leathers and nearly brought the rider to grief ; but, luckily, he managed to keep his scat, and shouted to me to keep on after the leopard—who, almost run to a standstill, was slowly trotting along the bed of the watercourse, and coming in my direction—whilst he repaired damages. As soon as the nearly breathless animal saw me, he scrambled up the opposite bank of the nullah ; and I, jumping off my horse, led him down one side and up the other, and again gave chase. The game was now all in my favour, and every stride brought me closer, until at last I raced almost alongside the leopard, and, rising in the stirrups as I shot past, drove my spear home behind the withers and out of the chest ; when, as I wheeled off sharp to the left, the bamboo shaft broke from the sudden wrench, and I was defenceless, and might have come off but second best if he had not been too far gone to turn the tables. As it was, he was mortally wounded, and Bulbul put him out of his sufferings as he lay writhing on the ground with a thrust behind the shoulder, which penetrated the heart and caused instant dissolution. He proved to be rather a large leopard, as he measured 7 feet 8 inches in length from the tip of the nose to the end of the tail ; and his skin was in first-rate condition, shining like satin. It was certainly a wonderful bit of luck my getting the spear, which my companion must have had if he had not been so unfortunately thrown out by the nullah. As it was, we returned to our huts highly satisfied with our sport, for it was a most exciting run from first to last.



LEOPARD-HUNTING.

THE DEATH OF A MAN-EATING TIGER.

I was hunting in the Deccan, in the neighbourhood of Mulkapore, when I heard that a man-eating tiger, which I had been after for some days, had been seen skulking near the outskirts of the village of Botta Singarum. I had on a former occasion tracked this cunning brute to one of his lairs, where the remains of several of his victims were discovered, and had twice beaten all his usual haunts in the jungle ; but up to this time had never been able to get a shot at him. Sending my gang of trackers on before I mounted my horse, and guided by the villager who brought the news, I made my way to the place where the marauder had been seen the evening before, where I found unmistakable signs that the information I had received was true, as his fresh pugs were plainly visible.

I sent my horse back to the village, and, accompanied by the gang, followed his track through a narrow ravine densely wooded. Here the trail became exceedingly difficult to follow, as the brute had evidently been walking about backwards and forwards in the bed and along the banks of a dry nullah, and we could not distinguish his last trail. I caused the band to separate, and for half an hour or so we were wandering about as if in a maze, for the cunning brute had been describing circles, and often, by following the trail, we arrived at the place we started from.

Whilst we were all at a loss, suddenly I heard a low "Coo" twice repeated, and I knew that Googooloo, who was seldom at fault, was now on warm scent, and from his call I was as certain that the game was afoot as any master of hounds would have been, while breaking cover, to hear his favourite dog give tongue. The gang closed up, and, guided by the sound, we made our way through thick bush to where Googooloo was standing by a pool of water in the bed of the nullah.

Here were unmistakable marks of his having quenched his thirst

quite lately, for when we came up the water was still flowing into the deeply-imprinted pugs of his fore feet, which were close to the edge of the pool, and I noticed that the water had still the appearance of having been disturbed and troubled. After having drunk, the brute made his way to some very thick jungle, much overgrown with creepers, through which we could not follow without the aid of our axes. Thus, stalking with any hope of success was out of the question, so I held a solemn consultation with Kistimah, Chineah, Googooloo, and the dhoby, as to the best means of proceeding.

I felt convinced that the brute was still lurking somewhere near at hand in the jungle, for, besides the very recent trail we were on, I fancied I heard the yelling of a swarm of monkeys, which I attributed to their having been frightened by his appearance; besides, this was just the kind of place that a tiger would be likely to remain in during the heat of the day, as it afforded cool shade from the sun, and water. All the gang were of my opinion, and Kistimah observed that, on two different occasions, after a post-runner had been carried off, he had remarked that the trail of the tiger led from this part of the jungle to a bend in the road, where he had been known frequently to lie in wait for his prey. "These man-eaters," added he, "are great devils, and very cunning, and I should not at all wonder if even now he was watching us from some dark thicket." As he said this I carefully examined the caps of my rifle, and I observed some of the gang close up with a strange shudder, for this brute had inspired them all with a wholesome fear, and prevented their straggling. Two or three spoke almost in whispers, as if they were afraid of his really being sufficiently near to hear them conspiring for his destruction.

At length Kistimah said that he had been thinking of a plan which, though dangerous in the execution, might be attended with success. It was for me to go, with a man dressed as a runner, down the main road at sunset, being the time the tiger generally carried off his victims, and to run the chance of getting a shot. At this proposition sundry interjectional expressions, such as "Abah!"

"Arrez!" "Toba!" "Toba!" escaped from the lips of the bystanders, and, from sundry shaking of heads and other unmistakable signs, I could see that it had not found much favour in their eyes. Chineah, the dhoby, and one or two of the gang, however, approved of the plan, and Kistimah offered to accompany me as the post-runner. This, however, I objected to, for I thought that I should have a better chance of meeting the tiger if I went alone than in company; besides, I preferred having only myself to look after. The plan of action once settled, I returned to the village and obtained from the patel the bamboo on which the tappal-runners sling the mail-bags over their shoulders. To the end of this is an iron ring with a number of small pieces of metal attached, making a jingling noise as the man runs, which gives warning of the coming of the post to any crowd that might be obstructing the path, allowing them time to get out of his way. Having broken off the ring, I fastened it to my belt, so as to allow it to jingle as I walked; and, arming myself with a short double rifle by Westley Richards, a brace of pistols, and a huge shekar knife, I made Kistimah lead the way down the road towards the place where the man-eater was said to lurk.

About a mile from the village I made the gang and the villagers who accompanied me halt, and went on with Kistimah, Chineah, and Googooloo to reconnoitre the ground. The road was intersected by a narrow valley or ravine, along the bottom of which was a dry, sandy watercourse, the banks of which were overgrown with high rank grass and reeds, intermixed with low scrubby thorn-bushes. To the left was a low rocky hill, in some place bare and in others covered with thick jungle, with wild date or custard-apple clumps here and there. Kistimah pointed me out a clump of rather thick jungle to the right of the road, where, he said, the tiger often lurked whilst on the look-out for his prey, and here we saw two or three old trails. He also showed me a rock, from behind which the brute had sprung upon a post-runner some weeks before; but we saw no signs of his having been there lately. It was, however, quite



TRACKING UP A WOUNDED TIGER.

what an Indian sportsman would term a "tigerish-looking spot," for bold, scarped rocks, and naked, fantastic peaks rose in every direction from amongst the dense foliage of the surrounding jungle, whilst here and there noble forest trees lowered like giant patriarchs above the lower verdure of every shade and colour. Not a breath of air was stirring, nor a leaf moving; and as the sun was still high up, without a cloud visible to intercept his rays, the heat was most oppressive, and respiration even was becoming difficult on account of a peculiar closeness arising from the decayed vegetation underfoot, and the overpowering perfume of the blossoms of certain jungle plants.

Having reconnoitred the ground round about, I felt rather overcome with lassitude, and returned to the rest of the gang, whom I found sleeping in a clump of deep jungle a little off the roadside. Here I lay down to rest, protected from the piercing rays of the sun by the shade of a natural bower formed by two trees, which were bent down with the weight of an immense mass of parasitical plants in addition to their own foliage. I must have slept several hours, for when I awoke I found the sun sinking low in the horizon; however, I got up considerably refreshed by my nap, and giving myself a shake, prepared for the task I had undertaken. I carefully examined my arms, and having ascertained that nothing had been seen by any of my gang, some of whom had kept a look-out, I told my people to listen for the sound of my gun, which, if they heard, they might come up, otherwise they were to remain quiet where they were until my return. I ordered Chineah, Kistimah, Googooloo, and the dhoby, to accompany me down the road with spare guns in case I might want them; and when I arrived at a spot which commanded a view of the ravine which was supposed to be the haunt of the man-eater, I sent them to climb different trees.

Kistimah begged hard to be allowed to accompany me, as he said this tiger never attacked a man in front, but always from behind; but I would not permit him, as I thought that two people would perhaps scare the animal, and his footsteps might prevent me from hearing any sound intimating his approach.

The sun had almost set as I proceeded slowly down the road, and, although I was perfectly cool and as steady as possible, I felt cold drops of perspiration start from my forehead as I approached the spot where so many victims had been sacrificed. I passed the rock, keeping well on the look-out, listening carefully for the slightest sound, and I remember feeling considerably annoyed by the chirping made by a couple of little bulbuls (Indian nightingales), that were fighting in a bush close to the roadside. Partridges were calling loudly all around, and as I passed the watercourse I saw a jackal skulking along its bed. I stopped, shook my jingling affair, and listened several times as I went along, but to no purpose.

Whilst ascending the opposite side of the ravine I heard a slight noise like the crackling of a dry leaf. I paused, and turning to the left, fronted the spot from whence I thought the noise proceeded. I distinctly saw a movement or waving in the high grass, as if something was making its way towards me : then I heard a loud purring sound, and saw something twitching backwards and forwards behind a clump of low bush and long grass, about eight or ten paces from me, and a little in the rear. It was a ticklish moment, but I felt prepared. I stepped back a couple of paces in order to get a better view, which action probably saved my life, for immediately the brute sprang into the middle of the road, alighting about 6 feet from the place where I was standing. I fired a hurried shot ere he could gather himself up for another spring, and when the smoke cleared away I saw him rolling over and over in the dusty road, writhing in his death agony, for my shot had entered the neck and gone downwards into his chest. I stepped on one side and gave him my second barrel behind the ear, when dark blood rushed from his nostrils, a slight tremor passed over all his limbs, and all was still. The man-eater was dead, and his victims avenged.

My gang, attracted by the sound of my shots, came rushing up almost breathless, and long and loud were the rejoicings when the tiger was recognized by Kistimah as the cunning man-eater who had been the scourge of the country for months. He was covered

with mange, and had but little hair left on his skin, which was of a reddish brown colour, and not worth taking.

I have killed many tigers both before and since, but I never met with such a determined enemy to mankind, for he was supposed to have carried off more than a hundred individuals. He fully exemplified an old Indian saying, "That when a tiger has once tasted human blood he will never follow other game, men proving an easier prey." On the spot where the tiger was killed a large mausoleum now stands, caused by the passers-by each throwing a stone until a large heap is formed. Since that day many a traveller who has passed that way has been entertained by the old pensioned sepoy, who is in charge of the travellers' bungalow, with an account of the terrible man-eater of Botta Singarum.



CHAPTER VII.

ELEPHANT-HUNTING IN INDIA.

General character of elephants—Their social habits—Their different cries—Differences between the Indian and African elephant—Coimbatore—Preparations for an elephant hunt—A nice trinity of servants—Building a "mechaun"—A "moat" or "skarm"—Night visitors—Four elephants shot—A short way with a tiger—A rogue elephant—Its extraordinary sagacity—A sad catastrophe—Strategy *versus* force—The danger of random shooting.

THE elephant-hunter, to be successful in his calling, must have a thorough knowledge of the nature and habits of that sagacious animal, whose keenly developed senses far exceed that of any other denizen of the forest. He must be well acquainted with its peculiar structure and anatomy, or his bullet, however true, will never reach the vital part with any certainty; he must be an adept at "tracking," or following spoor, with a silent foot, and in the understanding of *jungle signs*, which art is only acquired by constant study and long practice; he must be patient and enduring, satisfied with hard fare, short commons, and terrible thirst, as he will often have to subsist wholly upon his gun, with the ground for his bed, and a forest tree for his canopy. In following up spoor he must be prepared to encounter considerable hardship and fatigue, weary marches and countermarches, days of intense heat, and damp cheerless nights, painfully diversified. He should feel that "there is a pleasure in the pathless woods," and "society where none intrudes;" for he must often be content with Nature and his own thoughts as companions, and he must not let his spirits be depressed by the solitude and intense stillness of the deep jungle. The hunter must sleep like a hare, always on the alert, ever prepared and watchful; for he never knows what he may meet, or the danger a moment may bring forth. Inured to peril, he must never be cast down or

faint of heart, or he had better not attempt to follow up the spoor of the elephant to his haunts in the dense deep jungle, where the rays of the sun seldom penetrate, and the woodman's axe was never heard ; where the deadliest of fevers lurk in places the most beautiful to the eye ; and where, with the exception of certain times in the year, the air and the water are poisoned by malaria, and impregnated by the exhalations of decayed leaves and decomposed vegetable matter, entailing certain death to the hunter were he tempted to follow up his perilous calling out of season.

In Southern India, sometimes herds of elephants are tempted to roam, and leave their homes in the deep jungle to devastate the sugar-cane plantations and rice-fields of the ryots, where they commit great damage ; and on such occasions the sportsman is enabled to get amongst them without being obliged to penetrate the dense forests so pernicious to health. In Africa elephants are found alike on open plains as well as in the deepest forests, and I have found spoor denoting their presence in the most inaccessible places on the ridges of high mountain ranges.

The General Character.—My own experience leads me to believe that the elephant—whether of the Indian or African species—in his wild state is naturally a harmless, quiet, shy, and inoffensive animal, as I have frequently watched large herds of these huge beasts for hours together in their own domains, and never saw them assume the offensive, or evince any disposition to attack or molest other animals, such as hog, deer, antelope, or hippopotami, that might be feeding near them. On the contrary, I have seen an old boar successfully dispute the right of way with a herd of five elephants, and, by charging at their legs, drive them away from that part of the pool where his porcine family were drinking. It seemed ridiculous to see these unwieldy monsters shuffle away with cries expressive of terror, as if utterly unconscious of their own immense superiority of strength.

In their native haunts, Nature has provided for them such a rich profusion of food that their wants lead to no rivalry with other



THE INDIAN ELEPHANT.

animals: they are not compelled, like those of the carnivorous species, to resort to device in order to obtain subsistence, and the consequence is that they rarely have occasion to exercise the extraordinary sagacity with which they are gifted, but roam listlessly about the forest, every action bespeaking inoffensive indolence and timidity, combined with wary caution. Should they discover the intrusion of man in their domains, they rarely evince any disposition to become the assailant, and although the herd may number a score, and the hunter be all alone, they will fly his presence with the greatest precipitation. Even when wounded and rendered desperate, they are naturally so awkward, unwieldy, and utterly unaccustomed to use their gigantic strength offensively, that in a tree forest, clear of underwood, they are not difficult to escape from, provided the hunter keeps his head cool and is tolerably active.

The Social Habits.—A herd of elephant is not a group that accident or attachment may have induced to associate together, but a family often consisting of more than fifty members, including grandfathers, grandmothers, mothers, sons, and daughters; and the similarity of features, colour of their eyes, build, and general appearance, attest their common lineage and relationship as belonging to the same stock. Although several herds or families will browse and feed together in the open glades of the forest, and travel in company in search of water, or migrate in large bodies to fresh pasturage, on the slightest alarm or appearance of danger, each herd assembles and rallies round its own leader, and takes independent measures for retreating together. If, from any accident, a bull elephant becomes separated from his own family, as soon as he discovers his lone situation, he rushes frantically through the forest, uttering the most piercing cries of distress, for he is not allowed to attach himself to any other troop. The lord of a herd, however, does not object to a stray female joining his seraglio, and amongst a herd I have frequently met with a female who bore no family resemblance to the rest of the troop, and was evidently an outsider. If a young bull cannot find his family, or is turned out of the herd

for precociousness, not an uncommon occurrence, he either attacks the leader of another herd, and fights for the supremacy, or becomes a "rogue." These "rogues," or outcasts, lead a solitary life, and gradually become morose, vicious, and desperately cunning. One member of the herd, usually the largest tusker, but sometimes an energetic and strong-minded female, is, by common consent, implicitly followed and obeyed as leader, and it is wonderful to observe the devotion of the herd to their elected chief.

Elephants utter four distinct sounds, each of which is indicative of a certain meaning. The first is a shrill whistling noise, produced by blowing through the trunk, which denotes satisfaction. The second is the note of alarm or surprise, a sound made by the mouth, which may be thus imitated, "*pr-rut, pr-rut.*" The third is the trumpeting noise they make when angry, which, when they are very much enraged, and when charging an assailant, changes into a hoarse roar or terrific scream. The fourth sound betokens dissatisfaction or distress, frequently repeated when separated from the herd, tired, hungry, or over-loaded, which may be thus imitated, "*urmph, urmph.*"

The skin of the elephant is very sensitive, and at certain times of the year, when a district is infested by the tsetse fly, a whole herd will coat themselves with mud to protect themselves, as much as possible, from the bite of that poisonous insect. In the forests they frequent, a kind of large horse-fly also gives them incessant annoyance; and consequently the elephant is rarely ever still; for the ears flap, the tail switches, the body sways to and fro, the trunk is continually on the move, whilst the legs are in perpetual motion, rubbing one against the other, to ward off the attacks of these malevolent torments. Should an elephant, however, be suddenly alarmed, or become suspicious, on account of some slight deviation from the common order of things, or should he detect the taint in the air denoting the presence of man, he will remain motionless as a statue, with his great ears extended, so as to drink in the slightest sound, for hours at a time.

The olfactory organs of the elephant are developed to an extraordinary degree, for their scent is so acute that I have known a troop of elephants, when on the way to their usual drinking-place at night, halt and turn back without quenching their thirst, being deterred from approaching the water because they detected the taint in the imprints of men's footsteps who had passed along the path in the previous afternoon, when the prints must have been at least twelve hours old. Their sense of hearing is also extremely acute, and they can detect unusual sounds in the forest at much greater distances than any other animal. The comparatively small size of the eye seems to protect it from being injured as the elephant forces his way through the bush, and it is furnished with a nictating membrane, which enables it to free itself from dust, dirt, or insects that may accidentally have got in. Small as the eye appears, there is no deficiency of sight, although the range does not extend above the level of the head, or to any great distance ; however, his delicate sense of hearing and his remarkably acute smell amply compensate for his somewhat limited vision.

The progressive movement of the elephant is different from the motion of all other animals, on account of the great weight of his body. Nature has formed him with only two bones in his leg, whereas the horse has three, without counting the joint uniting the hoof, which enables him to move along at a springy pace : the gait of the elephant, therefore, is stiff and awkward, and this want of elasticity renders riding on him for any length of time extremely disagreeable and fatiguing. The elephant kneels like a man, his hind legs going out behind, whereas those of a horse are doubled under his body.

The usual pace of an elephant, when undisturbed and browsing, is an indolent, swinging kind of walk, the body swaying from side to side with the motion of the legs ; but if he is under marching orders, and travelling to a fresh pasturage, he quickens his gait, and gets over the ground at the rate of quite five miles an hour. When alarmed, he shuffles along at a kind of ambling pace, which, for a

short distance, exceeds twelve miles an hour, although it never equals in speed the gallop of a moderately fast horse on open ground. The Indian variety is far less speedy and enduring than the African. The former soon gets blown and stops. For a creature of such huge size and ponderous weight it is inconceivable how stealthily and noiselessly he can get through the forest if he chooses, without either breaking a twig or causing a dry leaf to rustle. From the spongy formation of the sole of his foot, his tread is exceedingly light and quite inaudible. In soft sand, where a horse would sink up to his fetlocks every stride, the spoor of an elephant would be hardly perceptible.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE INDIAN AND AFRICAN ELEPHANT.

The Indian and the African elephant differ most essentially, not only in their general appearance, the shape of the head, the formation of their teeth, the curvature of the spine, and the size of their ears, but also in their habits. By placing their different descriptions in juxtaposition, the chief distinctions between the two species will be better understood by the reader.

THE INDIAN VARIETY.

The Indian elephant has a high concave forehead, channelled in the centre, the facial line being almost perpendicular with the ground when the animal is moving.

The back of the Indian elephant is convex.

The ears are very small, and do not hang lower than the chin.

The tusks are set wide apart in the head, and are long in comparison with their diameter, being often gracefully curved. They rarely weigh over 100 pounds, even in the largest bull elephants, which are found in the Wynaad forests.

The females have only small straight tusks, that rarely weigh more than 8 pounds.

THE AFRICAN VARIETY.

The African elephant has a low, receding forehead, the skull being convex from the root of the trunk to the back of the head.

The back of the African elephant is concave.

The ears are immensely large, completely covering the shoulder when laid flat against the side.

The tusks are set in the head very close together, being held in their place by a mass of bone and cartilage, in which the roots are embedded to a depth of at least 2 feet. The largest tusk I have ever seen, a single one, weighed 226 lbs., and is now to be seen in front of a cutler's shop in St. Paul's Church-yard.

The females have small, straight tusks, weighing from 10 to 20 pounds.

THE INDIAN VARIETY.

The brain of the Indian elephant is placed somewhat higher than in the African species, and it is not difficult to reach provided the hunter understands the anatomy of the skull, as there are six vulnerable spots by which the

THE AFRICAN VARIETY.

The brain of the African elephant is situated behind the mass of bone and cartilage in which the tusks are firmly embedded, consequently the forehead shot is rarely effective.

Again, the bone of the skull recedes, and is



HEAD OF INDIAN ELEPHANT.

cerebrum can be penetrated with a hardened bullet, if fired at from a proper angle. They are as follows :

First, the forehead shot, as it is called, when the hunter, getting to within fifteen paces from his game, aims at the shield-shaped depression just over the root of the trunk and in a direct line with two prominent points of bone, some

much harder and denser in substance than in the Indian species ; besides which, the tusks almost join about the level of the eyes, and with the cartilaginous substance in which they are set most effectually protect the brain. This is also placed somewhat lower than in the Indian elephant, and is consequently more difficult to reach.

THE INDIAN VARIETY.

6 inches above the line of the eyes. At this spot the bone of the skull is soft and honey-combed, and the bullet, taking an upward course, passes between the carulaginous substance and muscles that encase the roots of

THE AFRICAN VARIETY.

That the African elephant can be killed in the same manner as the Indian variety by the fore-hand shot, *when fired at from an elevation*, I know from personal experience in several instances, but inasmuch as the tusks and



HEAD OF AFRICAN ELEPHANT.

the trunk, penetrates the brain, and causes instantaneous death. The Indian e'phant hunter prefers this shot to any other, but it is not always obtainable, as when an elephant charges, the vulnerable spot is more or less concealed and defended by his uplifted trunk. For the forehead shot to be effective, the hunter must be right in front of the elephant,

their encasement to a great extent protect the brain, it is a very hazardous shot to try on level ground in the open, as on several occasions I have seen the most accurately planted bullets produce very little effect, not even stopping or stunning the animal fired at. Mr. Henry Faulkner, of the 16th Lancers, who has had much experience in elephant shooting

THE INDIAN VARIETY.

and not more than twenty paces distant, otherwise the brain will be missed.

The next most vulnerable points for the hunter to aim at are the temples, when, if the hunter firing from a short distance, so that his bullet takes an upward course, aims just between the eye and the ear, the brain will be penetrated, and the animal drops, or rather sinks, to the ground stone dead. The temple shot is most effective when the position of the hunter is in advance and to the right or left of the elephant.

When the hunter is pursuing an elephant he may sometimes get a fair shot at the point where the lower part of the ear is joined to the head; and if his bullet is accurately planted in this spot, it will either prove immediately fatal, or at any rate drop the elephant and render him temporarily unconscious, when a second shot in the temple will give him a *quietus*.

The sixth vulnerable spot in an elephant's head can only be obtained when the hunter is pursuing an elephant down the side of a steep hill, or if he is on a rock above him, when, if he aims so that his bullet strikes the back part of the skull just above where it joins the vertebræ of the neck, the shot will prove immediately fatal.

A shot, fired from the right or left rear, just behind the shoulder-blade, often proves mortal, provided the projectile is hardened, and driven with a large charge of powder.

The Indian elephant generally frequents the same tract of jungle, rarely travelling more than twenty miles in a day, and if vigorously chased or followed up, soon shows signs of fatigue.

Indian elephants rarely forsake the forest for the open country, except when tempted to make nightly inroads in the rice-fields, and even then they always return to their jungle haunts on the first approach of dawn. During the intense heat of the day they resort to the deepest shade they can find, and at this time may often be found fast asleep, or indolently fanning themselves with the branches of trees.

THE AFRICAN VARIETY.

both in India and Africa, states that he has frequently killed African elephants by a single bullet in the forehead, and I have heard many Boers say that they have done the same thing with their roahs, some of which carry projectiles nearly a quarter of a pound in weight. Still, I look upon it as haphazard work, and bad policy to attempt.

The most vulnerable parts of the skull of the African elephant are the temples, and a bullet entering between the eyes and the upper point of the ear will generally penetrate the brain. This is my favourite shot, and latterly I rarely pulled trigger at an elephant until I had so manoeuvred as to get a fair chance of planting a bullet in this deadly spot. I have often found it quite as effective with the African elephant as the front shot is in the Indian species, having on several occasions killed my game with a single shot.

The African elephant is often killed by a single ball skilfully planted just behind the ear, and again, by the Boer's favourite shot behind the shoulder, the "dood plek," but the hunter must take care to reserve his shot until the fore-arm is advanced well forward, so that his bullet will not be turned aside in its course to the heart, by glancing off the hard shank-bone. I have also often killed elephants instantaneously when posted on an elevation, such as a high rock commanding a ravine or defile, by firing from above either at the top of the forehead, or at the back part of the skull, just where the head joins on the neck.

The African elephant is migratory, and changes his ground continually, as forage becomes scarce or exhausted.

Large bodies of African elephants, consisting often of several herds, in their periodical migrations to fresh pastures, frequently travel at the rate of forty miles in the twenty-four hours; and they get over the ground much faster and with less fatigue than the Indian species.

African elephants are as often found on the open plains as in the woods, and they appear fond of extreme heats, as I have frequently seen them basking in the sun at noon-day as if they enjoyed the warmth.

THE INDIAN VARIETY.

Indian elephants live chiefly on different kinds of herbage, and the young shoots of the bamboo, and may be considered as essentially grass-feeding animals. They are also particularly partial to rice, Indian corn, or, indeed, any other kind of grain, and commit great damage in cultivated tracts near their haunts in the forest.

The Indian species is gregarious, the old bulls often remaining with their families, consisting of females with their calves, and young males, nearly all the year round.

The following are the dimensions of the largest Indian elephant I ever saw, which was killed by Burton and myself on the Annamullai Hills.

	<i>Ft. In.</i>
Height at shoulder	10 8
Height of head	11 10
Greatest girth	15 0
Circumference of fore-arm	4 10
Circumference round fore-foot . .	4 8
Length from ridge on top of head along the spine	10 10
Length of tusks	5 10
Circumference of tusks	1 8
Weight of tusks	183 lbs.
Breadth between points of tusks . .	3 8

THE AFRICAN VARIETY.

The African elephant is decidedly a browsing animal, or a tree-eater, as his general food consists of the foliage of certain trees, and especially the mimosa. He also lives upon such herbage as is to be found in African forests, and different kinds of succulent plants found in the vicinity of water.

In Africa, except during the rutting season, the old bulls keep to themselves, consorting together in small herds, whilst the females and their young keep to themselves, and are sometimes met with in herds of several hundreds.

The following are the dimensions of the largest African elephant I ever saw, which I killed on the Longwee River, one of the tributaries of the Zambesi.

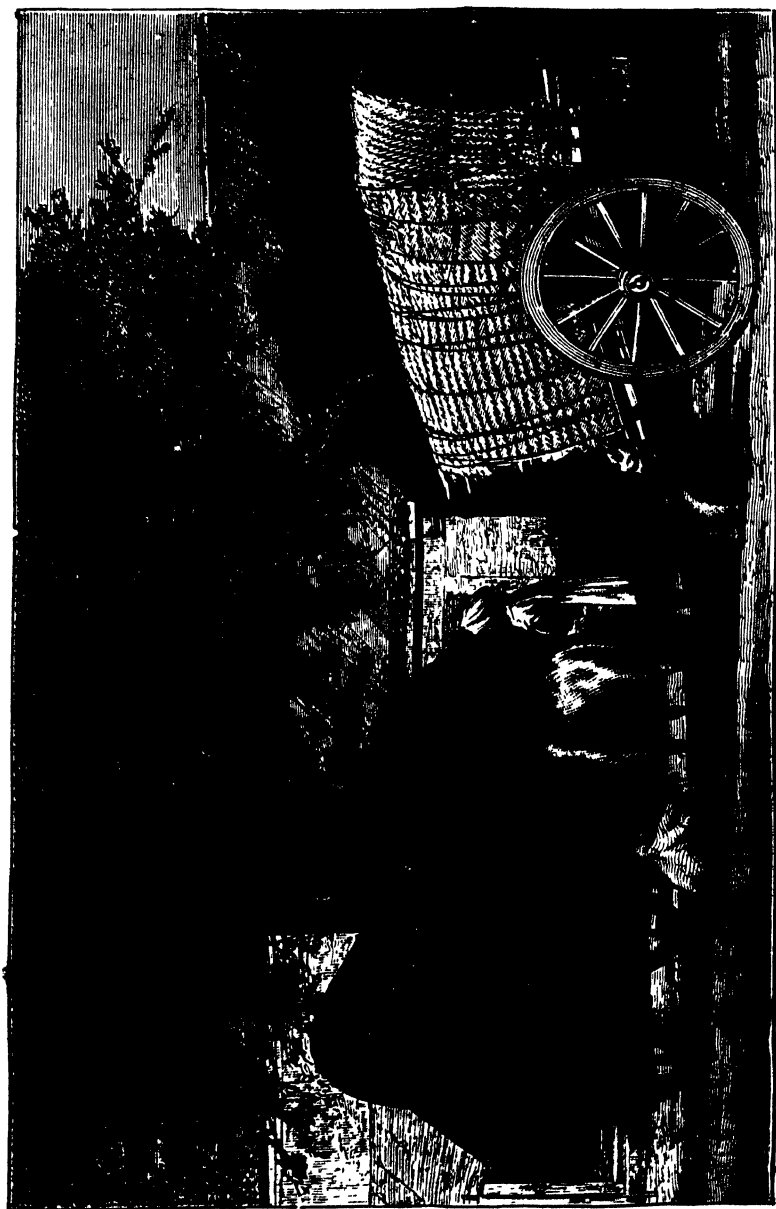
	<i>Ft. In.</i>
Height at shoulder	13 2
Height of head	12 9
Greatest girth	17 6
Circumference of fore-arm	5 10
Circumference round fore-foot . .	5 4
Length of back from crown of head to tail	12 4
Extreme width of ears from tip to tip across forehead	14 0
Length of tusks	7 2
Circumference of tusks	2 4
Weight of tusks	246 lbs.

ELEPHANT-HUNTING IN THE COIMBATORE DISTRICT.

I do not know a more jolly military station in all the Madras Presidency than Coimbatore for a sportsman, as the forests round the Anamalai and Neilgherry ranges are perhaps the very finest hunting-grounds in India for all kinds of large game, and they are both within a day's march from cantonment. Burton and I had been enjoying the *dolce far niente* for about a week with the 3rd Light Infantry, whose comfortable bungalows were close handy to a lake round which snipe were to be found in thousands during the season, when one morning, just as we were preparing to

start for a day's snipe-shooting, Kenny, of the 84th Foot, came in with the headman of Moodoonoor, who informed us that a herd of elephant had been committing great depredations in the grain-fields near his village during the night-time; and that, although large fires had been lighted at sunset by the villagers, they still continued in the neighbourhood, and visited the cultivated lands almost every night. Here was a chance not to be met with every day; so Burton, Kenny, and myself resolved to avail ourselves of it at once. The village of Moodoonoor, which was about fifteen koss (thirty miles) distant, lay amongst the low spurs of the Anamalai range; so we sent on our two head servants, with Chinneah and Googooloo, my two shekarries, in a hackerry, so as to make preparations against our arrival, and gather whatever information they could about the elephants.

Kenny had a retinue of low-caste servants, picked up promiscuously at Madras, who bore a most unenviable reputation in the cantonment, although they had only arrived a few days previously; and as they were almost in a state of mutiny at the idea of going into the bush, it was resolved to give them an extra month's wages and discharge them *instantly*. They were accordingly summoned, and Joakim, the butler, was the first to make his appearance. He was rather unprepared for his sudden dismissal, and wanted to argue the case, for, assuming the mien of injured innocence, he exclaimed, "You tink I thief man. Oh, Kenny Sahib! how many shirt you got in box when you come from Madras?"—"Three dozen," said Kenny. "Yas, sar; now go look for box. Master got more than six dozen, and plenty, plenty sock. Now you tink I robber man?"—"Well, you scoundrel," said Kenny, rather taken aback at the fellow's insinuation, "where did the other shirts come from, then? Did you steal them?"—"No, sar; I no robber man. I makee changee business with washerman; give one old shirt no good and take two new. Make proper changee for changee." In spite of this somewhat knowing defence of his reputation, he failed in convincing us of the desirability of retaining him, so his services were



COUNTRY CARTS.

dispensed with, and Ramasawmy, the khidmuhgar, was called in. He was a pariah of the lowest caste, although he called himself a Christian, which signified that he ate pork and would get drunk whenever he had a chance. When asked as to what sect he belonged to, he somewhat cheekily replied, "I Gor Almighty man, same caste like master. Suppose I tink my master go for make this business him catchee cold." What he meant by this ambiguous threat, deponent knoweth not, and he had not time to explain, for in the twinkling of an eye he was flying through the air with his master's toe very near his western point. The last of the triumvirate, the maity or cook boy, taking warning by this ignominious ejection, came in with a salaam, took his money without a word, and retired. Luckily, Kenny was able to engage a couple of very decent-looking servants, who were well known in the regiment, having been for several years in the service of an officer who had gone to England on sick leave; so he was put to little or no inconvenience by the change.

Whilst we were making preparations for the expedition, and superintending the packing up of tent, supplies, and suchlike gear, Kenny's sacked triumvirate came up, prepared for the road, having been ordered out of cantonment by the magistrate, and had the cheek to ask for written characters and three bottles of brandy, as medicine for their journey to Madras, and both applications being refused, they went away highly indignant. Having seen them clear off the premises, we sent our baggage, horses, and servants on in advance. I had given my head boy directions to engage three sets of bullocks at the different villages as he went along, so that we might have relays of fresh animals every five or six miles, and after dinner a couple of bundles of straw and our mattresses being spread at the bottom of country carts, well covered over with matting, as shown in the engraving, we rolled ourselves up in a blanket and made a start, sleeping comfortably all night, and finding ourselves at the choultry at Moodoonoor when we awoke in the morning.

Soon after daybreak our hut was pitched in a small clearing out-

side the village, and after we had a refreshing tub and substantial breakfast, we set off, under the guidance of several villagers, for the fields of "bargee" that had been devastated by the elephants. Here we had palpable evidence of the damage that these animals can commit even in a single night, for several acres of ripe grain had been more or less destroyed, a small part of which had been torn up and eaten, whilst much more had been trodden into the earth by their ponderous feet. From the spoor I estimated the herd to consist of about nine animals, of which one was evidently a good-sized bull, as his stride was longer, and the imprint of his foot was much larger and farther apart, than the rest. I could also see places in the banks of a nullah where he had used his tusks in endeavouring to uproot a small bush, bearing a fruit like a wild plum. One of the ryots, who was watching his crops the night before when they came, said that he heard them in the forest tearing down the underwood and crashing through the bamboo jungle soon after sunset, but that they did not come out into the open fields until past midnight, when the villagers' fires had burnt almost out. He could not say how many they were, for he was only too anxious to keep out of their way, as they were rushing wildly about all over the clearing until close upon daybreak. As they came and returned by the same route unmolested, I thought that they would most likely choose it again on their next visit to their feeding-grounds; so bidding Chinneah and Googooloo follow me with their spare guns, I stole gently forward to reconnoitre in case they might still be lurking in the neighbouring forest. There was no difficulty in following up their trail, as a regular pathway was made up the hill, bushes being levelled and bamboos torn up in all directions; and they had evidently travelled very leisurely, as they had broken off and browsed on the young shoots and tender roots along the whole of the route.

Having satisfied myself that the spoilers had not been scared and frightened away in spite of the villagers' fires, I felt convinced that they would return by the same path; so I returned to the rest of

the people, and began to make my preparations accordingly. I noticed from certain marks that the herd had paid several visits to a group of three large jamun-trees, and had broken off some of the lower branches, so as to get at the fruit, whilst they had also picked up the fallen berries from below ; and as these trees were of great size and commanded a good view of the surrounding clearing, I determined to rig up a couple of "mechauns," or platforms, at some 20 feet above the ground, and after two hours' hard work, I managed with the aid of my people and the villagers to accomplish my object, and two substantial bamboo platforms were erected far out of reach of the elephants' trunks.

Here Burton and Kenny elected to pass the night, and having constructed a bamboo ladder to get up and down with more comfort, they had their rugs and mattresses carried up, and fenced round the sides of the mechaun with a kind of rough basket-work, so as to prevent their guns or gear from falling out.

Having seen that my pals were comfortably settled, I reconnoitred the ground to select my own post, and as I observed that the herd had feasted upon a patch of pumpkins and gourds that were only a short distance from the outskirts of the forest, I determined to build a moat or skarm, in the middle of this cultivation, but close handy to two large trees, against the trunks of which I fastened two bamboo ladders, in case of being unearthed, and obliged to beat a retreat. The moat is generally constructed in the following manner:—A pit about 14 feet long, 4 feet wide, and 5 feet deep is dug out, and, if there is time, the sides and bottom are lined with bamboo, and covered with date-leaf matting, so that two people can lie down comfortably in it. About 8 feet of the centre part is strongly flat-roofed over with stout logs, strong enough to bear an elephant's weight, which are again covered with earth, and young bushes are often placed over it. Thus it resembles a burrow having two entrances, which are left open at each end, and here the hunters sit with only the upper parts of their heads above the ground. Great care must be taken that the general appearance shows no deviation

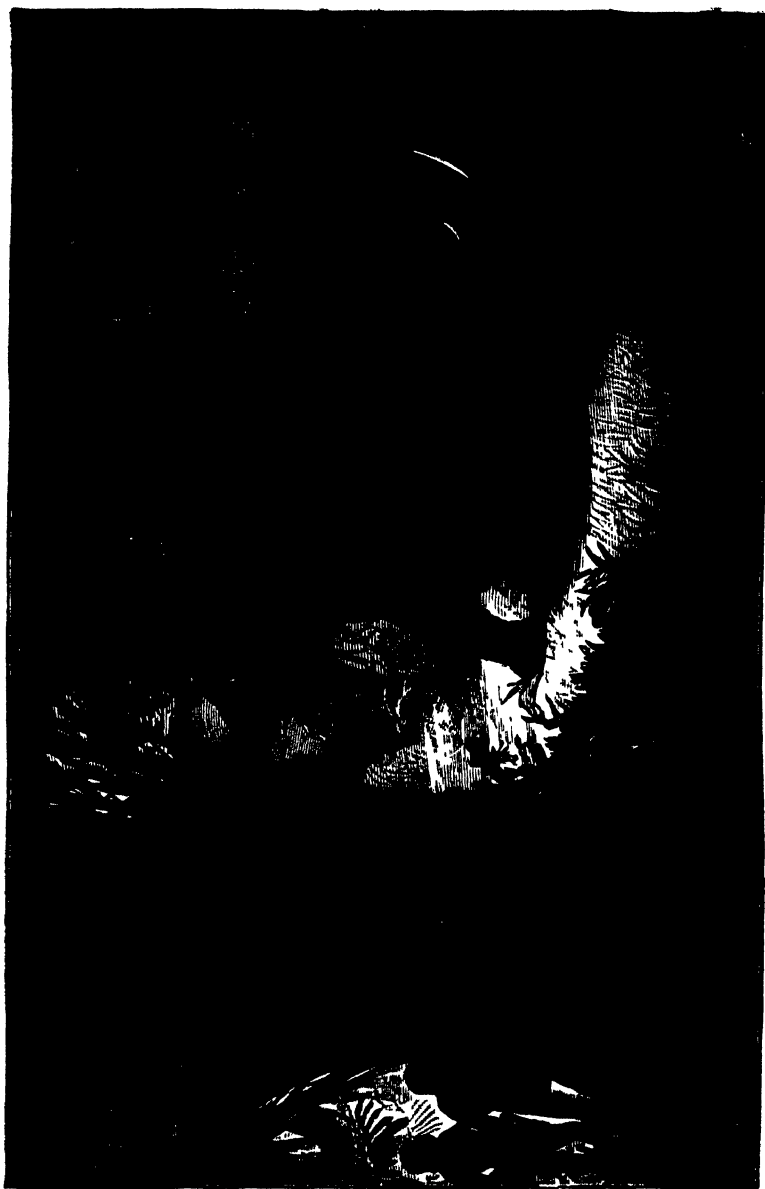
from the common order of things, and there are no signs of human occupation about it. The more natural it appears the better chance the hunters have of close shots ; and of course great attention must be paid that the moat is constructed to leeward of the track or run by which the game is likely to come, otherwise their keen sense of smelling will instantly detect the atmosphere tainted by man's presence. There is always a certain smell perceptible in freshly turned-up earth ; so to kill it I planted several strong-scented bushes round about, and covered it with sand from a neighbouring nullah, and creepers, taking care to have a good show of ripe pumpkins all round about the ambuscade. It was three o'clock in the afternoon before every arrangement was made for our passing the night, and then we adjourned to the tent for dinner, taking all the people, villagers included, with us.

After dinner we carefully cleaned our rifles and loaded with hardened bullets made of one part quicksilver to nine of lead, and, accompanied only by Chinneah, Googooloo, and Burton's shekarry, carrying our spare guns, some prog, and a large supply of cold tea, we adjourned to our ambuscades. Having seen Burton, Kenny, and the shekarry comfortably settled in their eyrie, and warned them against firing in the direction of my moat, I ensconced myself with Chinneah in my own diggings, and, leaving Googooloo in the tree to watch, slept like a top for three or four hours, when Chinneah awoke me and bade me listen, for there were suspicious noises in the forest.

Although the moon had not yet risen, the night was clear, and the sky was studded with stars, so that after a little time I could distinguish the surrounding objects pretty well with the aid of my field-glass. The continuous buzzing noise of the insect world after nightfall in the forest, when every bush and tree gives forth some sound, and life is everywhere audibly manifest, presents a remarkable contrast to the strange, weird-like stillness that reigns during the intense heat of the day ; and in the early part of the night the *cicada* kept up a ceaseless melody, which was only broken by the

hum of some enraged bloodthirsty mosquito, as he vainly attempted to find an entrance in the thin silk gauze veil I wore round my hat and shoulders to protect my face and neck from the ruthless attacks of these night marauders. As the night advanced, the cries of various wild animals resounded through the jungle, and a sounder of hog and a couple of porcupine came so close to my ambuscade that Chinneah had to pelt them with earth in order to drive them away, and prevent their eating the pumpkins we intended for nobler game.

Scarcely had they gone when a troop of sambur made their appearance, and they were followed by a score or so of green monkeys, who came close upon us before they detected our presence, when they scampered jabbering away. Now and then a crashing of wood was heard on the hillside, and a low "urmph, urmph," followed soon after by a faint whistle or blowing sound, assured me that a herd of elephant were afoot on the hillside. Every sound an elephant makes has a significant meaning to a hunter well versed in woodcraft, and from constant observation I knew by the "urmph, urmph," that one of their number was distressed at having lost the run of the rest, and that the low blowing sound that followed it denoted his satisfaction at having again fallen in with them. For fully three hours every now and again we heard those unmistakable sounds which denoted their presence in the bamboo forest that clothed the lower spurs of the hillside; but, as if suspicious of danger, they seemed to avoid breaking into the plain, and I began to fear that we should none of us get a shot, as the moon was rising, and I thought that, if they were afraid to venture in the open during the darker hours, they certainly would not come now that it was light enough to distinguish any conspicuous object on the plains. My surmise was, however, wrong, and soon after midnight a big female showed her great massive forehead at the edge of the jungle, and shortly afterwards moved stealthily and noiselessly forward, where for quite five minutes she stood like a statue, only moving the ears backward and forward, as if to drink in any sound that might be carried on the night breeze, which was laden



ELEPHANT-SHOOTING.

with the most delicious perfumes of wild flowers, which perhaps prevented her from being scared by the

“Frouzy pores that taint the ambient air,”

and winding us in our subterranean retreat. Having made up her mind that the coast was clear, she turned her raised trunk towards the opening in the jungle from which she issued, and made a curious blowing sound that nearly resembled a low whistle, and at this signal she was joined by seven others, who stalked in a majestic manner in single file up to her, and then scattered over the plain and began to feed on the grain. Although they passed midway between Burton's mechaun and my post, they did not detect our presence. Shortly afterwards, two females and a fine stately bull with decent-sized tusks, made their appearance, and followed in a bee-line the rack of the rest, evidently quite oblivious as to all recollections of past feeds on moura plums or pumpkins, for they gave both our positions a wide berth, and began to browse quite half a mile beyond Burton's mechaun. For three mortal hours we impatiently watched their proceedings, and about an hour before daybreak, my stock of patience becoming exhausted, I called down Googooloo from his perch, and we crept towards Burton's post, having first taken the precaution to give a single whistle, which was answered, so as to prevent any chance of our being mistaken for game. Burton had had a visit from a female and her young one, but he did not care to fire at her, having seen two young bulls in the herd, beside the tusker who came last. It was therefore decided that, as the herd would not come to us, that we should go to them, and I arranged that Burton and Kenny should try and stalk the tusker in the open, whilst I and my people should cut off the line of retreat, in case they should make for the same gap by which they entered the plain. Having looked to our arms and put on fresh caps, my companions began to creep cautiously towards the herd, taking advantage of any cover they could find, whilst I made tracks for the opening in the fence through which the herd had forced their

way, and took up an admirable strategic position between three or four large clumps or stout bamboos which commanded the path quite close to the edge of the clearing. These clumps of bamboo grew so close together that, although there was space for a man to creep between, an elephant could not easily squeeze his carcase through, so that the enclosure formed a kind of natural fortress in which we could take refuge, in case of being hard pressed or charged by the herd. Cutting away some of the young shoots and creepers that might have tripped us up, I had hardly finished my arrangements when a running fire was heard, and Chinneah, who had mounted a high tree which commanded an extensive view of the plain, announced that one elephant had fallen, whilst the big female leader and the tusker were heading in our direction at full speed, followed at some distance by the rest of the herd, who, being impeded by the young ones, could not get so fast over the ground. In a little while we could hear them blowing and tearing along through the grain, but they must have winded our position, for they suddenly halted and stood perfectly still at the extreme edge of the bamboo jungle; and although they could not have been more than thirty yards away, for nearly five minutes not a sound nor a movement betrayed their position, until the rest of the herd came close up, when they cautiously moved forward. By stooping low I could see their great legs moving in our direction; so creeping round a thick clump of bamboo as the bull passed within six yards of my *cache*, I got a fair view of his temples, and gave him a right-and-left between the eye and the ear, which rolled him over luckily right in the path of his watchful mate, who, with a vicious scream of revenge, charged straight at me, when, as she stumbled over the legs of her expiring lord, who was struggling convulsively and writhing in his death-throes, I was enabled to end her career with a couple of two-ounce bullets right between the eyes, and she fell doubled up in a heap close to the tusker. The report of my rifle, or perhaps the scream of alarm made by the female at seeing her mate fall, scared back the rest of the herd, and Burton hit a young tusker twice as

he broke back across the plain; but as both shots were fired at long ranges, they did not penetrate the brain, and although severely wounded, he made his way into some thick jungle, followed by the rest of the herd.

As the day broke, several of the villagers, hearing the shots, came to see what we had done, and one of the village shekarries brought with him some of the Mulcher bush tribes, who, always living in the forest, are well acquainted with the haunts of different kinds of game. After we had eaten some breakfast, and procured refreshment for our people, Burton and I set out to track up the wounded elephant, and after cutting our way through some dense jungle, we found him drinking at a small river. Although he winded us before we saw him, and dashed splashing through the river, Burton brought him down by a well-directed shot just behind the back of the head as he was clambering up the opposite bank. Burton and Kenny had killed an old female between them, who would persistently show fight and prevent their getting near the tusker they were trying to stalk; so amongst us we had killed four elephants, not a bad night's work considering the circumstances under which we were placed. The ivory, however, was not of much account, as the largest pair of tusks did not exceed 41 lbs. in weight; but in the old days the Honourable John Company disbursed seventy rupees for every elephant's tail and tip of the trunk produced at the cutchery, so that these rewards helped to pay our shekar expenses, which were very heavy at times, as we had so many people to feed.

Whilst we were tracking up the wounded elephant, we came upon an open glade or natural clearing, through which a mountain stream flowed, and as it was much trodden with bison and sambur, and there were also pugs of a large tiger freshly imprinted in the moist sand of a nullah at no great distance, we ordered some of our people and the Mulcher folk to construct a comfortable hunting-lodge of three huts, and surround it with a stout *abatis* fence, strong enough to keep out intruders from the adjacent forest. Having myself selected the spot and marked out the ground, I left Chinneah to



TRACKING UP A WOUNDED ELEPHANT.

carry out the arrangements, and we adjourned to the tent, where we found Kenny had been extremely thoughtful of our requirements, and an admirable tiffin and well cooled bitter beer was awaiting our arrival. I distributed among the ryots, through the curnum or headman of the village, one hundred rupees, as some compensation for the loss they had incurred through the elephants destroying their crops, and by this act established myself thoroughly in their good graces, so that they kept my camp well supplied with rice, grain, ghee, sheep, fowls, vegetables, and milk, and furnished carriers without any hesitation. In consideration of my largesse, they would not allow any extortionate prices to be asked for what supplies I required, and they kept me furnished with every information they could gain as to the haunts of different kinds of game. When my forest bivouac was finished and stored with provisions and various requirements, I superintended the cutting of a practical bush path to it, and made it my temporary head-quarters.

Our first precautionary arrangement on arrival at the new hill camp was to summon all our people and tell them off into watches, as with jungle all round it was very necessary to keep a good lookout, in case any of the marauding carnivora should visit our cattle-shed. A large quantity of dry wood was also collected, so that those on watch could keep up the fires without going outside the fenced enclosure. On examination of the ground round about our encampment, the fresh pugs of tigers and wolves, and several spoor of elephants, some three or four days old, were distinctly visible, besides numerous slots of different kinds of deer; so we had every prospect of good sport in our new diggings without going far from home. We had hardly our little stockaded fortalice in defensible order when one of the jungle wallahs came in somewhat scared, having seen two tigers making their way towards the stream about five or six hundred yards distant from our station. Burton and Kenny, accompanied by Googooloo and Chinneah carrying spare guns, started off at once in pursuit, whilst I remained behind to superintend the strengthening of the fences. Hardly had they



JUNGLE WALLAHS.

been gone five minutes when one of my servants called me and directed my attention to a peculiar whimpering noise, the import of which I well knew, that seemed to proceed from a patch of olibanum-bush scarcely a hundred yards away. My two trustworthy shekarries were with my pals, and there was no one at hand whom I dare trust with a second gun ; so, slipping the strap of a short double 8-gauge smooth-bore by Westley Richards round my shoulder, and taking my favourite double 10-bore rifle in my hand, I gave a couple of other guns of large calibre to my horse-keeper and dog boy, and sallied forth, my staunch old veteran Ponto leading the way by half a dozen yards, and showing by his precautionary actions that he thoroughly understood the nature of the game he was after, for he carefully reconnoitred and winded every bush that might afford concealment to a foe, and made casts from time to time to try and discover a trail, all the time peering watchfully ahead in the direction from which the suspicious noises appeared to come. All at once he gave a slight whimper and crouched down close to the ground, and I then knew that the game was afoot and in sight ; but I was scarcely prepared for what followed ; for a magnificent full-grown tiger, with a tremulous roar, sprang over a low bush and alighted between the dog and myself, where he crouched as if about to spring on me. At this moment his attention was attracted by a vigorous attack from Ponto, who, fearing his master was in danger, flew at him. Immediately I let drive right and left, one bullet entering his head just below the ear, whilst the second entered his chest and came out far behind the shoulder, so that death was instantaneous ; and if I had been quick enough with my second gun I might have had a fair shot at his mate, who came skulking round the bush to see what had so incensed her companion, but who bolted with a sullen growl when she saw what had happened. Her subsequent career was, however, a short if not a merry one, for in her confusion at becoming so suddenly a widow, she made tracks by the same route by which she came, and consequently fell in with Kenny and Burton, who were following up her

pugs from the stream, and who greeted her appearance with a volley, which broke her spine and disabled her, when a third shot stretched her lifeless.

The only reason to which I could attribute the tiger's aggressive line of action was that this was the beginning of the rutting season, and that hearing the dog giving tongue, and not seeing him, his jealousy was aroused, and he must have fancied the sound came from one of his own species, who had the audacity to interfere with his domestic arrangements. Luckily my noble dog was unhurt by my double shot, and after walking round his foe two or three times, and smelling him all round, he vented his spleen upon him, "after the ancient manner of his species."

THE DEATH OF A ROGUE ELEPHANT.

I was staying at Ootacamund on the Neilgherries, when one morning soon after daybreak my head shekarry Chinneah awoke me with the intelligence that a Curumber had come into the cantonment to say that a large herd of elephants had been seen the day previously near a nullah that flowed into the Moyaar river, about three miles from the foot of the hills. Wedderburn, who had also received the news, came to my bungalow, and it was arranged that he should go down the Seegur, or northern ghaut, and work towards the eastward, whilst I went down that of Coonoor and made for Gujelhutti, where we were to meet on the third day. This was a capital hunting quarter, close to a narrow belt of jungle between the hills and Moyaar river, through which elephants had to pass whether *en route* for the Ballyrungum Hills or for the southern forests.

Having completed my preparations, I sent on the guns, &c., Chinneah, Googooloo, the Gooroo, and a horse-keeper, also two coolies

laden with prog; and after they had started four or five hours, I mounted my nag Gooty, and caught them up at the bottom of the ghaut just as the sun was setting. We passed the night at the Metrapolliam bungalow, after having ordered the headman of the village to send to Seremogay and have a boat prepared for us. The next day we went down the Bhowani as far as the confluence of the Moyaar, and here we hunted for three days, but, as we could not find any fresh spoor of elephants, we made the best of our way to Gujelhutti, the village where Wedderburn was to have joined me. The village consisted of only seven bamboo and grass huts; but no sooner did the inhabitants understand that I was going to remain in that neighbourhood, than they all, men, women, and children, turned out to cut bamboos and gather dry leaves and long grass, for the construction of a hut, under Chinneah's directions.

Whilst these preparations for passing the night were being made two men of the Mulcher village, who had just returned with a load of roots which they had gathered for food in the jungle, came up with the intelligence that they had been chased by a rogue elephant that afternoon near a shallow tank about a koss distant. Although somewhat fatigued by my long walk, as it yet wanted a couple of hours to sunset, I determined to go after him, and leaving Chinneah in charge of the camp, accompanied by Googooloo and the Gooroo carrying spare guns, I set out under the guidance of the two Mulchers. Their koss proved a very long two miles, for I found myself close to the foot of the hills before they pointed me out a fresh spoor, evidently that of a solitary elephant of no great dimensions.

After tracking it up for a short distance, I came to a jheel, or marsh, full of high reeds and stunted bush, and there, in the centre of a shallow pool, I saw the object of my search, evidently enjoying the luxury of a bath. At first sight I thought it was a huge female, as no tusks were perceivable, but on a closer inspection with my field-glass I found it to be a bull, although of the kind called by the natives "*hyjera*," or "barren males." The Mulchers told me that he was a very vicious brute, as not only had he repeatedly charged them

without provocation, but when he found they had eluded his pursuit by climbing up a large tree and hiding themselves amongst the foliage, he wreaked his fury on a bamboo, which he plucked up and trampled to pieces under his feet, screaming with rage the whole time. Such being the case, I did not care to have more people about me than was absolutely necessary, so giving the two spare guns to Googooloo, I bade all the rest climb into high trees, from whence they could see the sport without danger.

This matter arranged, I tried the wind by a feather, which, when after elephants, I generally kept pinned by a bit of fine silk to my hunting cap; but as circumstances turned out, this precaution was hardly required. I now put fresh caps upon my guns, taking care to see that the powder was well up in the nipples, reconnoitred the ground carefully, and made a half-circuit of the marsh, in order to get behind the cover of a patch of high reeds which appeared about seventy yards distant from the spot where the elephant was standing. We both kept well under cover, making as little noise as possible, and approached *up wind*; but the keen-scented animal, although he had his back turned towards us, perceived the taint in the air when we were three hundred yards distant, and with a hoarse scream of rage, came rushing, tail on end, in our direction, flourishing his trunk about and sniffing the wind. Luckily, the loud splashing of his great feet betrayed his movements, for we were knee-deep in the mud, and the reeds in some places were considerably higher than our heads. This was an awkward position to be in; moreover, the setting sun shone right in my face, and as I was much afraid that it would dazzle my eyes and prevent me from taking proper aim, I pushed on until I came to a place where the reeds were only up to my waist, when I halted, looked to see that my guns were dry, and then told Googooloo to get on my shoulders to look round over the reeds for the enemy. Scarcely had he mounted than I knew my foe was discovered by the hoarse appalling scream of rage that rang through the air, sounding as if close at hand; and barely had Googooloo time to reach the ground and catch hold of the spare

guns, than the infuriated monster burst through a patch of high reeds in our rear that had hitherto concealed him from our sight, and charged splashing up towards us. When I first caught a glimpse of him, he was certainly not more than five and thirty paces distant, and I immediately raised my trusty rifle ; but life and death were on the shot, and it did not belch forth its deadly contents until he had charged to within fifteen paces, when I let him have it, aiming full at the centre of the hollow just over the trunk. The ragged bullet flew true to the mark, burying itself in the brain ; but the impetus of his headlong charge carried him on, and with a mighty splash that might have been heard at a quarter of a mile's distance, he fell with outstretched trunk close to my feet, covering us over with mud from head to foot. I felt sure that my aim was fatal ; but had it not been so, we should have been in a pretty predicament, for we were both completely blinded for the moment, and if he had not been very severely hit, he might have caught us, one after the other, before we could have cleared the mud away from our eyes. Poor Googooloo got much the worst of it, being also nearly choked ; but after some spluttering and coughing, he wiped his eyes on the tail of my shooting coat, and we simultaneously burst out into a loud laugh at each other's queer appearance.

This elephant was evidently a most dangerous rogue, for he had not only tracked us up entirely by his extraordinarily keen scent (in following the taint in the air), but had also shown desperate cunning in *doubling* before he made his attack, so as to take us in the rear and cut off our retreat.

Having washed off some of the extraneous mud in a neighbouring pool, I went to examine the dead elephant, whose almost rabid state I could now easily account for, as besides the hole my bullet had made, from which the blood was still oozing, there were three other recent wounds in nearly the same place, with a fourth that had passed through the off ear, and two more in the off shoulder. What astonished me more particularly was that none of the three wounds which the animal had previously received should have

proved mortal, although all were planted in the most vital part of the elephant's skull, and one within an inch of my own shot, from which death was instantaneous.

On my attempting to probe the previous wounds with a ramrod, in order to ascertain the direction the bullets had taken, I was much surprised to find them plugged up with red clay, which operation, I have no doubt, was performed by the sagacious animal himself, in order to stop the hæmorrhage. However, as night was drawing on, and I had a good hour's walk through the jungle to my camp, I deferred all further examination until the morrow; and having looked to my arms, in case they might be required *en route*, cut off the elephant's tail and the tips of his ears, to send to the collector's cutcherry for the Government reward, and joined the Gooroo and Mulchers, who, hearing the shot, were approaching us. We then made the best of our way to the village, which we reached safely, after nearly missing our way once or twice from the darkness of the night. I was regularly tired out when I arrived, but a bath, clean clothes, and a good dinner soon set me up all right again.

On the morrow, at daylight, I sallied out, accompanied by the gang and a large party of Mulchers, taking my course towards the jheel where I had killed the elephant the day before. Here I found that a pig had been paying a visit to the remains, for a bit of the hind quarters had been eaten away, and there were no fresh traces of animal life except the broad slots of a large boar, besides which I could plainly see the rips made by his sharp tusks in the flesh. The gang then set to work with their axes to cut out the tusks, which, although considerably thicker, much resembled those of a female, being only about 16 inches in length, and hardly protruding from the lip. They were, however, perfectly solid,* the cavity at the end being only an inch in depth, and much heavier than ordinary ivory. I then cleared out the mud, and with an iron ramrod probed the wounds in the forehead, when I found that,

* Their weight was just under 8 lbs. each.

although they had all struck the vital spot, not one had been delivered at the proper angle so as to penetrate the brain, although they were, I imagined, sufficient to have caused the animal to die a lingering death.

As the ground about the jheel seemed a very likely-looking haunt for elephants, I and Googooloo took a stroll round, looking out for spoor, but not a fresh one was to be seen, except that of the rogue killed the day before, although there were signs of almost every other denizen of the jungle having drank lately at the pool. Whilst we were away, some of the gang, who were curiously inclined, with their axes extracted the bullets from the forehead of the dead rogue, and presented them to me on my return, when to my surprise I recognized two cylindro-conical projectiles, made of a mixture of lead and pewter, as belonging to Wedderburn's two-grooved double rifle. The third was a round brass bullet that exactly fitted my Westley Richards 2-ounce smooth-bore, of which Wedderburn had a sister gun, so that I knew that he had fallen in with the elephant before I did. My friend was an admirable shot, and used to fire at elephants at very long ranges, when it was almost impossible that his bullet could reach the brain, not being fired at a proper angle. I halted at Gujelhutti for four days, when, finding that Wedderburn did not put in an appearance, I returned to my head-quarters at Ooty.

Here I learned that my friend had been killed by an elephant; and it appeared from the testimony of those who were with him and witnessed the catastrophe, that they had fallen in with fresh spoor soon after descending the ghaut, and had early in the day come across a solitary elephant, apparently without tusks, who was standing fanning himself in a patch of open tree jungle, knee-deep in undergrowth. Wedderburn in the first instance tried to approach him to leeward, but finding that he could not get a shot, the animal's back being turned towards him, crept round from tree to tree until he got a fair view of his forehead, when he let drive right and left with his double rifle and dropped him. However, the elephant, who

was only momentarily stunned, began to recover his knees, when Wedderburn, snatching his second gun from his shekarry (a double 2-ounce smooth-bore), again brought him to the ground with a third shot, and fancying he was dead, rushed forward ; but the animal with a scream of rage regained his feet, and perceiving his antagonist, charged upon him tail on end, with his trunk thrown high up in the air. At this moment Wedderburn either lost his presence of mind and fired without aim, or finding that the mortal place in the centre of the forehead was hidden by the upraised trunk, must have endeavoured to bring him down by a side shot ; but his fourth bullet (most likely the one that passed through the ear) produced no effect, and in the twinkling of an eye, before he could get out of the way, the infuriated animal was upon him, twisted his trunk round his legs, and hurled him to the ground. Wedderburn, although much injured, and doubtless with some of his limbs broken, still moved, and at this moment one of the shekarries, who carried a loaded gun, fired two shots into the animal's side ; but nothing attracted his attention from his victim, whose piercing shrieks rang through the forest, for, regardless of the shouts and cries of the natives, he again seized him, placed his huge foot upon his chest, and trampled and knelt upon him until almost every bone was broken, when he flung the mangled and lifeless body on one side, and rushed trumpeting through the forest. Such was the melancholy fate of one of the best shots that India ever produced ; and I must have fallen in with his vindictive adversary about eight hours after the fatal rencontre ; for I am convinced, from the circumstantial evidence of the recognized bullets, that the "*rogue*" I slew was the guilty party, although each of the half-dozen elephants that were killed round about the hills was supposed to have had something to do with the transaction.

STRATEGY *VERSUS* FORCE.

Many of my most successful hunting trips took place before the introduction of breech-loading arms, and in those days I was often put to severe shifts, and had to think twice before I fired at an animal that might turn the tables. The following incident will explain the tactics I found necessary to adopt upon one occasion. I was elephant-shooting in the Wynaad forest, when I came across an unusually fine tusker, standing alone by several large boulders of rock, against one of which he was rubbing his hind quarters, as if he belonged to the clan of Argyle. Immediately I caught sight of him I dived into the deeper jungle, and, by taking a circuitous route, got well to windward of him. I then regretted that my staunch Yanadi, Googooloo, was not with me, as I had no spare gun, and felt nervous lest my prey might escape. However, there was no help for it, so after carefully reconnoitering the ground, in order to avail myself of any cover it afforded, I crept forward on my hands and knees, and, after a few minutes of intensely exciting stalking, managed to wriggle up and ensconce myself behind a low ledge of rock, whence I could observe every motion the elephant made.

He was standing on three legs, the off hind foot being raised from the ground, and leaning carelessly against the other, whilst the fore part of his body was swinging to and fro. Although he was not more than twenty paces distant, I could not get a fair shot, as his head was turned directly away from me. I waited nearly ten minutes for a chance of his altering his position, during which I had ample time to admire his stately proportions and magnificent tusks, but he never moved an inch. I could not get round in front of him on account of the wind, and as I did not like to risk the chance of losing so fine a fellow by an uncertain shot that might not prove mortal, after a few seconds' deliberation.



ELEPHANT-SHOOTING IN THE WYNAAD FOREST.

I determined to try another plan, which, as I had not a spare gun, was attended with considerable danger.

I examined the ground carefully, so as to be prepared in case I had to make a run for it, and then taking off my leathern gaiters and extraneous clothing, so as to have my limbs as free as possible, noiselessly crept on my hands and knees behind him, and placing the muzzle of my gun almost close to the centre of the hind foot, which was raised, I pulled both triggers almost simultaneously, and sprang out of the way. A shrill shriek of agony followed the double report, and I just escaped a ferocious blow aimed at me with his trunk, being fortunately out of reach. I ran round to the back of the rock before I ventured to look over my shoulder, when, finding he was not on me, I re-loaded as quickly as possible; this done, I felt secure, and again approached the scene of action.

I found my plan had proved completely successful, for my antagonist was entirely disabled. My gun—a double 2-ounce smooth-bore, by Westley Richards—had been heavily loaded, having about six drachms of powder in each barrel; and the bones of the foot were so completely shattered by the double shot that he could not put it to the ground, and every time he attempted to make a step forward he fell heavily. He must have suffered intense agony, for he uttered most piteous cries between his bursts of rage. As I approached, he strove to charge with a shriek of despair, but fell heavily to the ground, and, as he was rising to his knees, I stepped up and discharged both barrels into the hollow over the trunk, the contents of which penetrating the brain, he fell “never to rise again.”

THE DANGER OF RANDOM SHOOTING.

Young sportsmen are apt to become over-excited when large game is afoot; and, in their eagerness not to let a chance escape,

will not wait until a fair shot presents itself, but fire at random. This is a mistake that should be guarded against, or it may bring the hunter to grief. Except in very exceptional cases, he should not pull trigger unless he feels pretty certain of hitting his game in a vital spot, and I think I may attribute my own immunity from accidents to my constant observance of this rule. Out of 876 bull elephants I have killed in India and Africa, I never had but one serious accident, and this occurred when I was a mere tyro, and may be attributed to my own carelessness. As the incident may serve as a warning, I shall relate it.

I had been shooting with some success in the Wynaad forest, and had just killed an elephant, when a mighty bull, the patriarch of the herd, and seven females, dashed hurriedly past at a distance of about fifty paces. I threw up my rifle, and, aiming behind the ear, let drive a couple of snap-shots for the chance of stopping him, the last of which took effect, for it brought him to his knees; but he immediately regained his legs, and, separating from the females, tore frantically through the forest, which he made resound with his angry roar.

I snatched my second spare gun—a heavy 2-ounce double rifle—and, jumping down the bank, ran with all speed to cut him off at the gorge, which was extremely narrow, as the torrent made its way between a huge cleft in the rock, through which I knew he must pass in order to join the rest of the herd. I was running down the bed of the stream, on either side of which rose high banks, when I heard a rattling noise among the stones behind me, and on turning my head I saw the wounded bull tearing after me, with his eyes flashing fire and his tail straight on end, about forty paces distant. Speed I knew would not avail me: he would have been down upon me before I could have clambered up the bank, so I swung round and dropped on my knee to take a more steady aim. On he charged with a fiendish shriek of revenge; I let him come to within fifteen paces, when I let drive, aiming between his eyes (my favourite shot); but whether it was that I was unsteady, being breathless

form my run, or that my rifle, which weighed 16 lbs., was too heavy, I know not; but my left arm dropped the moment I pulled the trigger (not from nervousness, for I was perfectly cool, and never lost my presence of mind for a moment), and my shot took effect 4 inches too low, entering the fleshy part of the root of the trunk instead of penetrating the brain. It failed to stop him, and before I could get out of the way the huge brute was on me. I saw something dark pass over me, felt a severe blow, and found myself whizzing through the air: then all was oblivion.

When I came to, I found myself lying on my face in a pool of blood, which came from my nose, mouth, and ears. Although nearly choked with clotted gore, a sense of my perilous situation flashed across my mind, and I strove to rise and look after my antagonist, but he was nowhere to be seen. I picked myself up, and although fearfully bruised and shaken, found that no bones were broken. I was lying on the top of the bank, although quite unable to account to myself how I got there. In the dry bed of the nullah I saw my rifle, and after much painful exertion managed to crawl down and get it. The muzzle was filled with sand, which I cleared out as well as I could; and then, sitting by the edge of the stream, began to wash away the blood and bathe my face and head. Whilst so employed, I heard a piercing shriek, and saw Googooloo rushing towards me, closely followed by the infuriated elephant, who was almost mad from the pain of his wounds. Luckily a hanging branch was in his way, and with the agility of a monkey he caught hold of it, and swung himself up the steep bank, where he was safe.

The elephant, balked of his victim, rushed wildly backwards and forwards two or three times, as if searching for him, and then, with a hoarse scream of disappointment, came tearing down the bed of the nullah. I was directly in his path, and powerless to get out of the way. A moment more and I saw that I was perceived, for down he charged upon me with a fiendish roar of vengeance. With difficulty I raised my rifle, and taking a steady aim between his

eyes, pulled the trigger—it was my only chance. When the smoke cleared away I perceived a mighty mass lying close to me. At last I had conquered. Soon after this I must have become half senseless, for I hardly remember anything until I found myself lying in my hut, and Burton leaning over me.

It appears that Chinneah and the gang had carried me in on a litter, and, finding my body very much swollen from the severe blow I had received, my back being black from the waist upwards, had applied a native remedy, and covered the bruised part with leeches, which had the effect of counteracting the inflammation, although I shall carry their marks to the end of my life. This was a close shave, but it taught me a lesson, and since that day I have never had an accident through random shooting.



SKULLS OF THE AFRICAN AND INDIAN ELEPHANT.

CHAPTER VIII.

BISON AND BUFFALO HUNTING.

The Indian bison—The Wynaad forest—A day's sport in the Anamullai Hills—A herd of bison—Stalking a bull—A fight between a tiger and a bison—Two tigers bagged—Combat between a couple of tigers—Habits and cries of nocturnal animals.

THE gaur, or Indian bison, which is the largest of the *Bos* tribe, is found in the dense forests of Southern and Western India, as far north as the Nerbudda river, but the finest specimens I have seen were shot in the Wynaad and Canara districts, and in the dense forests on the slopes of the Neilgherry and Anamullai Hills. Bison are generally found in the extensive tracts of bamboo forest that form a kind of terai or belt round many of our hill ranges in Southern India. Their home is on the densely wooded hillside, where they graze upon the young shoots of bamboo and the succulent grasses that clothe the slopes of the ravines. In the hot weather they may be found during the day on the plateaux lying down in some shady retreat sleeping and chewing the cud, but towards evening they make their way downwards towards their feeding-grounds, graze all night, and return to their day haunts soon after daybreak; except during the rains, and in cloudy weather, when, if they are not much disturbed, they may be found grazing at all hours. In the intensely hot weather, when the mountain streams dry up, herds of bison may be found wandering in the plains far away from their usual haunts, being compelled to quench their thirst at some large river, and during a general drought I have known bison to travel twenty miles in search of water, and return to their mountain fastness in the early morning.

During the rutting season, which is in the cold weather, the large herds break up, and each stalwart bull retires to rusticate with his seraglio, consisting generally of from eight to fifteen cows. At this time free fights amongst the bulls are of common occurrence, and those who are in the sere and yellow leaf, or weakly, being worsted in the combat, are ignominiously driven out of the herd by their younger rivals. A bull once tabooed is never again allowed to join the herd, and the lonely life he leads does not improve his temper, for solitary bulls are generally morose and vicious brutes.

Shortly after the rains, towards the end of October, the cows begin to calve, and for this purpose they separate from the bulls, and retire to some secluded ravine until the calves are about two months old, and strong enough to follow the herd. Immature bulls are allowed to remain with the cows unmolested by the lord of the harem, and from this time until the commencement of the rutting season the old bulls are often found alone, but in the vicinity of the herd, so as to be at hand in case of danger. Single bulls always lie looking to leeward, trusting to their keen sense of smell to guard the windward quarter.

Except on the Shevroy Hills, where driving has been resorted to with considerable success, bison are generally killed by stalking, and inasmuch as they are gifted with remarkably keen scent and hearing, and are very quick to detect the presence of man, it requires considerable cunning and very careful tracking in order to get near them.

In stalking a herd of bison, the hunter should always make his way up *against* the wind, taking advantage of any cover that may offer itself. Having got within range, and managed to conceal himself behind some friendly bush, he will watch the movements of the herd and wait his opportunity of getting a fair shot at the bull, as no sportsman would fire at a cow if he has a chance of killing the lord of the herd. The great secrets of success in bison-stalking are coolness and discretion, and in the long run a sportsman who will bide his time, and wait patiently until he can get a fair aim at a

vital spot, will kill far more game than he who, in a state of nervous excitement, fires at anything and everything he sees, trusting more to good luck than good shooting. The following are the dimensions of one of the largest bison I ever killed :—

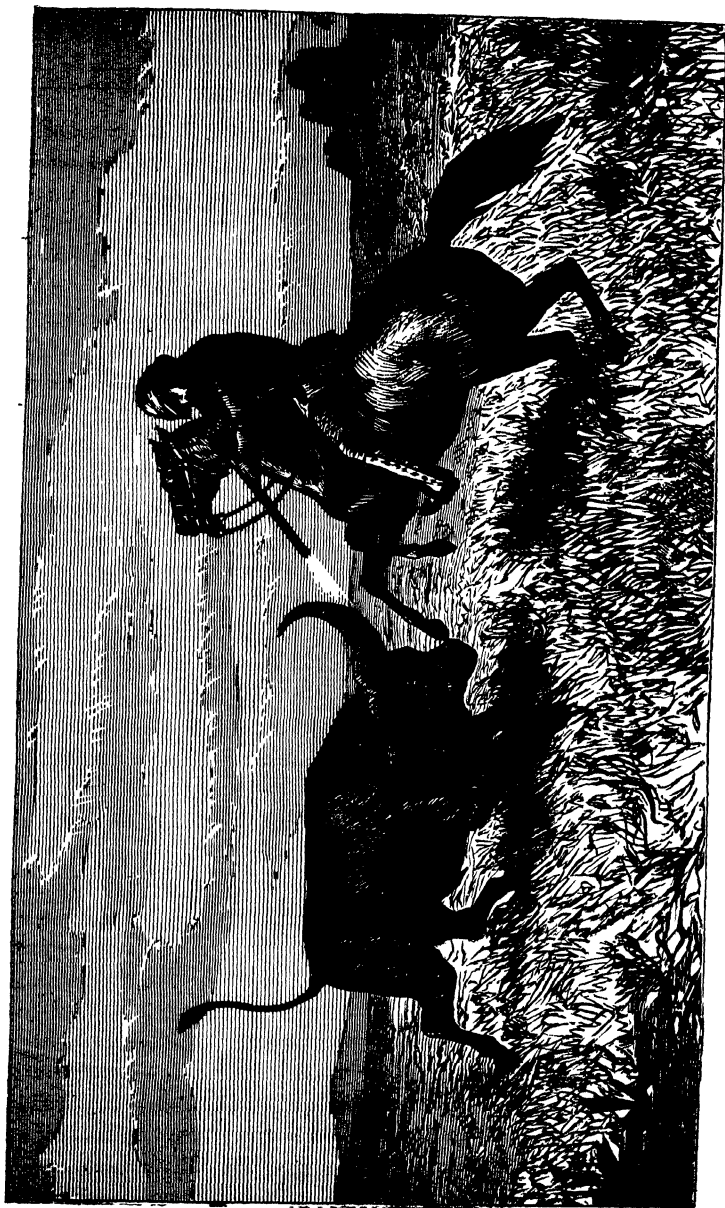
	<i>Ft.</i>	<i>in.</i>
Height at the shoulder, not following the curve of the body*	6	4
Height to the top of hump	6	9
Length from tip of nose to the insertion of tail	10	4
Length of tail	3	4
Girth of body	9	3
Girth of fore-arm	2	10
Girth of neck	4	10
Breadth of forehead	1	5
Circumference round base of horns	1	9
Length of horns	1	4

General colour—black along the back, light dun under the belly and inside the thighs, and the legs below the knees and hocks dirty white, but cleanly made and finely proportioned as those of a deer. The frontal bone is nearly 2 inches thick and exceedingly hard, and the bullet must be hardened and driven with a large charge of powder to penetrate it. I have seen leaden bullets flattened on a bull bison's forehead a score of times, so massive is the skull, and in some cases I have known the animal to go off apparently not much the worse, although the shot has been fired at point-blank range.

BISON AND TIGER HUNTING IN THE WYNAAD FOREST.

There is certainly no part of India where such a diversity of game is to be found as in the great Wynaad forest, surrounding the Neilgherry and Anamullai ranges ; but, except during the intensely hot weather—when the stagnant swamps and decomposed vegetation, which generate malarious vapours and fever-infecting miasma, are dried up and rendered temporarily innocuous—this belt of jungle,

* Bison are said to have been killed measuring twenty-three hands at the shoulder.



BUFFALO-SHOOTING.

which varies from five to thirty miles in width, is extremely unhealthy, and there are certain seasons when it is almost certain death to sleep a single night in the terai. The healthiest season of the year to hunt in those forests is March, April, and May, and at this time the best sport is to be had, as the trees are tolerably clear from leaves, and the scarcity of water drives all kinds of game to the proximity of the rivers and pools. Elephants, tigers, panthers, leopards, bears, hogs, sambur, spotted deer, and bison, are drawn by the drought from their usual haunts in the densely wooded ravines and impenetrable forests on the sides of the hills, to the more open jungle through which the Bowani and its tributaries flow.

The dense teak and bamboo forest which clothes the Anamullai range near Coimbatore is one of the finest hunting-grounds in Southern India, and here in their vernal home may be found vast herds of bison, as well as elephants, tigers, leopards, sambur, and sundry other game. Perhaps the finest bison-stalking in the world is to be had in this district, and Burton, my old *camarade de chasse*, and I have had many a glorious day's sport in these primeval woods. The following description of a day amongst the bison in this forest will give some idea of the manner in which this animal is generally hunted in India.

In the latter part of the month of April, during intensely hot weather, Burton and I, accompanied by a large gang of trackers, were out in the bamboo forest that covers the lower slopes of the Anamullai Hills, when we came across the trail of a herd of bison. From the freshness of the "sign," I knew that no great length of time had elapsed since they had passed, but the deep impressions of their hoofs on the soft soil showed that they had travelled past without browsing on the most tempting-looking herbage; so I concluded that they had either been alarmed or had been to the Bowani river to drink, and were impatient to get to the deeper shades of the forest before the intense heat of midday. After following the trail for some miles, Chinneah and Googooloo, who were creeping

along a rugged hollow, which appeared to have been the bed of a mountain torrent, some little distance in front, made a sign to us to keep silent, and shortly afterwards they beckoned us to advance. With great caution we crept noiselessly forward, stopping from time to time to listen, and after crawling on our hands and knees for nearly a hundred yards, we gained the crest of the hill, where we had the satisfaction of seeing a large herd of bison quietly browsing on the green herbage in a patch of open teak forest.

Having satisfied myself that we were well to leeward, and in no danger of being discovered by their remarkably keen scent, I raised myself cautiously behind the trunk of a tree to reconnoitre, and after pointing out to Burton a fine bull, who, surrounded with cows, was lazily nibbling the young and tender shoots of a clump of bamboos, about a hundred yards distant, I begged him to reserve his fire until he heard my signal, as I intended to try and stalk the patriarch of the herd, a stately fellow with enormous dewlap and immensely deep shoulders, who was pawing the ground fretfully, and uttering deep cries, as if impatient for the herd to retire to the depths of the jungle for shelter from the rays of the sun, which were beginning to feel oppressive. I descended a short distance down the side of a hill, and crept along the brow until I got under cover of a clump of bamboos, whence I again caught sight of him. Here I had nearly been discovered, for two cows and a young calf sprang up close to me, and rushed, tail on end, towards the rest of the herd, who, lifting up their heads, seemed to gaze anxiously in my direction. I therefore remained a few moments perfectly quiet, keeping my eye on the mighty bull, who was standing about three hundred yards distant; and when I saw that their alarm had in some degree subsided, I crept gently forward, and, taking advantage of any cover I could find, managed to ensconce myself behind a large rhododendron-bush within a hundred and fifty yards of him. I then blew a shrill blast on a silver call I always wore round my neck, as a signal to Burton, and shortly afterwards heard a double shot, followed by three others. The first report attracted the bull's

attention, and he trotted forward a few paces to reconnoitre, tearing up the turf with his hoofs, and lashing his tail, as if indignant that his sylvan retreat should be intruded upon. Whilst in this position, he offered me a fair view of his brawny shoulder, and I planted a heavy cylindro-conical bullet just behind it, which brought him to his knees with a surly roar. Mad with pain, he regained his feet, and staggered forward on three legs, when I gave him the contents of my second barrel in nearly the same place, which rolled him over. Chinneah now handed me my other rifle, and I quitted the cover; when no sooner did he catch sight of me than, again springing up, with a deep tremendous roar he charged headlong at me, tail on end, his eyes flashing fire, and his mouth covered with blood and foam. I let him come within six paces of where I was standing, when I stopped his mad career with a ball in the centre of his broad, massive forehead, which again made him bite the dust. He gave a desperate plunge forward, and rolled heavily over on his side, dead. The others, alarmed, were now tearing frantically over the plain, so I slipped behind the cover of a bush to re-load, and again stealing forward, managed to bowl over a cow, and wound another badly, before the terrified herd sought safety in flight by rallying in a body and crashing through the dense bamboo jungle which clothed the side of the hill. After re-loading, I dispatched the second cow with a bullet behind the horns, as she was lying disabled by my first shot, which had passed through the small of her back, and paralysed her hind quarters.

I now looked out for Burton and Googooloo, who were nowhere to be seen, but a dead cow and a bull calf showed that they had not been idle. Whilst I was examining the latter, and cogitating upon veal cutlets and marrow-bones, I heard two double shots in some cover just below the crest of the hill, which was immediately followed by a loud whoop from Burton; and, on running up, I found him standing breathless over the carcase of a huge bull which was evidently just killed.

"By Jove! Hal," he exclaimed as I approached, "I'm regularly

done up; this bull has led me such a chase. I hit him fairly between the eyes with my first barrel, and he dropped without a struggle—dead, as I thought; so I paid no more attention to him, but, letting drive at the herd as they bolted away, I killed a cow and a calf, and wounded a third, when suddenly my friend, as if brought to life by the sound of my last shot, picked himself up, shook his head savagely, gave an angry roar, and charged right at me. Every barrel being discharged, I stepped on one side and got out of its way, when he directed his attention to Googooloo, who dodged him amongst the trees easily enough; for, half blinded with blood from his wound, he reeled and tumbled about as if he were groggy, every now and then falling heavily. As soon as I had re-loaded I gave chase, but all at once missed him, and it was only just now that the Yanadi trailed him up to this clump of grass, where he had cunningly laid down to conceal himself. As I came up he again charged desperately towards me, when, stepping aside, I allowed him to pass, and gave him the contents of both barrels well behind the shoulder, which brought him up, and, to make certain, I administered two more shots in the back of the head as he lay writhing and gasping on the ground; and here he is safely landed at last."

On examination we found that the first shot had flattened on the thick bone of the forehead, without penetrating the skull, the bullet being of unhardened lead, driven by four drachms of powder from a 12-gauge smooth-bore. After having cut out the tongues, and packed up a few marrow-bones for supper, we superintended the bushing of the game, and, shouldering our rifles, made a start for our bivouac, well satisfied with our sport, for we had that day bagged three sambur and six bison to two guns, and furnished our people and the Mulcher tribe with a grand supply of meat.

Whilst hunting in the jungle, between the Bowani river and the Goodaloor Pass, at the foot of the Nedineallah Hills, my friend Burton and I witnessed a most gallantly-contested fight between a bull bison and a tiger, which is worth recording. Night had scarcely set in when a loud bellowing noise was heard, followed by an un-

mistakable roar, which caused no little commotion amongst the horns and bullocks that were picketed round our tents, and, from the ominous sounds that followed, we knew that a mortal combat was raging at no great distance from our bivouac. Having arranged for the safety of our camp, Burton and I, armed with rifles and pistols, followed closely by Chinneah and Googooloo, each carrying a couple of spare guns, sallied forth, and, keeping along the bank of the river for some short distance, entered a dense cover, from which the sounds of the contest seemed to issue by a narrow deer-run. Here we could only get along very slowly, having to separate the tangled brushwood with one hand, and hold the rifle cocked and ready with the other. Having proceeded in this manner for some distance, guided by the noise of the contest, which sounded nearer and nearer, we came to an opening in the woods, where we saw a huge bull bison, evidently much excited, for his eyes flashed fire, his tail straight on end, and he was tearing up the ground with his fore-feet, all the time grunting furiously. As we were all luckily well to leeward, the taint in the air was not likely to be winded, so I made signs to Chinneah and Googooloo to lay down their guns and climb into an adjacent tree, whilst Burton and I, with a rifle in each hand, by dint of creeping on hands and knees, gained a small clump of bush on a raised bank, not more than thirty yards distant, from whence we could see all that was going on. When we first arrived the tiger was nowhere to be seen, but from the bison's cautious movements I knew he could not be far off. The moon was high in the heavens, making the night clear as day; so not a movement could escape us, although we were well concealed from view.

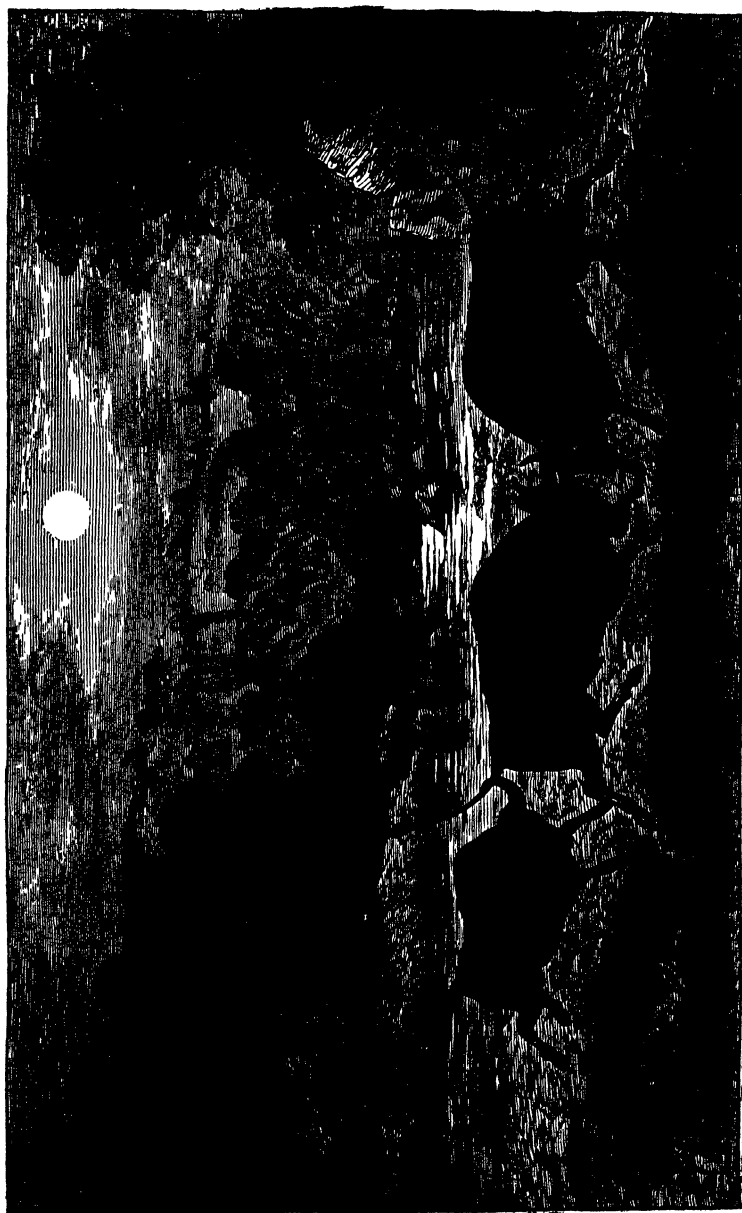
Several rounds had already been fought, for the game had been going on a good twenty minutes before we came up, and the bison, besides being covered with white lather about the flanks, bore several severe marks of the tiger's claws on the face and shoulders. Whilst we were ensconcing ourselves comfortably behind the cover, with our rifles in readiness for self-defence only—for we had no intention of interfering in the fair stand-up fight which had evidently



FIGHT BETWEEN A TIGER AND A BULL BISON.

been taking place—a low savage growling about fifteen paces to our right attracted our attention, and, couched behind a tuft of fern, we discerned the shape of an immense tiger watching the movements of the bison, who, with his head kept constantly turned towards the danger, was alternately cropping the grass and giving vent to his excited feelings every now and then by a deep tremulous roaring, which seemed to awaken all the echoes of the surrounding woods. The tiger, whose glaring eyes were fixed upon his antagonist, now and again shifted his quarters a few paces either to the right or the left, once coming so near our ambuscade that I could almost have touched him with the muzzle of my rifle; but the wary old bull never lost sight of him for a second, but ever followed his movements, with his head lowered to receive his attack. At last the tiger, which all along had been whining and growling most impatiently, stole gently forward, his belly crouching along the ground, every hair standing on end, his flanks heaving, his back arched, and his tail whisking about and lashing his sides; but before he could gather himself together for a spring, which might have proved fatal, the bison, with a shriek of desperation, charged at full speed with his head lowered, and the horns pointed upward, but overshot the mark, as his antagonist adroitly shifted his ground just in time to avoid a vicious stroke from his massive horns, and, making a half-circle, sprang a second time, with the intention of alighting on his broad neck and shoulders. This the bull evaded by a dexterous twist, and before his adversary could recover himself, he again rushed at him, caught him behind the shoulder with his horns, and flung him some distance, following up to repeat the game, but the tiger slunk away to gather breath.

Round after round of the same description followed, allowing breathing-time between each, the tiger generally getting the worst of it, for the bull sometimes received his rush on his massive forehead and horns, and flung him a considerable distance, bruised and breathless, although the skin seemed too tough for the points to penetrate; once, however, I thought the bison's chance was all over,



BISONS IN A SALT JHEEL.

for the tiger, by a lucky spring, managed to fasten on his brawny shoulder, and I could hear the crunching sound as his teeth met again and again in the flesh, whilst the claws tore the flank like an iron rake. With a maddening scream of mingled rage and pain, the bull flung himself heavily on the ground, nearly crushing his more nimble adversary to death with his ponderous weight ; and the tiger, breathless and reeling with exhaustion, endeavoured to slink away with his tail between his legs ; but no respite was given, his relentless foe pursued with roars of vengeance, and again rolled him over before he could regain his legs to make another spring. The tiger, now fairly conquered, endeavoured to beat a retreat, but this the bison would not allow ; he rushed at him furiously over and over again, and at last getting him against a bank of earth, pounded him with his forehead and horns until he lay motionless, when he sprang with his whole weight upon him, striking him with the fore-foot, and displaying an agility I thought incompatible with his unwieldy appearance. I have attempted to depict "the last round" in my sketch.

The game, which had lasted over a couple of hours, was now over, for the tiger, which we thought perhaps might be only stunned, gave unmistakable signs of approaching dissolution. He lay gasping, his mouth half open, exposing his rough tongue and massive yellow teeth ; his green eyes were fixed, convulsive struggles drew up his limbs, a quiver passed over his body, and all was still. His conqueror was standing over him with heaving flanks, and crimsoned foam flying from his widely-distended nostrils ; but his rolling eye was becoming dim, for the life-blood was fast ebbing from a ghastly wound in his neck, and he reeled about like a drunken man, still, however, fronting his dead antagonist, and keeping his horns lowered as if to charge. From time to time he bellowed with rage, but his voice became fainter, and at last subsided into a deep hollow moan ; then his mighty strength began to fail him, and he could not keep on his legs, which seemed to bend slowly, causing him to plunge forward. Again he made a desperate effort to recover himself,



TIGER-SHOOTING ON THE BOWANI RIVER.

presence. One night, before the moon rose, these nocturnal marauders had prowled for some hours round about our camp, and had caused no little commotion amongst our horses and cattle ; so as soon as the moon was well up, Burton and I, with two of our people carrying spare guns, sallied forth, and, guided by the shrieking and jabbering of a troop of monkeys, made our way to an open spot of ground in a ravine near the Bowani, where we fell in with a tiger, just as he had stricken down a doe spotted deer. Burton caught sight of him first, and rolled him over stone dead with a bullet admirably placed just behind the ear, and we were just stepping up to examine the spoiled foe when, with a long tremendous roar, his mate sprang into the open, and knocking down Burton's horse-keeper, seized him by the shoulder. Luckily at this moment the moon was unobscured by clouds, and I got a fair aim at the tigress's massive chest, as she stood growling above her shrieking victim. As I pulled trigger, Burton also fired, and she fell dead with one bullet through her heart, and another in the vertebra of the neck, either of which would have proved fatal. Luckily the horse-keeper was not dangerously hurt, although he had a severe bite in the fleshy part of the shoulder, which took some weeks to heal up. This place was infested with tigers at this time of the year, and for the best part of two months we made it a practice to sleep during the day and watch for game by water at night. Besides killing some of the finest specimens of the feline race, and enough venison for camp use, we occasionally fell in with elephants, and had famous sport.

On one occasion we witnessed a grand combat between two tigers for the possession of a deer, and this episode forms the subject of our sketch. Our goat-boy saw a tiger strike down a buck whilst watching his charge, and scared him from his prey by shouting at him and throwing stones. When the coast was clear, he gave us the information, and towards evening we took post behind some rocks that commanded the spot. We had hardly spread our rugs to make ourselves comfortable, when we heard a rustling in the

bushes, and a fine male tiger came crouching along the edge of the water, smelling the ground like a pointer on scent. Although he was within point-blank range, and offered an easy shot, his proceedings seemed so unusually strange that we forbore to pull trigger, and watched his manœuvring for some minutes. At last he perceived the dead deer, and made his way up to it with great caution, sniffing the air at every step he took, as if he could detect some danger threatening. Scarcely had he time to smell his windfall, when with a ferocious roar a second tiger sprang from some cover close at hand, and a tremendous fight ensued, which we watched with intense interest for several minutes. The second comer, which was much the larger tiger, was gaining the mastery, as he had his opponent hard and fast by the throat, when we fired a right-and-left simultaneously, and ended the fight, one of the combatants falling dead, whilst the other lay writhing in his death-throes, and he was soon put out of his agony by a bullet in the back of the head from my companion's spare gun. This night's work had a peculiar kind of charm both for my companion and myself, for besides being very successful in killing several kinds of game, we added very considerably to our "forest lore," and gained much insight into the habits of the different nocturnal animals. Hardly had the sun gone down before the forest seemed to ring with strange wild cries, and among the voices which resounded together we could only distinguish those that were heard singly during momentary pauses that from time to time took place in the chorus. The sambur uttered their loud cries of defiance, which were answered on all sides, until their hoarse bellowing became incessant. Then the hollow roar of a tiger would re-echo through the arches of the forest, and for an interval all was still save the noise of the great *cicadæ* in the trees. Then the howling of a troop of jackals, or the melancholy wailing of the hyena, would pierce the night air, and again the almost deafening chorus would recommence.

CHAPTER IX.

SOUVENIRS OF SPORT IN INDIA.

Great variety of game in India—Indian trophies—The Indian lion—The sambur—The Indian antelope—The black panther—The sloth bear—The treatment of skins—The tanning process—The measurement of wild animals—The average weight of tigers.

THERE are few countries where such a diversity of game is to be found as in British India, and the facility with which a traveller can now visit all parts of that immense empire has added considerably to the number of sportsmen who have made hunting expeditions to different parts of the country. Besides being a most interesting field for general travel, India offers to the sportsman incomparably the finest accessible hunting-grounds in the known world—except perhaps certain parts of Africa—and there is no other country that can show such a list of large game, or compare for minor sport with the endless array of bustard, pheasants, partridges, and water-fowl. If sport or the collection of trophies be the traveller's object, he can gratify his passion to the utmost extent in this the greatest of our dependencies, for here may be found the elephant, rhinoceros, buffalo, four species of wild bovines, including the mighty gaur, the largest of the race ; and in felines the lion, tiger, panther, and two varieties of leopard ; three varieties of bears ; nine species of antlered deer, and fourteen species of antelope, ibex, wild goats, and wild sheep ; to say nothing of almost innumerable varieties of other wild animals of less account, whose name is legion.

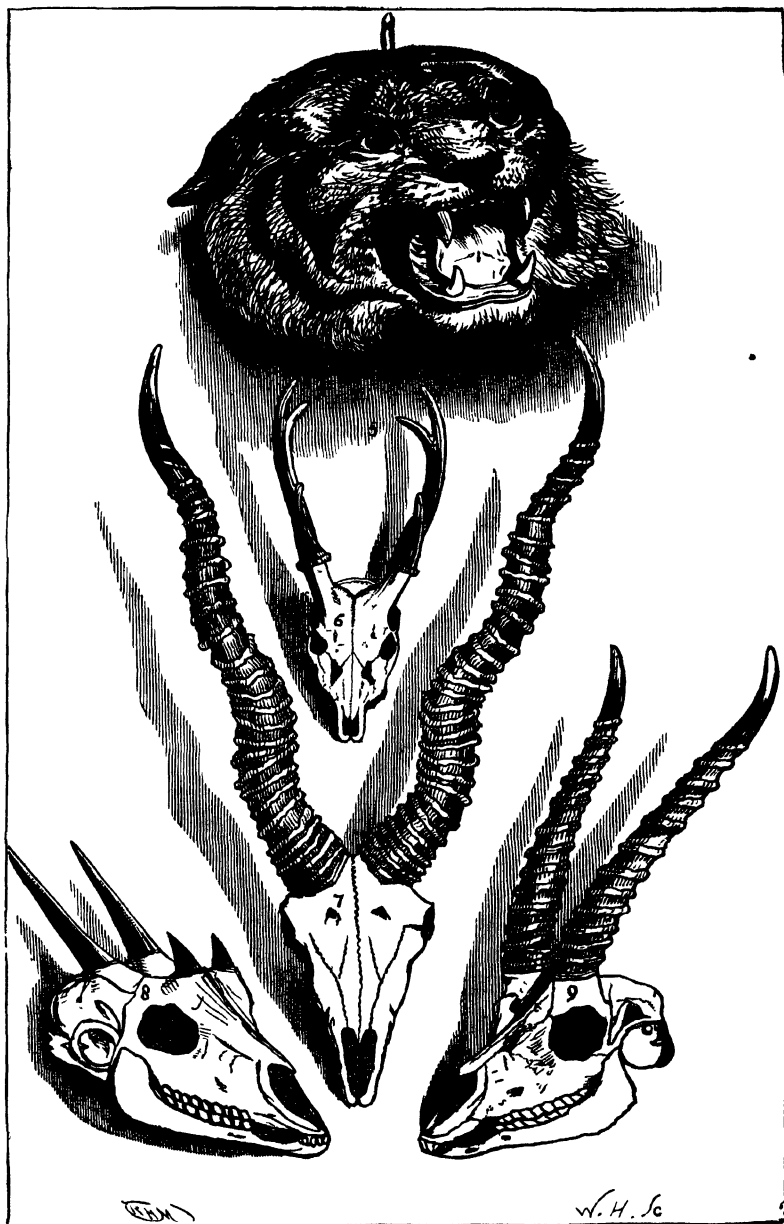
India is now so easy of access that in twenty-one days the traveller lands in Bombay, where he may at once complete his out-



INDIAN TROPHY.—NO. I.

fit, get camp equipage, stores, &c., and, by the help of a well-filled purse and the railways, see almost the whole country south of the Himalayas, and enjoy magnificent shooting during the cool weather between October and March; when he would finish his tour by a month's cruise among the ibex, *Ovis ammon*, and other mountain game in Kashmere and Thibet, returning to England for the best part of the season in May.

The annexed four engravings accurately represent most of the trophies which he would be likely to obtain in the way of large game during his trip. The first on the list, by right of his royal rank, is the lion of Guzerat, called in Hindi "*aslan*," which is certainly an inferior species to the African lion, or at any rate a much smaller variety. It differs also from the African lion in having a comparatively scanty mane, short tail, with a more conspicuous tuft. Underneath are the horns of the axis, spotted deer, or cheetul, a skull and antlers of the *bára-singhá*, or twelve-tined deer, and the antlers of the sambur, or rusa deer. These three are common throughout Central India, in the jungles surrounding the hill ranges. The axis (*Axis maculatus*) very much resembles the fallow deer, both in size and general appearance; but the horns have only one basal tine, and the beam branches in a terminal fork. The *bára-singhá* (*Rucervus Duvaucellii*), which is about the size of a Scotch red stag, is one of the handsomest of the deer tribe. His antlers differ from any other species, having but one basal tine over the forehead, no medium tines at all, and all the other branches diverge from the terminal fork of the beam. The extreme spread of a fine pair of antlers is about 36 inches, whilst the measurement along the curve of each horn will be about 33 inches. The sambur (*Rusa Aristotelis*), the largest of the Indian deer, is unsurpassed in appearance by any of the race. His antlers very much resemble in form those of the spotted deer, except that they are much more massive and heavy. The horns of a fine full-grown sambur vary from 30 to 40 inches in length, are 10 inches round the base, and often exceed 30 lbs. in weight.



INDIAN TROPHY.—NO. 2.

In the second plate is a rather nicely marked head of an adult tiger, and below are the skulls and horns of the kakur, or barking deer, a black buck, the male of the Indian antelope, the four-horned deer, and the chikara, or ravine deer. The barking deer (*Cervulus aureus*) is about the size of a roebuck, and has horns about 9 inches in length. The Indian antelope (*Antelope cervi-capra*) is one of the most graceful and elegant of the great antelope family. The horns are spiral, ringed from the base to within a few inches of the point, and diverging considerably at the tips. The largest pair of horns I have seen were 29 inches in length; but they were exceptional, and it is rare to find them more than 26 inches. The four-horned antelope are retiring little things, common in many parts of India, and generally found in pairs or families. The doe has no horns, whilst the buck has four distinct sheathed horns. The anterior pair seldom exceed 2 inches in length, whilst the posterior are some 4 or 5 inches long and set on high pedicles. The chikara, or ravine deer (*Gazella Benettii*), is somewhat smaller than the black antelope, and its horns are rarely more than half the length, and bend backwards. Their favourite haunts are the thinly wooded shallow ravines, and low jungle adjacent to rivers, and they are very hard to stalk on account of their extreme watchfulness.

At the top of the third plate are the heads of the black panther, or kala taindwar (*Felis pardus*), the sloth bear (*Ursus labiatus*), and the ordinary panther. The first is a very rare and beautiful specimen of the *Felidae*, but sloth bears and ordinary panthers and leopards are common throughout India in most districts where there is any jungle or rocky ground. Underneath are the horns of an adult cow bison, a seven-year-old bull bison, and a very old bull bison, the patriarch of a herd. The bison (*Bos gaurus*), the largest of the bovine race, affords excellent sport, but unfortunately their range is becoming greatly contracted, and their numbers are diminishing. The horns of the old bull represented in the engraving measure 28 inches in length round the outside curve, and the extreme girth at the base is just under 20 inches. It was shot by my



INDIAN TROPHY.—NO. 3.

friend Burton in the Wynaad forest, and considered a magnificent specimen.

In Plate IV. is the skull of an Indian bull elephant, the head of a wild boar, and the skulls of the ibex of the Himalayas (*Capra ibex*) and the Neilgherries (*Capra Neilgherri*); the former, being 42 inches round the curve, are nearly four times the size of the latter, which rarely exceed 10 inches in length. The heads and horns from which these sketches were made were most of them picked specimens, remarkable for their size and symmetry, having formed part of a collection that took several years to get together; and they will give a very fair idea of the kind of game a sportsman may expect to meet with in a hunting cruise through India.

The next point to be considered is the preservation of the skins of such of the denizens of the forest as may be brought to bay.

The Treatment of Skins.—Animals should be skinned as soon as possible after death, whilst the carcase is still warm, as the hide is then easily removed. In the larger carnivora, such as a tiger, the animal should be lifted to the nearest level spot of open ground, and laid on his back with his four feet fastened spread-eagle fashion to the neighbouring trees. Then with your skinning-knife cut from the corner of the lower jaw along the middle of the belly to the vent, and again four cuts from this centre line down the inside of each leg as far as the cushion of the paws, taking care to leave intact the natural features of the foot. You then commence removing the skin, beginning at the hind legs and tail, and then going to the fore ones, and when this and the belly and sides are finished, the ropes should be undone, and the animal turned on his belly and the hide removed from the back and head. Great care must be taken in separating the eyes, the lips, and the roots of the ears, if the skin is intended for stuffing. It must always be borne in mind that the value of the specimen preserved depends as much on the completeness with which all its natural features are saved as on the condition in which they are kept. Thus, if the rim of the eyelids be severed by the scalpel, the injury is almost irremediable, as it



INDIAN TROPHY.—NO 4.

completely changes the natural expression and cast of countenance. The lips must be also very carefully dissected from close round the gums, and after all the superfluous fat is scraped away, they should be thoroughly anointed with spirits of turpentine or arsenical soap and finely powdered alum. If possible, the skull, after being stripped of the flesh, should be kept for some days soaked in water, when the bones will become clean and white. If the skull is boiled, the component parts are very liable to come apart, and the teeth will crack and fall to pieces, which mars the effect when the animal is mounted. By exposing the skulls of elephants, the carnivora, deer, or even the entire skeletons of the smaller mammals, near a nest of termites or white ants, I have had the whole beautifully cleaned both inside and out in an incredibly short time; and when cleaned in this manner, the skulls do not fall to pieces.

Perhaps the best method of preparing a skin for transmission to England from India is simply to remove it carefully from the carcase, and, after having scraped away all the superfluous fat and cleaned it, to cover the flesh side with finely-powdered alum, and immerse it in a barrel of strong brine, the ingredients of which should be 6 lbs. of alum and two of salt to the gallon of water. This is perhaps the best and most inexpensive mode of preserving a skin which is intended to be sent any distance, as the brine does not affect the colour or cause the hair to fall off, which all preparations of lime are apt to do.

The ordinary mode of dressing a skin is as follows. The hide is laid on the ground with the fur side downward, and kept stretched out by driving a number of wooden pegs or long nails round the edge. All the fat adhering to the skin is then removed, and wood ashes are well rubbed in, after which it is left exposed to the air to dry. In India, sometimes, a preparation of turmeric and coconut oil, or milk if procurable, is then worked in with the palm of the hand, and its effect is to make the hide pliant.

The Bedouin Arabs and the Abyssinians are the best hands at skinning I have yet seen, as they will draw off the entire skin of a

large antelope, ibex, or goat, by only making one incision at the neck, so that the hide formed an excellent water mushuck, or flour bag.

If any of the carnivora are killed during a sporting excursion, when, from constantly moving about, the skin cannot be kept stretched for two whole days consecutively, the usual application, after removing all the fat and flesh as carefully as possible, is a little huldee (turmeric) and water; it is then thrown on a camel or any other mode of conveyance at hand, and perhaps never looked at again till the return of the party to cantonments.

It is then that the tanning process commences. First, have the hide steeped in clear water for some hours; put a layer of wood ashes on a level piece of ground, and when the hide is beginning to dry, peg it down, hair undermost, with numerous pegs (to prevent that unseemly Vandyke kind of edge, the result of an insufficiency of pegs), in just proportions; not too long for the sake of an extra foot of measurement, and thereby too narrow; or too broad, making it shorter than it was originally: about 18 inches longer than the measurement before skinning will be about the mark, as all skins stretch to some extent.

Next lay a coat of wood ashes (which are always attainable in the vicinity of the cook-room) and powdered alum in equal proportions, made into a paste, on the hide, about the thickness of a rupee. When this is well dried in the sun and begins to crack, get the shank-bone of a buffalo, being the larger animal, and presenting a greater surface than that of a cow or bullock, saw off half the knuckle-joint, and with this make your men rub off all the ashes and mixture, by dint of hard labour, and, when removed, let all the small fibres and ragged pieces of the skin be picked off; then lay on a second layer of ashes and powdered alum, which, after drying, is to be removed in the same manner. Should the skin be that of a very old tiger, perhaps a repetition may be necessary, but in most cases twice is sufficient; the skin now becomes pliant as a glove, and no vicissitude of weather will affect it. Be very careful

to protect it from night dews, covering it with mats or dry grass, and removing them at sunrise.

When the heads of bison or stags are to be preserved, the neck should be cut off close to the body, as they can then be much better mounted than if severed close to the jaws.

On the Measurement of Animals.—As the comparative size of different specimens of the same variety of animals is an object of curiosity to the sportsman, and of value to the man of science, it would be as well if a regular orthodox system of taking the various dimensions were adopted, as, whilst one measures the length and girth of the animal as it lies where it fell, another contents himself with taking the measurement of the skin when flayed, stretched, and pegged out, not being aware that between these two modes of measurement there exists a difference of at least two or three feet in an animal the size of a tiger. Again, one will ascertain the length from the nose to the end of the tail over the head; another carries the string along the cheek, so as to have a perfectly straight line, thereby causing a difference of several inches.

Perhaps the following system is about the best for taking the measurement of any of the mammalia :—

1. Length from the muzzle to the end of the tail, taken from the tip of the nose, over the crown of the head, the tape being carried along the centre of the neck and spine to the extremity of the tail.
2. From the muzzle to the insertion of tail (as before).
3. Length of tail.
4. Height of shoulder, taken from the heel to the top of dorsal ridge.
5. Height at the croup.
6. Girth of body behind shoulder.
7. Girth of neck.
8. Girth of fore-leg above the knee.
9. Circumference of head.

10. Breadth of forehead.
11. Length from toe to heel and across widest part of sole.
12. Length, girth, spread, and weight of horns.

If this system of measurement were adopted before the animal was skinned, we should hear no more of 14-foot tigers. The average length of a full-grown male, from the tip of nose to end of tail, is about 9 feet 6 inches, and of a tigress, 8 feet 6 inches; and although tigers measuring 11 feet have been killed, like giants among men they are few and far between. The skin of a 10-foot tiger will easily stretch to 13 or 14 feet if required, and all skins of the *Felidæ* stretch considerably in the process of dressing. An ordinary tiger will weigh about 500 lbs., but large cattle-lifters have turned the scale at 800 lbs.



JAGUAR.

CHAPTER X

THE GAME OF THE HIMALAYA.

The extent of the Himamayan range—A description of its vegetation—Various game found in its different zones, according to altitude—The ovis ammon, burrul, ouriah, thanr, markhor, ibex, gooral, surrow, musk deer, and goa.

THE Himalaya, the great natural barrier between India and Central Asia, is a mountainous district, about 1,400 miles in length, and varying from 70 to 120 miles in breadth, consisting of a succession of snowy ranges, rising one behind another, unassailable to man except in those places where the beds of rivers intersect it, and afford him access to its wild fastnesses.

Every variety of temperature, from tropical heat to the cold of the arctic regions, is to be found in the Himalaya; and as the nature of the forest changes with the climate, the variety of game the sportsman meets with in this district is something extraordinary.

A dense belt of forest, from ten to twenty miles in width, usually called "The Terai," skirts the base of the mountains, and thickly-wooded spurs, jutting far out into the plain, form hot, damp, swampy valleys, covered with long grasses, that at certain times of the year are almost impassable for Europeans, on account of the pernicious exhalations and fatal malaria there engendered, which bring on the most deadly of jungle fevers. These virgin primeval forests, which in many parts have never been explored, consist chiefly of sâl, send, sessum (valuable timber), kuldo, cheer (Scotch pine), bamboo, the leguminosæ and elephant-creepers, tree-ferns, wild banana, vines, ferns, high grasses, parasitical orchids, and convolvuli of several varieties; and are the home of herds of

elephants, rhinoceros, tigers, panthers, leopards, cheetahs, black bears, hyenas, lynxes, boars, jackals, foxes, wild dogs, tiger cats, sambur, spotted deer, muncjak kakur or four-horned deer, hog deer, pea-fowl, jungle fowl, kaleege or silver pheasant, spur-fowl, black and grey partridge, chickore, bustard, florikin or lesser bustard, quail, and hares.

This tropical belt ceases at from 4,000 to 5,000 feet, and the forest begins to wear quite a changed aspect, the trees being of a different character, for from this elevation to about 8,000 or 9,000 feet we have beautiful woods of oak of three kinds (the banj, the khurso, and the mohra, all evergreen), walnut, chestnut, sycamore, horse-chestnut, maple, rye, and morinda pines, alder, holly, cedar, cypress, ash, poplar, yew, apple, quince, peach, apricot, cherry, filbert, bramble, red and black currant, raspberry, strawberry, with groves of box, laurel, myrtle, white and purple magnolia, camellia, rhododendrons with blossoms of every shade, from white and bright yellow to dark purple, fuchsias, geraniums, woodbine, honeysuckles, peppers, dog-rose, ivy, violets, primroses, anemone, cowslips, and mosses and lichens, as in England. Here, in addition to many of the animals of the tropical belt, we find several species never to be met with in the plains—viz., the brown and yellow bear, the yellow solitary wolf, the gooral or Himalayan chamois, the jerow or hill stag, the thaar or wild sheep, the surrow or goat antelope, the eagle, the moonal or blue pheasant, the koklas or mottled pheasant, the peura or hill partridge, the Himalayan grouse, the woodcock, thrush, blackbird, cuckoo, goldfinch, chaffinch, mountain sparrow, flying squirrel, otter, marten, pine cat, lungoor or black-faced grey-bearded monkey, black hill monkey, boa, and gigantic damium or rock-snake.

At an elevation of about 9,000 feet we get to a third zone, and, with the exception of a few cedars, khurso oak, and stunted pine, no trees are to be seen but the white birch, dwarf rhododendrons, a kind of willow, and three varieties of juniper. Here we find a third class of animals—viz., the kustoree or musk deer, the markhor or

serpent-eater (a kind of wild goat), the ibex, the black-eared fox, the cheer or brown pheasant, and the argus or horned pheasant.

At from 12,000 to 13,000 feet the limit of the forest generally ceases (although in some more sheltered places I have found it at over 16,000 feet, or about the height of the summit of Mont Blanc), and is succeeded by a fourth zone of grassy pastures, which rise to the snow-line. Here in the summer the turf is enamelled with myriads of lovely flowers and aromatic herbs, which are nourished by the melting of the snows, and this is the habitat of the burrul or snow-sheep, the nyan (*Ovis ammon*) or gigantic snow-sheep, the sna and sha, varieties of wild sheep (*Ovis montana*), the bonchour or wild yak, and the kyang or wild horse.

Above the snow-line, the elevation of which varies considerably, is found a fifth class of animals—viz., the snow-bear, the snow-leopard, the white wolf, the white fox, the white hare, the lammergier, the kungul or snow-pheasant, and the snow-partridge.

The above description will show the general nature of the forest at the different altitudes, and the usual habitat of each animal; but the elevation of the line of demarcation varies in different parts, as some places are more or less exposed than others, and some animals change their place of abode to a higher or lower temperature, according to the season of the year, or as they may find food and pasturage. I shall now give some description of the various wild animals peculiar to the higher altitudes—viz., the *ovis ammon*, the burrul, the ouriar, the markhor, the ibex, the thaar, the gooral, the surrow, the musk-deer, and goa.

The *OVIS AMMON*, or nyan, is the largest wild sheep known, as it measures from twelve to thirteen hands at the shoulder, and weighs over 400 lbs. when in good condition. The *ovis ammon* has enormous horns, much resembling those of a domestic ram, but they make only one curve. They sometimes exceed 50 inches in length and 20 inches in circumference, but are rarely found perfect. The horns shown in the engraving are very perfect, measuring 16 inches in circumference at the base, and 46 inches round the curve.



THE LAMMERGIFE.

The fleece is about 2 inches in length, and of a fulvous grey colour, and round the neck is a ruff of long coarse hair, which is dark brown in the rams, and light ash in the ewes, which are very small and insignificant-looking creatures compared to the rams. The flesh is of good flavour, and tender. *Ovis ammon* are common in the valley of the Sutlej, above the Niti Pass, and in the Chusul district; but they are wary and difficult to stalk on account of the open nature of the ground on which they are usually found.

The BURRUL, or snow-sheep (*Ovis Nahura*), is a gregarious animal, found only upon the loftier ranges. The male stands 38 inches high at the shoulder, and is about 4½ feet in length, often weighing over 200 lbs. The female is scarcely half the size. Their general colour is a light ash, with white under the belly; but an old male has also black breast and points, as well as a narrow stripe between the ash on the upper part of the body and the white of the belly. The horns of the male are about 22 inches long by 11 inches in circumference, and they have a single curve, like a ram's, but the reverse way. The female has small flat horns half the size. Burrul are generally found on the grassy slopes between the limits of the forest and the snow-line; and there, in unfrequented regions, they may be seen, several score together, browsing like tame sheep. They are not difficult stalking, except in places where often disturbed, when they become shy and wary. When alarmed they utter a shrill kind of snort, retiring rather leisurely, and stopping at times as if to satisfy their curiosity as to the cause of alarm. They breed in June and July, the males and females associating all the year round, although flocks of young males are occasionally met with in the summer. On the Ladac side of the Himalaya there is a variety of this species called the Napor.

The OURIAR is another kind of wild sheep, found on the Attock range and in many parts of Thibet. It is a fine-looking animal, of a light brown colour, with a long shaggy beard, which in winter covers the chest. The rams have curved horns, generally averaging 24 inches in length, and 12 inches round the base. The females



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THE BURRUL.

THE OVIS AMMON.

THE THAAR.

have very small horns. They are wary and extremely active, so they afford good sport stalking.

The **THAAR**, a most noble-looking animal, is gregarious, being often found in large flocks. A ram, before the rutting season, frequently weighs over 300 lbs., measuring $5\frac{1}{4}$ feet, including the head, and 46 inches at the shoulder. The female is a most inferior-looking animal in comparison with the male, not being one-half the size. The ram is generally of a brownish-dun colour, almost deepening to black on the head and points, the neck and shoulders being furnished with long shaggy hair. The female and young are of a reddish-brown colour, rather lighter under the belly. The thaar has horns about 12 inches long and 10 inches in circumference, curving backwards, with flat sides. Those of the female are smaller.

The **MARKHOR**, or serpent-cater, is unquestionably the most game-looking animal of the Himalaya, being the last of the goat tribe, and having magnificent, gracefully-curved horns, often exceeding 60 inches in length, resembling those of a koodoo, but twisted in the opposite direction. The markhor is considerably larger than the ibex, and the hair, which is of a light greyish-slate colour, is extremely long and coarse, hanging like a mane on each side of the neck in the winter months. The beard is long and flowing, and often nearly black, so that the head and horns make a conspicuously handsome trophy, as shown in the engraving. The female is of a reddish-dun colour, has insignificant horns, and is very much smaller than the male. There are said to be four varieties of the markhor on the Himalayan range; but as the distinction only consists in a slight difference in the shape of the horns and in their measurements, I think they are all of the same genus, for I have often noticed that in the higher altitudes animals of the same class frequently vary both in the shape and massiveness of their horns, and in size according to their condition, which mainly depends upon the nutriment they can find, and the quality of the pasturage in the locality where they are found. Their colour also varies considerably, according to their age and the season of the



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THE MUSK DEER.

THE WILD DOG.
THE MARKHOR.
THE IBEX.

THE RAVINE DEER.

year. Markhor are only found on the loftiest and most precipitous ranges, which are almost inaccessible to any wingless animals except themselves. They frequent the steep grassy slopes and rocky ground above the highest belts of the forest; and if the ground has lately been disturbed they are difficult to find, as they seek the cover of the woods during the day-time, and only come out to feed in the open early in the morning or late in the afternoon. They are also very wary and suspicious, and, although the ground on which they are found is rocky and broken, it requires very careful stalking to get within range of them. Old male markhor are now not only very scarce, but, from being frequently hunted, are generally desperately cunning, so that a head with a fine pair of horns is not often to be got without a good deal of exertion.

The IBEX of the Himalaya (*Capra Sibirica*) takes the foremost place amongst the varied game of that district, being one of the finest of the goat species. The male measures 42 inches in height at the shoulder, and is about 5 feet in length, including the head. The female is very small in comparison. The horns of the buck vary from 3 feet to 50 inches in length, and from 8 inches to 13 inches in circumference; those of the female are round, and rarely exceed a foot in length. The general colour of the buck ibex is a yellowish grey, with a darker stripe along the centre of the back, ash-coloured muzzle, and black beard about 8 inches long. The females and young are uniformly of a reddish-grey colour. The head of the ibex is rounder and the nose shorter than any other of the goat tribe, and the ears are placed farther back. Ibex seem little affected by cold, for in the day-time they remain in the most secluded and rugged spots above the limits of vegetation, and in the evening move downwards towards their feeding-grounds, which often lie at a great distance. In summer the males separate from the females, and in a body resort to the higher regions, where they may sometimes be met with in troops of fifty.

The ibex is found in Koonawur, Lahoul, Spiti, Kashmere, and on most of the higher ranges of Thibet.

Although excessively wary animals, ibex are not difficult to stalk if the hunter takes care to keep well above the herd. He must also be sure and keep to leeward, or they will detect the taint in the air, and become suspicious, and then, however favourable the ground may be, it is very difficult to get within range. When after ibex, the best plan to adopt is to sleep as near their haunts as possible, and to get above their feeding-ground by daybreak, as the denizens of the mountains are not suspicious of danger from above, although they keep a bright look-out on the hillside below them. As with all other mountain game, the hunter should not show himself after firing, as if he lies hid he will most probably get another fair chance. Srinugger is not at all a bad head-quarters for ibex-hunting, as there are several ranges within four or five days' march where plenty of sport may be had.

The GOORAL, or Himalayan chamois, is a gregarious animal, about the size of an ordinary goat, with rough coat about 2 inches long, of brownish-grey colour, rather lighter under the belly and inside the legs, and white under the throat. Both male and female, which are much alike, have black ringed horns about 8 inches long and $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in circumference, tapering to a point, and curved backwards. They breed in the end of May, the female rarely having more than one at a birth. Gooral are generally found feeding at dawn and near sunset, lying under bushes and rocks during the day. They frequent the steepest grass-covered hills and rugged ground, and never forsake a district, however much they may be disturbed. When alarmed they give a peculiar hissing grunt.

The SURROW, also a kind of chamois, stands about $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet at the shoulder, and is about $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet long from the point of the nose to the end of the tail. The general colour of the fur is of a reddish-grey, deepening to black on the back, head, and hind quarters, with yellow and dirty white under the belly and inside the legs, and a light ash muzzle, with a white streak running along the sides of the lower jaw. Having large coarse ears, the expression of the head resembles that of an ass more than a deer, and the legs are thick and clumsily

proportioned, occasioning an awkward gait. The male has a black forelock and mane, which he erects when alarmed, and a large and fiery black eye. Both male and female have highly-polished, black, tapering, sharp-pointed horns, about 12 inches long and 4 inches in circumference at the base, annulated for the first 5 inches and curved backwards almost on to the neck. The surrow is rather a rare animal, and is generally found in the most inaccessible parts of the forest in the vicinity of water. He is a dangerous customer for dogs to bring to bay, often killing and maiming several with his horns before being pulled down.

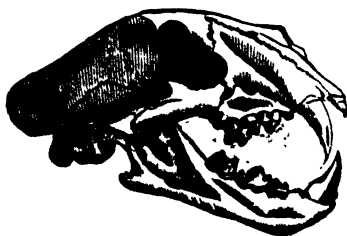
The MUSK DEER, or *kustooree*, a solitary animal, is about the size of a roebuck, measuring 40 inches in length and 22 inches in height. The male is furnished with a sharp-pointed canine tooth or tusk, curving backwards on each side of the upper jaw, which, in a full-grown animal, is about 3 inches in length. The general colour is speckled grey, approaching to black on the shoulders, back, and outside of the legs; reddish-fawn along the lower part of the sides and inside the thighs, and dirty white under the throat and belly and inside the legs. The fur is very thick, coarse, and brittle, the hairs being nearly white at the roots and becoming gradually darker towards the end, not unlike the small under-quills of the porcupine. The head is delicately formed, the ears broad and erect, and the tail very small, not being over an inch in length. In males this appendage is quite naked, except a small tuft at the end, caused by continual shaking about; but in females and young it remains covered with grey hair at the top and white underneath. The legs are very slender, the hoofs long and pointed; and they always go in bounds, all four feet leaving the ground, except when grazing. The female and young are rather lighter in colour than the males, and have no tusks; otherwise they are much alike. The musk-pod, which is only found in males, is situated between the skin and the flesh, close to the navel, and much resembles the gizzard of a fowl, having a small orifice through the skin, but no apparent internal connection with the stomach. The musk is found



THE GOAT, OR RAVINE DEER.

in dark brown rounded grains, and the pod of a full-grown animal may yield about an ounce on an average. Scarcely any is found in animals under two years old, and more in proportion as they become aged, although this is not always the case, as at times the musk is discharged through the orifice in the skin. Musk deer much resemble hares in their habits, making forms in the same manner, and generally choosing to feed early in the morning or towards the evening. Their food chiefly consists of young leaves, grass, tender shoots, herbs, berries, grain, and moss seeds. The female generally gives birth to twins, which are deposited at some distance from each other, the dam only visiting them at times during the day. Thus are those habits of solitude and retirement engendered which continue through life, for they are rarely seen two together, and the fawns never associate with the dam. Musk deer are found in all kinds of forest, but seldom at lower altitudes than 8,000 feet. The flesh is fine-grained and well flavoured.

The GOA, or hill antelope of Thibet, very much resembles the chikará, or ravine deer of the plains, if, indeed, it is not the same animal. The only distinction that I know of, and I have killed scores of both, is that the reddish-brown fur of the goa is somewhat longer and closer than that of the chikará. They are alike in size, colour, and habits, and the bucks of both varieties have tapering curved horns, varying from 10 inches to 15 inches in length, and ringed to within 3 inches of the points, which are very sharp. The doe is much smaller than the buck, and has much slighter and shorter horns, that scarcely show any indication of rings, and are often nearly straight.



SKULL OF TIGER.

CHAPTER XI.

SPORT IN THE DOON.

The valley of the Doon—A sporting triumvirate—A trip to the Ghuriali Hills—A dense jungle—A family of panthers—Brave dogs—A ferocious cub—A wild sow and her litter—A panther preparing for pork—Disappointment—A courageous mother.

THE Dehra Doon is, perhaps, the *ne plus ultra* of tropical hunting-grounds, as the Damun-i-koh or Terai that skirts the lowest spurs of the Himalayan range abounds in almost every variety of large game usually found in Indian forests. The valley of the Doon is about forty miles in length, sixteen in breadth, and is bounded on the north by the Moosoaric Hills, on the east by the Ganges, on the west by the Jumna, and on the south by the Sewalek Hills, a densely wooded range about 3,000 feet in height, and from eight to ten miles across. My party, a triumvirate, consisted of an old school chum, Fred Graham, and Doctor Singleton, both of whom were ardent sportsmen and excellent companions.

Three is, in many respects, the best number for a shooting party, as it not only allows all the members to participate in any conversation that may take place, but in case of argument or indecision of action, gives a majority; besides, three cots can be stowed very comfortably in a hill-tent, but not four; three can, in most cases, hunt well together; and lastly, three well-armed Europeans, with their attendants, form a little army in themselves, and, in case of need, can hold their own against any marauding attempts by predatory hill tribes.

Our programme was arranged as follows: first a fortnight or three

weeks' hunting in the Doon, to be followed by an excursion to Gangootree, the source of the Ganges, and to Jumnautri, the source of the Jumna, after which we were to cross the Nilung, pass into the valley of the Sutlej, and finish off with an expedition to Kashmere.

Dehra, being so central, is the best head-quarters for Doon shooting, and during our sojourn there we made several expeditions to different parts of the valley, enjoying first-rate sport, and rarely meeting with blank days. Elephant, however, were not so numerous as might have been expected from the likely appearance of the forest, having been driven into the more remote parts by the periodical burning of the Doon grass, which takes place in January and February. Notwithstanding we explored all the most favourable haunts, we only twice came across them; once near Jobrawallah, on the banks of the Sooswa river, and again in the Sankote forest, when on both occasions we killed. We also had some excellent tiger-shooting in different parts of the Doon, and amongst the Sewalic Hills; but as these hunts afforded no incidents out of the common, I shall not enter into any description of them, but describe a trip we made to the Ghuriali Hills, where we had excellent sport.

Some time before dawn, we were apprised that it was time to be stirring, from the noise made by the Lascars loosening the pegs preparatory to striking the tent; and donning our hunting gear, we partook of an early breakfast, reclining on carpets placed near the embers of a huge log fire, whilst our people packed up our goods and chattels, it having been determined to move our camp to a valley in the Ghuriali Hills, which was considered by Fred's shekarries to be a certain find for large game; moreover, a herd of elephants had been seen in the vicinity a couple of days before. As soon as it was sufficiently light to discern the track, our tattoos (ponies) and coolies being laden, we commenced our march, ourselves and shekarries forming the advanced guard, whilst the baggage followed up in the rear.

Elk had already commenced bellowing, and their loud cries of

defiance resounding from every side of the forest might by unaccustomed ears have been mistaken for the roaring of much more dangerous animals, so hoarse and hollow did they sound. At day-break, pea-fowl, jungle-fowl, and partridge began calling in all directions; and as we did not expect to meet with any large game *en route*, some of our people having been over the ground the day before, it was determined to make a general bag, and, advancing in skirmishing order, we had excellent sport, killing several silver pheasants, besides black and grey partridge, chickore, and hares.

After a tramp of about four hours, during which time our people were laden with small game, we arrived at the Ghuriali Hills, and skirting their base, made our way for a couple of miles up a densely wooded ravine, at the bottom of which flowed a turbulent mountain torrent; and as Fred informed us that this was to be our temporary head-quarters, we halted the coolies, and prepared the ground for our camp.

In a short time the tents were pitched, the dinner under weigh, and everything comfortably arranged for passing the night, so we adjourned to a pool at the foot of a small murmuring cascade, and refreshed ourselves with a most delightful bath before sitting down to table; after which we assembled our people round the log fire, and held a solemn consultation as to the morrow's proceedings. It was determined that Fred and two of his people should go along the Tiri road and meet a Ghoorka chief who had been invited to join our party; whilst the Doctor and I, dividing our people into two parties, reconnoitred each side of the valley in search of game. A brew of Glenlivat was made, tobacco served out, and, after two or three hours' agreeable conversation, in which our people freely joined, the night watch was set, and we retired to rest.

The next morning, refreshed and invigorated by wholesome sleep, we breakfasted at early dawn, and shortly afterwards each set out on his way. Googooloo and most of the other shekarries went with the Doctor along the course of the river, to look for elephant spoor; whilst Chinneah and two of the Phaidee coolies, with the dogs,

accompanied me in a clamber up the hills, where I hoped to get some venison for camp consumption.

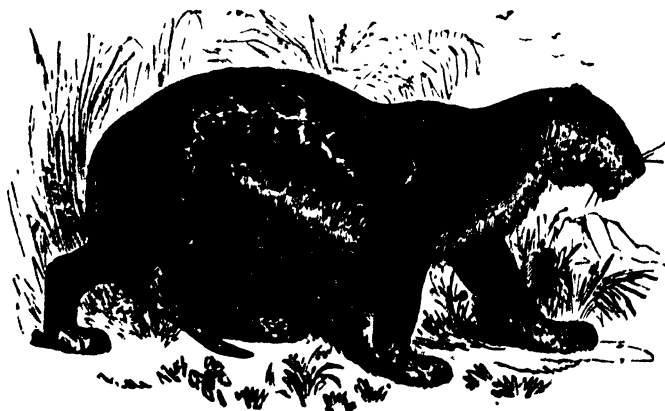
We were obliged to follow the right bank of the stream for some distance, as the forest was too dense for us to penetrate; but at last, by creeping up the dry bed of a tributary torrent, and groping our way, often almost in darkness, under overhanging boughs covered with heavy foliage, we got into a deep cleft or narrow gorge in the side of the mountain. Here were some noble teak-trees, and a few clumps of bamboos of enormous proportions, besides patches of fern and luxuriant grasses. From a crack in the solid rock, about 15 feet from the base, issued two small streams, evidently having the same source, which fell into a beautiful natural basin, bordered with short green turf. The dogs immediately made their way down to this spot to drink, and were engaged in chasing and diving after a couple of saucy-looking little dabchicks or lesser grebe, when suddenly I heard Ponto give tongue, followed by an unmistakable whine, which told me that we were not alone in the glen, separated even as it appeared to be from the rest of the world. From his attitude, as he stood snuffing the air with his fore-paw raised, his head lifted, his lips apart, showing his teeth, and now and then giving a low growl, I knew by experience that some of the feline race were in close proximity, and made my preparations accordingly; bidding Chinneah fasten up the Poligars in their slips, and give them in charge of one of the Phaidee coolies, whilst he kept near me with the second gun, for I only happened to have two out with me that day. A small hill dog, belonging to one of my people, kept running backwards and forwards about twenty paces in front, in spite of our endeavours to keep him back, to Ponto's great annoyance, as he and I were making casts about the place in search of the trail. A very few turns served to satisfy us both on this point, for we almost immediately came upon the pugs of what appeared to be a family of either panthers or leopards, which we were steadily following up, when suddenly a female panther, with a short low growl, pounced upon the poor Puarhee dog,

breaking his back with a blow from her muscular paw, and carrying him off as a cat would a mouse. At this moment my view of the transaction was partially obstructed by an intervening bush; but getting a momentary glimpse, as she bounded along, I gave her the contents of both barrels, which tumbled her over, and made her relinquish her prey, but did not prove mortal, for in the twinkling of an eye she recovered her feet, and sprang towards us, uttering a savage roar, when the Poligars, who, on seeing the game, had forcibly broken away from the man who held them, dashed forward, and, scared by their sudden appearance, she swerved, raised her head, and looked round for a line of retreat; which action gave Ponto a chance, and the gallant dog rushed in and pinned her by the back sinew of the hind leg, whilst at the same time Hassan and Ali fastened on each side of her, one by the ear and the other on the throat. I had received my second gun from Chinneah the moment my first was discharged, but I was afraid to fire lest I should injure my dogs, and was waiting for a fairer chance, when suddenly, with a scream of rage, the male panther appeared, and made a leap which would have very summarily disposed of poor Ponto, if I had not luckily stopped him in mid-career by almost simultaneously giving him the contents of both barrels, killing him at once. The game was now becoming hot, for a violent struggle was still going on between my dogs and the wounded female, whose strength was so great, notwithstanding one of her fore-arms was shattered and useless, that she twice managed to shake off the Poligars, although Ponto still kept his hold; and fearing lest my favourite might get a mauling before I should have time to re-load, I drew my hunting-knife, and, watching my opportunity, plunged it up to the hilt behind her shoulder-blade, when she reared up, gave a hollow groan, and dropped dead on her side. The Poligars, when they saw their antagonist was dead, lay quietly down, and began to lick the scratches and bruises they had received in the conflict; but old matter-of-fact Ponto, in a most cautious manner, went up to each of the carcasses, examined them all round, as if to satisfy

himself that there was no life remaining ; after which he came trotting up to me as I was re-loading, looked up in my face in a peculiarly knowing manner, wagged his apology for a tail, and lay down at my feet grunting with intense satisfaction.

Having rubbed the blood and dirt off the dogs, and examined their limbs carefully, so as to make sure that they had received no serious injury, we again took up the panther's trail, which led us to a shelving rock, where, in a small cave, we found two young panther cubs, one of which the dogs killed, and the other, a young male, we caught alive. He was not larger than a Clumber spaniel, but already very ferocious, scratching and biting at every one who approached ; and as he would not walk, I had him slung to a bamboo so as to be more easily carried, having first taken the precaution of fastening up his mouth. I then sent Chinneah to despoil the dead panthers, bidding the rest of the people go to the water and there wait, whilst I, accompanied by Ponto, continued my survey of the glen. I had not gone far when I came upon the slots of a sounder of hog, and whilst I was following them up, I perceived the fresh pugs of a panther, to which I did not give much attention, supposing it to have been made by one of those I had killed. Ponto, however, was not so mistaken, but gave a peculiar whine, as if apprehensive of danger, which I not understanding, and fearing lest the noise might alarm the game, ordered him to fall back and lie down. Hardly had he done so when I heard the grunting and shrill squeaking of a young hog, and, guided by the sounds, I crept quietly forward on my hands and knees through some high grass, until I got near enough to see a fine sow, surrounded by a numerous litter, turning up the soil and feeding upon the young roots of the grass. I watched her proceedings for a moment, and was considering whether to fire or not, being rather unwilling to kill the mother of such a numerous small family, when I heard a slight rustling noise within a few paces to my left, which at first I imagined to have been caused by the dog ; but on turning round, to my surprise I saw a fine full-grown panther gathering himself up as if to make

a spring. His attention was evidently centred in the prospect of a pork dinner, for he licked his slavering lips repeatedly, and his green eyes were fixed intently on the sow, who, strangely enough, had not yet caught the taint in the air. I quickly raised my rifle, and aiming behind the massive shoulder, which was fully exposed as he couched, pulled trigger, and the panther sprang into the air, stone dead. The sow, alarmed, dashed forward most courageously to protect her young, and in self-defence I was obliged to give her my remaining barrel, as she charged close to me. The bullet passing through the body, "grassed" her at once, and with the aid of Ponto, who came up immediately on hearing the report, I managed to dispatch her with my knife. We now turned our attention to the squeakers, and Ponto and I soon managed to catch five of them alive, which I secured by fastening their legs together. This done, I made my way to the spring, where I waited until Chinneah came up with the skins of the animals first killed, when I sent him and the coolies, under Ponto's guidance, to bring in the rest of the game. In the meantime I refreshed myself with a bath in the pool until their return, when we set out on our route towards camp, where I found Fred and his Ghoorka friend awaiting our arrival.



LEOPARD.

CHAPTER XII.

SPORT IN THE HIMALAYA AND THIBET.

A portable ladder—Puharrees or hill coolies—The Mussoorie Pass, beautiful scenery—
A majestic panorama—The chamois of the Himalayas—Thaar-stalking—The
source of the Ganges—The monarch of the Himalayas—Burrul-shooting—Sport
in Thibet—Bunchowr-stalking.

HAVING spent the best part of a month shooting in different parts of the Doon, where we had first-rate sport, a couple of days were devoted to preparations for our expedition among the mountains. Stores, groceries, and supplies of all kinds were provided and packed securely, iron-shod alpenstocks were made, and a light portable bridge and ladder of my own invention constructed, which latter arrangement I shall describe, as it proved on many occasions very useful to our trip, for with it we could in a moment either bridge a nullah 18 feet wide, or climb a scarp of 20. It somewhat resembled the arm of a fire-escape, having a canvas back and strong male bamboo sides, bound with iron, strong hooks being fastened at one end and spikes at the other. The rings, however, were all of rope, except those at the top and bottom, which were of stout iron, and movable, so that the whole could be taken to pieces for carriage, or put together in a moment. We also, each of us, ordered three waterproof "kiltas" to be made, to save our supplies from damage. These are long, pottle-shaped baskets, lined with painted canvas within and leather without, having one side made flat to fit the back, against which it is fastened by straps, this being the ordinary mode the Puharrees or hill coolies carry supplies.

As the roads, or rather tracks, were impassable, even for mountain ponies, all our baggage had to be carried by coolies, which considerably swelled the number of our camp-followers. The Puharrees, a caste of Hindoos, are divided into two classes, the



PUHARREES, OR HILL COOLIES.

Gungarees or low-country men (from *gunga*, "a valley"), and the Purbutees, or hill men (from *purbut*, "a peak"). The latter are stout, robust, and hardy mountaineers, generally short in stature, but capable of undergoing much exertion and fatigue on very simple fare, their ordinary food being chapatis, or girdle cakes

made of coarse flour mixed into a paste with water, seasoned with a little salt, and baked upon an iron plate. The men wear loosely-fitting tunics, gathered in and fastened at the waist with a cotton belt, and wide peg-top trousers, tight at the ankle, both garments being made of a coarse blanket-like material, round cap of the same, or sometimes a white turban, and network sandals of curious construction. The coolies we engaged were all of the latter class, and had been carefully selected as good men some days before by Surmoor, their chief, who had been with Fred on several former occasions. They all received a month's pay in advance, with a thick, coarse country blanket, and as they mustered in front of the bungalow, I thought I had never seen a more likely-looking set of fellows for the work. The engraving represents two Puharrees with a kilta as described.

Our baggage consisted of a good-sized routee, or hill-tent, which, slung on the portable bridge, was easily carried by four men, two small scouting tents, somewhat resembling the *tentes d'abri* of the French Chasseurs, but larger and more commodious, although each was a light load for one coolie, three painted canvas packages, containing bedding, blankets, etc., and twenty-six kiltas, sixteen of which were filled with clothes, ammunition, stores, and supplies of every kind, that we calculated would last us for two months. Four contained "atar," or coarse flour, rice, curry stuff, and salt for our people; two held our cooking utensils, two cheel pine torches and firewood, and two contained a complete breakfast kit, which, with one of the scouting tents, was sent on the day before, so that our breakfast was always ready by the time we arrived on the new ground, or half-way when the march was very long. Thus, although we eschewed beer and curtailed all extraneous baggage, we had thirty-two coolie loads, each man carrying about 50 lbs. weight.

All our preparations and arrangements being completed, sending on our people, we drove to Rajpooor, at the foot of the Mussoorie Hills, the first range of the Himalaya, that rise about 4,000 feet above the Doon. The eastern part, on which is Landour, the

military cantonment, rises about 1,000 feet higher. After a first-rate breakfast at a comfortable hotel kept by a *ci-devant* trooper, we commenced the ascent, one of the most delightful walks that I ever met with in any part of the globe. The road winds in zig-zags cut along the face of the hill, but we frequently availed ourselves of native paths, which, although much steeper, cut off corners, and shortened the route considerably. As we ascended, a great change was observable in the nature of the forests, although the vegetation was everywhere most luxuriant. At the base the prevalent trees were sâl and send, varied with banyans, patches of bamboo, wild banana, or acacia. Here and there gigantic festoons of leguminosæ, or the pothos creeper, stretched high overhead, whilst wild vines, peppers, and convolvuli of every colour, formed natural bowers of living verdure, that courted repose on every side. At an elevation of 3,000 feet the alteration of the appearance of the forest became strikingly apparent. The tropical trees gradually disappeared, and were replaced by evergreen oaks of magnificent foliage, noble rhododendrons with enormous lemon-scented blossoms, pines, magnolias, camellias and tree-ferns, whilst the underwood consisted chiefly of yellow raspberries, ivy, honeysuckle, and other plants of the temperate regions. The banks on the roadside also now began to be clothed with wild strawberry, geranium, violets, and different kinds of mosses and lichens never seen in the plains. It is difficult to conceive more beautiful forest scenery than the Mussoorie Pass exhibits. At every turn a varied view presents itself, either of magnificent vistas in the wood, or glorious landscapes of the park-like Doon below. We fully enjoyed it, and although the ascent was a stiff seven miles' tramp, we were not the least fatigued on our arrival at Mussoorie, where we put up at Wolf's Crag, a comfortable and elegant little bungalow belonging to a friend of Fred's, that was beautifully situated on a rising ground facing the valley of the Doon. So much has been written about this far-famed sanitarium, that I shall not enter into any detailed account of it; suffice it to say that the most glowing descriptions I had read did not come up to the reality.

The first view of the Himalayas from the north side of the Landour ridge is, I believe, scarcely to be equalled for grandeur. Wave upon wave of snowy ranges, surmounted by majestic peaks of every conceivable shape, rise from the dark dense forest below, clearly and sharply defined against the deep blue firmament. This panorama is sublime beyond conception, and offers a striking contrast to the southern view, where the valley of the Doon, the Sewalic Hills, and the reeking plains of India, with the windings of the Ganges and the Jumna, lay stretched before the eye as in a map. Even the genius of a Turner could not do justice to such scenery; how faintly, then, would words portray it!

The best day's thaar-shooting I ever had was at Bengallee, a small village at the foot of the Kanoolce Hill, which is a spur of the high ridge of mountains that divides the valleys of the Ganges and the Jumna. Our party, which consisted of Graham, Singleton, and myself, halted here for some days, and leaving our heavy baggage at the village, we engaged a guide who knew the ground, and clambered up the south face of the hill, carrying only our small tent, bedding, a change of clothing, and provisions. The slope was clothed with beautiful forests of chestnut, walnut, and oak, varied with green patches and rocky ground; and as we went along the dogs put up a brace of woodcocks and several moonals; but they were allowed to go unscathed, lest the report of our guns might disturb more valued game. We pitched our tents under the shelter of some noble oaks, by a beautiful purling stream, rather more than half-way up the hill, which rises about 7,000 feet above the valley; and then Fred and I, leaving the Doctor to superintend the culinary arrangements, set out with the villager and Chinneah to reconnoitre the ground.

It being so early in the season, the haunts of the thaar had not been disturbed for some time, so we had every reason to expect good sport. After passing through a belt of moura oak, we came to some rocky ground, where we found numerous fresh slots and traces, but no thaar; so we crept along some very awkward-look-

ing places to the east face, and gained a grassy slope, where we found several gooral feeding. Desiring our people to lay down



THE GOORAL OR HIMALAYAN CHAMOIS.

and remain quiet, Fred and I made a circuit and gained the cover of a rock within a hundred yards of the game, from whence we should have had an easy pot-shot right and left, when, just as we

were about to fire, a brace of cheer pheasants got up, with a whirr, from almost under our feet, and gave the alarm. With a snort somewhat between a hiss and a whistle, they all made a sudden rush, and we had only time for a couple of snap-shots each as they bounded up the slope at speed: one, a young male, rolled over paralysed, with his spine broken, and a female, which went off with the rest, was observed to lag behind, and then lie down: having re-loaded, we crept towards her as noiselessly as possible, but on our approach she regained her legs, and would most likely have got away had not Fred again fired, and dropped her with a bullet through the neck. Having gralloched the game, we were returning to camp, when we saw a couple of large yellow bears bowling along a piece of rugged ground a couple of hundred yards below us. As they were coming uphill in our direction, we got behind a clump of rhododendron-bushes, which afforded excellent cover, and awaited their approach. They travelled slowly, being engaged in turning over stones as they went along, to look for insects, which search could not have proved very satisfactory, for they came up grunting and groaning, as if in very bad humour with each other, offering splendid shots. We let drive almost simultaneously, and both shots were effective, for the male dropped without a movement, whilst the female, rearing up on her hind legs, with a grunt betokening surprise, fell sprawling on her back in the last agony. We rushed up to give the *coup de grâce*, but it was not required—both were dead. Having re-loaded our rifles, we continued our route towards the camp, leaving the operation of skinning until the morrow, as we did not care to lose our dinners and pass the night in the bush—the natural consequence of being overtaken by darkness in these regions.

The next morning, at daybreak, we all started in different directions to look for thaar, taking our breakfasts with us. I was accompanied by Chinneah carrying a spare gun, and a couple of coolies to carry back any game I might kill. After several hours' fag, during which I traversed several likely-looking patches of oak forest with-

out seeing anything but an occasional moonal pheasant, which I would not fire at for fear of disturbing other game, just as I was thinking of making my way back to the tent empty-handed, a herd of five thaar was discovered browsing on the grassy slope of a little ravine some distance below us. With the aid of my glass, I made them out to be all males, with long shaggy hair streaming in the wind. Having carefully marked the spot, which appeared extremely favourable for stalking, I made my people lie down, and slinging my second gun over my shoulder, commenced the descent, taking care to keep well to leeward. Creeping noiselessly down, I succeeded in gaining a long low ridge, which ran parallel to the hollow in which I had marked them, and, looking cautiously over, there they were still, unsuspectingly feeding not more than sixty paces distant. Selecting the one that appeared to have the finest horns, I took a steady aim just behind the shoulder, and he dropped to the shot; my second barrel brought another fine fellow floundering on the ground, with a bullet through his loins, that passed out of the opposite shoulder. The three survivors, startled at the report of my rifle, rushed forward a few paces, and then turned and stood, as if bewildered, giving me another fair double shot with my second gun. I rolled over a third dead with a bullet through the neck, and broke the leg of the fourth, which, however, went off at a good pace. Elated with my success, I re-loaded, and, leaving the game to be collected by the coolies, set off in pursuit of the wounded animal. I was soon on the trail, which, being plentifully sprinkled with blood, showed that the quarry was hard hit, and I had no difficulty in following it up. After a quarter of an hour's tracking, I came upon the wounded thaar lying down in some low bush. He was so weak from loss of blood that he could hardly stand, much more get away, for the bullet, besides breaking his hind leg, had entered into his body; and I dispatched him with my hunting-knife.

Leaving one coolie in charge of the game, and dispatching the other to the camp for assistance to carry it, I was strolling leisurely along in the direction of our bivouac, when a fine male musk deer

started up from almost under our feet. I let drive right and left, but missed with both barrels, when Chinneah giving me my second gun, I managed to roll him over with my third shot, as he was bounding away through the long grass. Musk deer-hunting is very pretty sport, and the best practice the sportsman can have to test his shooting, as the game offers a very small mark and bounds along with incredible swiftness. After taking out the pod, which must have contained nearly an ounce weight of musk, Chinneah slung the deer over his shoulders, and we made the best of our way to the tents, where we found the Doctor busily engaged in skinning and preserving a beautiful specimen of the argus, or horned pheasant, which he had killed high up on the mountain. This was the only shot he had fired, for although he had seen a flock of several gooral, they were so wild that he could not get near them. Towards sunset Fred returned, having killed a fine old male thaar and two musk deer, besides wounding a bear, which escaped by taking refuge in a cave. After dinner we all assembled round the camp fire to discuss the events of the day and our hopes for the morrow. Since that evening long years have rolled, yet it is not forgotten. Four head of thaar bagged in four consecutive shots made it a red-letter day in my calendar.

The next day we changed our camp, moving about three miles towards the east face, which was said to be the best ground for thaar, and here we remained four days enjoying fair sport, killing between us three snow-bears, eight thaar, five gooral, two burrul, seven musk deer, and a surrow. After this, we descended the hill and returned to Bengallee, where we halted a day to rest and prepare some of the specimens, which we sent by a coolie to Fred's quarters at Dehra.

One of the best days' sport we had amongst the burrul was a few miles below the great glacier in which the Ganges takes its source. Here the triumvirate greatly distinguished themselves, and made a remarkable bag, so I shall give an account of their doings. Our camp was at Gangotrie, the holiest shrine of Hindoo worship, and

having seen all that the Brahmins had to show, which amounted to very little, we started for the Cow's Mouth, the reputed source of the sacred river. An hour before daybreak I opened the door of the tent without disturbing my sleeping companions, and looked out into the night. The gorge was still in darkness, for although the moon was shining brightly, the high lateral mountains intercepted her rays, and cast a deep shadow below. The air felt cool and bracing, but not a leaf stirred, which was most favourable for effective stalking, as the taint in the air caused by man's presence is carried on the wind to almost incredible distances, and is immediately detected by the denizens of the mountains, whose organs of scent are most keenly developed. All was still save the rushing of the waters, and not a sound denoted the existence of animal life save that indescribable low hum, or soft murmur of the invisible insect world, which ever greets the hunter's ears in the early morning.

Having satisfied myself that we had every prospect of fine weather for our expedition, I bid the man who was on the look-out to rouse the people, and in a few moments we were all assembled round a blazing fire. Having partaken of a substantial breakfast, and superintended the packing of our baggage, we lighted our cheroots, and waited until there was sufficient light to distinguish our way, when we shouldered our rifles, and set out for the glacier, distant eighteen miles. We kept an extended line whenever the nature of the ground permitted, and beat the most likely-looking patches of forest for musk deer, of which there were numerous fresh traces. Fred got a couple of shots, and managed to bag a fine old buck with a pod that weighed over an ounce. I might have had a fair shot had I been prepared, for one started up from behind a bush within easy gunshot whilst I was fastening up my gaiter, but before I could raise my rifle it bounded away out of sight.

Notwithstanding the numerous obstacles *en route*, we had excellent sport as we advanced, twice falling in with burrul on the grass-covered slopes of the hill-sides; and here I was very successful, for I killed two, right and left, and broke the leg of a third, which, how-

ever, got away, whilst two others were bagged by my companions. I also succeeded in stalking a snow-leopard, which had evidently been following the burrul, and knocked him over by a lucky shot through the head as he was stealing away over some craggy ground some two hundred yards distant. It proved a beautiful specimen, the fur being very soft and close, having a whitish ground with dark spots. These animals are very cunning, and, notwithstanding their traces are often seen on the snowy ranges, comparatively few are bagged.

Whilst I was performing the operation of skinning the leopard, and my companions were breaking up the other game, Chinncah espied something moving on a grassy patch in a ravine high up among the rocks on the left bank, and with the aid of my glass I made out a large flock of burrul, some of which were lying down, and the others quietly grazing. It was of no use, I knew, approaching them from below, as the ground was unfavourable for stalking, and we should have no chance of getting within range without being perceived; so we arranged that Fred should creep along through the birch forest and clamber up the hill on the farther side, whilst the Doctor and I should try and get above on the near side, so as to take them on both flanks.

After a careful reconnaissance of their position, we crept noiselessly upwards, keeping our bodies bent as low as possible, so as not to attract their attention; and by dint of hard climbing, often on all fours, in rather less than two hours we emerged from out of the birch forest, and traversing a belt of stunted juniper-bushes half covered with snow, reached the rocky crest of the hill, breathless and faint from continued exertion. Throwing ourselves down on a smooth slab of rock, to rest and regain our steadiness previous to approaching the burrul, our attention was drawn to the magnificence of the panorama then before us, and for a time we gazed spell-bound. Before us lay the glacier world, with its interminable barriers of eternal snow, peak upon peak rising one behind another in endless succession. From the valley, on account of the steepness



THE HIMALAYAN IBEX

and close proximity of its boundaries, little was to be seen except a narrow strip of sky above ; but from the elevation we had now attained, which the Doctor made out to be nearly 15,000 feet above the level of the sea, and about 4,000 above the bed of the river, the scene was grand beyond conception. Rising above an unbroken girdle of perpetual snow, seventeen peaks seemed to pierce the heavens, the lowest of which exceeded 20,000 feet in elevation. Most conspicuous, from its colossal proportions, was the mighty Soomeroo Purbut, or Rudru Himalch, with its five majestic peaks towering high against the deep cerulean firmament. They rise in a semicircle facing the south-west, and from where we stood appeared to form an immense amphitheatre filled with eternal snow, in which the Ganges has its primary source.

Although the distance to some of these peaks from where we stood must have exceeded forty miles as the crow flies, yet the air was so transparent that their outlines were most clearly and sharply defined. From this point we had a very extensive view of the valley of the Ganges, now and then getting a glimpse of the river itself, as, like a silver thread, at a vast depth below us, it wound along from the east, and then took a southerly direction towards the plains. The general character of the valley is that of a grand ravine bounded by two precipices of almost vertical rocks, sometimes with only sufficient space between for the windings of the river, and at others opening out to a mile in breadth.

But it was time to look after the burru. Having regained our breath, we examined our rifles, and stole quietly forward along the crest of the hill. We had not gone many yards, our footsteps scarcely making any noise over the crisp snow, when Chinneah, who was a couple of paces in front, stopped short, and made a sign to attract our attention ; a slight rustling was heard, and in an instant there was a rushing sound on the opposite side of a ridge of rocks like that of an animal bounding away at full speed.

"There goes our game. Is it not provoking?—after such a fag, too!" exclaimed the Doctor in a subdued voice; and he was pressing

forward, when I thought I heard a second movement, and made a gesture for him to keep still ; another moment and I perceived the horns, head, and black breast of an old ram peering inquisitively over a narrow ridge of rock, not fifty yards from where we were standing. To fling up my rifle and press the trigger was the work of a second ; but when the smoke cleared away nothing was to be seen, but a shrill snort, followed by a trampling of feet, was distinctly heard on the other side of the crest, and for a moment I thought I had made a mess of it. Not so Chinneah : he insisted the animal was hit ; and so it proved, for, on running up to the spot, there was a fine full-grown ram stone dead, the bullet having entered the skull right between the eyes. The rest of the herd galloped away in the direction of the ravine where we had marked burrul in the first instance, and on the other side of which Fred had gone to take post. As they had not seen us, I did not think they would go very far, so we pressed on after them, and at last arrived at the edge of the slope, when by craning over we saw a herd of at least forty burrul grazing undisturbed on the grassy flats below us. Where now was Fred ? Ensconcing ourselves behind some rocks which served as a screen, we waited impatiently his approach. At last I saw three moving figures in clear relief against the sky on the opposite hill : it was Fred and his two shekarries. I watched him with my telescope cautiously creeping along the broken ground, rifle in hand, prepared for anything, and halting every now and then to sweep the ground with his glass. Perceiving from his movements that he could not see the flock from where he was, I stepped back a few paces, and fastening a handkerchief to my ramrod, made a signal that "game was afoot," which was immediately understood and answered. Fred, with the precaution of an old sportsman, now sent one of his people along the hill at the entrance of the gorge, so as to drive back the herd in case they should break in that direction, whilst I did the same on my side, and then leaving the Doctor, I posted myself at the head of the ravine. Hardly had I reached it than I heard a couple of shots

from Fred, and the reports were still reverberating among the rocks when the Doctor also let drive right and left, and I saw the flock scatter in all directions, as if puzzled to know from what point the danger threatened. Again Fred's rifle cracked, and a magnificent old ram, leading half a dozen females, plunged suddenly forward, regained his legs a moment, and then dropped. Again there was a confused hurrying to and fro, a gathering as if for consultation; then the whole herd burst into a gallop, and disappeared over the crest some distance below the spot where the Doctor was posted, and in a few moments I saw them dashing across a distant hill miles away with undiminished speed. As matters turned out I did not get a shot, for I did not care to fire at random among the herd, which was my only chance; but my companions had no reason to complain, for Fred killed one outright, and wounded a second, which was bagged after a long chase, and several more shots; whilst the doctor killed one, and wounded another, which got away. Our game, being collected and gralloched, was much heavier than we could carry, so we had to leave two men in charge whilst we made the best of our way to the rest of the people, whom we left in the valley, and sent coolies to fetch it.

As it was now too late to think of continuing our march, we determined to bivouac under the cover of a patch of pine forest which offered some shelter. Our scouting tents were soon pitched, a shanty constructed, and a huge fire lighted, round which we assembled, for as the sun declined the evening became chilly. We were very well contented with our day's sport, having killed a musk deer, a snow-leopard, three male burru and four females—a bag which has rarely been equalled in one day by any three guns.



THE NEILCHERRY ILEX

SPORT IN THIBET.

Gratifying as the magnificent scenery of these regions is to the traveller, any very detailed description of daily marching can scarcely be otherwise than monotonous to the reader. I shall, therefore, simply confine my relation of this expedition to pointing out that which will be most useful to any brother sportsman taking the same route.

Crossing the Ganges, we made our way along the banks of the Goomtee Gadh, and for three days directed our course up the Neila Valley, a delightful spot called by the Puharrces *Pool-ke-daree*—the Road of Flowers—and *en route* we had some very fair burrul-shooting. Crossing the Neila Pass, an altitude of 16,000 feet, which somewhat tried our powers as mountaineers, we entered the head of the Buspa Valley, and following the down-stream course of the river of that name, in three days arrived at Chetkoul, the first village on the Koonawaur side, where we halted a day, as our people and the coolies were somewhat knocked up with seven days' continuous marching and the difficulties of the way. Our next stages were to Raugchum and Sangla, and from thence, over the Barung Pass, an elevation of 16,300 feet above the sea, into the valley of the Sutlej. Crossing this wide, rapid, and muddy-looking river by a very precarious rope suspension-bridge, at Poaree, a few miles from Chinee, three more marches brought us to the Askrung Valley, where we halted for five days, and had some capital ibex-hunting, Fred greatly distinguishing himself by his excellent shooting at long ranges. The ibex, although plentiful, were very wild and difficult to approach, having been recently disturbed; consequently all the game killed was by long shots. Twice Fred killed running ibex at distances considerably over four hundred yards, which is the *ne plus ultra* of brilliant marksmanship.

From Askrung we marched through Libi over the Mannerung Pass (18,600 feet) to Mana, the first village in Spittee, and from

thence along the Spittee river and over the Parung Pass (18,800 feet) into Rupsha, halting for three days at Kiang-dam, on the Choomarera lake, a magnificent sheet of fresh water, about twenty miles long by five broad, situated at an elevation of 15,000 feet above the sea. In the country round about the lake we first came across the kiang, or wild horse, of which we shot a few as specimens. The kiang is about fourteen hands at the shoulders, and resembles the ass much more than the nobler quadrupeds. They are generally of a reddish-grey, with a dark stripe down the back, and almost white under the belly and inside the legs. The head is large and ugly, the mane hogged, and they are usually cat-hammed. There is a great similarity between the South African quagga and the kiang in general appearance. We saw great numbers of these animals during our wanderings in this part of the country, but, our curiosity satisfied, we did not care to pull trigger at them.

Leaving the Choomarera lake, we crossed the Nakpokonding Pass to Latok, near the Cheumo salt lake, and here, whilst hunting over a bleak and desolate-looking region, we fell in with a wandering tribe of Tartars who were returning to their summer camp near the Pang-kung lake. Their chief, a very intelligent man in his way, gave us such excellent accounts of the game in that part of the country, more especially as regarded the naheen, or *ovis ammon* (the largest species known of wild sheep), that we determined to explore it. We sent off the yaks with the heavier portion of the baggage under charge of some of our people to Ladak, by the Tungrung Pass (18,100 feet), whilst we accompanied the Tartars, who carried about a month's supplies for us on their spare yaks. Branching off to the eastward, we struck and followed up a small stream to its junction with the Indus at Mahe, and continued our way along the banks of the latter river until we came to Nioma, when our route lay in a northerly direction. We now crossed the Sakala Pass (16,000 feet), and halted at Chushul, which we made a temporary headquarters.

We hunted in this neighbourhood five days, and, under the

guidance of the Tartar chief, had excellent sport, falling in with numerous flocks of burrul and ovis ammon. The finest specimen of the latter animal, which was as large as an ordinary bullock of the plains, Fred killed after a three hours' stalk. His horns were 16 inches in circumference at the base, and 46 inches round the curve. I killed three fine rams and a female, but none of them equalled in size that killed by my companion. The female is an insignificant-looking creature in comparison with the male, and the horns are not more than 14 inches in length, and but slightly curved. We all contributed clothes, knicknacks, and sundry articles that we could spare, as a present to the chief, and put him in such a good humour that he volunteered to accompany us to a range of mountains to the westward of the Pang-kung lake (which I believed to be part of the Kailas range), where we should find bunchowr or wild yaks. We closed at once with the desirable offer, and started off to the eastward early the next morning.

After seven days continuous marching through a most desolate-looking country, where the only human beings met with were a few wandering Hunnias, we passed round the north end of the lake, and struck a range of lofty mountains, which our Tartar guide informed us was the haunt of bunchowr. Burrul and ovis ammon were frequently seen *en route*, but we only killed sufficient game to maintain ourselves and our people in food; and now that there was a prospect of nobler game, we did not dare to fire a shot, lest the report of our rifles might scare it away. For the first two days we explored these mountains without success; no bunchowr were to be seen, although we found numerous traces of their existence. The third morning, soon after daylight, we saw five dark objects moving slowly over the snow, about a mile distant. Our field-glasses were put in requisition, and to our great delight we made out five gigantic shaggy bulls, quietly browsing, perfectly unconscious of our presence. The ground was tolerably favourable for stalking, and as we had taken the precaution of wearing white shirts over our ordinary hunting gear, with linen cap-covers,

we were scarcely distinguishable from the snow. Fortunately a strong breeze was blowing at the time, of which advantage we did not fail to avail ourselves by keeping well to leeward, and after an exciting quarter of an hour's work, we managed to get within easy range (150 yards) of the herd, who were chewing the cud quite unconscious of their fate. A moment more, and two shaggy monsters were on their backs on the snow, struggling in their last agonies, whilst the other three, more or less wounded, were galloping about in wild but grand confusion. Having hastily re-loaded, we gave chase; but this was scarcely required, for no sooner were we perceived than two of the three wheeled suddenly round, and with heads down and tails on end, made a most vicious charge towards us, evidently meaning mischief. Again our rifles cracked, and two more huge bodies were floundering in the snow, which was discoloured with their gore. The fifth bull, who was slowly following the other two, being more severely wounded, now came up, and was easily dispatched. Thus died five stately bulls of undaunted pluck, and great was the joy of our Tartar followers at the prospect of such an immense supply of food. We carefully skinned the two finest specimens, and preserved the horns and tails of the others as trophies, but the hides were a great deal too heavy for our people to carry, so we were obliged to leave them on the ground and send the yaks for them.

The next morning we saw a solitary bull of immense dimensions, but he proved a very wary beast, and notwithstanding all our precautions, the taint in the air betrayed our whereabouts, and he took himself off without giving us the chance of a shot. The day following we separated, Fred and the doctor taking one side of a hill, whilst I explored the other. I met with several fresh traces, although I saw no game worth pulling trigger at; but my companions were more fortunate, as they fell in with a herd of seven bulls, and managed to kill three of the number. Two days after this, I again caught sight of the same old solitary bull who had baffled us on a previous occasion, and this time I was more fortunate, although I

was fully three hours in circumventing him before I dared venture within range. Even then I was afraid of attempting to get within four hundred yards of him, as he was standing like an outlying sentinel on a small eminence, so I managed to take up a position on an adjacent height, from which I could observe all his movements. I watched him for at least twenty minutes before commencing offensive operations, for the distance was too great for me to make certain of killing, or even mortally wounding him; and there was a deep cud or valley where the drifted snow appeared to lie deep, which I could not hope to cross without being seen. At last I fancied he was about to move away, and as his position seemed to offer a fair shot, I put up the back-sight of my heavy 2-ounce rifle at the four hundred yards' range, and deliberately aimed at his brawny shoulder. The grooved bore carried truly, for when the smoke cleared away, I saw the huge beast was brought to his knees, and in a moment more he careened on his side, and rolled over on his back with his four feet in the air. I gave him the contents of my second barrel, which did not seem to affect him, for his position remained unchanged; so, having carefully re-loaded, I approached him, keeping myself in readiness to receive his charge, which would be the more impetuous as it would be made downhill. As I drew near, I heard him making a peculiar moaning noise, accompanied by a succession of loud grunts, which I knew betokened extreme distress; and when I mounted the crest of the hill, I saw at a glance that the game was nearly over. The poor beast was in his last agony, and too far gone to notice me; so stepping up, I put him out of pain by shooting him between the eyes, when a convulsive quiver passed over the body, and all was still. I found my first shot had proved fatal, having entered just behind the shoulder and penetrated the lungs; whilst the second had passed through the neck. The dimensions of this bull far exceeded any we had hitherto killed, and his mane, forelock, and the hair on his flanks were much longer. His horns were nearly 18 inches in circumference at the base, and short in comparison. The bunchowr, although not

SPORT IN THIBET.

so high at the shoulder as the bison of the low country, is a larger and more formidable animal than the American species. He is very short in the legs, and massively built, yet very active, and capable of getting over the most difficult ground in a surprisingly short time. Their general colour is black, with dark ash under the belly and inside the legs; but they vary. I have seen some skins that were altogether black. We hunted over this part of the country for ten days, having famous sport; when, finding our supplies getting short, we retraced our steps, and made the best of our way back to our former camp in the Chushul Valley.

After hunting for some days in the mountains between the Pang-kung lake and the Indus, we proceeded in a northerly direction up the Chushul Valley, and crossed the range by the Changla Pass (16,500 feet), striking the Sakety river, the downward course of which stream we followed until its junction with the Indus, near the village of Marsilla. Two days' marching along the banks of this river brought us to Leh or Ladak, the capital of Little Thibet, where we found our people rather uneasy at our prolonged absence. Halting here for three days, we visited the Rajah's palace and the Buddhist monastery of Hemes, being shown through the place by the lamas.

Having seen all that was worthy of notice in Ladak, we started for Kashmere, keeping along the banks of the Indus for three marches; and passing through Nurila, Lamieroo, and Drass, halted at Pandrass, where we had three days' hunting amongst the hills adjacent to the glaciers, and killed several shalmar, a species of wild sheep different to any we had hitherto fallen in with. From Pandrass, four marches *vid* Soonamurg and Kungur, brought us to the celebrated Lake of Kashmere, where, finding boats, we entered the capital on the twentieth day after leaving Ladak.

CHAPTER XIII.

UNLOOKED-FOR RENCONTRES.

Unexpected sport—A critical situation—A coracle voyage down the Bhowani and Cauvery rivers—A safe craft—Alligator-shooting—The nilghau—Attractive nautch girls—The sacred island of Srirangam—The Temple of Vishnu—A Paradise for snipe-shooters—Partridges—Quails—Trichinopoly—Return to Madras—Sambur-stalking—The great bustard—The florakin—Sand grouse.

WHEN a hunter is in the forest he should always keep on the alert, with his arms ready for service, in case of an unexpected rencontre with some of the feline animals that may be prowling about. The following example will show the necessity of being ever prepared against eventualities. Whilst hunting in the Andior jungle, I was clambering down the dry sandy bed of a nullah, and peering between the trees in the expectation of getting a shot at a brood of pea-fowl that I could hear chirping and scratching up the ground in the underwood close at hand, when, turning stealthily round a large jummon-bush (a kind of willow), I suddenly came face to face upon an immense tiger, who had evidently been taking his "*siesta*" under the cool shade of the shelving bank, for when I first caught sight of him he was stretching himself and yawning as if only just awake. Doubtless it was a mutual surprise, but I was the first to recover self-possession, for without a moment's hesitation I swung round, and notwithstanding we were barely 6 feet apart, and my gun (a double 8-gauge by Westley Richards) was only loaded with No. 4 shot, I let drive right and left full into his face. Before the smoke cleared away, the tiger, uttering an appalling shriek of rage, sprang clear over my head, and fell with a crash against the opposite bank; whilst I,



AN UNLOOKED-FOR RENCONTRE.

without waiting to watch his further movements, gave "leg bail," and ran in a contrary direction down the nullah. Finding that I was not pursued, I re-loaded with ball, when "Richard was himself again," for I must own my serenity of mind was somewhat disturbed at such an unlooked-for rencontre. Chinneah, attracted by the double report, now came up, and, having taken my pet rifle from him, I slung the smooth-bore over my shoulder, directed him to remain quiet in a tree, and again made my way to the scene of action. I soon came across the tiger's pugs, and followed them up to a pool of water where there were marks of his having quenched his thirst a few moments before.

The double charge of shot I administered at such close quarters had evidently taken effect, for the trail was marked with large crimson drops, and I knew that his sight was partially if not entirely destroyed, as from time to time he had struck his head against the steep banks on each side of the nullah, leaving large gouts of blood behind him. In a few minutes I heard sundry strange noises in a patch of reeds and corinda-bushes by the side of the nullah, and from the "swearing" of a troop of monkeys in the trees overhead on each bank, I knew what to expect. I clambered up a boulder of rock, from whence I could see the tiger going round and round, evidently quite blind, for every now and then he knocked his head against stones and bushes, when he would give a short angry roar, tear up the ground, and bite at everything within his reach. I saw at a glance how matters were, so stealing gently up I aimed just behind the shoulder, and the ball passing through the heart, immediately put him out of his misery, for he sprang high into the air and dropped stone dead. On examination I found the whole of the upper part of the face was blown to pieces and both eyes destroyed with the effect of my first shots; indeed, the head was a mass of congealed blood, none of the features being distinguishable. However, such is the tenacity of life in the feline race, that he managed, even in this condition, to make his way for upwards of half a mile, although totally blind.

This is only one case out of some scores, in which I have met with a startling surprise whilst wandering through the forest, and it shows the absolute necessity of always being on the alert, prepared for any danger that may present itself.

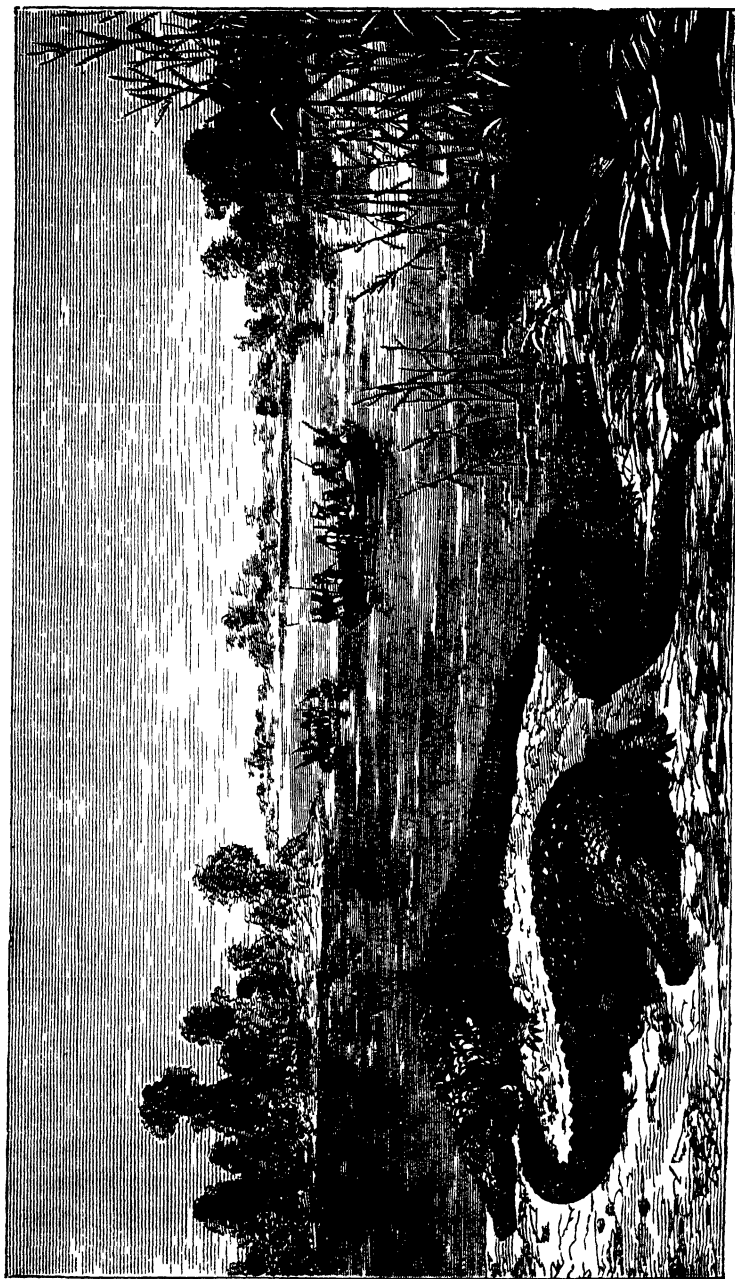
A VOYAGE IN A CORACLE DOWN THE BHOWANI AND CAUVERY RIVERS.

I had been shooting for some months in the Coimbatore jungle, when I was compelled to return to Madras, and there being no railways in those days, instead of marching the three hundred miles by tedious daily stages, I determined to embark with my servants, two favourite horses, my dogs, and all my gear, at Metrapolliam on the Bhowani river, close to the Neilgherry Hills, and make my way down stream to the east coast. For this purpose I had three famously strong bamboo saucer-shaped basket-boats constructed, each about 16 feet in diameter and 30 inches in depth. These were strongly covered with bison and raw bullock-hides sewn together, and one of them was carefully fitted with a plank flooring to prevent the horses' hoofs from breaking through. All being prepared, a fair stock of provisions and liquor was stowed away, our baggage, horses, dogs, and people embarked in two of the boats, whilst Kenny, of H.M. 84th, Chinneah, my head boy, a boatman, and myself occupied the third. Bidding good bye to several friends from Ootacamund, who had come to see us off in a primitive craft, the boatmen pushed off, and our voyage began. No rowing was required, as we were carried down the stream by the force of the current at the rate of nearly five miles an hour, the boatmen keeping our craft in deep water by means of a broad paddle, which not only acted as a rudder, but also prevented the boat from turning round and round, as it would have done if left to itself. There is no possibility of capsizing these strange-looking craft, and the only accident that can happen is that

the leather covering may be torn by sharp ledges of rocks or trees half buried in the bed of the river, a mishap of rare occurrence, as, although the coracles can carry an immense weight (two or three tons), they rarely draw more than from 4 to 6 inches of water. Besides, this accident is easily remedied, as the boatmen always carry the necessary materials for repairing damages ; the boat is drawn ashore, and a leather patch makes it as water-tight as ever. As we glided down the stream, which in many parts was fringed with dense forest jungle, the howling of my dogs repeatedly attracted my attention to the numerous alligators that were swimming with only just their noses above water, and Kenny and I had some very pretty rifle practice, turning several of them over with a conical ball between the eyes, when they would show their dark yellow throats, lash the water with their tails for a moment, and sink to the bottom.

The river was very full, and rapidly and smoothly we glided over its dark surface, now and then startling from the overhanging trees swarms of pelican, blue and white herons, ibis, and kingfishers of various kinds ; whilst at times we would drive out from their places of concealment in the reeds, gigantic cranes of the adjutant species, or troops of scarlet-winged flamingoes. As the moon was nearly at the full, the nights were as light as day ; so we continued our voyage throughout the night, and rested for six or seven hours in some shady place during the intense heat of the day. Sometimes, in the evening or the early morning, we got shots at deer or other forest animals, as the stream carried us noiselessly past the place where they were drinking ; and on one occasion we surprised a tiger, and hit him hard just as he had struck down a fine fat doe chitel ; but he managed to escape into the thick bush, leaving a bloody trail ; so we contented ourselves with appropriating the venison, which was still warm when we put it in our boat.

On the third morning we arrived at the confluence of the Bhowani and the Cauvery rivers, and here we made a couple of days' halt, so as to stretch our horses' legs with a gallop after nilghau, which are plentiful in the neighbourhood, and to give our boatmen a rest.

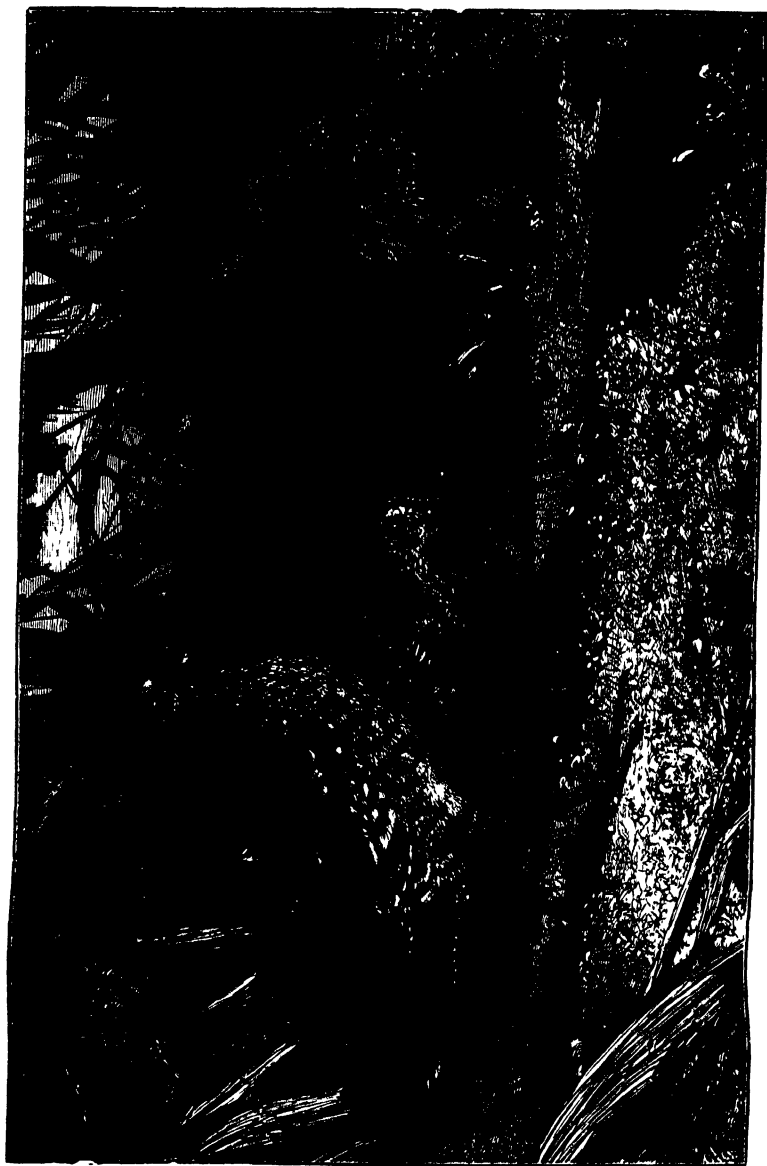


ALLIGATORS ON THE BHOWANI.

As soon as our arrival at the travellers' bungalow was made known in the village, several of our old acquaintance came to see us, for on several occasions I had made Bhowani my head-quarters, as supplies of all kinds were plentiful, and in those days the surrounding jungle was a sure find for large game. The village shekarries wanted me to halt for a week, as they said they could show me several tigers at no great distance, but I told them that I was afraid of the river falling shallow, and could not spare the time, so it was determined to have a grand hunt after nilghau on the morrow, and renew our voyage towards Trichinopoly in the evening.

The nilghau is the largest of our Indian antelope, the bull standing nearly fourteen hands at the shoulder. The male, which is often called the "blue bull," is of a slatish-grey colour, whilst the female, which is a much smaller animal, is of a greyish-fawn. These animals are generally found in herds of five or six together, in the neighbourhood of low jungle-covered hills adjoining cultivation, or on the sites of deserted villages, unfortunately too common all over India, which are usually overgrown with long rank grass and low bush. Nilghau, although awkward animals to look at, have a very fair turn of speed, and it is capital sport to drive a good bull out into the plain and ride him down with the spear. In districts where they have not been much harassed they are not difficult to approach, and they are easily stalked. Their flesh is coarse and poor eating, but the marrow-bones are considered a *bonne bouche*.

As evening drew on, after we had dined, Mother Garrow and her train of dusky nymphs from the pagoda of the dread goddess Kali, "the destroyer," made their appearance, and we were entertained with an admirable nautch. Several of the younger dancing girls were very fair and had soft, oval faces; large, brilliant, almond-shaped eyes, fringed with long lashes, and set off with beautifully arched black eyebrows; noses finely cut; tempting-looking lips, which disclosed pearl-like teeth; rounded arms and well-proportioned figures, which were admirably set off but not concealed by



SNIPER

richly coloured silks and flowing drapery. Singing and dancing continued to a late hour, when, having distributed our largesse to the fair votaries of Bhowani, we turned in. Early the next morning we started under the guidance of a couple of village shekarries, who posted us in the dry bed of a dry watercourse, and as soon as we had taken up our position the beat began. Although we had ridden all the way to the spot where we were placed in ambuscade, the jungle was too dense for us to attempt to ride down our game, so we gave up all thoughts of doing so, and waited patiently to see what might turn up. At last an old female bear and her cub emerged from the cover and made their way into the open, when Kenny (who had won the toss) fired first, hitting the old one hard with one barrel, and finishing her with the second. The young one, frightened by the reports of the gun, ran to the dead mother for protection, and was easily secured by Chinneah in his turban-cloth. Shortly afterwards a herd of spotted deer, followed by a troop of seven nilghau, broke out, and we discharged all our guns into the brown of them as they crossed the open ground. One spotted deer and two nilghau dropped in their tracks; and two other spotted deer that were hard hit, were followed up by our people and the dogs, and brought to bay. In a second beat we killed another spotted deer, with fine branching antlers, and two jungle sheep, and then returned to the bungalow to dinner.

About an hour before sunset we re-embarked, and early in the morning of the next day but one we landed at the ghaut of the sacred island of Siringam, on which stands the famous temple of the god Vishnu. The temple of the god, where Vishnu is said to repose in eternal sleep, is surrounded by seven concentric enclosures, 25 feet high and 4 feet thick. In the first, Hindoos of all castes reside; in the second, Brahmins only may dwell; in the third, the families of the priests of the temple and the dancing girls reside; the fourth contains several temples, or *mandapams*, one of which contains a thousand columns, in sixteen rows of sixty-five columns in a row; and in others may be seen colossal monsters and mounted



COMMON OR GREY PARTIDGE

figures carved out of the solid stone, and columns ornamented with gigantic sculptures in relief. The central enclosure, or "the holy of holies," is not shown to ordinary visitors, but some officers of the Civil Service, who insisted upon seeing all over the place when there was reason to suppose that arms were secreted there, said there was nothing remarkable in the place except a black granite throne, on which stood several rudely carved gods and goddesses, and some stone lingums and bulls. In Trichinopoly several hundred dancing girls are attached to the pagodas, whose services are hired for weddings and gala days, by wealthy natives fond of display. Six miles south-west of Trichinopoly, in the middle of the jungle, is a large deserted pagoda, full of beautiful carvings, which bears the name of "Shitan Rowil," or the "Palace of the Devil," and all round about the district are similar stupendous Hindoo monuments, none of which, however, are believed to be of any great antiquity.

The district round about Trichinopoly is famous for small game-shooting, more especially snipe and wild-fowl. Perhaps there is no part of the world where snipe abound as they do in this part of India. The alluvial soil, which at certain seasons of the year is covered with water, operated upon at the same time by the influence of a fierce sun, generates and swarms with vermicular and insect life, which constitutes the chief food of the *Grallæ* tribe.

Sportsmen who are fond of snipe-shooting may satisfy themselves to their hearts' content, should they ever wade through the rice-fields of Trichinopoly during the months of October, November, and December. At this season the rains have ceased, and the stagnant waters left behind, covering a vast extent of country, filling all the tanks and inundating the low lands, having to a great extent evaporated, thousands upon thousands of *Grallæ* swarm over the land. At this time snipe rise by the score, from almost under the sportsman's feet, and often, when literally gorged to repletion, alight again a few paces distant. The birds at this season are in famous condition, and would weigh down the generality of our English birds.

Snipe and different varieties of water-fowl begin to arrive in India from the steppes of Central Asia in October, and before the end of November every lake, tank, and swamp swarms with wild-fowl. The common grey teal, the whistling teal, and the blue-



THE PAINTED PARTRIDGE.

winged teal are the first to make their appearance; then come flights of widgeon, the red-headed pochard, the pintail, the gadwall, the mallard, the Brahminee duck, the shovel-billed duck, the grey goose, the black-backed goose, and a host of different kinds of herons, cranes, storks, ibis, and wading birds, which are found in clouds in the pools and marshes not much frequented by man.

Partridges and quail of one kind or another are extremely plentiful all over this district. The common grey partridge, which in appearance closely resembles the English bird, feeds foully, and is found on the outskirts of every village surrounded by cultivation. In some parts of the country red-legged partridges are very numerous; in Upper India is found the black partridge; and in various other parts the painted partridge, a game-looking bird, excellent for the table and affording admirable sport, is found round the outskirts of the jungle.

Besides these, there are several other varieties peculiar to different districts, the appearance and habits of no two being exactly alike. Of the other winged game, the grey quail—one of the best of Indian game birds both for sport and the table—is found at certain seasons in great numbers in most grain districts, and in some places a hundred brace have been killed by a single gun in a day. There are besides, the three-toed or florakin quail, the rain quail, the button quail, and the brown quail, which are more or less common all over the country.

The ordinary way of shooting all kinds of small game in India is by beating it out with a line of men; but for sport I much prefer shooting in the early morning, when the scent is good, with a team of well broken Sussex spaniels. The grey quail (*Tetrao coturnix*) is a pretty bright-eyed little bird, not much larger than a lark, but resembling a partridge both in shape, plumage, and in the build of the legs. A "bevy" of quail generally consists of about a dozen birds, and, as a rule, they lie very close, and may easily be passed over if the sportsman has no dog with him. When they rise, they do so with a whirr, and instead of soaring, sweep along in a straight line with great velocity.

The shrill whistling of a quail, which is generally repeated three times in rapid succession, is so seldom heard when the breeding season is over, that the males are then said to have lost their voice. The nest is generally found among clover or long grass, and consists of a hollow in the ground lined with dry grass and moss. The eggs,



QUAILS AND YOUNG.

from seven to twelve in number, are white, tinged with yellowish red, speckled with brown. The female sits upon them three weeks, and the young follow her as soon as they leave the shell, commencing at once to feed upon seeds, grain, insects, and green leaves.

I halted a couple of days at Trichinopoly to beat up some old friends, and here I parted with my friend Kenny, who had to rejoin his regiment, the 84th Foot, then forming part of the garrison of that station, and then continued my voyage. From Trichinopoly the Cauvery river takes the name of the Coleroon, after one of its principal tributaries, which it retains until it reaches the sea. Leaving Trichonopoly, in the evening of the third day afterwards we arrived at the embouchure, a few miles from Tranquebar, where I put up with my old friend Campbell, then in command of the military detachment stationed in the fort. Here I heard that a steamer was expected in a few days at Karical, a French settlement a few miles distant, on its way to Pondicherry and Madras ; so sending on my horses and servants by road, I proceeded to that place, and put up at the Hôtel de l'Orient, a very comfortable establishment, until its arrival, when I took my passage and embarked for the Presidency. My voyage of over three hundred miles down the river was a very agreeable one ; and, considering that it was accomplished under a fortnight, including halts and stoppages, it certainly was an expeditious mode of travelling in those days, although at the present time the journey can be made by rail in about twenty-four hours.

THE SAMBUR.

THE sambur or Rusa deer (*Rusa Aristotelis*), which is found in most of the large jungles surrounding the hill ranges throughout India, is considerably larger than the Scotch red deer, and more powerfully built. A full-grown stag averages from 14 to 15 hands

at the shoulder, and his hind-quarters are as well shaped as those of a high-caste Arab, whereas the Scotch red deer generally falls low behind, and is more or less cat-hammed. The head is beautifully formed, the forehead being broad and massive, whilst the line of the face is straight, and the muzzle very fine. The eyes are very large and beautiful, being fringed with long black eyelashes, and the suborbital sinus—which is very conspicuous—expands greatly when the animal is excited. The horns of the sambur vary very much in their development according to the district in which they are found, some being long and slender, whilst others are massive and short. The horns are rather upright, having two short *brow* antlers only, and at three years old two points at the extremities of each beam, as shown in the engraving. Sometimes the inner and sometimes the outer tine of the terminal fork will be found the longer; and occasionally, but rarely, three tines are seen at the summit of the beam. The horns of a mature stag average 35 inches in length from base to tip, having a circumference of 11 inches round the burr at the base, and 8 inches at the thinnest part of the beam; but I have seen antlers which greatly exceeded these dimensions. The colour varies slightly, but is usually a very dark slate, mingled with grey, nearly black about the face and points, and a light buff between the haunches and underneath. The hair immediately next to the jaw is longer than on any other part of the neck, and when the animal is alarmed or excited, it stands on end and forms a kind of ruff, sometimes called the mane. The hinds are smaller than the stags, and of a lighter colour; and both sexes have canine teeth in the upper jaw.

The horns vary in size according to the age of the animal, and, until the stag gets in the "sere and yellow leaf," are cast annually; not, however, always at the same time, for one generally drops a day or two after the other. The new horns attain their full growth in about three months, appearing about a week after the old ones are shed, and are covered with a thick leaden-coloured skin or velvet, which after a time peels off. At this period the horns are

very sensitive, and the stags avoid bringing them into collision with any substance. Old stags shed their horns very irregularly. Captain Forsyth says :—"I have taken much pains to assure myself of a fact of which I am now perfectly convinced—namely, that neither in the case of the sambur nor the spotted deer (both belonging to the Asiatic group of *Rusinae*, as distinguished from the *Cirvidæ*, or true stags) are the antlers regularly shed every year in these Central Indian forests, as is the case with the *Cervidæ* in cold climates. No native shekarry who is engaged all his life in the pursuit of these animals will allow such to be the case, and all sportsmen out at that season must have seen stags with full-grown horns during the hot weather and rains, when they are supposed to have shed them. Hornless-headed stags are seen at that season ; but the great majority have perfect heads. I have also known certain stags for successive years always about the same locality, which I have repeatedly stalked at intervals during this time along with natives who constantly saw them, so that I could not be mistaken as to the individual, and all the time they never once dropped their horns."

Old stags remain solitary, except during the rutting season, in October and November, the younger harts only remaining with the herd. During this period they are extremely vicious, and may be heard roaring all over the forest, calling and answering each other. When they meet they engage in savage conflicts, rearing themselves on their hind legs, sparring with their fore-feet, and butting each other with their antlers, until one feels himself worsted and leaves the herd, the hinds, who generally watch the engagement with the utmost *nonchalance*, bestowing their favours on the conqueror.

Sambur move from place to place according as food becomes scarce. They feed on a variety of jungle products, more especially the flower of the mohra, wild figs, the fruits of the chironji, the bher, and many other trees, the roots of young trees, and herbage of different kinds. When the villagers' crops are green, they issue forth at night and commit great devastation, nibbling close off all the tender young shoots; but at break of day they retire into the forest, or



SAMBUR-HUNTING.

high up the hills, where they make forms in the long grass, and lie down for the day. Each animal makes its form under the shade of a tree, and they have the discrimination to select a spot where the deepest shade falls during the hottest hours of the day. In some secluded places hundreds of forms may be found on a hill-side, each of which will be shaded during the intense heat of the day by the foliage of a sheltering tree. The form of an old stag is generally apart from those of the hinds, from which it may be readily distinguished by its superior size. When lying down for the day in their forms, sambur will frequently allow the sportsman to approach quite close without getting up, trusting to the high grass concealing their presence. A somewhat curious incident exemplifying this occurred on the Annamullai Hills, where Burton and I had three months' glorious sport. We were crossing a grassy plateau some 5,000 or 6,000 feet above the plains, when we came to the crest of the hill, and a fine old stag suddenly appeared to rise from the ground right in front of me. He had evidently only just awoke from deep slumber, and was unsuspecting of danger in his mountain fastness; for instead of bounding away in an instant as he would have done if alarmed, he began to stretch himself, and I rolled him over with a bullet in the back of the head. Hardly had I fired, than the clattering of hoofs was heard all along the hill-side, and I think quite a hundred sambur started from their forms in the high grass. Burton killed a fine hart, as well as a young hind, as they tore over the crest of the hill past him; but I refrained from firing, as I saw no other good heads pass within shot. I never, either before or since, saw so large a herd together.

Sambur, like every other kind of deer, are exceedingly fond of salt, and a herd will frequently travel a score of miles during the night to get to a salt-lick, as a jheel in which saline incrustations are found is called in India. The native shekarries, who are aware of this fact, secrete themselves near such places, and often kill bison and various kinds of deer during the night with their matchlocks. This, however, is rank poaching, and should be discouraged as



A SAMBUR AT BAY

much as possible, as for one animal that is killed and bagged, half a dozen go away wounded and die a lingering death. There is scarcely a sport I know of that affords a true sportsman more pleasure than sambur-stalking, when the hunter, accompanied by a couple of native scouts who know their haunts, and his dog, gets on trail soon after daybreak, whilst the herbage still glistens with dew-drops, and when every footprint made the previous night is clear and sharp, and follows up his game by the slots until he steals upon his quarry in his day retreat, and kills him fairly in his own domain. This is real sport; and a stag killed in this manner gives infinitely more satisfaction than half a score slaughtered in a drive or from an ambuscade.

A thoroughly-broken dog is extremely useful in tracking up and bringing to bay a wounded deer, but unless they are perfectly well trained and know their business, the hunter had better leave them at home. Whilst in Southern India I had a large nondescript kind of dog—a cross between an English foxhound and a Bhinjarry greyhound—that was perfectly *au fait* at every kind of sport, and in the jungle he rarely left my heel, except when trailing up a wounded animal. When he was with me I rarely lost a wounded deer, as he generally managed to keep them at bay until I came up and dispatched them. His instinct was perfectly wonderful, for whilst on trail he would remain as silent as the grave, but when the stag was at bay his deep hoarse bark resounded through the forest and guided me to the quarry. In some districts sambur are driven by a long line of beaters past the sportsman posted in ambuscade, but although by this arrangement a good bag is often made, if it is often repeated the country becomes disturbed, and the game gets very wild.

The GREAT BUSTARD (*Otis tarda*), although, unhappily, extinct in England, is at certain seasons common enough on the plains of Asia Minor.

Unquestionably the great bustard is the finest game bird we



THE GREAT BUSTARD (*Otis Tarda*)

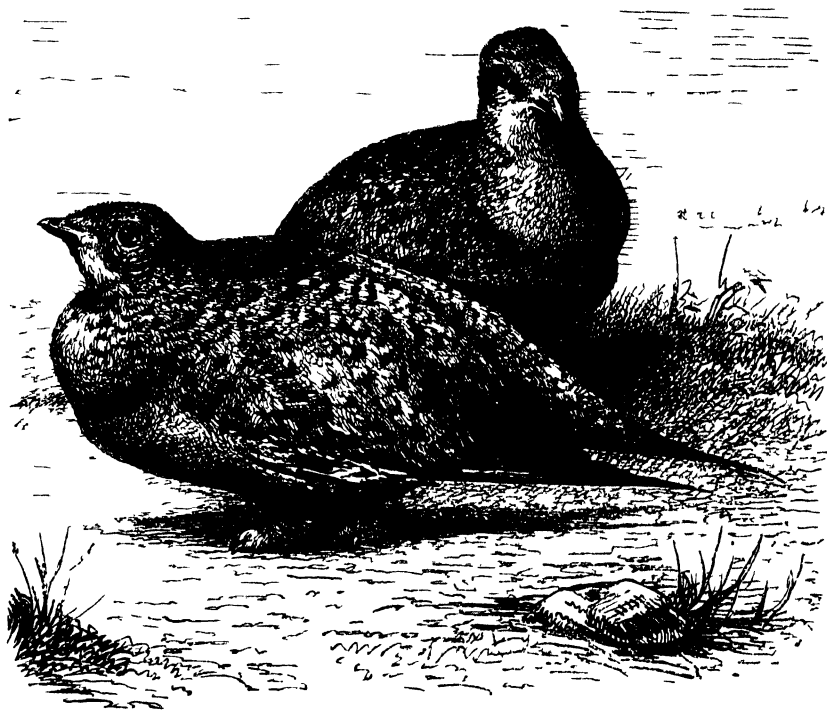
have for the table, as the flesh is more tender and delicate in flavour than either the pheasant or the turkey, consequently it is much sought after by pot-hunters. The bustard is essentially a bird of the plains, as it is never found in densely wooded country, and it makes its nest amongst high rank grass, where the hen lays three



THE ILOKAKIN

or four olive-coloured eggs, splashed with brown. Bustards are very slow and heavy in their flight, but they can run very fast, and when alarmed they generally run for some distance before they take wing. The best way of killing bustard is with a stalking-horse, and circling quietly round them until within shot. Another mode is to load a big-bore gun with Eley's green cartridge, containing

No. 1 shot, and to ride carelessly to leeward of them until they show signs of alarm, and then to make a sudden rush upon them at full speed, and pull up and fire as they take wing. In some districts, where the birds were wild, I tried a native dodge, and



SAND GROUSE

found it answer exceedingly well. This was to construct a kind of screen with green branches of trees, which a man carried in front of me until I got well within range, and quietly picked them off with a small-bore rifle. Without some such arrangement it was quite impossible to get within a couple of hundred yards of them.

The FLORAKIN, or lesser bustard (*Otis tetrax*), is found on the

plains, and it is also esteemed a most delicious bird for the table. The male bird when in full plumage is a very handsome bird, being most beautifully marked; but the hen is much plainer looking. They are usually found in pairs, and are very shy and wary, hardly ever taking to the wing if they can avoid doing so.

Wherever florakin are found, SAND GROUSE (*Pterocles bicinctus*) may be seen. These birds, although always associating in pairs, are often to be met with in large flocks. They are very beautifully marked, but their flesh is coarse and tasteless. The hen makes no nest, but merely scratches a small hole in the sand, in which she lays three or four eggs. Soon after the young birds leave the shell they become strong enough to run about and hide if alarmed.



CAPERCAILLIE.

CHAPTER XIV.

SHOOTING IN ASIA MINOR.

Circassian refugees—Cheap wives—A human market—A deer drive in the Kula Mountains—Bear-shooting—A large bag—Native superstition—A famous shot—A wandering fakir—An ibex-stalk—Mountain scenery—A deer battue—Camp revelry.

IN the year 1864, the Circassian tribes, who for fifty years had held their own in the Caucasus against the gigantic power of Russia, were obliged to yield; and vast swarms of fugitives from the steppes of the Kuban and the slopes of the Elburz, abandoning their "*konacs*" in the mountains, emigrated *en masse* to Turkey, with whatever goods and gear they could carry with them. I had been staying a few days with an old Danubian friend, Hassan Pacha, at his "*chiftlik*," or country residence, near Arnautkoi, on the Bosphorus, when, early one morning, an aide-de-camp came in with the news that a large Turkish man-of-war, full of refugees from the Caucasus, had arrived from Souchum Kaleh, and was anchored close at hand, within a stone's throw of the house. "*Allah talah!*" exclaimed our host, with a knowing twinkle of his eye, "now or never is the time to furnish our zananahs handsomely, without having dirt thrown upon our beards, and being fleeced by those extortionate *pesivenkler*. So, sound the 'boot and saddle,' and, *Insh'allah!* we shall be the first in the field, before those rascally Stamboul merchants get wind of the arrival." "Ready, aye ready," was the order of the day, and with a *posse* of chaushes and retainers we descended to the jetty where the Pacha's *caïques* were waiting, and in a few moments we were standing on the deck of the Osmanli

man-of-war, where, after the usual exchange of salaams, pipes and coffee were produced, and the object of our visit explained.

The scene on board was certainly not inviting, and needed a somewhat strong stomach to examine in detail, as the voyage had been a long one, rough weather having been experienced in the Black Sea ; and a crowd of men, women, and children were lying huddled up together in groups, pale, emaciated, and apparently half stupefied by the privations and hardships they had undergone on the voyage. The unexpected appearance of the Pacha and his somewhat gorgeously arrayed suite produced a considerable sensation. The officers of the ship vied in their polite attentions to us, pointing out the most desirable-looking of both sexes amongst the various groups ; whilst the fathers and husbands were in no way loth to exchange their "rising stock" for Turkish piastres, and a brisk trade was soon opened, wives, sisters, sons, and daughters being offered for sale indiscriminately. Being the first and only customers, there was no competition ; consequently the Pacha and his suite had no difficulty in purchasing a few additions to their harem on their own terms, as well as a sufficient number of girls and boys as domestic servants for their household. The supply exceeding the demand by long chalks, the purchasers obtained bargains not to be met with every day ; and the Pacha's "*kiatib*," or secretary, having written out the necessary papers, the documents were signed, and the piastres paid down on the deck. Although slavery as a rule is not to be defended, it must be admitted that in this instance the arrangements made were equally advantageous to the buyer, the seller, and the sold. The Turkish Pacha and several of his suite got a couple or so of pretty wives on the cheap, and several useful helpmates for their establishments ; the emigrant, freed from encumbrances, whose mouths he would have had to fill, obtained a little stock of the needful to set himself up upon landing ; and the girls and boys bought, instead of being kept half starved, would at once find comfortable homes and kind treatment.

Not being disposed either to invest in a wife or set up as a

householder in Turkey, I was merely a spectator—although I was importuned on all sides to buy—when my attention was attracted to two handsome, athletic young fellows, who stood aloof, and appeared to be of a higher caste than the rest. Finding that they spoke Turkish, I entered into conversation with them, and ascertained that they, having compromised themselves too much to hope for lenient terms from the Russians, had abandoned their home for a time, and were thinking of joining the Turkish army. Being very much prepossessed by their manly bearing and general appearance, I offered to take them both into my service, and then and there arranged that they should accompany me in a shooting expedition I intended to make in the Kula Mountains, between Batoun and Ardahan. Never had I better reason to congratulate myself upon my skill as a physiognomist, for two more willing, faithful, and devoted followers a man never had. My arrangements were made in far less time than those of the Pacha and his staff; and whilst I was waiting for the completion of their settlement, I was persuaded by a withered, shrivelled-up old crone to buy her grandson, a healthy, merry-looking, bright-eyed boy, about thirteen years old, who forthwith became a part of my goods and chattels in exchange for ten five-franc pieces, and to whom, in the course of a few days, was entrusted the special charge of some half-dozen chibouks, a narghillai or hookah, a couple of bull terriers, and a grand old retriever, my constant companions.

When all arrangements were concluded, a ship's boat was lowered, and the new acquisitions were passed into it, strange to say, without any sign of emotion or show of feeling being perceptible either on one side or the other. I tried to get a glimpse of "the bargains" obtained by my host, but they were now too closely veiled for any recognition of their features. I noticed, however, that they were all of the fat kind, so that condition had evidently been taken into consideration in their selection.

The Pacha, although considerably elated at his success, did not appear, I thought, quite at his ease. Perhaps he anticipated

"a shine" in his establishment amongst the old stock, who might not be over-pleased at the augmentation of his household ; perhaps he felt that he was somewhat over-married, and was cogitating upon his increased responsibilities ; or perchance he was considering as to which of his new acquisitions he should first "throw the handkerchief." He appeared deep in thought, and as I knew he would have his hands full for a few days, I intimated my intention of returning for a time to Mysierees' hotel, my old head-quarters at Pera, with my charge, to which arrangement he tacitly consented. Upon landing at the jetty, I perceived the dilapidated condition of my new followers' externals ; so having taken leave of the Pacha, and bidding one of his chaushes to accompany me, I engaged a *caïque* and landed at the Stamboul side of the Galata bridge ; then making my way to the bazaar, I got each of them a complete and serviceable rig-out, and sending them under charge of the chaush to the baths, they were enabled to make a very decent appearance at the hotel. There I was joined a couple of days afterwards by Captain Vaughan and Mr. Steuart, who were both going to take part in the Georgian expedition ; and having obtained a passage in a government despatch boat, we landed at Batoun with all our belongings and people, who formed a little host in themselves.

The Seraskier had very kindly given me letters to the Pachas in authority in Batoun and Ardahan, so that we soon found comfortable quarters, and had no difficulty in hiring sufficient baggage animals to transport our gear. We also each of us bought a couple of sturdy, cob-like, little mountain horses, at prices varying from £12 to £15 each, for our own riding, and having obtained two trusty guides and one of the Pacha's official messengers for procuring supplies, we made a start inland.

During the war of 1855, after the surrender of General Williams, whilst making my way from the neighbourhood of Erivan, *via* Ardahan to Batoun, I had made the acquaintance of several of the Georgian chiefs of the Kula range, and learned from them that

bears, red deer, and other game abounded in the ravines on the southern slopes of the range. It was to renew this acquaintance, and more especially to hunt over this district, that I again found my way into Asia Minor.

Three short marches brought our party to the foot of the Kula range, and skirting the base until we found a pass, two more, along somewhat difficult mountain tracks, brought us to the hamlet of Beuk-kara-su, situated in a broad, shallow, well-wooded valley in the very heart of the range. This was the residence of my good friend the Aga Ghoolam Ali, who received us with great cordiality, so I determined to make his village my head-quarters for a time. At my especial request he assigned for our use a couple of decent-looking huts in a small enclosed garden on the outskirts of the village, which we preferred to an establishment of much greater pretensions near his own house, as being more private.

Knowing from experience the necessity of a careful purification of the establishment if we intended to sleep in comfort, we remained under canvas a couple of days, whilst the huts underwent a thorough cleansing. The walls being of sunburnt brick and the floor of mud, I had the old roof pulled off and lighted brushwood fires inside and out, so as to kill all undesirable occupants; and after the place had been thoroughly cleaned out and thatched with fresh grass it made extremely comfortable quarters. The second hut, having undergone a similar purification, was assigned to our followers. A cooking-house and commodious sheds for our horses were constructed, so that the whole party and its belongings were housed comfortably in case of bad weather. The villagers cut the grass for thatching as well as for our horses' food, taking these out with their own herds to graze when not wanted, while the Aga sent round to all the adjacent villages to inquire of the herdsmen as to the haunts of any bears they might know of. From every side we received credible accounts of game, and our prospects were most encouraging.

The first three days after our arrival we were too much engaged

in establishing ourselves to go after large game, but Steuart killed a brace of bustards within sight of the village; and enough grey partridge, with an occasional pheasant or hare for the pot, were to be picked up at any time in some low bush that skirted a few scattered patches of cultivation. The fourth day we invited the Aga and several of the headmen of the adjacent villages to a grand feast, buying a fat bullock and some sheep for the occasion; and after justice had been done to the good cheer, it was arranged that on the next day the villagers should be collected and beat up a ravine some three miles distant, into which a couple of bears had been tracked, and which was known to be full of game.

Starting at daybreak, the Aga, and two of his people as guides, conducted us to the foot of a rather steep hill, where we found some forty villagers assembled, armed with all kinds of antiquated firearms; and we were informed that an equal number were collected about a mile farther on. A densely-wooded ravine cleft the side of the mountain, and we were to make our way as stealthily as possible up the slope of the hill, and take post on each side of the head of the ravine, whilst the villagers, closing in from both sides, beat towards us. The plan seemed to promise well, and there was scarcely a breath of air stirring to betray our presence; so we commenced operations by clambering up the dry rocky bed of a torrent that had worn a way in the side of the mountain.

We were none of us in very good condition after Embassy feeds and the dissipations of Pera; so we had to stop from time to time to rest, for the steep ascent much resembled the side of the grand pyramid near Cairo, except that some of the steps were very much higher, and that the hill was some six times the height of old Cheops' tomb. On the way we saw several slots of red deer, and wice we heard game breaking through the underwood in the ravine below us. At last we gained the crest of the hill, and moving cautiously along the ridge so as not to appear conspicuous against the sky-line, we got to the head of the ravine, where we found gullies branching off in two directions.

On examination of the ground, we noticed the sign of bears, two days old, and quite fresh "pugs" of a pack of wolves, who must have passed into the ravine that morning. There were also several fresh slots of deer, leading in and out of the ravine; and



PARTRIDGES

from the size of the sign there must have been one or two good harts among the herd. Having made sure that there was no other easy outlet or run leading out of the head of the ravine, it was decided that Vaughan and Steuart should watch one passage, whilst I guarded the other. We had each a double breech-loading rifle and a revolver; and in addition to my 10-bore Westley

Richards, I had a double 4-bore duck gun, loaded with B.B. shot, which was carried by Cassim, one of the Circassians, whilst his brother Ali shouldered an American axc, and took charge of the water chagul. I had hardly got to my station and cut away a few branches that impeded a clear view of the gap up which I expected the game to come, when I heard three distant shots—the signal for the beaters to advance—from the bottom of the hill, and shortly afterwards I saw the two parties of villagers extending themselves in a line at the base of the ravine.

The movement appeared to me to be admirably executed, as, notwithstanding their distance, from my bird's-eye view I could every now and then get a glimpse of the line of men making their way through the gaps in the trees.

My companions, the two Circassians, were in the most exuberant spirits, evidently longing for the fray ; and it did one's heart good to mark their eyes sparkling with excitement, whilst they were too discreet to utter even a whisper, or to show a superfluous inch of their bodies over the crest as they peered into the bush below. The mountaineers had evidently been brought up in a good school, and constant skirmishing against Russia's best light troops had not only proved their mettle, but had taught them discretion, and made them men before the down had covered their cheeks.

When the line of beaters had been completely formed across the mouth of the ravine, gun-shots were fired from time to time on either side, and presently shouting was heard all along the line, which betokened game afoot. At this moment four shots fired in rapid succession, closely followed by three more, were heard from the direction of the top of the ravine where Steuart and Vaughan were posted, and immediately afterwards eight hinds, followed by an old hart, came cantering up the pass, making the stones clatter as they scrambled up the steepest parts. Notwithstanding the chance of bears being afoot, the royal head was a temptation not to be resisted, and as his broad chest was fully exposed, and offered an easy shot, I dropped him in his tracks with the first barrel, and



DEER-DRIVING IN ASIA MINOR.

rolled over a young hind that passed within a dozen yards of me with the second.

Drawing my hunting-knife, I presented it to Cassim, telling him to perform the usual Mussulman rite so as to make it lawful food, and I had hardly finished re-loading when Ali directed my attention to an enormous brown bear who was slowly winding his way up the hill in our direction. Every now and again he would rise, sit upright on his haunches, and make a peculiar moaning noise ; which strange proceeding for some time I could not understand, until at last I saw a second bear struggling up the hill evidently badly wounded. Her mate was piloting the way, but she could only crawl along very slowly. When the male got within about eighty yards from the crest of the hill, he again halted, and, turning towards his wounded friend, again stood upon his haunches, as if surveying the approaching beaters. Whilst in this position with his nose upturned, he presented a most favourable opportunity, and I dropped him stone dead with a bullet in the centre of the back of the neck, which broke the spine just where the head is set on the body. The shot alarmed the wounded female, and she again broke back and disappeared in the bush below.

Again a file firing was heard in Vaughan's direction, and at the same moment four great wolves came creeping along under the steep crest of the hill, within thirty yards of our position. Taking the smooth-bore from Cassim, I fired a double raking shot, killing one outright and wounding two others, so that they could hardly drag themselves along ; and I was on the point of bidding Cassim to dispatch them with the axe, when a herd of at least a dozen deer dashed up the hill and passed us at full speed, within twenty yards of our ambuscade. As I did not see a stag amongst them, I let them go without pulling trigger. My forbearance was amply rewarded, for a grand old hart with magnificent antlers came trotting up almost immediately, and I gave him a right-and-left pretty close behind the shoulder-blade as he mounted the crest, when, leaping into the air convulsively, he fell dead, one of the bullets having

penetrated the heart. Soon after this I heard loud cries from some of the beaters, some of whom had now nearly gained the top of the hill ; the thought of the wounded bear flashed across my mind, and, hastily re-loading, I made my way towards the spot from whence the cries proceeded.

It was as I dreaded : three of the villagers had come across the wounded bear lying down under a rock, and one of them, after firing at her, finding that she did not move or show any sign of life, approached pretty close, when she charged and grappled with him. Luckily she was very far gone and weak from loss of blood, so she could not inflict much injury ; but with an extraordinary tenacity of life she maintained her hold, notwithstanding she was repeatedly stabbed with long knives, until Cassim split open the back of her head with his axe, when she relaxed her grip and fell backwards, dead. The man was rather severely clawed on the back of his left hand, and one of his ears was split open ; but a couple of stitches and some diachylon plaster, with a handful of piastres, made matters all right, and squared the transaction satisfactorily.

We now made our way back up the ravine towards the place where Vaughan and Steuart were posted, and found that they also had had grand sport, having killed two wild hogs, a fine hart and two hinds, a couple of roeddeer, three wolves, a dog lynx, and a curiously spotted gannet ; whilst they had wounded the female bear, and two other deer, one of which was afterwards found. Our united bag was, therefore, a very fair display of game, and, notwithstanding the quantity that was killed and driven over the hill, the beaters said that another bear, several sounders of hog, and a herd of deer, broke back through their line and got away.

It took some time to collect and divide the game, so that all engaged in the hunt had a fair share ; and our party did not get back until sunset, when we found a good dinner awaiting us, to which ample justice was done after the day's work. Later on in the evening, we all adjourned to the chief's house, where a special entertainment was provided, and native songs, dances, and a bur-

lesque play, in which several women took part, kept us up until the small hours.

The valley of Beuk-kara-su, or the "Big Black Water," takes its name from a beautiful pellucid stream which winds through the valley, and which in the spring, after the melting of the snow on the lateral heights, becomes a furious torrent, sweeping away trees, rocks, and every other obstruction in its course, and sometimes bursting its banks and inundating the plain. At the extremity of this valley is a high mountain, or rather a clump of high mountains, the sides of which, from a distance, appear rocky and bare, except in the numerous ravines and clefts in the face of the rock, which are clothed with dense waving forest extending from the base far up the slopes, and almost to the crest or plateau.

The summit or highest peak, which is a mass of black porphyritic rock, resembling a gigantic chest from the valley below; and the Georgians call it "Sas-ka-sundook," or the "Mother-in-law's Chest," having a tradition that some powerful afrit, or spirit of the mountain, buried his mother-in-law alive on the top of the hill, and piled the great porphyritic mass on the spot to secure her. The Aga and his people told us that this mountain was a great resort for all kinds of game, but that, as it bore an evil reputation, and was also known to be inhabited by gins and ghouls, none of the inhabitants of the valley had dared to intrude on their domain. "What, Aga Effendi," said I, "do you, who have killed over a score of Russians in your time, mean to tell me that you are afraid of meeting spirits? Why, man, I wish we had only the luck to come across one. Piastres would never be scarce again in our *konacs*."—"That may be true, my friend," replied the Aga: "up to this time the dead have never interfered with me, nor I with them, but I and my people have been told strange things about that hill; and I have myself remarked that whenever there is a storm the lightning always seems to play round that black-looking peak, leaving the rest of the valley in darkness. There must be some reason for that, although I cannot understand it. However, Bey Effendi, if

you intend to go to the Mother-in-law's Prison, and cast dirt on the beards of the spirits, I and my people will go with you. We have faced Azrael, and gone through some rough work together in old days; and, *Mashalla!* now the Moskofler are quiet, a brush even with a ghou! would be a pleasant change after my late quiet life."

There was not a single atom of fear in the whole composition of our gallant host, and although it was evident that he would rather have had to cut his way through a *sortie* of Cossacks than face an imaginary danger, he had no intention of going from his word, and gave orders that about two score of the stoutest of his people should be ready to start at dawn the next day. In the meantime we reconnoitred the approaches, and endeavoured to ascertain, with the aid of our telescopes, which ridge seemed to offer the most feasible route to the summit. We estimated the altitude to be some 4,000 or 5,000 feet above the plateau on which we were located; but, although the sides appeared terribly rugged, as there was no snow to encounter, we felt confident in our powers of making the ascent and descent in the day. Whilst we were cogitating upon the best means of accomplishing our enterprise, the chief of a neighbouring village, who was visiting our host, informed us that there was a mad dervish living in an old ruined shrine at the foot of the mountain, who was said to hold communications with the spirits of the mountain from time to time; and that perhaps he would serve us as a guide. It was therefore settled that we should assemble the people at the foot of the mountain on the first day, and commence the ascent on the second. In the meantime we made every necessary preparation for a six days' expedition. I purchased a dozen oxen, a flock of goats, and a few sheep, whilst the Aga sent a couple of men ahead to secure the holy man's aid. At daybreak the next morning our party, fully equipped for their work, were assembled by beat of kettle-drum in front of the Aga's domicile; and after we had partaken of a most substantial matutinal collation, prepared by "the house"

of our host, consisting of roast lamb, boiled fowls, *pilau*, and various kinds of *kabobs*, stews, and sweetmeats, we at last came to a round of coffee and pipes, and presently mounted our horses for a start. We had intended to form a long line of beaters across the valley, and shoot our way on foot; but after our heavy feed the carrying out of this arrangement was scarcely possible.

However, we had not gone far when a flock of bustard rose, and Vaughan, dismounting, made a splendid shot with a small-bore Daw rifle, bringing down a magnificent bird of nearly 30 lbs. weight, that was circling high over his head. This feat astonished me as much as it did the Georgians, who set up a shout as it came whizzing through the air and struck the ground with a loud-sounding thud. "There's a good day's rations for four, at any rate," he said quietly, as he re-loaded; "but you must admit that old Daw can bore a barrel as truly as either Westley Richards or Purdey, my friend," he continued; "for although I don't profess to shoot at ranges over three hundred yards, it's always my own fault if I miss anything the size of the crown of a hat at that distance with either barrel."

After such a demonstration there was no replying to his argument: the bird was cleanly shot through the breast at a distance of quite three hundred yards, and my friend's reputation as a shot of no common order was henceforth noised through the valley. "*Shabash, shabash!*" cried the old chief, "the fiends had better not show themselves on the mountain to-morrow, as, if they do, we shall have such trophies as were never yet seen in Beuk-kara-su." The game being picked up, and made lawful meat for the faithful, notwithstanding every sign of life had departed, the line moved on, and as it passed some low bush near a patch of cultivation, a sounder of hog was started, and leisurely trotted in the direction of the nearest lateral hill. A running fire was opened upon them by the whole line, and, although two or three of their number were obviously wounded, they managed to get into some thick cover and elude further pursuit.

The sun was now getting up, and, as we had a good journey before us, we called in our beaters, and made the best of our way towards a distant spur close to the foot of the mountain, where there were said to be a few huts chiefly used by herdsmen. After a tramp of about four hours we came to the spur indicated, but could see no signs of habitations; so, collecting some wood, we made a large fire on the summit of a low hill, and then putting some damp grass and leaves upon it, a dense column of smoke arose that could have been seen at several miles' distance.

This signal had the desired effect, for after an interval of half an hour's duration, the Aga's two men, the dervish, and the chiefs of two or three villages and their followers, joined our party. We had somehow mistaken the direction, and the spot appointed for our bivouac was still some little way farther on, in fact, close under the foot of the mountain. The wood now became very dense, and we had to dismount from our horses and cut a path through the brushwood to enable our baggage animals to follow us. At last we came to a cleft about a hundred yards wide, apparently riven in the bare rocky wall of the mountain by some gigantic convulsion of nature; for the various strata on each side appeared to correspond, and even the different ledges, that were covered with all kinds of flowering shrubs and creeping plants, appeared to have corresponding cavities on the opposite side, from which they had been torn asunder. That this chasm had been formed several centuries ago was proved by the ruins of an old Greek temple with carved Doric marble columns, that was built on an elevation close against the almost perpendicular face of the precipice; and by two Moslem shrine-like erections, one resembling a mosque from its broken and dilapidated minarets, and the other a tomb with a dome. Both these constructions, although in ruins, were of a much later date than the Greek edifice, and amongst their *débris* I found evident signs that some extensive Greek temple had been despoiled for building materials; as large marble columns and delicately carved blocks of marble had been indiscriminately used with un-

hewn stones in their construction, the former having belonged to a far anterior age, when the Greeks were rulers in the land.

As soon as we had reconnoitred the place, tents were pitched and shanties constructed for the whole party; a couple of oxen were killed with great ceremony for the use of the camp; and in the course of a few hours every belly was full, and each heart contented as its possessor smoked the pipe of peace round the huge log fire of the Fehringee Bey.

After a solemn smoke, the Aga shook himself together, drank a pull of sherbet, which, *entre nous*, was good stiff half-and-half brandy punch, and made a short pithy oration, which was somewhat to the effect that his old friend, the Ingleese Bey, who had fought by his side at Kurukdère and Ingendère against the Moskoffer, having turned up with his friends in these parts, he was bound to show him every attention, and give him the welcome of a brother. The Bey having made up his mind to go up the haunted mountain to shoot bears, beasts, or afrits of defiled ancestors, if they would only show themselves, it behoved him and his people to accompany him. Heré the dervish chimed in, and, to my surprise, showed himself a saner man than any of the party, for he ridiculed the idea of the mountain being haunted, and declared that, although it was swarming with animals of the brute creation, not an afrit dare come within a day's march of the holy shrine. I found, to my surprise, that the dervish was a Hindostance fakir, who had wandered on foot from Northern India through Kashmere and Cabul to Persia. After having made the pilgrimage to Mecca, he had found his way from Suez to Asia Minor, and had intended to get to Stamboul, when he was laid up with rheumatism, which obliged him to remain where he was, dependent for subsistence on alms and wild fruits.

Finding that I spoke Hindostani, and had passed many years in India, he became wild with excitement, and told me that in his youth he had been the body servant of an officer of the 16th Lancers until he died; and I have no doubt but that his story was true, for the names of Thackwell, Havelock, and Dick Pattinson Sahib—the

latter of whom was a dear old pal of mine—cropped up over and over again as he told me his early history. Having gleaned what information I could from him about the game on the mountain, and the best route to take in its ascent, I handed him over to the charge of Ali and Cassim, and bid them take care of him, and furnish him with a warm rug to keep away rheumatics, so that he might be fit to pilot us up the mountain in the morning. Everything being arranged satisfactorily, the night guards were posted, and we turned in and enjoyed a capital night's rest, sleeping through two or three night alarms, caused by the visits of a pack of wolves, who were doubtlessly attracted towards our camp by the smell of the meat and the bleating of the sheep. The Circassians, who took their turn at night duty with the rest, awoke me at dawn, and I found most of our people astir round the fires broiling meat or making coffee. Our tents, which were impervious to any weather, being made of Cording's waterproof canvas, were packed up so as to be carried on men's heads; a goodly supply of food was got ready and our flock of sheep and goats was ordered to be driven up in the rear. Our horses, oxen, and heavy gear were left under an escort behind.

The dervish, who showed signs of recent ablutions, and who had trimmed his beard, made his appearance in one of Steuart's old shooting-coats, armed with a boar-spear instead of his staff; and, although he complained of aching pains in his shoulder, he managed to get over the ground very well. Under his guidance the Circassians, and some of the Georgians, who had axes and billhooks, enlarged a track through the underwood, which, from the number of slots, appeared to be a well-frequented deer-run, until we came to an open space caused by the interposition of a bare ledge of rock. Crossing this, our guide pursued his way unhesitatingly, evidently guided by signs visible only to himself. Muscular in frame, but gaunt and emaciated from sickness, his large and deep-sunken eyes glared wildly for a moment, and then he stopped short, his attention being evidently attracted by some slight noise. At this moment

I detected the sound of a rolling stone, and, looking up, I saw a female bear and two half-grown cubs making their way up the side of the hill by a line parallel to our own course. Steuart saw her as soon as I did, and we fired almost simultaneously, when a great brown mass came tumbling down the hill, and the father of the family was on his hind legs in our midst almost as soon as the smoke had cleared away. Although he appeared as suddenly as if he had risen from the ground, like the ghost in a play, he found a warm reception; for Steuart and I gave him the contents of our second barrels, whilst the dervish administered the *coup de grâce*, by driving a boar-spear into his chitterlings, and he subsided with a long hollow moan. Having re-loaded, we made after the female, whom we found *in extremis*, with her two cubs playing beside her. These were soon caught with the aid of our dogs, made secure with dog-chains, and left in charge of a party of six, who were told off to skin and cut up the bears' meat. We continued the ascent, and, getting into more open ground, passed over two or three rich grassy glades, intersected by belts of fine trees, amongst which the walnut, then in full bearing, was conspicuous. Here we found numerous slots of deer, and twice we reared hog, but did not fire at them lest we should disturb nobler game. The deer-run we were following up now led across a bare rocky slope, and beyond this we had to scramble over huge boulders of rock piled one on another in chaotic confusion. Travelling was hard work now, and it seemed to be becoming more difficult as we advanced; but the black summit loomed at no great distance; so, after a drink at a bright purling stream and a few minutes' rest, we again girded up our loins, and after another hour's fatiguing climb, stood upon the plateau, at the extreme end of which rose the black mass of the Sas-ka-sundook.

The plateau was overgrown with grass, ferns, and juniper-bushes, which in many places were trodden down by deer and other wild animals, whose run was everywhere to be seen. From the crest of the summit, we saw mountains all around us; some in continuous

ranges, and others rising alone and isolated, but all standing out against the bright blue sky in clear, sharp, and well defined outline. We had no barometers with us to ascertain the altitude we had attained, but it must have been at least 7,000 feet above the plains below, for the air was cool and bracing even at noonday.

After a short consultation with the Aga, it was resolved to choose a suitable place for a camp, and remain for a few days on the mountain. We therefore reconnoitred the position, and finding a fine purling spring of water, we selected a spot sheltered from the wind by two massive boulders of rock, and forthwith commenced to establish our bivouac. Whilst our people were collecting huge logs of wood and constructing huts, we strolled to the peak, which from the plateau was easily surmounted; and there we sat for a couple of hours, smoking, and taking our *kieff*, and gazing into the illimitable space before us, the view ending in the blue ether that hung over the low-lying plains of Anatolia. We carefully examined the ravine below us with our binoculars and telescopes, but not a sign of game did we see, although we knew that the woods must be full of deer.

Whilst we were speculating upon our prospects of sport, and arranging for the morrow's proceedings, Ali came up with the intelligence that a number of big goats were browsing quietly on the other side of the hill, and that we could easily get within shot. Without a moment's delay we picked up our rifles and made tracks after the Circassian, who had left his brother watching the game whilst he gave us the intelligence. We found Cassim lying his full length on the ground, with his head stretched over the steep perpendicular scarp of a precipice at least 200 feet deep.

Following his example, we all craned over the brink, and right below us, upon a jutting ledge of rock that appeared to hang in mid-air, were five buck ibex quietly browsing. It was no easy matter to get a sight of them, as the ground sloped towards the brink of the scarp, and it would have been dangerous work to have attempted to shoot them from that position. So, leaving Cassim

on the watch, Vaughan took one side, while Steuart and I clambered along the other. After some rather ticklish climbing, we managed to ensconce ourselves on a jutting ledge of rock that commanded a view of the abyss below, but, although the ibex were in full view, they were almost out of range for anything but a chance shot. Such being the case, I bid Steuart keep a look-out in case they took alarm and came that way, whilst I returned to where I had left Cassim. There I found Vaughan, who could find no favourable place from which he could get within range, although there were several gaps which commanded one of the approaches to the ledge on which they were standing. I went with him to the nearest, and having posted him, I told him I would alarm the game, which must pass within range of either Steuart's post or his own. I then returned to Cassim, and, fastening a rope round a boulder of a rock, I attached the other end to my waist-belt, where I made it fast ; then crawling on my belly to the brink of the scarp, I bid Ali sit firmly on my legs, while Cassim reached me my rifle, and I was thus enabled to get into such a position that I could use my rifle effectually. The five ibex, all unconscious of danger, were within very easy range ; so, selecting the buck with the finest horns, I aimed at the centre of his withers, and he dropped without a struggle. I was not so successful with my next shot, for the smoke hung and partially obscured my view, and the second buck, who had gained some distance before I fired, only slightly struck in the hind quarters, was going away as if unhurt, when he received his *quietus* from Vaughan, who shot him cleanly through the head as he passed his post. The remaining three, with five or six others who had been lying concealed from our sight, dashed at full speed past Steuart, who, firing into the brown of them, by good luck managed to kill one outright, and paralyse a second with a bullet through the spine ; whom he afterwards put out of pain by a well-directed shot in the head. After I had fired, and scrambled back on to *terra firma*, the question arose how we were to get the game now we had killed it ; for the ledge on which the ibex lay appeared to be quite inaccessible from the summit. I

therefore sent the Circassians to reconnoitre the spot from below, and after a good deal of trouble the heads and skins were obtained, but the flesh was too rank for food.

We now returned to our encampment, and found that the Aga had sent the bulk of the people to the camp below to pass the night, and instructed them to beat up a densely wooded ravine the next day, so as to drive whatever game it might contain in our direction up the hill. This was a bright idea of the old chief, and we were highly satisfied with the arrangement. The evening was chilly, but we kept up an immense fire, round which we sat eating, talking, smoking, and drinking whisky toddy until, overcome by drowsiness, we could hardly keep our eyes open; when we turned in, and slept as only hunters can sleep.

The elevated plateau on which we were encamped was lovely beyond conception in the early morning; but the change of climate from the plains below was clearly demonstrated, as at dawn the ground glistened with hoar frost, and it was so cold that the Aga, who could hardly sleep, had kept some of his people up all night long to replenish the fire. We were not, however, so susceptible to the change, or perhaps we were better provided, as our tent, made by Cording of strong waterproof material, was impervious to cold or damp; and besides, we were amply provided with waterproof sheets and rugs, which, although much lighter and less cumbrous than the Georgian sheepskin *poshacs*, were more effective in keeping out the cold. As we were not bound to keep our gear and *impedimenta*—as Cæsar very justly termed his baggage—under the regulation weight, we all indulged in luxuries, and were each provided with an inflatable air-bed and bath, so that we could not only turn in as comfortably as if we were “at our inn,” but also turn out fresh and clean in the morning fit for a day’s work. I know that some travellers abjure ablutions as a matter of principle; but I believe in the old axiom that “cleanliness is next to godliness,” and that a good tub after a hard day’s work is an admirable restorative to the powers of nature, having a wonderful recuperative effect upon the

appetite. This is my own experience, consequently a folding-up bath always forms a part of my travelling equipment.

We had a famous breakfast upon the broiled remains of the bustard shot by Vaughan, and it was decided *nem. con.* that, *coûte qui coûte*, we must never allow a chance of bagging a bustard to escape us; as, when kept for a couple of days, and buried in the ground so as to become tender, it is the most juicy and at the same time the best flavoured of game birds. After a smoke, one of the Aga's people brought the intelligence that he had seen two columns of smoke at the base of the hill, which was the signal for us to take up our position at the head of the ravine, up which the beaters were about to drive the game. Having seen to our arms, we strolled round to the crest of the hill, and each took up a position from whence he could command a fair view of the ground below where the game was expected to break. Vaughan and Steuart having chosen their posts, which were to the right about two hundred yards asunder, I struck off to the left, and, guided by one of the Circasians, managed to scramble down to an overhanging ledge or placer of rock, from which I had a capital bird's-eye view of the whole ravine, as well as of Steuart's and Vaughan's positions on the cliffs above. The Aga accompanied me, and having made known my station by waving a handkerchief until it attracted their attention, so as to prevent their firing in our direction, we wrapped ourselves up in our rugs, for the air was extremely chilly, and, as the Aga said, smoked the pipe of patience. I did not ask him to refrain from smoking, as the wind blew right in our faces, and would carry away any taint in the air that tobacco might leave. The panorama stretched before our view was very beautiful, and although perhaps somewhat tame and wanting in grandeur when compared with some of the mountain scenery of the majestic Himalayas—amongst which I had wandered for many months—still it was a source of infinite delight to me to examine minutely with my powerful telescope every rugged feature of the varied landscape that extended for many miles below us; and to cogitate upon the mighty convulsion

of nature that had riven the side of the mountain, torn asunder the almost perpendicular granite scarp, and hurled the monstrous boulders, cleft and shattered, into the disjointed masses and chaotic piles that now, covered with forest verdure, brought to mind some mighty ruin overgrown with ivy, and grand even in its desolation. I do not think that the scene from the extreme summit of a mountain must necessarily be the most striking, for the first sensation of the prospect from the top is simply that of immensity, as the eye dwells over the vast extent of undulating country below, that is only limited by the dim blue haze of the distance. In the ascent a traveller will be constantly arrested by the charming pictures seen through broken vistas that every turn in the winding road will reveal—pictures that, if they do not possess the sublimity of the sea of space seen from the extreme altitude, gain many beauties in the nicer articulation of the different peaks and cliffs jutting up in strange isolation from the hanging woods below. I have often thought that the charming views of mountain scenery which are the most strongly impressed upon my mind presented themselves in these momentary half-glances that from time to time are obtained in the ascent. There is no mountain scenery that does not require its acquaintance to be cultivated before we can fully appreciate its supreme beauty, varied features, and changing aspects; but then its subtle influences enter the soul by many doors, and the true lover of nature never tires of the numberless picturesque charms that are ever to be found in its woody glens and rocky retreats.

While I was musing dreamily, and the Aga was puffing lazily away, and trying to make one circle of smoke pass through another for want of some other diversion, I heard a slight rustling noise below, and presently a single hind emerged from a patch of cover and stood sniffing in the air, with her great ears moving suspiciously backwards and forwards, as if to drink in some fancied sound. She was evidently not quite satisfied, for now and again, after cropping a mouthful of grass, she would start forward, paw the ground impatiently, and look round as if she had heard or smelt something.

She was now joined by a second hind, and presently up clattered a large herd of stags and hinds, intermixed in single file, and making their way under the crest of the hill towards the ambuscades of my friends. The last of all to show up was a very dark red stag, with beautiful spreading antlers; he was picking his way leisurely up the hill, at about two hundred yards' distance, when I brought the sight of my express 500-bore rifle—a *chef d'œuvre* of Westley Richards—to bear point-blank against his brawny shoulder, and pulled trigger. With a startled toss of the head, and a leap into the air, he ran about forty yards, and then fell stone dead. The express bullet is a short conical projectile, hollowed at the point like a shell, but without any bursting charge, and propelled by a very large charge of powder, which drives the light bullet with great velocity. On striking the object aimed at, the apex of the projectile has its hollow fore end opened out by the shock, in the shape of a mushroom; or sometimes, when the charge of powder used is excessive, the whole bullet after striking is broken up into fragments, which spread and take different courses, inflicting a terrific wound. These small-bores, although the *ne plus ultra* of weapons for deer-stalking, on account of their long point-blank range and low trajectory, are not sufficiently effective against the larger animals, such as bison, elephant, or the feline race, as they will not penetrate or smash the larger bones as a heavy, solid, hardened projectile will. They are, however, admirable weapons for all ordinary purposes, the only real disadvantages being that, from the smallness of the hole the bullet makes on entering, and from the fact that it rarely passes through an animal of any size, although the quarry may be mortally hit, there is very seldom the slightest sign of blood upon the trail; so that tracking up a wounded animal is rendered more difficult than under ordinary circumstances.

Soon after the echoes of the report of my rifle had ceased reverberating amongst the faces of the cliffs, a regular file firing commenced from the upper ledge, and back broke the panic-stricken herd right past my post, which gave the Aga and myself a famous

opportunity, for we each bagged a hind, and a stag went away hard hit. We had hardly re-loaded when groups of deer began to run across all the open glades that lay below us, sometimes gazing back in the direction of the beaters, and then looking up hesitatingly towards the crest of the hill, as if aware of their danger and unwilling to come on.

Finally they made a rush, and a mass of dun hides and tossing antlers passed before us in a long stream. Selecting the best heads, it was the work of only a few seconds to bring down five noble stags and wound three others, two of which were eventually recovered. The Aga was not idle; although, being armed with a muzzle-loader, he only got a couple of shots, with which he succeeded in killing a stag and mortally wounding a hind. Unfortunately, upon reaching the crest of the hill, the great body of the herd, alarmed at the firing, broke away to my left over the plateau, and entered another deep corrie, only a few straggling groups making their way to the right past Vaughan's and Steuart's posts; but they got several shots, and besides killing three stags and four hinds, they bagged a magnificent white wolf, evidently an albino, from his pale colourless eyes. There must have been at least two hundred deer driven up in this beat, and amongst us we managed to bag nineteen deer and a wolf. The beaters now came straggling up, and informed us that two bears, besides several deer, had broken back through their line at a point where the undergrowth was very dense. We were, however, extremely well satisfied with our day's work, as we had provided sufficient venison to keep our beaters in food for some days.

Our next task was to collect the game and bring it to camp, which was an affair requiring time, as the hill-side was steep, and each deer had to be slung to long poles and carried on the men's shoulders. At last they were all brought up and awaited dissection, which act was speedily performed, for the men were quite up in that kind of work; and considering the variety of tools used—swords, yataghans, daggers, knives, and axes—the quarters were

severed and the chins divided with the dispatch and precision of experienced *charcutiers*.

The distribution of this meat, which might be roughly estimated at about thirty hundredweight, was quickly effected by the Aga himself, who apportioned to each hamlet that sent out its contingent of men what he considered its fair quota; an arrangement that gave universal satisfaction. We had now had a surfeit of deer-driving, and determined to "up sticks" and get down again to the valley, as our people were not prepared for bivouacking at an elevation where the ground every morning was covered with hoar frost. A general move was therefore made; our gear, being carefully packed in as light loads as possible, was distributed amongst the people, and a couple of hours before sunset we were again comfortably established in our old quarters at the base of the mountain, near the old Greek temple. Here we were joined by a number of villagers, who came to see the Aga and his Feringhee friends; several of their women accompanied them, and our camp began to look like an Eastern fair. I gave directions to kill some oxen and sheep for our guests, and had huge log fires made, which lighted up the whole glen; and after a somewhat sumptuous feast we were most agreeably entertained by some very creditable singing and dancing, accompanied by soft-toned stringed instruments, somewhat resembling citherns. Several verses were sung by an *improvisatore*, in which I heard my name and the Aga's coupled, that created an absolute *furor* amongst the bystanders, who all joined in chorusing the last couplets until the whole glen reverberated with the strain. This entertainment was kept up for some hours after we had made our *congé* and retired, and it formed an admirable *finale* to a glorious day's sport.

CHAPTER XV.

BEAR-HUNTING IN THE CAUCASUS.

Caucasian hospitality—A presuming jackal—On the track of a large bear—A rocky climb—Wild country—In Bruin's clutches—A bear pack—A huge bear—Death and victory.

HAVING accepted the hospitality of the Hlori Bey, I was staying at his *konac*, on one of the spurs of the Caucasus, about thirty miles from Suchum Kalch, when news was brought to the camp that the lair of an immense bear had been discovered, whose depredations were severely felt during the winter months, when, emboldened by hunger, he was in the habit of carrying off horses picketed close to the hamlet.

I decided to beat the bear out if possible; and after a long smoking match and some talk with the Bey as to the best mode of proceeding, he went to warn his people to be in readiness to start at the first appearance of dawn on the morrow, and I crept into my tent. Being tired, I was soon in a sound sleep, from which I was awakened by some one, as I thought, unceremoniously shaking me by the shoulder; but the visitor proved to be a prowling half-famished jackal, which was trying to drag away the buffalo robe which served as an outer covering. I scared him away by shouting, and he vented his indignation by setting up a melancholy howl, which started a most infernal chorus from half a dozen packs in the neighbouring woods; but being well accustomed to such "jungle melody," I turned over and once more composed myself to sleep.

When I awoke the next morning I found my followers busily employed in rubbing down the horses, and the whole of the male

portion of the tribe, with the exception of a few left to guard the village, preparing for the field. I gave myself a shake like a water-spaniel, and washed out my mouth (the ordinary toilet of a hunter of the deep jungle, who generally performs his ablutions in the first stream he comes to); then, after hastily swallowing a cup of coffee and a biscuit, I mounted my horse and hastened the departure of the party, which consisted of about forty individuals, most of whom were mounted upon rough mountain ponies, and armed with matchlocks, pistols, yataghans, &c.

The track lay through a gorge in the mountains, and, when day broke, a magnificent scene was presented, as the sun dispelled the fog and mists which seemed to cling to the gigantic masses of rock, piled on each other in endless variety of shape and extraordinary confusion; but I felt too much absorbed in surmising upon the different kinds of large game that were likely to be met with in such a vast extent of virgin forest, to pay much attention to the picturesque beauties that lay in my path.

After about three hours' riding we came to a large log cattle-shed, used only in the summer months, when the best pasturage is to be found on the lower spurs of the mountains; here we had to leave the horses under charge of a guard, as the track became impracticable for them.

The Illori chief described this bear to be a terrible animal, standing as high as a pony, but as I had a 10-gauge double gun, a rifle, and a brace of revolvers, I considered myself more than a match for him.

The herdsman now led the way, and under his guidance we climbed, in Indian file, a steep rocky hill, which caused us to puff and blow, and made our knees tremble before we got to the top; where, by dint of scrambling on our hands and knees, creeping along the edges of break-neck precipices, and hanging on to perilous ledges, we managed to work our way along the crest until we came to a deep rocky ravine on the other side. This appeared to have been denuded of the dense bush that generally covered the



BEAR-HUNTING IN THE CAUCASUS.

face of the country, by the violence of numerous mountain torrents, which, when swollen by the rains or the melting of the snow, dash down steep descents with immense force, and sweep away all the underwood in their course. Here our guide assured us the lair was; and, indeed, it looked a likely place to meet with queer customers, for in all my peregrinations I never saw a wilder country.

After an hour's careful investigation, during which I came across several tracks of red and roedeer, hogs, wolves, jackals, and foxes, as I was crossing a patch of sand in the dry bed of a stream, I perceived the fresh footprints of a bear, which I instantly saw must be a very large one, from his long stride and the size of his pugs, my hand hardly covering them.

I followed the trail for some distance, but lost it on some rocky ground, and was making casts in different directions in order to regain it, when some of the Bey's dogs, which had gone on some distance ahead, gave tongue, and immediately afterwards I heard a sullen roar, followed by four or five dropping shots. I sprang upon a boulder of rock, and discovered a dirty-white-looking bear in full pursuit of four or five Abassians, who were running shrieking up the hill-side about two hundred yards distant. One of them in his frantic fright tripped over a stone, and before he could rise the brute was upon him. Although the hind quarters of the animal only were presented to me, I threw up my rifle and let drive; whether it was that my hand was unsteady that morning, or that I feared killing the man, I know not, but the first bullet fell short; the second, however, struck fair, and the bear, with a sharp hoarse cry of pain, quitted the fallen man and made after the rest. I reloaded as quickly as possible and ran towards the fallen man, when I again saw Bruin for a moment, and got a couple of snap-shots at him as he bolted into some cover, having been turned by a straggling volley from some of my gang and the Bey's people. I found the youth who had fallen into the bear's clutches severely bitten in the shoulder, besides having his sides clawed, being altogether considerably bruised and shaken, though not dangerously hurt; so,

after bandaging his wounds as well as I could, I collected the people together and prepared to make another effort to dislodge Bruin from his shelter.

One of my people had seen him enter some thick underwood between two large rocks, and I tried to coax the dogs to go in and drive him out; but it was of no use, they only ran yelping round the thicket. Two of their number had been killed in the first onset, and some of the others severely mauled, which damped the courage of the rest; so finding that nothing could be effected with their assistance, I posted all the people in groups as safely as I could at one end of the cover, in case the game might break without showing fight, and followed up the trail—which was very plainly marked with blood—alone.

The brushwood was very thick and much impeded my movements, so I got on but slowly; but by dint of creeping on my hands and knees and scrambling, I managed to get some distance into the cover, when I heard a savage growl, followed up by a low grunting noise, evidently not far from me. I peered through the bush, but could see nothing; so, resting my rifle against the trunk of a tree, I endeavoured to swarm up, in order to have a better look round. I had hardly raised myself a couple of feet from the ground, when, with a terrific roar, the brute, which must have got wind of me, charged. Luckily the bush was so thick in front that he could not get at me very easily, but had to make a turn, which gave me time to seize and cock my rifle; and as his monstrous head, with flashing eyes and open jaws, appeared about a couple of paces from me, I gave him the contents of both barrels, which almost stunned him, for he spun round and round, and gave me time to follow them up with my smooth-bore, both bullets taking effect in the head; but such was the enormous tenacity of life, that he managed to tear out of the cover, rolling over and over as he went.

After re-loading carefully, I followed up and found him sprawling about on the ground, moaning piteously and evidently very sick. As I got out of the bush he caught sight of me, and made another

headlong charge, reeling from side to side as he came; but I stopped him with another bullet in the head, which made him bite the dust. He rose again, and got up on his hind legs as if to look round. Whilst in this position he looked a fearful object, standing as he did, with his fore-paws raised about 7 feet high, and the blood pouring in torrents out of his mouth. I now had a fair shot at his big brawny chest, and inflicted a mortal wound. On receiving it he uttered a strange gurgling sound, and rolled over and over, seizing the root of a tree between his teeth with his last dying effort. A shiver passed over his limbs, and the game was over. He proved to be an immense bear, standing over 4 feet at the shoulder, and from the number of men it took to lift him, I should think he could not have weighed less than 800 lbs. He appeared to be of the same species as the hill bear of Kashmere and the Himalaya, being covered with long whity-brown hair. He had received eleven wounds, six of which were in the head; but I found that the round leaden balls from my smooth-bore had flattened on the skull without penetrating, whilst the conical projectile from my rifle had splintered the bone. By the time the skin was taken off, the carcase cut up, and the flesh divided amongst the people, the sun had sunk low in the west, and we had to beat a hasty retreat in order to reach our bivouac—the cattle-shed—before nightfall. There we found a supply of sheep, fowls, and forage had been brought in during our absence. So after we had pitched our tents and made the “inner man” comfortable, our battle with the bear was fought over again as we reclined round an immense fire until some of us began to nod, when we rolled ourselves up in our blankets and turned in for the night, well satisfied with our day’s sport.

CHAPTER XVI.

LIFE AMONGST THE BEDOUINS OF TÔR.

The peninsula of Sinai—Its history and geography compared—Our preparations and departure from Suez—Insubordination nipped in the bud—Tôr and its inhabitants—Our march and encampment—The convent of St. Catherine—Jebel Mousa—Mount Catherine—"The Asamer," and a Bedouin *soirée*—March to Ouadi Feiran, and ascent of Jebel Serbâl—A hyena killed, and good sport amongst the ibex—The ibex of Sinai—A blank day—The Bedouins of Ouadi Feiran—Their character and habits—Marriage amongst the Bedouins—Hard life—Return to Jebel Mousa.

BETWEEN the gulfs of Suez and Akaba lies the peninsula of Sinai, one of the most remarkable regions on the face of the earth, not only on account of its interesting associations with the earliest history of the world, but also for its peculiar natural physical features.

Its history may be said to commence and end with the tradition of the wanderings of the Israelites, as described in the Pentateuch; and from the earliest records it appears that the grand object of every traveller visiting these parts has been to connect the marvellous events recorded with the scene of action. *In this none have succeeded.* The route of the twelve tribes has never been satisfactorily determined; the spot where they are said to have passed through the Red Sea is unknown; and it is still an open question whether Mount Serbâl, Jebel Mousa, Mount Catherine, Ras-Safsafah, or Jebel Monéjah is the Sinai of the Exodus, where it is alleged "the Law was given to Moses." On each of these subjects the most learned explorers either disagree on all material points, or decline to give any decisive opinion; which latter course is perhaps the wisest, as at the present day there is no conclusive evidence to identify the history of the earliest ages with the locality.

It is now over 3,400 years ago since the Israelites are said to have passed from Rameses, in Egypt, to Jericho beyond Jordan; and although the line of march is described with wonderful precision in the tradition, and the names of *forty-two* halting-places are recorded, not a single place mentioned tallies, either in name or description, with any locality known in the present day, with the exception of the point of starting and the ultimate destination. Thirty-four centuries is a great gap even in the history of the world; during that period the natural features of the country which served as ancient landmarks must have been entirely changed by the action of water and volcanic agency, so that the present topography serves but little to identify events that occurred at such a remote period.

It was not for the purpose of "treading in the footsteps of Moses," or "walking in the paths of the chosen people," that I found my way to these regions; for I confess to being much more interested in the doings of Disraeli and his party in the present day, than in following up the track of his ancestors, *where the "trail" is cold, and all "sign" obliterated.*

I had on several occasions passed the arid-looking mountains of Tôr on my passage up and down the Red Sea, and each time resolved to make an expedition into the interior whenever an opportunity should occur. In the autumn of last year, whilst staying at Suez, I had the good fortune to fall in with M. Allard, an engineer, who was engaged in the construction of the greatest work of the age—the Suez Canal—and we determined to cruise along the coast to the port of Tôr, and there hiring camels, to visit the so-called "holy places," and shoot a few ibex on the adjacent mountains. My old friend Colonel Kenedy, who was at Cairo, got me a *teskere* or firman from one of the ministers, which was thought necessary to ensure us a safe-conduct amongst the tribes; and M. Allard obtained a letter of introduction to the Prior of the Convent of Mount Sinai from the head of some branch establishment.

As we only intended to be away three weeks, our preparations and establishment were not very large, and three camels were ac-

counted sufficient to carry the whole of our gear. One of Edgington's "Wigwam" tents, waterproof sheets, bedding, and clothes formed the first load; our armament, stores, comestibles, cooking utensils, and servants' rugs the second; whilst three large bullock-leather water-skins were the destined load for the third.

Our stores consisted of a bag of rice, curry stuff, a case or two of wine, some condiments, a dozen tins of *pâté de foie gras*, two dozen 2-lb. tins of soups, a goat-skin full of coffee, another of tobacco, a stock of onions, limes, and charcoal, six sheep, and two dozen fowls.

I had three of my own special followers. First, my henchman, Achmed, an Arnaut, who had served in the Bashi-Bazouks, and whom I seduced out of the Land Transport Train, a strong, active fellow, who could hold his own against any three ordinary Egyptians; secondly, a Frenchman, Le Sage (who ought rather to have been named "Le Souûl," for he always got tight when he had a chance), a first-rate cook, and an honest, well-meaning fellow, *mais un blagueur de première force*; and last, but not least, a huge Seedce, a *ci devant* fireman in one of the steamers from Aden, who had been out with me on two trips to Jebel Ataka, a high range to the south-west of Suez.

M. Allard had two Egyptian servants, both very fair specimens of the country, who could turn their hands to anything; and he also engaged as guides two young Bedouins, who had come into Suez with loads of charcoal, and knew the country. We took no dragoman with us, as both Allard and myself had a fair knowledge of the vernacular, and could make ourselves perfectly understood.

One of Allard's friends in the Consulate lent us a large half-leecked boat of about 12 tons, with two masts, and large lateen sails, which afforded more than ample accommodation for all our party, so we offered a free passage to an Arab merchant and his servant, who were going to Tôr with an assortment of "knick-knacks" and cloth for sale or barter; and he in return gave us a good deal of valuable information as to the country, and promised

to procure us camels at a moderate rate of hire upon our arrival at Tôr.

All being ready, we started at daylight on Sunday morning with a fair wind, which sent our craft along merrily until ten o'clock, when it grew light, and gradually died away. I forgot to mention that we hired two Suez boatmen to assist in working the boat, both sturdy, strong-looking fellows, but with anything but prepossessing physiognomies; in fact, one of them was as sullen and morose a looking cur as I ever saw—a man “whose face would hang him.” When the calm came on I ordered our people to get out the oars and pull ashore, for although we had every convenience for making a fire on board, I preferred to have the cooking done on land. The boatmen protested against pulling, and not only refused to take an oar, but were cheeky to Allard, who had engaged them. Knowing the danger of allowing even the appearance of insubordination in an expedition like ours, I determined to nip it in the bud, and make a severe example of the first offenders; so taking up one of the rhinoceros-hide coorbatches used in camel driving, I gave the sullen-looking party a couple of stinging cuts across the shoulders, at the same time bidding him turn to at the oars. Instead of doing this he attempted to draw his knife, but before he could get it out I gave him a right and left, straight from the shoulder, between the eyes, and dropped him into the bottom of the boat almost senseless. When he came round he began blubbering and calling on Allah; but as he was still sulky, and refused to take an oar, at a signal from me my fellows laid him on his face along a thwart, and whilst Achmed sat on his head, and the Seedee on his legs, I gave him a couple of dozen, well laid on, which brought out the hallelujah chorus with every variation. I then made the second boatman take his place, and, whilst my hand was in, administered a dose of the same regimen, giving him only half the quantity, which he took without howling, simply grunting out “*Taiheeb! Taiheeb!*” (“good! good!”) at every cut. This sharp treatment effected a complete cure, and was not again required; it taught both parties

their true position ; they turned to at once, and afterwards did as they were told without a murmur. With this class of people expostulation and reasoning are useless, and so much waste of time and breath. Blows are the only effective argument they can understand, and without their aid there is no getting on amongst the Egyptians, who are a stubborn race.

We landed on the Asiatic side, about ten miles south of Ain Mousa, "the Wells of Moses;" and whilst our people were engaged in cooking, I strolled along the beach, and shot two brace and a half of curlew, and a couple of grey teal, to the intense astonishment and delight of the Bedouins, who had never seen birds shot flying before. Having dined, we re-embarked at about two in the afternoon ; and a fresh breeze springing up, we carried on all night, being favoured by the moon, till at eleven the next morning we found ourselves abreast of the scarped cliff of Jebel Hummam. Here we landed and visited the hot springs and caves of Faraoun, or Pharaoh, near which place I killed a gazelle with No. 5 shot, as it started up from a bit of cover close under my feet. We performed our ablutions in the stream, close to the embouchure, where the water is tepid, and excited the intense surprise of the Bedouins, who watched me lather my head and beard in mute amazement. After we had dined we returned to the boat, hoisted up sail, and were again speeding through the green waters of the Red Sea. Keeping well away from the lee of the high land, a stiff breeze carried us along at a spanking rate, and the white foam in our wake and the hissing of the water at the bow told me that our little craft was going the pace. With the exception of Achmed—who had implicit confidence in my navigation—as the wind freshened and the sea got up, the faces of my companions grew longer, and more grimly pale with fear ; one after another remonstrated against my carrying on, and urged my making for the shore, and waiting until the gale subsided ; but I laughed at their terrors, for the boat rode over the water like a bird, and I knew that we should be in smooth water after weathering Cape Ras Jehan ; besides, it was

impossible to land with such a sea running, as the boat would have been dashed to pieces against the scarpèd rocks that rose precipitately from the water's edge. I had the helm myself, and by keeping the craft in proper trim, with the exception of a little spray breaking over her half-deck, she scarcely made any water ; so after a time my people began to regain their equanimity, and amused themselves with spinning yarns. The next morning we arrived at Tôr, our port of destination ; a miserable-looking place, inhabited by a few Arab shopkeepers and a heterogeneous breed of Greek Christians, who appeared to be anything but a desirable community to dwell amongst. On landing, Allard and I, preceded by our fellow-voyager, went to the head official of the village, a Hadji, who upon our exhibiting the *teskerce*, was extremely civil, giving us coffee and pipes : he at once procured us four camels with their drivers and three hygeens or trotting camels, two of which were for our own riding, and the third for Le Sage, as in long journeys I always make it a practice to mount the *chef de cuisine*, lest he should be too fatigued to cook the dinner on arrival. I gave the Hadji a liberal bucksheech for the trouble he had taken, and he promised to look after our boat and the two boatmen we were leaving behind to keep it in order.

He did not give us a very encouraging account of the game to be found in this district, but told us that on the mountain of Oommar there were plenty of wild goats, and procured us four Bedouins to serve as guides who knew their haunts. We encamped about two miles from the village, in a fine date tope close to the tepid springs of Ain Mousa, which are strongly impregnated with sulphur, and occupied ourselves in getting our gear into marching order. Achmed, who considered himself a judge of camel-flesh, chose our animals, and assured us that they were in famous marching condition, as they had plenty of fat on the hump, clean sinewy legs, and good feet.

The next morning soon after daylight we were *en route* for the interior, and passing in a north-easterly direction over a sandy plain,

which extended between the mountains and the sea, entered the Ouadi Hebron, a gorge between two lofty ranges. Halting during the intense heat of the day under the grateful shade of some overhanging rocks, we continued our route in the afternoon until we came to a stream, where we encamped for the night. Dinner over, and all our animals being securely tethered and fed, our people made a fire of camels' dung and brushwood, round which we all sat to hold a consultation; and Achmed, by distributing a liberal allowance of coffee and tobacco to each of our followers, opened their hearts and made them glad. All Islam, whether Osmanlee or Arab, have an innate love of the narcotic berry; and although it is a luxury rarely to be met with in the desert, there is nothing more grateful to a Bedouin. With coffee and tobacco he is a happy mortal.

After a lengthened sojourn amidst the unnatural restraints ever attendant upon civilization, varied only by such transient excitements as "*the little village*" can give, a confirmed wanderer like myself finds it a relief to be once more in the wilds, unfettered and untrammelled by laws and customs, and free to follow the impulses of his nature. At such a time I always feel that the bivouac watch-fire is my true home, and that I have led a roaming life too long, and loved its freedom too well, ever again to relish a monotonous existence passed between four walls. The scene of our camp that night was one that Salvator Rosa would have delighted to picture. In the far west a blood-red African sun was setting in gorgeous splendour, and his radiance still lighted up the higher peaks and crests that rose above the sombre-coloured cliffs on either side the valley, and caused the ripples on the pool to glisten like burnished silver as they reflected back the light of departing day. Here and there the dark foliage of the wide-spreading carob was interspersed with clumps of fan-leaved palms, or the lighter verdure of the feathery tamarisk, and sensitive mimosa, which droops its leaves even when too roughly shaken by the wind. In the foreground was our tent, and near it our camels were lazily dozing, whilst all around

were picturesque groups of swarthy figures reclining in all attitudes. As daylight faded, and the grey shadows deepened and gathered rapidly round, the flickering blaze of the watch-fire gave a mystic and almost weird-like appearance to the scene ; while the shrill cry of the cicadi, the low melancholy sighing of the wind, the rippling murmurs of the stream as it wound its way unseen amid the sedges, the mysterious breathings or pulsations of nature, and the wild music of the night, seemed to shed a magic-like influence upon the mind. It is at such an hour the sons of Ishmael love to gather together and relate their wild tales. Their thoughts veer back to the past, and memory awakens, with almost supernatural vividness, scenes of old joys and sorrows that have long slept, and would have been forgotten in the ordinary routine and bustle of an every-day life. Then old traditions are told that have been passed down from generation to generation, and in this manner the earliest history of the world and the greater part of the mysterious events therein recorded were handed down from the days of the patriarchs until the age when writing was discovered. Can we wonder, then, at the apparent incongruities of a record, the events of which extend over a period of nearly six thousand years?

The next morning we started up the valley at daybreak, and following the watercourse, on each side of which was a narrow belt of date palms, tamarisk, and mimosa, after a few hours' march along a very well-marked-out track we crossed a pass, the Nagb Hebron, descended into a long winding valley, the Ouadi Es Slav, and again ascending the pass Nagb el Deira, encamped on the Ouadi el Racha, "the Valley of Repose." The next morning we were in sight of Jebel Mousa, and a short march brought us to the convent which, with its lofty embattled walls, square bastioned angles, and deserted watch-tower, looks more like a fortalice of feudal times than an abode of priests ; and the resemblance is somewhat kept up by the entrance being situated some 30 feet from the ground. We, however, entered by the garden gate, which is strongly plated with iron, and after waiting a few minutes in an open balcony, on which



TRAVELLING ON CAMELS.

the chambers devoted to guests open, the superior and several of his brethren entered. He offered us accommodation in the convent, but for several reasons we preferred to encamp outside; and after thanking him for his proffered hospitality, we simply asked permission to look over the convent, which was immediately granted. We presented the letter of introduction we had brought with us, which the prior opened, and, glancing at the signature, passed on to an attendant priest without reading. We then adjourned to the refectory, where coffee, raki made from dates, and different kinds of fruits were offered us.

We then were conducted round the building, which consists of a large quadrangle divided into several courts, containing the Church of the Transfiguration, about a score of neglected-looking chapels dedicated to different saints, a library, cloisters for the monks, and a more modern-looking building for guests. The church is divided into nave and aisles by granite columns; the roof is blue, spangled with stars; and there are the usual priestly paraphernalia, consisting of gaudily decorated images, pictures of saints and martyrs, silver lamps, gilt candlesticks, and suchlike gear. We had to take off our boots before entering the chapel of the Burning Bush, which is considered the "Holy of Holies," and it is here pretended that the Lord appeared to Moses. We were also shown a sarcophagus of white marble, containing relics said to have belonged to St. Catherine, and the charnel-house, which was anything but an agreeable sight. Not being much interested even in live monks, I certainly cared less about dead ones, and was heartily glad to breathe the fresh air once more and get into the garden, which is kept in very tolerable order, and contains a good many fruit-trees of different descriptions. Having had sight-seeing enough, I tipped "*a quid*" to our ciccone, which I thought was doing the thing handsomely; when, to my surprise, he contemptuously turned the coin over in his hand—as a London cabby would on receiving a sixpence—and had the cheek to lift up his fingers and demand three more. "The next time we come to Sinai," was my reply, as I buttoned up my coat; and *the*

thing in petticoats, with a ghastly grin, opened the gates, and we returned to our people, who had prepared us an excellent breakfast.

After doing ample justice to the good cheer, accompanied by four of our own people carrying our guns, lunch, water-skins, &c., and guided by a couple of Bedouin boys in the service of the convent, we set off to explore Jebel Mousa.

Passing behind the convent, we began to ascend by a zigzag path in which steps were cut, which greatly facilitated our route. In a quarter of an hour we came to a spring of clear sweet water, delightfully situated under an overhanging rock, called by the Arabs Ain Jebel—"the Well of the Mountain." Farther on we came across the ruins of two chapels, one dedicated to the Madonna, and the other to Elijah, who was said to have lived in a cave underneath. Then passing under two archways between the rocks, we arrived on the plateau, where there is a paved pool to collect the rain-water, and an old cypress, called by the monks—for what reason I know not—"Elijah's tree." Nine hundred feet higher than this plateau is the summit which, by tradition, is the spot where the Law was given to Moses. Here we found the ruins of a Christian church and a Mahomedan mosque—the cross and the crescent in close proximity—but little else worth seeing except an extensive view over the surrounding country, which is well described by Jeremiah, who calls it "a land of deserts and of pits, a land where no man passed through, and where no man dwells"—a howling wilderness where there was no water. Imagination cannot picture such a scene of endless desolation. On all sides rose range after range of bare and rugged mountains, sufficiently high to cast deep shadows over the sterile and dreary-looking valleys that intersect them, which, with their sandy or stony beds, look like rivers without water. The slopes were furrowed by dark fissures and chasms that at one time might have been the beds of mountain torrents, but that they were not relieved by any trace of vegetation. Here were no variegated woods of pine, birch, and oak; no ferns, bracken, pasture land, moss, or

living verdure to take away from the utter lifelessness of the scene. Save the dismal moaning of the wind, as it swept past the scorched rocks and precipices, a death-like silence ever reigned. Here are heard no murmuring, purling streams, no sounds of falling waters. All nature appears dead, for nothing grows, nothing stirs, nothing changes. All seasons are alike in this land of utter desolation, which may be likened to a hideous chaos before the germ of life was awakened.

We were glad to get away from this scene of eternal barrenness, and returned along the road made by order of Abas Pacha when he conceived the idea of building a palace on the mountain. On arrival in camp we were somewhat disgusted to find that there were no signs of preparation for dinner, as Le Sage, our cook, and one of the padres had been fraternizing, and were both in a maudlin state. I very unceremoniously started the monastic party back to his convent, and a few buckets of nearly ice-cold water from the well soon brought Le Sage to his senses, and enabled him to carry on his culinary arrangements. This little *contretemps*, which delayed our dinner a couple of hours, however trying to our patience at the time, turned out lucky in the end, for just as we were about commencing operations, two American gentlemen, somewhat knocked up after a long march, rode up on camels and did us the honour of joining our party.

We had neither table nor chairs, but in the centre of the carpet a tablecloth was spread, on which the viands were placed; and our mattresses being stowed round, we dined like the noble Romans we have all read about. Our cook, to make up for his delinquency, had bestowed extra care upon his *cuisine*, which was voted the best in the desert by long chalks. A case of Bordeaux was cracked, a brew of "blue ruin," such as Vickers only can distil, was concocted, and I never remember passing a more jolly evening. Long after the old monks had finished their "Kyrie Eleison," "Annie Laurie," "Le Vieux Drapeau," "The Star-Spangled Banner," and "The Bonnie Blue Flag," and suchlike chants, were borne on the night

winds, and I daresay somewhat astonished a neighbouring camp of Egyptian soldiers.

Our guests had travelled from Suez by land, and were going to Petra *viâ* Akabah, and they tried hard to persuade us to accompany them, but unfortunately we could not spare the time. The next day we visited the block of isolated rock from which—according to tradition—Moses caused water to flow, and ascended to the summit of Mount Catherine, from whence we had a splendid view of the surrounding country. The panorama embraced the Serbal, with its five peaks, El Shomar, Jebel Mousa, Um Shaumer, the groves of Tôr, and the Red Sea, with the high mountains of El Yareeb and El Zet on the African shore. *En route* I shot a brace of red-legged partridges and a couple of “conies,” animals of the same colour as a hare, and much resembling a very large guinea-pig. They have a very strong smell, and can scarcely be good to eat, notwithstanding the Arabs told me that some Europeans had eaten them. We all passed the evening together, and gave our followers and people a feast, at which our Bedouins were joined by a Towara Sheikh and several of his tribe, so that we had to double their allowance of sheep and rice. After our own dinner we sat in state, and were visited by the whole tribe then present, to whom I distributed coffee and tobacco, for which they appeared very grateful. Later on in the evening the Binbashi, and several officers of the Egyptian detachment, came to see us; so our family circle began to assume rather gigantic proportions. Sending a score of youngsters to collect fuel, a cheerful fire was made, round which we all sat, and copious brews of coffee and sherbet were handed round by our people, who prided themselves upon the hospitality of their masters. Several Bedouin women, having got over their shyness, joined our circle, and after some little hesitation—perhaps caused by the presence of the Pacha’s officer—at the request of the Sheikh, they commenced the “Asamer,” their national dance. The younger girls, joining hands, sang and kept time to a measure, whilst the men clapped their hands and joined in the chorus. In the begin-

ning the performers were coy, and the movement was very slow ; but warming up by degrees, they became extremely animated, their eyes sparkled with excitement, and the scene became very interesting. With the exception of an old party who regulated the time, the dancers seemed between the ages of thirteen and fifteen, and five or six of their number were very good-looking, having extremely white, even teeth, with olive complexions tinged with the ruddy glow of health. Although their only garment consisted of the ordinary blue chemise, open from the throat to the waist, which scarcely concealed the outlines of their lithesome figures, there was no immodesty or indelicacy in the whole performance. On the contrary, several of the dances were very graceful. To the best dancers I distributed gilt bracelets and silver rings, of which I had brought a quantity for presents, and great was the rejoicing there-upon.

On the strength of my long beard, weather-worn phiz, general get-up, and knowledge of the language, Achmed had dubbed me a "Hadji," and in the extemporaneous songs that followed I was welcomed by the tribe "as one who had been long away;" and it was evident that my party had gained greatly in the esteem of the Bedouins by not putting up in the convent. The festivities were kept up until a late hour, as long after we had retired I heard them chattering.

The next morning at daylight we bade our American friends adieu, and started in a northerly direction for Mount Serbal. Our route lay through barren valleys, and plains hemmed in by still more dreary-looking mountains; and crossing Nakb Hawa, "the Pass of the Winds," after a long and fatiguing march we halted in the Ouadi Feiran, where our camp was pitched by a beautiful spring in a palm grove. Here we found another Bedouin camp, the Sheikh of which paid us a visit in the evening, and gave us two of his tribe for guides. As I told him of my intention of remaining here a few days to shoot, he advised our pitching the camp in Ouadi Aleiat, where we should be much nearer the haunts of the

"bedan," or ibex ; so the next day, after visiting the ruins of the old town of Feiran, we changed our camp, and pitched our tent by a spring of pure cold water, in a gorge or cleft in the mountain ; a most delightful spot, shaded by overhanging rocks. The camels had great difficulty in making their way over the loose stones and masses of rock, so it was late in the day before we got comfortably established and all our things in order.

At daylight the next morning, accompanied by eight Bedouins carrying our guns, ropes, food, water-skins, rugs, and waterproof sheet, we commenced the ascent of Serbâl, which from the plain has certainly a more majestic appearance than any other mountain we saw. After about a couple of hours' hard climbing, we got to the ridge, from which five isolated peaks rise ; and here we were glad to halt for a time and rest, as we were all somewhat fatigued. I had on two occasions seen the slots of ibex on our way up, and upon the ridge, which in some places was covered with dwarf shrubs and aromatic herbage, I found quite fresh "sign," which I determined to follow up ; whilst Allard made his way to the summit of one of the peaks, and two of the Bedouins climbed up another, from whence they were to make certain signals in case they saw any game. All tracking was impossible, and we had had hard work even to get along, as the ridge consisted of boulders and *débris* of grey granite, which often gave way underfoot ; however, the Bedouins seemed to know every inch of the ground, and proved first-rate mountaineers. We descended a slope where the herbage, such as it was, appeared to grow more luxuriantly than in other places, and this they considered a certain find for ibex early in the morning and late in the afternoon. They showed me two circles of stones where the Bedouin hunters used to lie in wait for them when they came to feed ; but none were to be seen, and I was on the point of moving from the place, when I heard a slight rattle of loose stones, and I saw a very large dog hyena scrambling down a gully about a hundred and fifty yards below the slope on which we were standing. It was apparently hard work for an

animal of his build, which is most unsuited for going downhill, and he stopped every now and then, perhaps to listen. I did not think of firing at him, but the Arabs begged me to kill him on account of the ravages that the animals make amongst their goats; so, as he was standing with his head raised somewhat suspiciously in our direction, I threw up my rifle and dropped him, the bullet entering just below the ear.

A moment afterwards I was sorry that I had fired, for three buck ibex, disturbed by the report, sprang up from behind a large rock, under the shade of which they must have been lying. Unfortunately, from the place where I was standing I could not see them until they were long out of range and scampering along the brow of the ridge above. The oldest of the Bedouins, who was himself an experienced ibex hunter, said he knew the spot they would make for; so under his guidance I again clambered up the steep slope, and after a long scramble we passed between two of the peaks, making our way very gingerly over slabs of smooth granite to the edge of a crest, just below which seven ibex were grazing about two hundred yards distant. I drew back and paused a few moments to take breath, for the exertion had made me too unsteady to shoot well; then shaking myself together, I again crept forward, and, selecting a buck that appeared to have the longest horns, I dropped him stone dead with a ball through the shoulder, and with my other barrel brought a second to the ground, but almost immediately he regained his feet, and bounded off as if unhurt. Away dashed the Bedouins in pursuit, perfectly astonished at my having killed at what they considered so long a range, and I followed as fast as I could, my movements being considerably impeded from having to carry my rifle. When I got down to the spot where the first ibex fell, I waited, as my people were out of sight, having gone after the second. In a few minutes a loud shout of triumph told me that they had been successful, and half an hour afterwards they appeared with a fine young buck, which they found dead, my bullet having entered the back and shattered the

hind leg. As they had experienced great difficulty in carrying the carcase up the slope of the hill, it was resolved to cut them up where they lay, and I never saw game broken up more expeditiously. The skins were taken off in a most artistic manner—all in a piece, to serve for carrying water; and the best parts of the meat were cut off and carried with us, I reserving the heads and horns as my share. These ibex were of a different species to any I had hitherto killed, and differed from those of the Alps, Caucasus, Neilgherries, or Himalayas, being more like a goat, and not so delicately formed. The horns of the largest measured 35 inches along the curve, and were about 9 inches in circumference round the base. They rise from the crest of the skull, and bend gradually backwards, almost describing the arc of half a circle. The anterior surface is ringed with bands, the number of which, it is said, denote the years of the animal's age. The theory is not, I think, to be relied upon, as I have killed a buck with thirty-seven such rings. The horns of the young one were much smaller. Their general colour was an ashy grey, deepening to black on the hind quarters, where the hair was long and shaggy. The beard of the larger one was black in colour and about 8 inches in length. The females are very small in comparison with the males, and have short horns slightly curved backwards; they are also lighter in colour, and more delicately shaped. The report of my gun brought up Allard and the rest of our people. He had been to the summit of one of the peaks, and amused himself by copying some of the Sinaitic inscriptions that were carved on the rocks. Our people being heavily loaded, we were a long time scrambling down the mountain to our camp; and it was nearly dusk before we arrived at our bivouac.

Being somewhat stiff after our exertions, we passed the next day in camp, and I amused myself by preserving the ibex heads, and preparing them for being set up. The following morning at day-break found us again clambering up the steep side of the mountain, and seeing no fresh signs of game upon our arrival on the

ridge, we halted for an hour and breakfasted. We afterwards ascended two of the peaks, in order to reconnoitre the ground more effectually, but had to be satisfied with a splendid view of the surrounding country, as not an ibex was to be seen. We had considerable difficulty in ascending, and much more in descending, the second peak, as in some places we had to cross along a narrow and uneven ledge of rock running along the scarped face of a cliff, when, if the head had turned giddy or the foot slipped, a drop of some hundreds of feet would have been the consequence. However, with the aid of my long rope we all got down safely, although with knees and hands somewhat excoriated by the sharp edges of rock. Although the air at this elevation was cool and refreshing, still the rays of the sun were intensely powerful, and to this cause I attribute our not falling in with ibex, who, like all other wild animals, remain in the shade during the heat of the day. We had but to look in each other's faces to see that our powers of exertion had been taxed to the uttermost, so after an hour's repose we retraced our steps to camp.

The next day we returned to the Ouadi Feiran, a great resort of the Bedouin tribes, who lead the same primitive nomadic life as their forefathers, the patriarchs of the early ages, from whom they have inherited and preserved unchanged their peculiar habits and customs. A race takes much of its character from the country in which it lives, and the wandering habits of the Bedouin were inculcated by necessity. The tribes are obliged to migrate according to season and the changes of the weather, as their existence depends upon water and pasturage. Having no fixed home, and being habituated to constant change, their wants are few; and their household gear and utensils are limited to a few necessary articles of the most simple description. Their only wealth consists of male and female slaves, herds of camels, sheep, and goats; the black huts, their only habitations, made of camels' or goats' hair; earthenware jars and pots, leather water-skins, and bags to contain clothes. Although Mahomedans in name, few amongst them can

even repeat the prescribed form of prayer, and scarcely any can read the Koran. The only act of worship performed by any of our Bedouins was a short invocation to the Deity, hastily muttered as the sun was rising, with their faces turned towards the east, but without dismounting from their camels. Notwithstanding their laxity in the ceremonial observances of their religion, they have many sterling good qualities. Their greatest fault, a common one, is an innate love of the almighty dollar, and an incapacity of distinguishing between *meum* and *tuum*; yet a guest and his property are sacred, and a Bedouin will defend both at the peril of his life. Generally they are men of few words, simple and unaffected in manner, trustworthy and faithful to their salt, when uncontaminated by the corrupting taint engendered amongst dwellers in cities. Both men and women are well formed, although carrying little spare flesh, and there is generally a great want of development below the knee and in the fore-arm, while the feet and hands are peculiarly small and delicately shaped. They have marked features, aquiline noses, and piercing black eyes, capable of great expression. Some of both sexes are nearly black, but the majority have a complexion about the colour of a ripe filbert; although amongst the higher classes I have seen women and girls almost as fair as Europeans, they having never been exposed to the heat of the sun whilst tending sheep or fetching water. Like the sex throughout the world, the women are passionately fond of ornaments, and adorn themselves with a profusion of silver armlets, bracelets, necklaces of amber or beads, ear-rings, and small silver cases containing talismans, charms, or verses from the Koran. To heighten their beauty they tattoo their chins, each tribe having a peculiar mark, stain the nails of their hands and feet with henna, darken the eyelids, and pencil the eyebrows with antimony. The Towara women wear their hair drawn from the forehead in the shape of a horn; and the maidens, to distinguish them from wives, widows, &c., wear the *shebeka* fastened round the head, which is an ornament made of small shells, and corresponding with the "snood."

This is forcibly taken away by the bridegroom on his nuptial night and the bride can never resume it.

Marriage amongst the Bedouins is an institution which does not entail such "awful responsibilities" as if contracted at St. George's, Hanover Square. The form is simple, and certainly not expensive. Seven days after the negotiation is concluded, the bridegroom cuts the throat of a young camel or kid in front of the girl's father's tent, and the ceremony is completed.

During the day a feast is held by the friends of both parties ; and a tent having been pitched a short distance away from the rest of the camp, towards evening the bridegroom retires to it. In the meantime the bride elect, after having had her hair dressed and her body perfumed, is carried by the women, howling and yelling with fear, and delivered into the arms of the impatient husband, who tears off the *shebeka*, *et l'affaire est finie*.

"Wedlock's like a game of whist :
A card is chosen from the pack ;
How much trouble might be miss'd,
If 't were bad, to give it back !"

Such is matrimony in the desert ; and if the Bedouin does not like his bride the contract is easily broken : he mounts her on a female camel, says to her "*Ent taleek*"—"thou art divorced,"—and away she goes back to her family, when, after forty days, should she not prove to be in an interesting condition, she is free to marry again. On the second occasion, however, no great show of modesty is required to be displayed : the tent of the bridegroom remains in its usual position, and the bride is supposed to find her way to it without offering any opposition.

Hard life, exposure to the weather, low diet without excess, and constant exercise, make the Bedouins extremely hardy, capable of great endurance, and able to perform the most arduous services on very meagre fare. Many a time have I seen them wrap themselves up in their burnouses and sleep out in the open, rather than take the trouble to unpack and pitch their tent ; and although heavy dew or

rain might fall during the night, their constitutions rarely seemed to suffer by the exposure. The men may feed the horses and camels, but all the really hard work and domestic labour is done by the women.

They fetch the water, grind the corn, cook the food, tend the flocks, and when the labour of the day is over, shampoo and crack the joints of their lords and masters as they recline on the skin which serves as their bed. Such is the ordinary routine of nomade life ; but what else can be expected from a people who have no religion or law, no sense of honour, no antecedents or aspirations, and no home or possessions but a few brackish wells and palm-trees? In the barren waste they inhabit they know no real security, are ever, more or less, in danger, and are often exposed to the greatest privations and suffering, caused by drought and famine. Brought up without even a semblance of education and instruction, uninfluenced by the force of example, and unsoftened by the civilization of society, the life they lead very much resembles that of their own goats : sometimes, indeed, one is struck by the extraordinary likeness to these animals that is to be found in an Arab's physiognomy. The valley of Feiran afforded capital grazing for our camels, and as we found ourselves well supplied with milk, honey, kids, and other Bedouin delicacies, supplied by the Sheikh, we passed a couple of days very pleasantly, and then retraced our steps to Jebel Mousa.



CHAPTER XVII.

THE GAME OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

The Limpopo and Zambesi districts—Great variety of antelope—The sassaybe—The koodoo—The eland—The steinbok—The rheebok—The springbok—The blesbok—The bontebok—The gemsbok—The hartebeeste—The bushbok—The pallah—The oryx—The hatesbok—The sable antelope—The gnoc—The roan antelope—The waterbok—The adax—The zebra—The quagga—The wild dog.

THERE is no country in the world where such a variety of the antelope species is to be found as in the district between the Limpopo and the Zambesi rivers, and the accompanying engravings show the trophies a hunter is likely to obtain in these parts. Vast herds of all kinds of antelope are to be met with in this district, which ravage the country over which they pass until scarcely a blade of grass is to be seen. During their periodical migrations, or "*trek-bokken*," as they are called by the colonists, thousands upon thousands of all kinds of animals may be seen pouring over the country like a great river, ever moving onwards. I shall now give a short description of the various species I have fallen in with in this region.

The SASSAYBE, or bastard hartebeeste (*Damalis lunatus*), is generally found in small herds in the neighbourhood of rivers. The adult male stands about 4 feet 6 inches at the shoulder, 4 feet at the croup, and is 8 feet 6 inches in extreme length. The general colour is a reddish-brown, with a very dark blaze down the face, and black points, the tail having a black tuft at the end. The horns are 12 inches long, with ten or twelve incomplete rings, which, first turning outwards and then sweeping inwards and backwards, seem to form a complete crescent from the front. The female, which is a



1. THE SASSAYBE.
2. THE KOODOO.
3. THE ELAND.

4. THE STEINBOK.
5. THE REEBOK.

much smaller animal, has much more slender horns. The Bechuana and Matabili name is "Sassaybe."

The KOODOO (*Strepsiceros capensis*) is one of the most striking of the South African antelopes, on account of his magnificent antlers. The adult male stands 5 feet at the shoulder, and is about 9 feet in extreme length. The body is somewhat heavily made; consequently, he can be run down without difficulty, provided he is fallen in with on good riding-ground and that the hunters are well mounted. This, however, is a very rare incident, as koodoo frequent the thickets and wood on the banks of rivers, and I have never met with them in the open plain, unless they have been driven there by beaters or chased by wild animals. The head is short and well formed, with a somewhat square muzzle, and the ears are large and broad, but pointed at the tips. The horns are about 4 feet in extreme length, forming two complete spiral circles, diverging from each other in their ascent, like a corkscrew. The base is marked for some distance with slight wrinkles, but not annulated. The female is hornless. General colour—a greyish-blue, marked with a white line along the spine beneath a brown mane, which extends almost to the tail. The flanks are marked with several white stripes running downwards to the belly, which is white. The face is dark brown, with white under the horns and eyes; the beard is white; and the dewlap also white, fringed with black hair. The Matabili name is "Eechlongole."

The ELAND (*Boselaphus oreas*) is the largest of the South African antelope, being equal in dimensions to a fine ox. A full-grown bull will measure 6 feet 6 inches at the shoulder and about 12 feet in extreme length; he is also proportionately ponderous in his build, and when fat and in good condition will weigh over 800 lbs. He has a very blood-looking head, light and long, with massive forehead, broad muzzle, small pointed ears, and large, brilliant, melting eyes. The neck is light, the shoulders deep, the withers elevated, and he has an ample pendulous dewlap, fringed with wavy brown hair. The horns, placed on the summit of the frontals, are about



6. THE SPRINGBOK.
7. THE BLESBOK.
8. THE BONTBOK.
9. THE GEMSBOK.

10. THE HARTEBEESTE.
11. THE BUSHBOK.
12. THE PALLAH.

2 feet in length, slightly divergent, nearly straight, and encircled by a spiral ring, which ascends almost to the tips. The general colour is a greyish-brown, and he has no suborbital sinus or lachrymary depression. The cow is much smaller than the bull, and has long and slender horns. The flesh of the eland is the best that can be obtained in Africa, being juicy, well-flavoured, and tender. The Hottentot name for the eland is "T'ganna," the Kaffir "Impoof."

The STEINBOK (*Tragulus rupestris*) is generally found in pairs in most of the South African hill ranges. The adult male is 20 inches high at the shoulder, 22 inches at the croup, and 3 feet in extreme length, standing very high on the legs. The head is short and oval, the muzzle black and pointed, the ears large and open, and the tail barely an inch long. The horns are about 4 inches in length; slender, round, and pointed, with several wrinkles round the base. The general colour is tawny ash, with white under the belly and inside the legs. The Matabili name is "Ecoolah."

The RHEEBOK (*Redunca capreolus*) is common amongst the hills and rocky ground in the neighbourhood of the Limpopo. The adult male stands about 2 feet 5 inches at the shoulder, and is about 5 feet in extreme length. The horns are about 9 inches in length, straight and sharply pointed, and annulated some distance from the base with from ten to fifteen rings.

The SPRINGBOK (*Antelope euchore*) derives its name from the extraordinary bounds that it makes when alarmed; it being capable of leaping six or seven feet in height without any difficulty. When moving or grazing, they walk or trot like any other antelope. Confident in their fleetness, it is very amusing to see the contemptuous way in which they treat their pursuers, as they allow them to come near, and then, giving a bound and a snort, expand the hair on their backs, and change colour, appearing white. They are extremely graceful creatures, jumping beautifully, with the head thrown back, the legs doubled quite under, and the body curved, so that they appear for the moment as if suspended in the air. Besides being one of the most beautiful of the South African ante-

lopes, it is also by far the most numerous, being often seen in herds numbering many thousands. The adult male stands 2 feet 8 inches at the shoulder, 2 feet 10 inches at the croup, and measures about 4 feet 10 inches in extreme length. The horns are about 15 inches in length, lyrate, with the points turning inwards. They are annulated with about twenty rings. The general colour is a rich cinnamon brown, with pure white upon the abdomen, the two colours being separated from each other by a broad band of reddish-brown. The doe is smaller than the buck, and has slender horns, with a few indistinct rings at the base. The Kaffir and Bechuana name is "Tsepe."

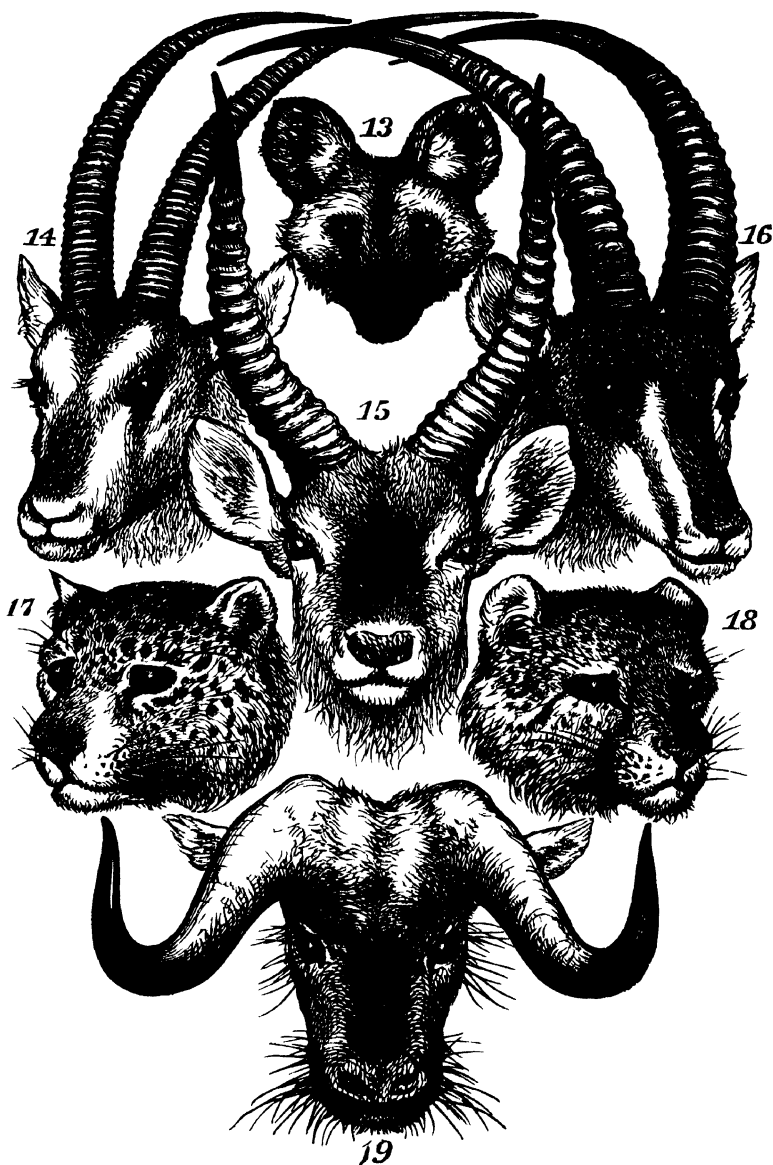
The BLESBOK, or white-faced antelope (*Gazella albifrons*), is not uncommon all over the Matabili district and south of the Vaal river. The adult male stands 3 feet 8 inches at the shoulder, and measures 6 feet 4 inches in extreme length. The head is long and narrow, with broad muzzle. The horns are 15 inches in length and semi-annulated on the anterior edge. The general colour—chocolate on the head and neck, bluish-white on the back, chestnut along the sides and hind quarters, and white under the belly and inside the legs. It has all the appearance of being artificially painted. The Bechuana name is "Nunni."

The BONTEBOK, pied antelope, or painted goat (*Gazella pygarga*), is found in troops throughout the district between the Limpopo and the Zambesi. The adult male stands 3 feet 10 inches at the shoulder, and measures 6 feet 6 inches in extreme length. The head is ill shaped, long, and narrow, with broad muzzle, and has always a white blaze down the face. The horns are 15 inches long, thick round the base, lyrate, divergent, and erect, with ten or twelve incomplete rings broken in the middle and striated between. The female has slender horns, similar in shape. The general colour is chocolate on the side of the head and neck; black on the sides, flanks, and fore-arms; bluish-lilac on the back and withers, with a white triangular patch on the croup; white belly, white stockings, and white inside the legs.

The GEMSBOK, or South African oryx (*Oryx capensis*), is one of the handsomest of the antelopes of Southern Africa. The adult male stands 3 feet 10 inches at the shoulder, and measures about 10 feet in extreme length. The head is very game-looking, with black between the base of the horns and down the forehead, and with two black stripes on each side of the jowl. The ears are also fringed with black. The horns are from 3 feet to 4 feet in length, slightly bent backwards and annulated half-way up from the base with from twenty-five to thirty rings. The general colour is buff, with a black stripe along the back, widening over the croup and stretching down the fore-arms and hocks. Belly white, with black stripe running diagonally along the side. He has also a peculiar tuft of bristly black hair upon the larynx. The Matabili and Bechuana name is "Kookam."

The HARTEBEESTE (*Acronotus caama*) is one of the clumsiest of all the African antelopes, and is not difficult to ride down. The adult male stands 5 feet at the withers, and measures about nine feet in extreme length. The head is remarkably narrow, heavy, and long; the shoulders are very high, and the croup droops considerably, so that the gait appears very awkward. The horns, 22 inches in length and slightly annulated, are seated on the summit of a beetling ridge above the frontals, very close together, and forming a double angular curve, with the sharp tips pointing backwards. The general colour is a bright orange sienna, with a black stripe down the nose and on each fore-arm and hock, reaching down to the fetlocks. The Matabili name is "Intoosel;" the Kaffir and Bechuana, "Cama."

The BUSHBOK (*Tragelaphus sylvatica*) is generally found in the low bush near the coast. The adult male stands 2 feet 8 inches at the shoulder, rather higher at the croup, and measures about 5 feet 2 inches in extreme length. The head is somewhat like that of a goat, with the ears broad and rounded. The horns are 12 inches long; erect, spiral, and sub-lyrate; being twisted about the middle, and sharp-pointed. The female is hornless. General colour—bril-



13. THE DHOLE, OR WILD DOG
 14. THE ORYX.
 15. THE WATERBOK.
 16. THE SABLE ANTELOPE.

17. THE LEOPARD.
 18. THE CHEETAH.
 19. THE GNU.

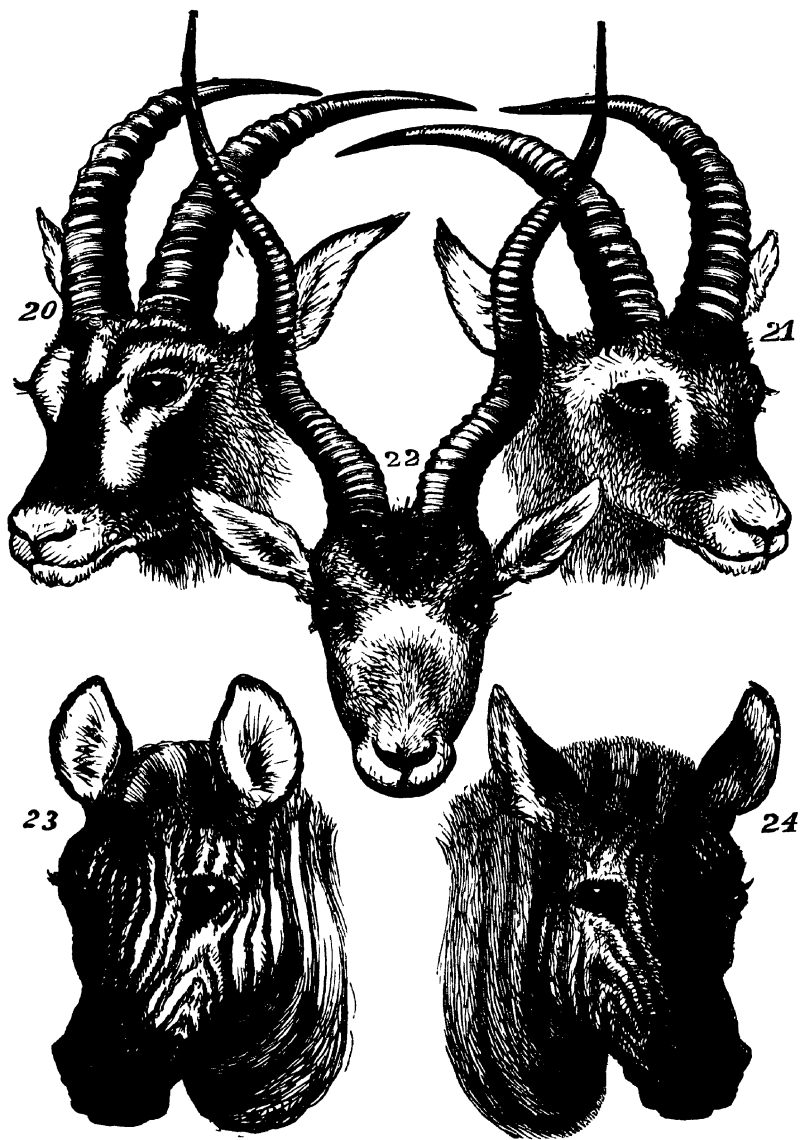
liant chestnut, with black or very dark brown band round the neck; two white patches on each cheek and several on the flanks; the abdomen and inside the legs are white. They are generally found in pairs.

The PALLAH or Rooyebok (*Epyceros melampus*) is found in the low bush of Bechuana Land, and all over the district between the Limpopo and the Zambesi, in large herds. The adult male stands about 3 feet 4 inches at the shoulder, and measures 6 feet in extreme length. The horns are about 20 inches in length, lyrate in form, and annulated and striated for two-thirds of their length; the rings being partially obliterated at the sides, with the tips smoothed and polished. There is no trace of a suborbital sinus. The female is a much smaller animal, and hornless. The general colour is bay, with a black crescent-shaped mark on the croup, forming a dark streak down each flank. They have also a peculiar cushion of black hair between the hock and the fetlock.

The ORYX (*Oryx leucoryx*) is found in herds of considerable numbers in the districts bordering on the Zambesi. It much resembles the gemsbok in general appearance, but the horns are very much more curved. An adult male stands about 3 feet 6 inches at the shoulder, and measures in extreme length about 9 feet. The horns are about 38 inches in length, and slightly ringed or wrinkled two-thirds of the way up. The general colour is greyish-white, diversified with dark brown patches on the face, back, and points.

The WATERBOK (*Kobus ellipsyprymnus*) is generally found in pairs or families in the neighbourhood of rivers, into which when alarmed it will plunge without the slightest hesitation, regardless of the depth and strength of the current. An adult male stands about 4 feet 6 inches at the withers, and measures in extreme length about 8 feet. The horns are about 34 inches in length, lyrate in form, and wrinkled half-way up from the base. The female has no horns. The general colour is brown, with an elliptical patch of greyish-white round the base of the tail.

The SABLE ANTELOPE (*Aigocerus niger*) is the most magnificent



20. THE ROAN ANTELOPE.
 21. THE BLAUBOK.
 22. THE ADDAX.

23. THE ZEBRA.
 24. THE QUAGGA.

creature found in Southern Africa, and the hunter who has secured a specimen of a fine old male sable antelope may think himself lucky. The adult male stands 4 feet 6 inches at the shoulder, and measures about 9 feet in extreme length. The head is remarkably game-looking, being attenuated towards the muzzle. The ears are long, tapering, and pointed, chestnut inside, and with black tips. The withers are elevated, and the croup low; therefore it is not very speedy, and can be run down with a good horse if found in fair riding-ground. The horns are about 40 inches long, annulated with about thirty incomplete rings, and curved gracefully backwards, the tips being very sharply pointed. The general colour is intense glossy black, with an occasional cast of deep chestnut, and the male has a black mane. A white streak, commencing above each eye, runs down the side of the nose to the muzzle, and reaches along the jowl to the throat.

The GNU, or wildebeest (*Connochetes gorgon*), is an awkward, grotesque-looking animal, seeming a link between an antelope and a buffalo. There are several species of gnus in South Africa, known as the common gnu, the brindled gnu, and the blue wildebeest; and all are found in large herds in the Zambesi country. An adult gnu will stand over 4 feet at the withers, and measures in extreme length about 9 feet. He has a heavy square head, not unlike a buffalo's, and spread-out muzzle, small pointed ears, and a tuft of long black hair down the face. He has also a greyish wiry hog mane, a bushy black beard from the chin to the dewlap, and long wavy hair from between the fore-legs to the brisket, extending for some distance along the belly. The horns, which are about 20 inches in length, rise from a basal mass that extends over the forehead, and sweeping downward over the eyes and beetling brows with a regular curve, rise upwards, tapering to a sharp point.

The ROAN ANTELOPE, or bastard gemsbok (*Aigocerus equina*), is common on the Zambesi. The adult male stands 5 feet at the shoulder, and measures 9 feet in extreme length. The head is shaped like that of an ibex, and the ears are 14 inches in length,



THE ADDAX

and pointed. The horns are about 2 feet in length, bend backwards like those of an ibex, and are nearly parallel, with from twenty-five to thirty prominent rings, pretty close together at the base, but becoming more widely separated towards the points. The female has no horns. The Matabili name is "Etak."

The BLAUBOK, or etaac (*Aigocerus leucophæus*), is found in troops of ten or twelve in the neighbourhood of the Limpopo and the Zambesi rivers. The adult male stands about 4 feet at the shoulder, and measures about 7 feet 6 inches in extreme length. The horns are about 30 inches in length, are annulated, and sweep backwards. The general colour is a bluish-slate, and the mane and the tuft of the tail are black. The flesh is as rank as that of an ibex, and uneatable.

The ADDAX (*Addax nasomaculatus*) is found in pairs on the most arid plains of South Africa. An adult male stands 3 feet 6 inches at the withers, rather high at the croup, and measures about 7 feet in extreme length. The horns are about 30 inches long, annulated and twisted somewhat like those of a koodoo, but the curves are not so great. The general colour is white, but the male has a black mane and a black patch of hair on the forehead. Both male and female have horns very much alike.

The ZEBRA, or wilde paard (*Asinus zebra*), is one of the most beautiful of all the South African animals. The general colour is a creamy white, marked regularly with velvety black stripes that cover the entire head, neck, and body. The zebra stands about 4 feet 6 inches at the withers, and measures 8 feet 6 inches from the nose to the point of the tail. He has a short glossy coat, clean muscular limbs, arched crest, and black muzzle. They are found in great numbers all over the interior of South Africa, and more especially in the country between the Limpopo and the Zambesi.

The QUAGGA (*Asinus quagga*) looks at first like a cross between the zebra and the ass. He stands about 4 feet 6 inches at the withers, and measures 8 feet 6 inches in extreme length. His general colour is dark fulvous brown brindled, with darker brown stripes on the

neck, belly, and legs. He has a high crest, full hog mane, ears like a horse, and flowing white tail. These animals are found in great herds on the Vaal river, living peaceably and sociably with antelopes of all species.

The WILD DOG, or DHOLE, of South Africa (*Cuon dukhuensis*) is commonly found in packs of about twenty, and the ravages they make amongst the game is something incredible ; no animal, however swift, being safe from attack, as they systematically hunt their prey down by relays. They rarely stand more than 2 feet at the shoulder, and measure 4 feet 3 inches in extreme length. Their general colour is brindled or sandy yellow, with black head and muzzle, and they are marked with black and white irregularly-shaped stripes on the body. The tail is bushy, like that of a fox, and divided in the middle by a black band ; the upper part being sandy and the end white.

Amongst the trophies are the heads of the leopard (*Felis leopardus*) and the cheetah (*Felis jubata*) which have been described in the previous pages.



KANCHIL.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A TREK-BOKKEN, OR PERIODICAL MIGRATION OF GAME IN CENTRAL AFRICA.

Lack of water—*Coup d'œil* on the banks of the Meritsane—Multitude of wild game—
A *trek-bokken*—Sir William Harris's description of one—Gordon Cumming's
experiences—African hunting a remedy against *ennui*—"The Fairyland of sport."

IT would be difficult for those who have never visited the interior of Africa to imagine or even form a remote conception of the countless herds of different kinds of antelope that are occasionally to be met with on her vast plains. Lack of water, the curse and the prevailing feature of these savage regions, frequently compels the *feræ naturæ* to assemble in countless companies round the last dregs of expiring moisture, without reference to caste or hereditary animosities; and on such an occasion the picture they represent is one that must be seen to be believed.

At a single *coup-d'œil* may be seen mixed multitudes of the graceful springbok, the brindled gnu, the red and yellow hartebeeste, the purple sassaybe, the peach-bloom coloured gemsbok, the roan antelope, the corkscrew-horned koodoo, the white-faced blesbok, the many-striped zebra, the agile quagga, intermingled with troops of unwieldy eland, flocks of ostriches, and countless varieties of smaller animals.

"Rolling and blackening, swarms succeeding swarms,
With deeper murmurs and more hoarse alarms,
Dusky they spread, in close embodied crowds,
And o'er the vales descend in living clouds."

The eloquent word-painting of the greatest sportsman of this century, Sir William Harris, will convey to the reader a very fair

idea of the vast quantity of game that is to be met with in these regions :—

“It was on the banks of the Meritsane, south of the twenty-sixth parallel of latitude, that we first witnessed one of these grand and imposing spectacles. Countless herds, which had congregated from every quarter to drink of the stagnant waters of that river, literally covered the wide extended landscape for many miles, nor could the numbers assembled have fallen short of 15,000 or 20,000. ‘You should have seen this ground ten years ago,’ is the observation which usually grates on the ear of the disappointed sportsman who visits some boasted hunting-grounds in India, only to find it tenantless ; and so little game had been seen by our party previous to reaching this river, that we were strongly tempted to treat the accounts that had been given of its abundance as altogether fabulous. With this noble panorama, however, we opened our campaign against the African fauna. A host of famished savages scoured in our wake, dexterously dispatching the wounded animals as they fell, by a touch on the spine with the point of an assegai ; hastily covering up the carcases with thorn-branches, to secure them from the voracity of the impatient vultures, which swooped in myriads, and, seeming utterly heedless of the presence of man, plucked out the eyes of the yet living victims. Never, perhaps, has there been witnessed such an onslaught since the days

‘when Nimrod bold,
That mighty hunter, first made war on beasts,
And stained the woodland green with purple dye.’

“Troop upon troop now pour in from every quarter, and continue to join each other, until the whole plain seems literally alive ; and thousands still bearing down from every point of the compass, a vast extent of country, which presently becomes chequered white and black with their congregated masses, at length presents the appearance of a moving mass of game. The clatter of their hoofs becomes perfectly astounding, and can be compared to nothing but the din of a tremendous charge of cavalry, or the rushing of a

mighty tempest. Their incredible numbers so impede their onward progress, that the horseman experiences no difficulty in closing with the motley band. As the panic caused by the repeated reports of his rifle increases, the rear ranks, pressing tumultuously upon the heels of the leaders of the retreating phalanx, cause indescribable confusion. Dense clouds of dust hover over them, and the long necks of troops of ostriches are to be seen towering above the heads of their less gigantic neighbours, and sailing past with great rapidity; whilst a host of hungry vultures, which, wheeling in airy circlets like small specks in the firmament, have been gradually descending, and now swoop with the velocity of lightning as each succeeding flash of the deadly tube gives token of prey, serve to complete a picture which must be seen to be understood, and which beggars all attempt at description."

The *Trek-bokken*, as the colonists are wont to term the immense migratory swarms of different kinds of antelope which from time to time inundate the abodes of civilization, to the destruction of every green herb or sign of crops, not only form one of the most remarkable features in the zoology of Central Africa, but may also be reckoned amongst the most extraordinary examples of the fecundity of animal life.

The springbok, which is unquestionably one of the most graceful and symmetrical of the antelope species, may be found in countless herds on the broad plains of the interior. It abounds at times to such an incredible extent that the whole face of the country, as far as the eye can sweep, is absolutely white with its congregated multitudes. As the traveller advances over the trackless expanse, hundreds of this delicately formed antelope bound away on either side of his path with metcor-like and sportive velocity; winging their bird-like flight by a quick succession of those singularly elastic leaps, which have given rise to its colonial appellation, and which enable it to surpass as well in swiftness as in grace almost every other mammiferous quadruped. But although frequently found herding by itself, the springbok is more usually detected in the

society of gnus, quaggas, ostriches, or blesboks. Fleet as the wind and thoroughly conscious of its own speed, it mingles with these motley herds, sauntering about with an easy, careless gait, occasionally with outstretched neck approaching some coquettish doe, and spreading its own glittering white folds so as to effect a sudden and complete metamorphosis of exterior from fawn-colour to white. Wariest of the wary, however, the springboks are ever the first to take the alarm and to lead the retreating column.

Harris thus describes a *trek-bokken*: "To form any estimate of their numbers on such occasions would be perfectly impossible; the havoc committed in their onward progress falling nothing short of a wasting swarm of locusts. Pouring down like the devastating curse of Egypt from their native plains in the interior, whence they have been driven, after protracted drought, by the failure of the stagnant pools on which they have relied, whole legions of springboks, abandoning the parched soil, throng with one accord to deluge and lay waste the cultivated regions; and so effectually does the van of the vast column destroy every vestige of verdure, that the rear is often reduced to positive starvation. The lion has then been seen stalking in the middle of the compressed phalanx, removed little more than a paw's length from his powerless victims, whilst flocks of sheep have not unfrequently been swept away by the living torrent and no more seen. Ere the morning's dawn, cultivated fields, which the evening before appeared proud of their promising verdure, despite of every precaution that can be taken, are reaped level with the ground, and the grazier, despoiled of his lands, is driven to seek pasture for his flocks elsewhere, until the bountiful thunderclouds, reanimating nature, restore vegetation to the burnt-up country. Then these unwelcome visitors, whose ranks during their short but destructive sojourn have been thinned both by man and beast, retire instinctively to their secluded abodes, to renew their depredations when necessity shall again compel them."

This account, which is in no way exaggerated or overdrawn, is more than corroborated by the testimony of Gordon Cumming,

Oswell, Livingstone, and a host of other African travellers. Gordon Cumming gives the following graphic description of one of these periodical migrations of game during a severe drought: "On the 28th I had the satisfaction of beholding for the first time what I have often heard the Boers speak of, viz., a 'trek-bokken,' or grand migration of springboks. This was, I think, the most extraordinary and striking scene, as connected with beasts of the chase, I ever beheld. For about two hours before dawn I had been lying awake in my waggon listening to the grunting of the bucks within two hundred yards of me, imagining that some large herd of springboks was feeding beside my camp; but rising when it was light, and looking about me, I beheld the ground to the northward of my camp actually covered with a dense living mass of springboks, marching slowly and steadily along. They extended from an opening in a long range of hills on the west, through which they continued pouring, like the flood of some great river, to a ridge about a mile to the north-east, over which they disappeared. The breadth of ground they covered might have been somewhere about half a mile. I stood on the fore-chest of my waggon for nearly two hours, lost in astonishment at the novel and wonderful scene before me, and had some difficulty in convincing myself that it was a reality which I beheld, and not the wild and exaggerated picture of a hunter's dream. During this time these vast legions continued streaming through the neck in the hills in one unbroken compact phalanx. At length I saddled up, and riding into the middle of them with my rifle and after-riders, fired into their ranks until fourteen had fallen, when I cried 'Enough.' We then retraced our steps to secure from the ever-voracious vultures the venison which lay strewn along my track. Having collected the springboks at different bushes, and concealed them with brushwood, we returned to camp."

In certain parts of the interior of Africa game of every description is still to be found, unlimited in quantity; but the wholesale introduction of firearms of late years has made every man more or less

a hunter; consequently, the sportsman who would kill elephant, rhinoceros, the great carnivora, or make a collection of the numerous kinds of antelope, must now go far away from the general European trading settlements, and, having provided himself with a suitable equipment and following, strike into the interior from the seaboard.



THE GORILLA.

African hunting is an excellent remedy against *ennui*, and the man who has done Europe may still find ample excitement in stalking through tropical forests abounding with large game, or in riding over magnificent plains teeming with countless antelope of different kinds. Elephants, rhinoceros, and lions are still plentiful, at no great distance inland, for those who are fond of hazardous sport and midnight excitement; and, as a famous African sportsman in

the Artillery wrote, "It is a great comfort to be in a barbarous land where you shake hands with every man you meet (not often troubled, by-the-bye), and can ask this man, black or white, to do you a favour, and meet kindness from him, and probably receive an invitation to shoot or dine with him. It is better than residing in civilized countries, where your most intimate friend will only know you near corners, because perhaps you don't wear peg-top breeches or Noah's-ark coats. I am no grumbler, but I do like to see the sun three hundred days out of the three hundred and sixty-five. I am fond of green trees, green fields, and even green men. I like to have room to move my elbows, without digging them into somebody else's ribs, and I like to be able to open my mouth and shout, and have no hearers, instead of having an army jump down one's throat if one merely opens one's lips."

A man who has passed through an African shooting campaign will find that his health is improved ; that he is better able to help himself, has a greater trust in his natural gifts, and that trifles cease to annoy him. He will return to England without having lost much of his taste for his native sports. He will enter fully into a five-and-thirty minutes' run across country, at a pace that weeds the mob, or will take his quiet station near the rippling trout-stream, with just the same *gusto* as before his African tour. "The plains of Southern Africa are the true Fairyland of sport."



CHIMPANZEE.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE LION AND ITS VARIETIES.

The king of beasts—His tremendous strength—Night his opportunity—His inferiority by day—Two distinct species of lion—The yellow-maned lion—The black-maned lion—The grey lion—The roar of the African lion—Jules Gerard's description of it—What the lion says—"I am the son of the woman"—Different meanings of different roars—A brave lion—The combat—The *coup de grâce*.

THOSE who have only seen the King of Beasts immured in a cage, after years of harassing and emaciating captivity, and half-paralysed by confinement and want of exercise, can form no conception of his majestic appearance as he bounds along in his own native wilds conscious of his own strength and prowess. There he is indeed a monarch, for, dreaded by all, he has nothing to fear from any living creature, save when by chance some solitary hunter, aided by his death-dealing arms, wages unequal war against him. I have lived in his domains for months and months together, and have encountered him at all times and under all circumstances; and the more I have studied his character and his habits, when in a state of nature, the more am I convinced of his right to royal precedence amongst beasts.

His strength is unsurpassed by any animal in creation, not even excepting the tiger, for I have known him to break the spine of an ox with a single blow of his tremendous fore-paw. I have seen him stop a horse in its full career and throw him back on his haunches, I have witnessed the skull of a living man crushed to pieces as if it were an egg-shell by a lion already in its death-throes, and at night I have heard a marauder leap over the wall of a cattle-kraal 7 feet high, taking with him a bullock, which he carried off as easily as a

cat would do a mouse. Add to this terrible strength the fearful gripe of his flesh-rending fangs, his peculiar faculty of being able to see in the dark, the noiselessness with which he is enabled to approach, and the distance from which he can spring upon his prey, and it must be confessed that in the darker hours of night a hunter, however experienced and well armed he may be, stands but a poor chance against such a formidable antagonist. In the daylight the chances of the contest are all in favour of the man. The lion's superior powers of attack vanish, his faculties become deadened, his self-possession at times leaves him, and his gigantic strength is of no avail against the deadly-grooved bore of the hunter.

Lions are essentially nocturnal animals, as during the day they seek some cool and shady spot, and sleep until the approach of night, when they sally forth in search of prey. In the hot season they seldom turn out of their lair between sunrise and sunset, unless disturbed or driven out by the swarms of flies and stinging insects that infest their haunts, when they move about in a state of semi-somnolence, and look like fish out of water. But in wilds where they are not subject to man's intrusion, during the rains, and in cool or cloudy weather, they may frequently be seen wandering listlessly over the plains during the daytime.

Sir William Harris, in his admirable account of the wild sports of South Africa, says, "Scarcely a day passed without our seeing two or three lions, but, like the rest of the animal creation, they uniformly retreated when disturbed by the approach of men. However troublesome we found the intrusions of the feline race during the night, they seldom at any time showed the least disposition to molest us unless we commenced hostilities; and this, owing to the badness of our horses, we rarely felt disposed to do."

A lion in the day and a lion at night are two distinctly different animals. During the daylight a lion, unless severely pressed by hunger or provoked by hostilities, never shows any disposition to molest man. On the contrary, he almost invariably beats a precipitate retreat when he discovers his presence. If the rencontre takes

place in cover he will steal quietly away, but if it occurs in the open, and he knows that his movements are observed, he will stand a moment or two exhibiting a certain apparently fearless *nonchalance*, and then move slowly away at a stately walk, as if afraid of compromising his dignity. When he has placed a certain distance between himself and the intruder into his domains, he quickens his movements, and, if he sees that he is not followed, breaks into a trot until he thinks he is out of sight. Then all restraint is thrown off, and he bounds away at speed.

The lion, unlike all the rest of the feline carnivora, never kills for the mere pleasure of killing, but only for food, or to resent attack. Thus a lion, when his belly is full, may very often be seen in close proximity with herds of quagga, antelope, and zebra, without attempting to molest them. At such a time, *i.e.*, in broad daylight, if a Hottentot woman even shakes her apron at him, he will make himself scarce, for he hates intrusion. But he is no poltroon, notwithstanding, and those who know him best, and have encountered him at all hours in his own domain, have a very high opinion of his courage, majestic coolness, and unconquerable spirit, which have very justly earned him the title of the King of Beasts.

Although it appears to be a pretty general opinion amongst naturalists that there is only one species of lion, my own experience leads me to believe that this theory is erroneous, and that the Asiatic and the African lions are of two distinct species, whilst the former may be again divided into two varieties, and the latter into three. Of course, the general appearance, size, and even to a certain extent the colour of any variety of lion, depend in a great degree upon the animal's age and the development of his physical powers, which vary according to the habits and the nature of the locality in which he is found. I have seen lions in India, Asiatic Turkey, Syria, and Persia, and have every reason to believe that they all belong to the same genus, which, however, is as decidedly inferior to the African species in size, weight, and physical power as a pony is to a horse.

The lion may be said to be indigenous to Africa, having been

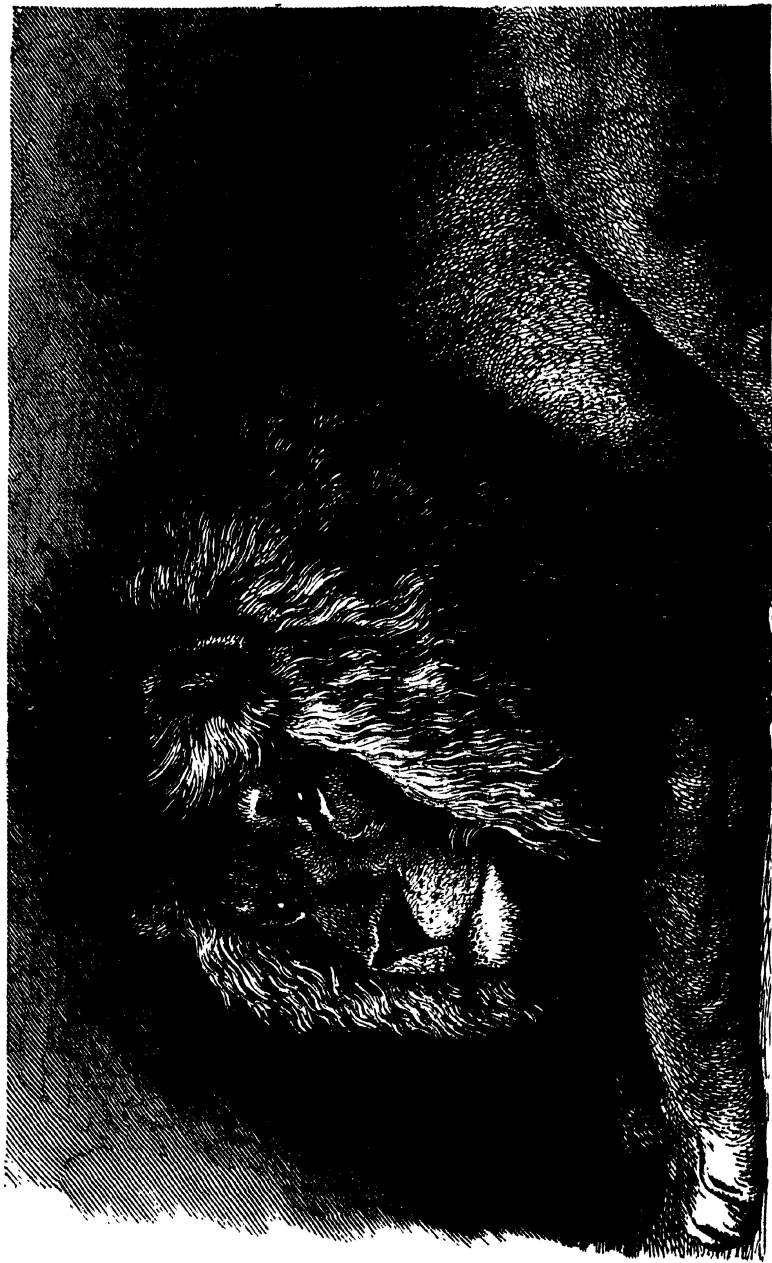
found in all parts of that continent, except in the mangrove swamp districts of the west coast, and along a belt some 5 or 6 degrees on each side of the equator. Fever arising from malaria kills lions as it does men, and as a rule lions are never found in a swampy country.

I have killed three varieties of lions between the Limpopo and Zambesi rivers ; and in that district the Boers, colonists, Kaffirs, and Bushmen, who are all quite familiar with the peculiar differences both in appearance and habits of each variety, are accustomed to distinguish them as the "yellow-maned," the "black-maned," and the "grey lion."

My own experience leads me to believe that the yellow-maned lion, shown in the engraving, is the largest, heaviest, and most powerful variety. It is also the most common in the districts inhabited by man, and is more disposed to subsist upon domestic cattle than either the black-maned or the grey lion, who may be said to live chiefly by the chase of wild animals. He also generally inhabits the same district for years together, living alone with his family, whilst the other varieties, although not gregarious, are often found hunting in troops, following the periodical migrations of antelope over a great extent of country. When found away from the haunts of man, he generally lies in wait for his prey near water, or surprises herds of antelope by night, when his noiseless step, and his faculty of seeing in the dark, give him great advantages.

The black-maned lion is generally found in the neighbourhood of forests, and rarely in the plains. He is somewhat smaller than the yellow-maned variety, and much shorter in the back and more compactly built than the grey lion. Although he lives upon the same species of wild animals as the grey lion, he hunts in a very different manner, as instead of depending upon his speed and endurance, he generally stalks his game, and springs upon his prey from under cover or from an ambuscade, depending more upon his subtle cunning than his speed.

The grey lion, or, as he is sometimes called, the sand lion, is often



THE AFRICAN YELLOW-MANED LION.

met with in troops upon the vast undulating plains that are to be found in different parts of Central Africa ; on various occasions I have seen companies of about a dozen adult males and females hunting together, and displaying wonderful instinctive sagacity in circumventing, and hunting by relays, herds of different kinds of antelope.

The grey lion has but little perceptible mane, a sleek coat of long texture, and is longer in the body and more lithe than either of the other varieties : as he depends upon his speed and bottom in hunting his prey, and is generally in good training, a hunter must have a right good horse in fair racing condition to ride him to a standstill. In Central Africa, from insufficiency of wholesome grain and the want of the requisite nutrition in the herbage, it is very hard to keep a horse in fair condition ; consequently the comparatively few grey lions I have killed were met with in chance rencontres, when gorged, or stalked in undulating ground, at a time when their attention was attracted by visions of venison.

I have killed all three varieties at various ages, from whelphood to decrepitude, yet their specially distinctive marks and attributes were always discernible. I have met with both the black and the yellow-maned lion on the western confines of Tunis, and the grey lion in the desert south of the Atlas range in Morocco ; and amongst the spoils of King Theodore's stronghold at Magdala, I found specimens of both the black and the yellow-maned varieties, that were said to have been killed in the Galla country. I have seen skins both of the yellow-maned and the grey lion at Bathurst that had been brought from the country lying between the Senegal and the Gambia ; and when at Lagos, amongst the presents forwarded by one of the independent Haussa chiefs of Zeg-zeg, was a magnificent black lion's skin, whose owner was said to have been killed in the Haussa territory adjacent to Lake Van. No lions are to be found in the fever-haunted districts of the West Coast of Africa, comprising the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Monrovia, the Gold Coast, Lagos, the embouchures of the Niger, the Gaboon, the

Congo district, or Loando; although in the interior, to the southward of Little Fish Bay, they are said to be numerous. Jules Gérard, who is a great authority on this subject, describes all three varieties as being found in Algeria and Northern Africa, and he informs us that the Arabs distinguish them as "*El asfar*," the fawn-coloured lion, "*El adria*," the black lion, and "*El sarzouri*," the grey lion; and that they also assign to each variety different traits of character and habits of living,—and the late Lieutenant Henry Faulkner, of the 16th Lancers, who shot over the same ground, corroborates their opinion. This distinguished sportsman, who accompanied Mr. Young in the Livingstone Search Expedition, and was afterwards treacherously murdered by a native tribe in the Lake districts of Central Africa, informed me that he had seen all three varieties in East Africa.

The Asiatic lion, according to Layard, has also two varieties, for he tells us that on the river Karoom he had seen lions with long black manes, which by the inhabitants were designated "*Sons of Islam*," whilst the common maneless lions are now denounced as "*kaffirs*" or infidels. They pretend that a true believer may induce the former to spare his life upon his pronouncing the profession of faith, whilst the unbelieving lion is inexorable.

The roar of the African lion impresses one with awe when heard in the night-time, and the Arabs have only one word to express his voice and thunder, which is "*Rad*." It must not be imagined, when speaking of the roar of the lion, that it is in any way to be compared with the low hollow sighing noise, ending with a gruff grunt, that is commonly heard in the Zoological Gardens. The roar of the animal in its wild state is a sound, once heard, never to be forgotten; for there is something strangely terrifying and appalling in the sound. Gordon Cumming thus describes it:—"One of the most striking things connected with the lion is his voice, which is extremely grand and peculiarly striking. It consists at times of a low deep moaning, repeated five or six times in quick succession, each increasing in loudness to the third or fourth, when

his voice dies away in five or six low muffled sounds, very much resembling distant thunder. At times, and not unfrequently, a troop may be heard roaring in concert, one assuming the lead, and two, three, or four regularly taking up their parts, like persons singing a catch. Like our Scottish stags in the rutting season, they roar loudest on cold frosty nights; but on no occasions are their



LIONS ROARING.

voices to be heard in such perfection or so intensely powerful as when two or three troops of strange lions approach a fountain to drink at the same time. When this occurs, every member of each troop sounds a bold roar of defiance at the opposite parties; and when one roars, all roar together, and each seems to vie with his comrades in the intensity and power of his voice." The power and grandeur of these nocturnal concerts are inconceivably striking and pleasing to the hunter's ear; and the effect is equally enhanced when the hearer happens to be situated in the depths of

the forest, at the dead hour of midnight, unaccompanied by any attendant, and ensconced within twenty yards of the fountain which the surrounding troop of lions are approaching. Jules Gérard, who had many opportunities of studying the roar of a lion, thus describes it :—" It is composed of a dozen sounds, commencing with sighs which rise in volume as they proceed, and finish as they began, with an interval between each." When a lion and a lioness are in company, the lioness is always the first to roar, and this is at the moment of leaving the lair. The lion alternates with the lioness, and in this manner they proceed on their way, roaring every quarter of an hour until they have approached the *douar*, or village, which they propose despoiling ; and when their appetites are satisfied, they often again recommence roaring, and continue until daylight. In the hot weather the lion scarcely ever roars. General Dumas informs us that when the lion roars the Arabs pretend that they can distinguish the following words :—" *Ahna ou ben el mora*," that is to say, " I am the son of the woman." Moreover, that he repeats twice *ben el mora*, but *Ahna* only once, from which they conclude that he does not recognize any other creature than man besides himself. One of our earliest writers on Africa says, " When the lion speaketh, his breath maketh the big trees to quake, and the smaller animals infesting his domain to gape with fear."

In former days there were men who professed to understand the songs of birds ; and often whilst watching for game, as I have listened to the merry songsters of the wood, or to the exquisitely plaintive melody of the turtle-dove as he wooed his bride, I have thought that it was quite possible to learn much of their language by watching their actions and paying attention to the manifold accents of their notes—now soft, low, and long drawn out, now shrill, disjointed, and harsh. These studies of nature are the hunter's recreations, and he feels a proportionate pleasure as he understands them. After a long sojourn in the solitudes of the forest, no sound escapes his keen ear, and he gets accustomed to

observe the minutest change, tracing the cause by the effect; thus he gains fresh insight into the nature, character, and habits of animals by marking their cries under different circumstances—cries which express their various desires and emotions, as all have certain calls, and utter peculiar sounds denoting pleasure, sorrow, maternal affection, connubial attachment, anger, rage, alarm, and fear. Those who have lived for any length of time in a region infested with these grand carnivora can readily distinguish the temper and condition they are in, by listening to the various peculiar and distinctly different sounds and noises they make. Thus there is no mistaking the suppressed sighing cry which the male lion always makes whilst following the lioness, or her sharper note, which somewhat resembles the subdued whinny of a mare. Again, it is not difficult for those initiated in "forest lore" to distinguish the long-continued rumbling growl of a hungry lion, from the expressive grunts of satisfaction emitted by one whose appetite is satiated; and some of the tribes of Bushmen can even tell, from the different degrees of hoarseness in the roar of the lion, whether he has lately eaten, or is still fasting and on the look-out for prey. Moffat, one of the most practical teachers of humanity of all the many missionaries whom I have met with in Africa, thus describes the skill of the natives in detecting the condition of a lion by his varying moaning noises. He says: "One of those beasts passed near us, occasionally giving a roar, which softly died away on the extended plain, and it was responded to by another at a distance. Directing the attention of these Balala, and asking if they thought there was danger, they turned their ears as to a voice with which they were familiar, and, after listening for a moment or two, replied, 'There is no danger, he has eaten and is going to sleep!' They were right, and we slept also. Asking them, in the morning, how they knew the lions were going to sleep, they replied, 'We live with them, they are our companions.'"

Although my own experience leads me to believe that Nature has implanted in all wild animals an instinctive fear of man, I have also seen notable exceptions to the rule, not only in man-eaters of

the feline race and "rogue" elephants, but on several occasions I have had my right of way disputed by the black rhinoceros, bears, buffalo, and boars. In nine cases out of ten the fiercest of forest creatures will flee on man's approach; even the taint of his presence borne on the wind, or the betraying odour of his footsteps in their path, being sufficient to scare them; but I once came across a lion who not only would not acknowledge the supremacy of "a lord of the creation," but who held his own, without flinching, to the very death. The circumstances of the case were these: I was hunting in the Berere bush when the settlement of Natal was in its infancy, and consisted of only a few huts and shanties, in company with Captain Stevenson, an old friend who had given up the service to turn settler, when we came across the trail of a herd of springbok. This we followed to the banks of a small river, fringed with high reeds, some twenty yards in width, which we crossed, the water scarcely coming to our saddle-girths. When we arrived at the other side, we perceived from the slots that the herd had scattered over the plain, as if suddenly alarmed; and on closer investigation we found the pugs of two full-grown lions and a pair of half-grown cubs, which fully accounted for the panic that had taken place. It was evident that these animals had been lurking in a mimosa-grove, by the side of the river, and lying in wait for their prey as they came to drink; and from the freshness of the pugs I felt sure that they could not be far off, so I followed their spoor for about a mile over the plain (which was hard, firm, and good riding-ground), until I came to a low cone-shaped hill, which I ascended, to get a better survey of the surrounding country. I was sweeping the horizon with my field-glass, which was not of much use on account of a mirage that obstructed the view and made all distant objects look dim, when "Kleine," a Hottentot boy, tapping me on the shoulder, pointed out a flock of vultures that were circling in the air at some short distance, saying, "Dar ist der verdamt tau!" (There is the cursed lion!) I turned my glass to the spot, without distinguishing anything; but on cantering ahead, I soon had the gratification of

seeing a full-grown lion and lioness, with two half-grown cubs, feasting on the remains of two spring-bucks.

I looked to my nipples, to see that the powder was well up, and rode towards them ; but my horse did not at all like the sport, and fear made him almost unmanageable ; so finding that I should have had no chance of firing from the saddle with any degree of precision, I had to return to Stevenson, who, with the rest of our people, had pulled up on observing the lion, which, being game, none of them seemed inclined to attack ; for although my friend was a fearless hunter, he had been suffering from an inflammation and weakness of the eyes, caused by the excessive glare of the sun reflected from the sand, and his sight was so much affected that he could no longer depend upon his aim as in days of yore. I therefore dismounted, and prepared to open the campaign on my own hook—trusting to a steady hand and good weapons to see me safely through it.

On my retreat, on account of the restiveness of my horse, the lion had advanced nearly two hundred yards from the spot where the dead spring-bucks lay, leaving the lioness and cub still feeding ; and he was now coolly surveying our party, stretched out at full length on the grass, with his paws spread out before him, and yawning listlessly, about four hundred yards distant. On perceiving me advancing towards him, he made a long low moaning noise, like thunder rumbling among distant hills, by which he thought perhaps to intimidate me ; but, finding it had not the desired effect, he got up and sat on his haunches like a dog, making curious whining noises, and turning his head every now and again to look at his mate and cubs, who, understanding from his growling, which was becoming more and more savage, that something was up, withdrew to some low sand-hills a short distance away ; which I was rather thankful for, as it reduced the odds against me and made the chances more even. When I got to about two hundred and fifty yards distant, I stopped to unsling my second gun from my shoulder, so as to be ready ; on which my friend sprang to his feet, and made

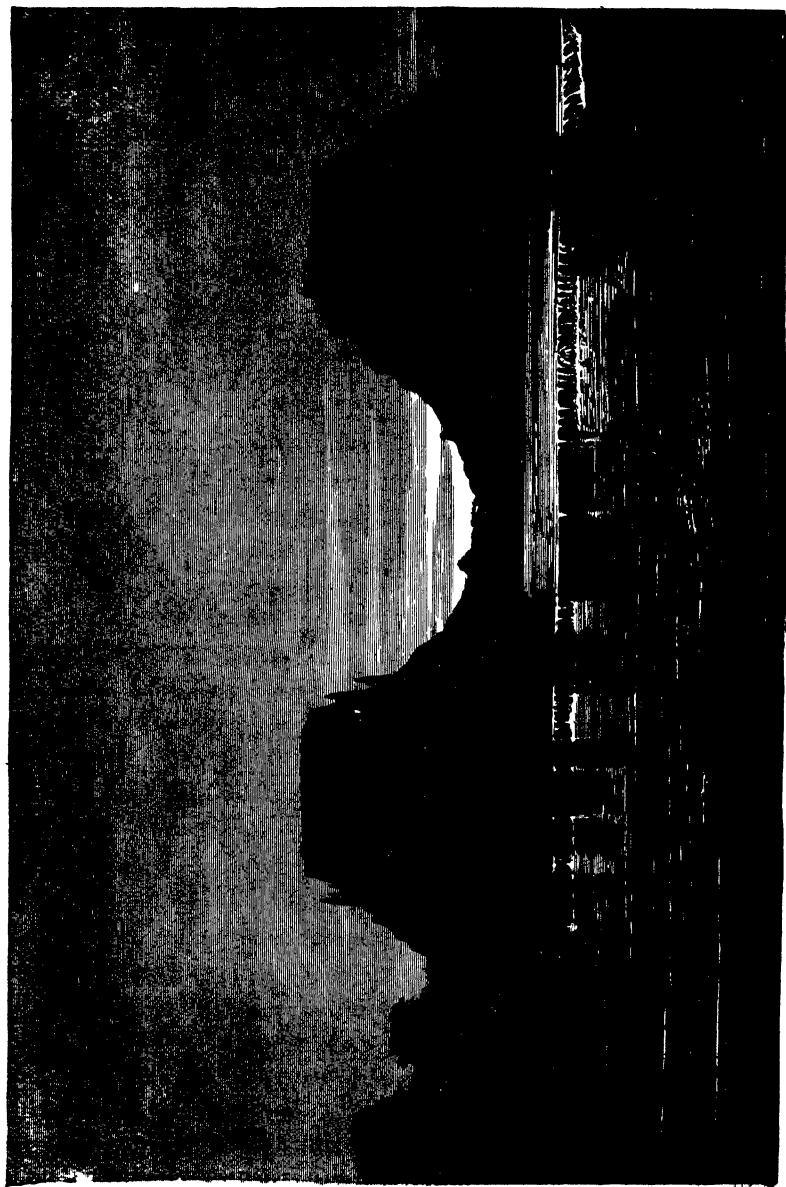
three or four huge bounds towards me, lashing his tail from side to side, showing his teeth, and giving a tremendous roar, which seemed to shake the earth, and caused the horse I had been riding to break from the grasp of the Hottentot who was holding it, and scour over the plain. On seeing me advance, he again stopped, and, couching low on his belly, growled in a most savage manner. I felt that "the die was cast," and that there was no retreating; it was a regular duel between man and beast, and was beginning to be rather serious work, for we were barely sixty yards asunder. The lion still lay with his head couched between his paws, although every now and then he appeared to rise, and tear up the earth with his hind claws. His eyeballs glistened with rage, his mane stood erect, his tail lashed his flanks, and I felt he was watching my every movement, and that further delay was dangerous. I therefore quietly cocked my second gun, laid it by my side on the ground, and then gave a loud shout, at the same time flinging my pith hunting-cap towards him. This had the desired effect: he sprang upon his feet, and at this moment looked grand beyond conception. Now was the moment. I threw up my rifle, took deliberate aim at his broad and massive breast, and let fly. I heard the soft "thud" of the ball as it entered his chest, saw him spring high into the air, and fall upon his back. I rushed up to give him a *coup de grâce*, but it was not needed; a convulsive tremor passed over his sturdy limbs, blood gushed from his nose and mouth, the under jaw dropped, and my first African lion was dead. He was a noble animal, measuring over 11 feet from the tip of the nose to the end of the tail. The lioness and cubs, on hearing the shot, made for a small copse about a mile distant; and as it was late in the day I did not follow them up. This was the bravest animal of the feline race I ever met, such undaunted pluck being rarely exhibited in any forest creature.

CHAPTER XX.

THE AFRICAN RIVERS, AND THE ANIMALS FOUND IN THEIR VICINITY.

African desert—The Senegal river—Its obstructions—The Makagnian and Gouina Falls—Lieutenant Mage's travels—The African buffalo—Its habits—Its savage cunning—A charge of buffalo—Fatal accidents—Revenge—"Behemoth"—Peculiarities of the hippopotamus—Its native hunters—Sir Samuel Baker's encounters with hippopotami—Livingstone's description of a hippopotamus hunt—The rhinoceros—The mochocho, or common white rhinoceros—The keitloa, or two-horned black rhinoceros—The borèle, or one-horned black rhinoceros—A rhinoceros hunt—Just in time—Waggon travelling in Africa.

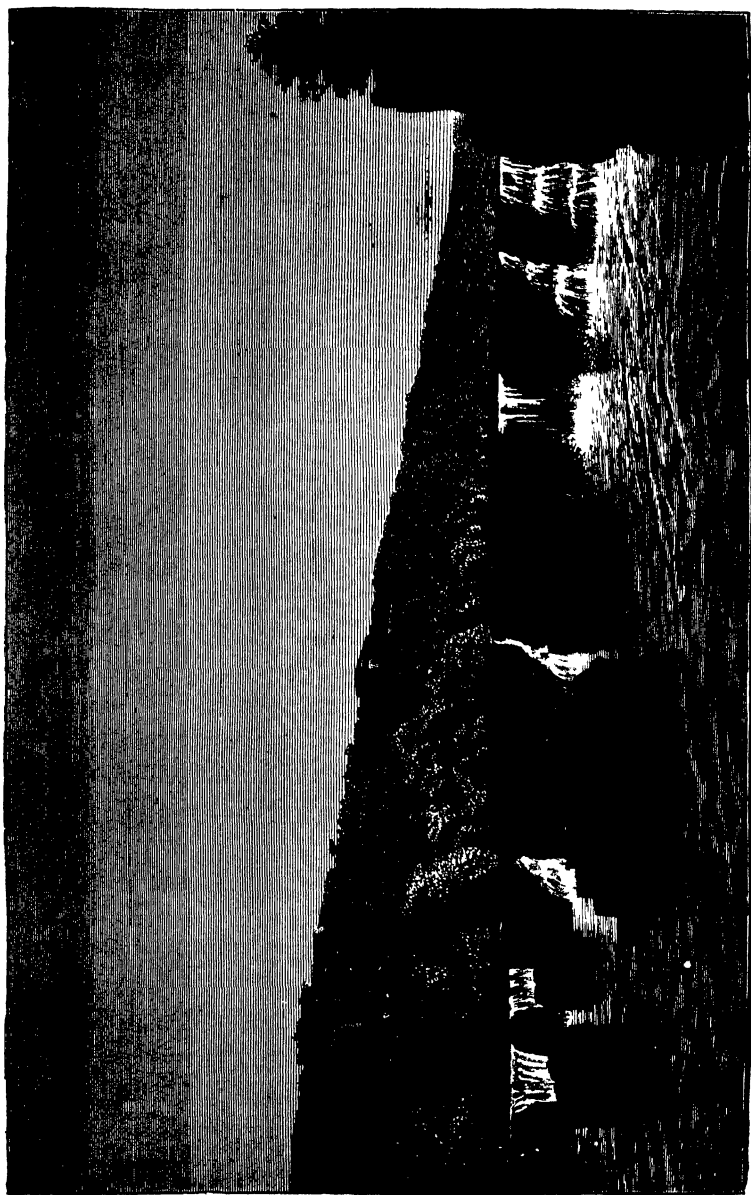
THE immense continent of Africa, although abounding with the most striking and surprising contrasts, presents on a general view a monotonous uniformity, as from one coast to the other dreary arid wastes of almost boundless extent are spread over its surface. The sun, which cheers and illumines the rest of the earth, glares upon Africa with such fatally oppressive influence that it blasts the whole face of nature, and spreads desolation over the land, for the soil, when not watered by copious rains or the overflowing of rivers, is scorched and dried up till it is turned into a dreary waste. Thus those vast plains of sand we call the Great Desert extend across the entire continent, except where intersected by the valley of the Nile. In this waste the traveller may march for days without finding water or seeing any vestige of animal life. He pursues his dreary course amid loose hills incessantly shifting, and having no marks to guide his course. Every breeze is loaded with dust, which enters the mouth and nostrils, penetrating even the clothes and the pores of the skin; while sometimes the sand



THE MAKAGNIAN FALLS OF THE SENEGAL.

is driven along in clouds by whirlwinds, sweeping away all before it. Such is the general aspect of all regions between the tropics directly beneath the solar influence, when not plentifully watered, as the soil moulders into sand, and causes these desolate tracks to resemble the dry bed of an ancient ocean. In order to mitigate the desolating effects of the tropical sun, Nature has provided that every district under this latitude has its periodical rainy season, when the ground is covered as if with a deluge, and great rivers, swollen by the floods, lay the lowlands under water, and cause that luxuriant growth of vegetation which is only to be seen in equatorial regions. There are also mountain chains and tablelands that give rise to several rivers of great magnitude, which fertilize large tracts of country ; but except in these irrigated districts, and upon certain elevated plateaux, vegetable life, in consequence of the absence of moisture, is very scantily diffused over a great extent of Central Africa.

Besides the great difficulty of travelling by land over arid wastes, which supply neither food for man nor forage for cattle, pestilential belts of mangrove swamp, reeking with noxious exhalations, and immense tracts of impregnable forest, form an almost unsurpassable barrier to the formation of any extensive intercourse with the interior. It is only by the navigable rivers, therefore, that an expedition can penetrate any distance into the far interior. Unfortunately, all the large rivers have shifting bars and lines of breakers at the embouchures, that impede navigation and only permit shallow-draught vessels to ascend ; besides which, in many of them are impetuous currents, that only powerful steamers can stem, and impracticable rapids and falls. In the illustrations—which are taken from drawings made on the spot by M. Mage, Lieutenant de Vaisseau of the French Navy—are represented the Makagnian and Gouina Falls, which obstruct the navigation of the Senegal. That enterprising officer, accompanied by Dr. Quintin and ten native followers, ascended the Senegal from Saint Louis, at the embouchure, until he arrived at the Bambouk country, on the Upper



THE GOUINA FALLS OF THE SENEGAL.

Senegal, a distance of over eight hundred miles from the coast ; then he started across the country, and after a fatiguing march of nearly three months' duration, struck the Upper Niger at Yamina, which town is represented in the illustrations. There the party were detained on various pretensions by King Ahmadon, who, although he treated them kindly, would not let them return for nearly two years, when they reached Saint Louis in safety, after an absence of nearly three years. M. Mage gave a very graphic description of the country through which he passed, which entirely substantiates Mungo Park's account, who went over a good deal of the same ground.

In most of the large and broad rivers of the African continent still exempt from white man's intrusion, and in the immense forests that overshadow them, are found three species of amphibious animals of ungainly shape and uncouth proportions. These are the buffalo, the hippopotamus, and the crocodile, all of which are alike able to stalk on land, march along the bottom of the waters, or swim on their surface. The African buffalo (*Bos Caffer*) has broad, massive, curved, sharp-pointed horns, that cover the entire forehead with the exception of a small triangular space, the apex of which is directed upwards between their bases. They are huge ponderous animals measuring about 9 feet in length, exclusive of the tail, which is 3 feet long, and terminates in a large tuft of coarse black hair. They often exceed 50 stone in weight when in good condition, but their flesh is coarse and tough. They are generally found in families of about twenty, although in certain seasons several families will herd together, and as many as a couple of hundred have been seen at a time. During the heat of the day the African buffaloes, like the Indian variety, frequent pools or bends in the river, where the current is not very strong, and immerse themselves until only their heads appear above the surface, thus freeing themselves from the stinging flies that otherwise would allow them no respite. If water is unobtainable, they roll in the mud until a crust impervious to stinging insects is formed over their body, when after exposure to

the sun's rays they look like hideous clay images such as are represented in Hindoo temples.

The buffalo has been reported by some writers to be a timid in-offensive animal ; but my own experience has proved them to be quite the reverse, and I think a wounded bull buffalo is one of the most cunning, malignant, and revengeful brutes in creation, as the following incident will show. I was on a hunting expedition with Captain Stevenson and a Dutch colonist named Van Jansen in the Notoanis district, and a party were following up an old elephant-trail that led through thick bush, down a rather steep incline, when all at once I perceived a herd of about a dozen buffalo making their way up the same track we were going down. As a string of natives carrying our baggage was following us in Indian file, I shouted so as to try and scare them, and make them break back, and both Stevenson and Van Jansen joined me ; but our shouts produced no effect, and they continued to ascend the slope in a most defiant manner, a sturdy old bull leading. Passing the word to our carrier in the rear to "look out for squalls," and take refuge behind trees, Stevenson, Van Jansen, and I prepared for offensive operations, for the elephant-track was not much more than 4 feet wide, and the bush on either side was almost impenetrable from dense undergrowth and wait-a-bit thorns. Van Jansen fired first from his roah, which carried a 3 oz. ball, and struck the leading bull clean between the eyes, bringing him down to his knees ; but in an instant he sprang again to his feet, and shaking his head in a threatening manner, continued his course up the hill in our direction. Stevenson now let drive, and his first shot went crashing through the bull's nose and entered the chest, rolling him over ; whilst with his second barrel he severely wounded a second bull, that, after plunging heavily about a few moments, tore his way through the bush, where we heard him fall. In spite of the discomfiture of the two leaders, the remainder of the herd did not seem inclined to yield the right of way ; and I brought down two more of their number with my heavy 8-gauge rifle, which carried the largest size Jacob's shells,

before they thought of beating a retreat. The first shell, which I fired at less than sixty yards' range, burst in the chest of a malignant-looking old cow, who was pawing up the ground with her feet and making hostile demonstrations, and finished her career ; whilst the second just escaped the horns of a young bull, and entered the nape of the neck, where it exploded, and shattered the vertebræ, causing immediate death.

Having cleared the way, we advanced, and were examining the horns and massive proportions of the big bull first shot at, when shouts and yells were heard in our rear, and all our carriers came rushing down the hill in a body, without their loads, having been charged by the bull wounded by Stevenson. We immediately made our way back again up the track, which was somewhat encumbered by our baggage, and at a little bend in the path came across the still quivering body of one of Van Jansen's best servants, who had been gored in two places through the body ; one horn having entered the side just above the hip and ripped open the abdomen ; whilst the other had entered just under the right armpit and pierced the lungs. A little farther on lay one of our Zulu goat-boys, surrounded by five or six of his charge, insensible, and with his left arm and two ribs broken ; and just beyond was the carcase of the pony that carried the water-skins, literally pounded into an almost undistinguishable heap, the intestines being scattered along the track for a dozen yards or more. I could see by the trail that, after having killed the pony, the buffalo had again re-entered the bush ; so, having looked to our arms, we followed him up, and after creeping through the undergrowth by the track he had made for about a couple of hundred yards, I caught sight of him lying down, with his back and hind quarters turned towards us. He was evidently very sick, as I could see by his horns that he was resting his head and neck on the ground ; so having cocked my rifle and made ready, I gave a shrill whistle, which caused him to raise his head and turn his nose in our direction, when I gave him a shell just behind the ear, which, exploding in the brain, caused instantaneous death. Stevenson's cylindro-conical



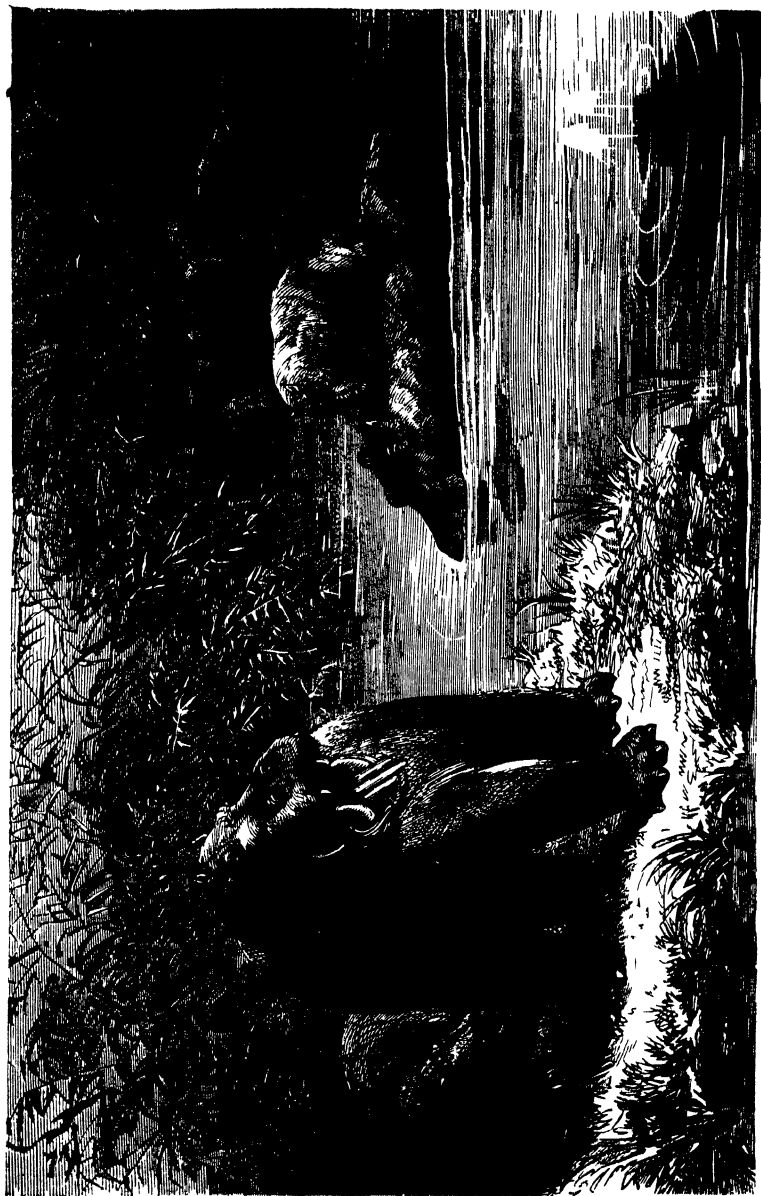
A CHARGE OF AFRICAN BUFFALO.

bullet had pierced his shoulder-blade and entered the lungs ; but his extraordinary vitality and tenacity of life were such that, although mortally wounded, he could commit such damage whilst almost in his death-throes.

Having collected our people together with some difficulty, we buried the Zulu, and carried the wounded boy in a litter ; but he never recovered his consciousness, and died in a few hours, having doubtlessly received some severe internal injury. In the evening I heard the whole account of the disastrous affair from some of the carriers who had witnessed it ; and it appears that the buffalo, after having been wounded by Stevenson, had entered the jungle, and ascended the hill some distance ; when, probably attracted by the sound of the horse's hoofs, it came crashing into the track down which the carriers were coming, and, first venting its revenge on the man, afterwards attacked the horse, merely knocking down the boy *en passant* by a sweep of his horns. After this affair I was always very careful how I meddled with a herd of buffalo, and always took care I had a good line of retreat before I commenced any hostile demonstrations.

"Behemoth" is another awkward customer to tackle when in his native element ; and naturalists who represent the hippopotamus as of a mild and inoffensive disposition cannot have had much practical experience of his habits when in a wild state, as on several occasions I have seen him wantonly attack boats and canoes. Some of the African tribes, who are fearless hunters, harpoon these ferocious-looking animals and kill them with javelins, as shown in the engravings ; but in these affairs fatal accidents often happen, which in a country where life is held so cheaply is not of much account.

The Rev. Mr. Moffat relates an instance of a hippopotamus having seized a boy and literally severed his body in two with its monstrous jaws ; and Sir Samuel Baker, in his last work, "Ismailia," cites an extraordinary instance of the unprovoked ferocity of a hippopotamus of the White Nile. Sometimes, indeed, Sir Samuel did not give the hippopotami time to show their ferocity ; I give his own words :—



THE HAUNT OF REHEMOTH.

"About half an hour before sunset I observed the head of a hippopotamus emerge from the bank of high grass that fringed the lake. My troops had no meat, thus I would not lose the opportunity of procuring, if possible, a supply of hippopotamus beef. I took a No. 8 breechloader, and started in the little dingy belonging to the *dialabeeah*. Having paddled quietly along the edge of the grass for a couple of hundred yards, I arrived near the spot from which the hippopotamus had emerged. It is the general habit of the hippopotami in these marsh districts to lie on the high grass swamps during the day, and to swim and amuse themselves in the open water at sunset. I had not waited long before I heard a snort, and I perceived the hippopotamus had risen to the surface about fifty yards from me. This distance was a little too great for the accurate firing necessary to reach the brain, especially when the shot must be taken from a boat, in which there is always some movement. I therefore allowed the animal to disappear, after which I immediately ordered the boat forward, to remain exactly over the spot where he had sunk. A few minutes elapsed, when the great ugly head of the hippopotamus appeared about thirty paces from the boat, and having blown the water from his nostrils and snorted loudly, he turned round and seemed astonished to find the solitary little boat so near him. Telling the two boatmen to sit perfectly quiet, so as to allow a good sight, I aimed just below the eye, and fired a heavy shell, which contained a bursting charge of 3 drachms of fine-grained powder. The head disappeared; a little smoke hung over the water, and I could not observe other effects. The lake was deep, and after vainly sounding for the body with a boat-hook, I returned to the *dialabeeah* just as it became dark. The next morning the body of the hippopotamus was discovered floating near us, therefore all hands turned out to cut him up, delighted at the idea of fresh meat. There was about an acre of high and dry ground that bordered the marsh on one spot, and to this the carcase of the hippopotamus was towed. I was anxious to observe the effects of the explosive shell, as it was an invention of my own.



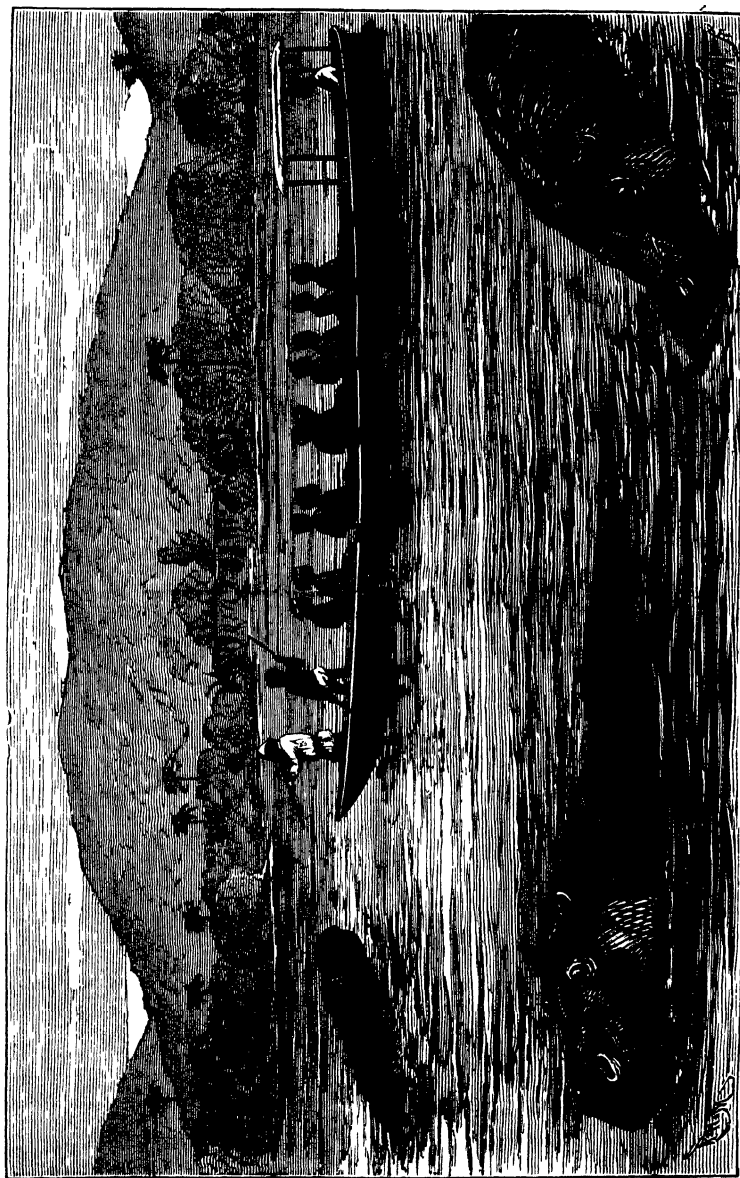
NATIVE HUNTERS SPEARING HIPPOPOTAMUS.

This shell was composed of iron covered with lead. The interior was a cast-iron bottle, similar in shape to a stoneware seltzer-water bottle; the neck formed a nipple to receive a percussion cap. The entire bottle was concealed by a leaden coating, which was cast in a mould to fit a No. 8 or 2 oz. rifle. The iron bottle contained 3 drachms of the strongest gunpowder, and a simple cap pressed down upon the nipple prepared the shell for service.

"On an examination of the head of the hippopotamus, I found that the shell had struck exactly beneath the eye, where the bone-plate is thin. It had traversed the skull, and had apparently exploded in the brain, as it had entirely carried away the massive bone that formed the back of the skull. The velocity of the projectile had carried the fragments of the shell onwards after the explosion, and had formed a sort of tunnel, which was blackened with burnt powder for a considerable distance along the flesh of the neck. I was quite satisfied with my explosive shell."

Sir Samuel thus recounts the rather strange instance of aggression on the part of a hippopotamus I have already referred to:—

"The night was cold, and the moon clear and bright. Every one was wrapped up in warm blankets, and I was so sound asleep that I cannot describe more until I was suddenly awake by a tremendous splashing quite close to the *diahbeeah*, accompanied by the hoarse wild snorting of a furious hippopotamus. I jumped up, and immediately perceived a hippo, which was apparently about to attack the vessel. The main deck being crowded with people sleeping beneath their thick mosquito curtains, attached to the stairs of the poop deck and to the rigging in all directions, rendered it impossible to descend. I at once tore away some of the lines, and awakened the sleepy people. My servant, Sulciman, was sleeping next to the cabin door. I called to him for a rifle. Before the affrighted Suleiman could bring the rifle, the hippopotamus dashed at us with indescribable fury. With one blow he capsized and sunk the zinc boat with its cargo of flesh. In another instant he seized the dingy in his immense jaws, and the crash of splintered wood betokened the com-



HIPPOPOTAMUS-SHOOTING.

plete destruction of my favourite boat. By this time Suleiman appeared from the cabin with an unloaded gun in his hand and without ammunition. This was a very good man, but he was never overburdened with presence of mind ; he was shaking so fearfully from nervousness that his senses had entirely abandoned him. All the people were shouting and endeavouring to scare the hippo, which attacked us without ceasing, with a blind fury that I have never witnessed in any animal except a bulldog.

"By the time I had procured a rifle from the cabin, where they were always kept fixed in a row, loaded and ready for action, with bags of breech-loading ammunition on the same shelf, the movements of the animal were so rapid as he charged and plunged alternately beneath the water in a cloud of foam and wave, that it was impossible to aim correctly at the small but fatal spot upon the head. The moon was extremely bright, and presently as he charged straight at the *diahbeeah*, I stopped him with a No. 8 (or 2 oz.) shell. To my surprise he again recovered and again commenced the attack. I fired shot after shot at him without apparent effect. The *diahbeeah* rocked about upon the waves raised by the efforts of so large an animal ; this movement rendered the aim uncertain. At length, apparently badly wounded, he retired to the high grass ; there he lay by the bank snorting and blowing.

"I could not distinguish him, as merely the head was above water, and this was concealed by the deep shadow thrown by the high grass. Thinking that he would die, I went to bed ; but before this I took the precaution to arrange a white paper sight upon the muzzle of my rifle, without which night shooting is very uncertain.

"We had fallen asleep ; but in about half an hour we were awoke by another tremendous splash, and once more the mad beast came charging directly at us as though unhurt. In another instant he was at the *diahbeeah* ; but I met him with a ball at the top of the head which sent him rolling over and over, sometimes on his back, kicking with his four legs above the surface, and again producing waves that rocked the *diahbeeah*. In this helpless manner he rolled

for about fifty yards down the stream, and we all thought him killed.

"To our amazement he recovered, and we heard him splashing as he moved slowly along the river through the high grass by the left bank. There he remained snorting and blowing, and as the light of the moon was of no service in the dark shadows of the high grass, we waited for a considerable time, and then went to bed with the rifle placed in readiness on deck. In a short time I heard loud splashing. I again got up, and I perceived him about eighty yards distant, walking slowly across the river in the shallows. Having a fair shot at the shoulder, I fired right and left with the No. 8 rifle, and I distinctly heard the bullets strike. He nevertheless reached the right bank, when he presently turned round and attempted to recross the shallow. This gave me a good chance at the shoulder, as his body was entirely exposed. He staggered forward at the shot, and fell dead in the shallow flat of the river. He was now past recovery. It was very cold, the thermometer was 54° Fahrenheit, and the blankets were very agreeable, as once more all hands turned in to sleep.

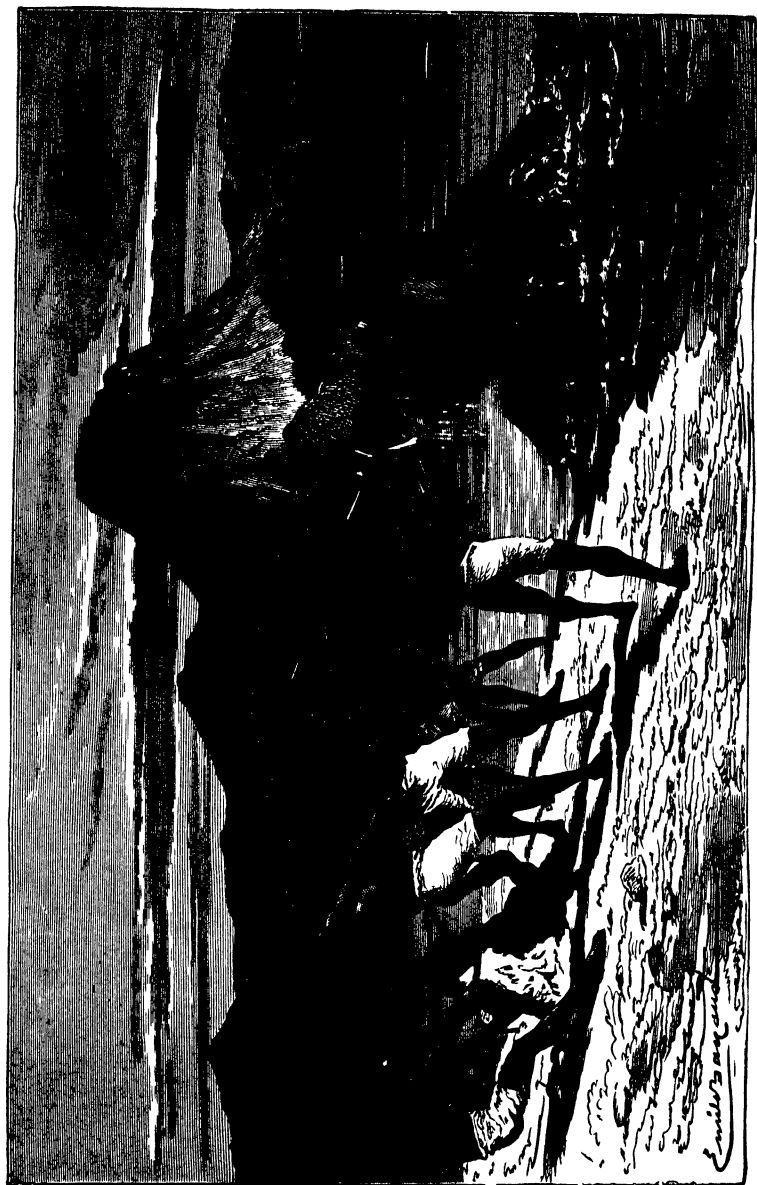
"On the following morning I made a *post-mortem* examination. He had received three shots in the flank and shoulder; four on the head, one of which had broken his lower jaw. Another had passed through his nose, and, passing downward, had cut off one of his large tusks. I never witnessed such determined and unprovoked fury as was exhibited by this animal. He appeared to be raving mad. His body was a mass of frightful scars, the result of continual conflicts with bulls of his own species. Some of these wounds were still unhealed. There was one scar about 2 feet in length, and about 2 inches below the level of the surface skin upon the flank. He was evidently a character of the worst description, but whose madness rendered him callous to all punishment. I can only suppose that the attack upon the vessels was induced by the smell of the raw hippopotamus flesh, which was hung in long strips about the rigging, and with which the zinc boat was filled. A dead hippo-

potamus that was floating astern lashed to the *dialbeeah* had not been disturbed. We raised the zinc boat, which was fortunately unhurt. The dingy had lost a mouthful, as the hippopotamus had bitten out a portion of the side, including the gunwale of hard wood. He had munched out a piece like the port of a small vessel, which he had accomplished with the same ease as though it had been a slice of toast."

Formidable as is the hippopotamus when his wrath is raised, he does not commit half the depredations of the crocodile, who lies like a log upon the water watching for his prey, and is the most dreaded of all the inhabitants of the African rivers. Thousands of lives are lost annually by the depredations of these ferocious animals, yet the natives scarcely make any attempts to extirpate them or prevent their increase, and in some places they may be seen in hundreds together.

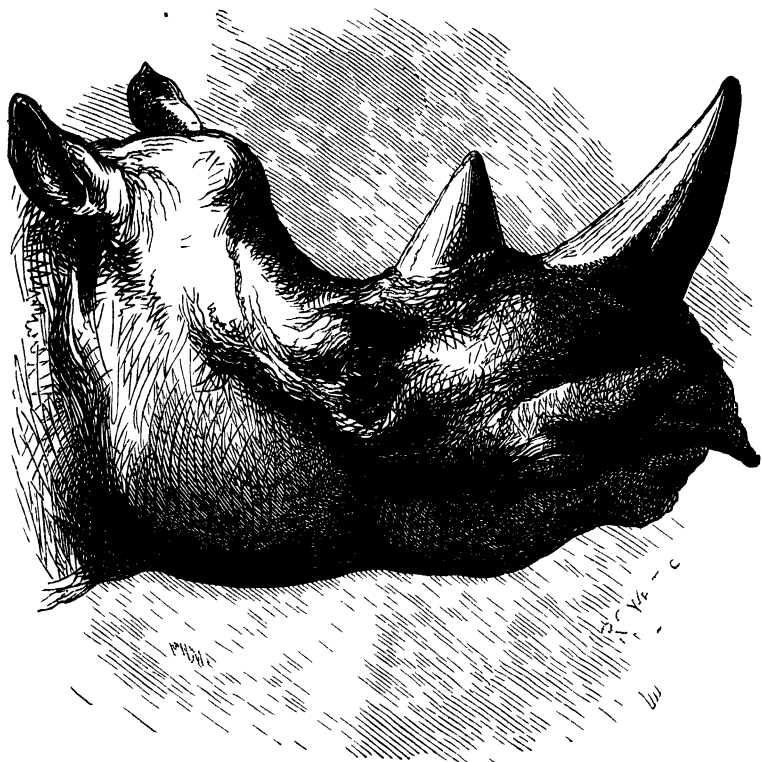
Livingstone in his last journal thus describes an exciting hippopotamus hunt:—

"At the Loangwa of Zumbo we came to a party of hereditary hippopotamus hunters called Makombwé or Akombwe. They follow no other occupation, but when their game is getting scanty at one spot they remove to some other part of the Loangwa, Zambesi, Shiré, and build temporary huts on an island, where their women cultivate patches. The flesh of the animals they kill is easily exchanged by the more settled people for grain. They are not stingy, and are everywhere welcome guests. I never heard of any fraud in dealing, or that they had been guilty of an outrage on the poorest. Their chief characteristic is their courage. Their hunting is the bravest thing I ever saw. Each canoe is manned by two men. They are long light crafts, scarcely half an inch in thickness, about 18 inches beam, and from 18 to 20 feet long. They are formed for speed, and shaped something like our racing-boats. Each man uses a broad short paddle, and as they guide the canoe slowly down stream to a sleeping hippopotamus, not a single ripple is raised on the smooth water. They look as if holding their



HAULING A HIPPOPOTAMUS ASHORE.

breath, and communicate by signs only. As they come near the prey, the harpooner in the bow lays down his paddle and rises slowly up; and there he stands erect, motionless, and eager, with the long-handled weapon poised at arm's length above his head,



THE MOCHOCHO, OR COMMON WHITE RHINOCEROS

till, coming close to the beast, he plunges it with all his might in towards the heart. During this exciting feat he has to keep his balance exactly. His neighbour in the stern at once backs his paddle, the harpooner sits still, seizes his paddle, and backs too to escape. The animal, surprised and wounded, seldom returns the attack at this stage of the hunt.



THE TABLES TURNED.

"The next stage, however, is full of danger. The barbed blade of the harpoon is secured by a long and very strong rope wound round the handle: it is intended to come out of its socket, and while the iron head is firmly fixed in the animal's body, the rope



THE KEITLOA, OR TWO HORNED BLACK RHINOCEROS.

unwinds and the handle floats on the surface. The hunter next goes to the handle and hauls on the rope till he knows that he is right over the beast; when he feels the line suddenly slacken he is prepared to deliver another harpoon the instant the hippo's enormous jaws appear, with a terrible grunt, above the water. The backing by the paddles is again repeated; but hippo often assaults



JUST IN TIME.

the canoe, crunches it with his great jaws as easily as a pig would a bunch of asparagus, or shivers it by a kick with his hind foot. Deprived of their canoe, the gallant comrades instantly dive and



THE BORELÉ, OR ONE-HORNED BLACK RHINOCEROS.

swim to the shore under water; they say that the infuriated beast looks for them on the surface, and being below they escape his sight. When caught by many harpoons, the crews of several canoes seize the handles and drag him hither and thither, till, weakened by loss of blood, he succumbs. The danger may be appreciated if

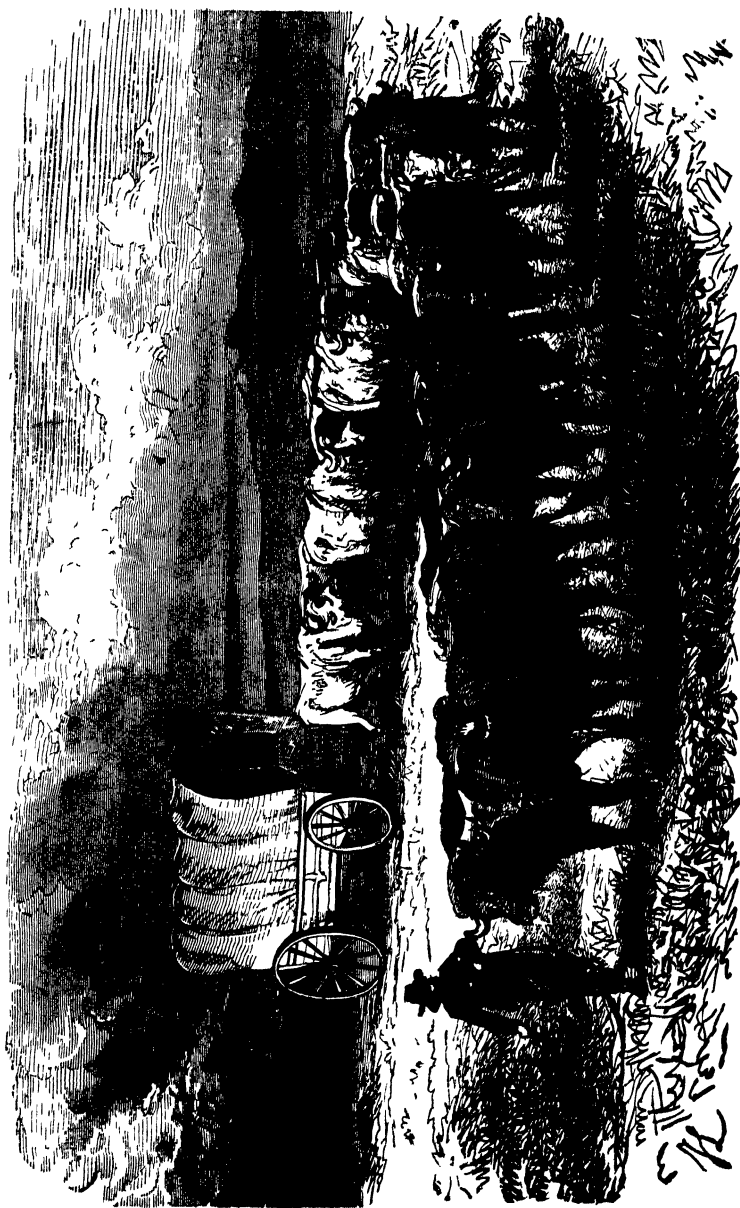


THE COUP DE GRACE.

one remembers that no sooner is blood shed in the water than all the crocodiles below are immediately drawn up stream by the scent, and are ready to act the part of thieves in a London crowd, or worse.

Next to the elephant, the rhinoceros certainly takes precedence as the largest of forest creatures ; but whilst the former is one of the most peaceable animals in existence, the black varieties of the latter are without exception the most morose and mischievously inclined. There are four distinct species known to exist in Africa, two of which, the *borèlè* and the *keitloa*, are black, whilst the *mochochó* and *kobaoba* are white, or rather of a colour more approaching that than any other. The mochoco, or common two-horned square-nosed white rhinoceros, is the largest of the family, as it often exceeds 18 feet in length; next to it in size is the kobaoba, or long-horned white rhinoceros, which is frequently seen with a main horn exceeding 4 feet in length, whilst that of the mochochó seldom exceeds 2. The posterior horn in both species is seldom longer than 8 inches. The white species are harmless, and will rarely attack man or beast except when provoked or wounded. The flesh is succulent and of fair flavour, and as this animal yields about 2,000 or 3,000 lbs. of meat, it is much sought after both by the colonists and the native tribes. The keitloa, or two-horned black rhinoceros, is smaller than either of the white varieties, but somewhat larger than the borèlè. Its horns are much longer than those of any other species, the posterior horn sometimes attaining a length exceeding 5 feet 6 inches ; whilst in the borèlè the posterior horn is much shorter than the anterior one, which rarely exceeds 2 feet in length.

The white rhinoceros are flat-lipped, and habitual *grazers* ; whilst the black species have the upper lip prehensile, and are habitual *browsers* ; the two differ much both in habits and disposition, the former being innocent eaters of grass that live in peace with all other animals ; whilst the latter feed on young shoots, branches, and roots, which they dig up with their fore-horns, and are the most quarrelsome and spiteful brutes imaginable, attacking indiscriminately man



WAGON TRAVELLING IN AFRICA.

and beast. As a rule, most of the denizens of the forest will shun and avoid man's presence, doing their best to escape a rencontre; but the black rhinoceros is an exception, for as soon as he sniffs the taint in the air denoting an intrusion in his domain, he snorts a defiant challenge, tosses his head up wind, and, sweeping right and left with his huge horns, charges in the direction he imagines his enemy to be, and commences the attack without the slightest provocation. Should the lion and the keitloa meet, the former allows the latter a wide berth; and the elephant generally yields the path to him rather than encounter such a formidable antagonist, although sometimes he is attacked by his quarrelsome adversary before he is aware of his presence, and then a terrific battle ensues, when the elephant, if he is a tuskier, generally gets the best of it, although I have seen a whole herd of elephants put to flight by two black rhinoceros.

Every African traveller who has been much in the bush has some strange story to tell of his rencontres with this general disturber of the peace, and the following incident is one of many instances in which this aggressive and malevolent animal has taken the initiative in the attack.

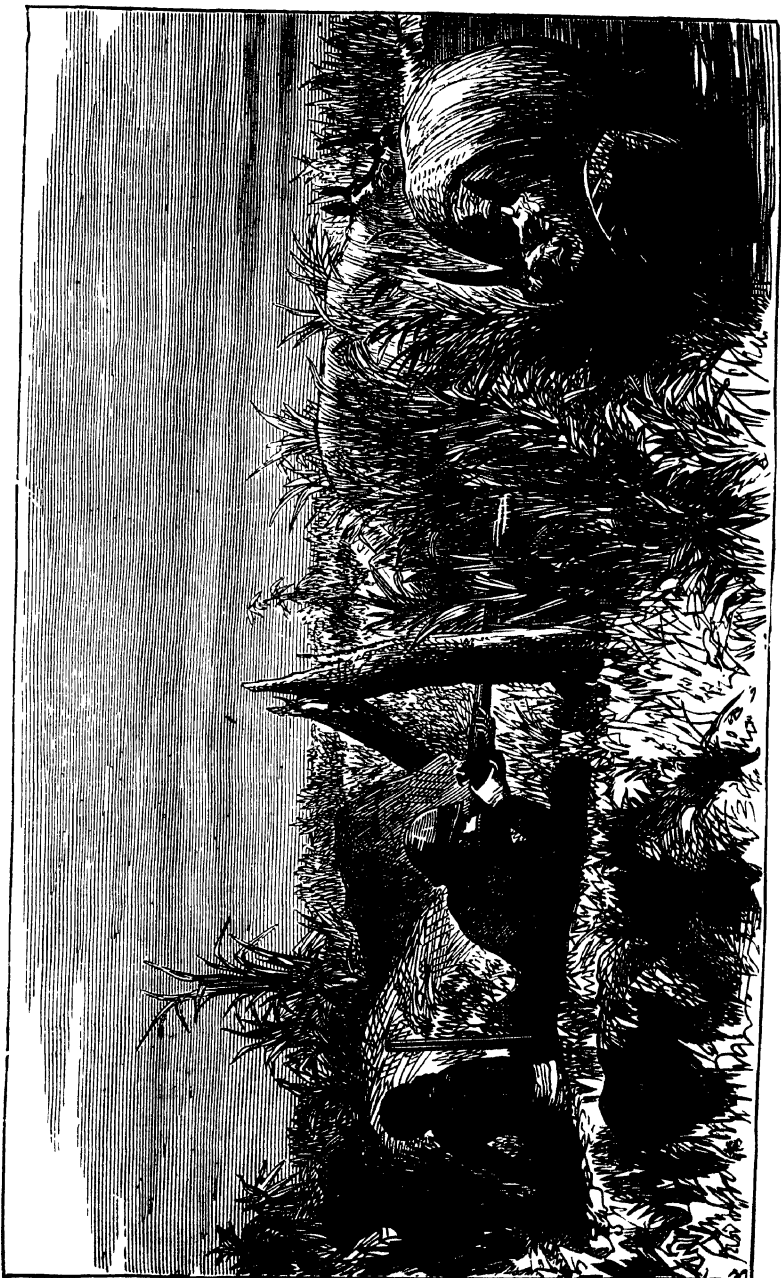
The engravings illustrate a trader's narrative of a rhinoceros hunt in Amatonga Land, which is best given in his own words as told round the watch-fire after a good day's buffalo-hunting. "Buffaloes are dangerous at times, very dangerous, and most big game may be made to fight; but for a thorough-going *skellum* (villain) commend me to a *bichan* (black rhinoceros), who, when you wish to hunt him, it is more likely will hunt you. I remember once I and a mixed breed after-rider, part Kaffir and part Hottentot, whom I often took with me on my trips, contrived to get a couple of bullets into a black rhinoceros, one of a pair which we came suddenly upon whilst riding through a bush path. Our quarry did not hesitate a moment to retaliate, but came down at a furious pace upon my people, who did not seem to know where to run. Charging among the discomfited carriers, they leapt over the nearest, who had presence

of mind sufficient to throw himself flat upon the ground, and came blundering along, apparently undecided as to which they should attack first ; when my horse, generally steady and reliable, gave a loud snort, and, leaping into the air, went plunging through the rough thorny bush. Jan, my after-rider, galloped off down the bush-path, but I well knew that he would keep with us, and be ready in time of need. If I had had the advantage of open ground, I felt sure that my horse could easily have distanced the rhinoceros, but we were among tangle and timber, and upon rough broken ground, and, worse than all, my horse was frightened, and a horse is never so useless as when he is frightened. Well, after a short time—what with ducking and dodging to avoid the trunks of trees and overhanging boughs, and my efforts to guide my horse so as to keep ahead of the game, who followed grunting and groaning in my tracks, hunting me as much as a bloodhound hunts a fox—I was beginning to feel uneasy and anxious to bring matters to a crisis. The blood was flowing, I could see, from two bullet-holes in the old bull ; but as the wounds were not near a vital part, I knew they would not impede his progress and prevent his doing mischief. Every now and then, after being lost to sight for a time, he would come charging out upon one or other of us, with his nose to the ground, making strange grunting noises, kicking up pieces of hardened soil, and crashing through the thick thorny tangle. Seeing that my light-coloured steed only made me a conspicuous object for a charge, and that riding with anything like safety was impossible with my terrified horse in a heavy bush country, I watched my opportunity, slipped from his back, and, handing him over to one of my Kaffirs, hurriedly directed him to get away to the safest place he could find, whilst I turned my attention to our infuriated pursuers. The Kaffir fastened the horse up in the bush, and then, apprehensive of his own safety, clambered up into a tree.

“Whilst creeping along, almost bent double, I heard a crashing in the undergrowth some short distance from me, and climbing on a rising ground, I saw the rhinoceros emerge from some cover and

charge my horse, which would have been sacrificed in an instant if I had not stopped him in mid-career by a lucky shot just behind the shoulder-blade, which brought him up, and caused him to charge back in the direction of the Kaffir, who was shouting 'blue murder' from his elevated sanctuary amongst the branches of a good-sized mimosa. I now re-mounted, and getting into some more open ground, began to feel myself once more master of the situation ; so again gave chase to the infuriated animal, who, whilst thundering along apparently in mad pursuit of something, afforded me a fair shot at his shoulder, which brought him to his knees. Jan now arrived upon the scene, and handing me a spare gun, I discharged both barrels in the region of his heart, which ended his troubles. Even while lying at the point of death there appeared to be a vicious twinkle and a look indicative of anything rather than surrender in the eye of the black rhinoceros. After a good deal of shouting we collected all hands, and lying down under a tree quite exhausted, I confess that I was oblivious of everything else for some time, my only real wish being for utter quiet and rest."

The different incidents of rhinoceros-hunting are represented in the engravings, which also give a fair delineation of bush scenery, and of the temporary residences of colonists in this part of Africa, with their general mode of travelling in a waggon drawn by twelve span of oxen. These waggons are the only vehicles that will stand the wear and tear of African travel. The wheels are made of the famous umsimbiti or Natal iron-wood, so called from its strength and durability, whilst the truck or body is of umkoba, a tough, durable yellow wood, which stands the climate well. The top is formed of arched laths of a lighter description, covered with rough coarse canvas, under which the hammocks are slung. These hanging beds are not at all uncomfortable, and when the waggon is in motion the occupant might well imagine himself at sea. The vehicle is naturally of a great weight, for it is necessary to have every part most substantially built, to stand the bad roads and passes. It often constitutes an African trader's home for years together.



RHINOCEROS-SHOOTING.

CHAPTER XXI.

REMINISCENCES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

“ Away, away, from the dwellings of men,
By the wild deer's haunt, by the buffalo's glen ;
By valleys remote, where the Oribi plays,
Where the gnu, the gazelle, and the hartebeeste graze ;
And the kudor, the eland, unhunted, recline
By the skirts of gray forests o'erhung with wild vine ;
Where the elephant browses at peace in his wood,
And the river-horse gambols unscared in the flood ;
And the mighty rhinoceros wallows at will
In the fen where the wild ass is drinking his fill.”

—PRINGLE.

The Boers—The Van Jansens—A sick camp—Crocodiles—Buffalo antics—A bull buffalo's seraglio—Attacked by black rhinoceros—Narrow escape of Hans Van Jansen—Death of the male rhinoceros—Fury of his widow—Rhinoceros meat.

SOME twenty years ago, when Natal was in its infancy, and the district between the Limpopo and the Zambesi was a *terra incognita*, rarely visited, except by a few elephant hunters, there were two brothers, Hans and Septimus, or, as the latter was more commonly called, Kleine Van Jansen, who had the reputation of having travelled farther into the interior than any of their *confrères* in the pursuit of their calling, which was trading, eked out with elephant-hunting. Their head-quarters were at Notoanis, a fine well-watered district lying under the Hangslip Mountains, and bordering on the Nylstroom, one of the tributaries of the Limpopo. In those days the country abounded in all kinds of game, and, although the Boers possessed considerable numbers of cattle, *wild braad* or venison was the staple article of food ; and an ox, unless disabled, was rarely killed, except on high days and holidays.

The little village settlement to which the Van Jansens belonged consisted of five Dutch families, knit together more or less by intermarriages, and living in the same kraal for mutual protection, as there was a deadly feud raging between the Boers and the Bechuanas and Kaffir tribes, which originated in the cattle-lifting propensities of both parties.

Again, there was no love lost between the Dutch and the few English traders who came with waggons full of goods to barter for ivory with the natives in this part of South Africa ; and, although there was no open rupture between the races at that time, still they seemed to regard each other with suspicion, and had little in common together. For my introduction to the Van Jansens, with whom I afterwards became intimately associated, I was indebted to chance, and our meeting took place under the following circumstances :—

I was following up the slots of a sable antelope that I had seen pass into a clump of mimosa close to the Makoko river, some forty odd miles to the westward of the Hangslip range, when I noticed three waggons drawn up under the shade of a grove of makolani-trees.

Although neither hungry nor thirsty, the canvas tent, curling smoke, and white women's forms in the African bush were sights that were as welcome as meeting a vessel from home after a long cruise in unfrequented seas ; so I gave up the trail and reconnoitred the camp. My presence was almost immediately made known to the inmates by the baying of half a dozen dogs of a nondescript breed that gave tongue in every key, and as I approached I was hailed in a somewhat gruff tone of voice by Hans Van Jansen, a stout, burly Hollander, who, roah in hand, asked me, in his own vernacular, who I was, and where I was going. Although my knowledge of Dutch was extremely limited, I had a fair smattering of German, and, replying in that language, made him understand my answer. He then, in fair English, asked me if I happened to be a doctor, and beckoned me forward. I told him that I was

not, but that I had a chest of medicines in my waggon, and knew their use, and that he was welcome to anything I might have. "God must have sent you, my friend, in our sore distress, for we have a sick camp, and one of my nephews lies dead."

I sent some of my people to my *compagnon de voyage*, Captain Stevenson, bidding him to hasten up the waggons that were some three miles in the rear, while I went to see the sick, which consisted of several bad cases of fever. It appears that the whole party had pitched their camp for some days in a low swampy valley, for the sake of the green forage for their cattle, and the malaria had brought on virulent intermittent fever, which had prostrated nearly the whole camp. There were three apparently very serious cases; Van Jansen's sister, who had lost her eldest boy the day before, was delirious and raving, whilst her younger brother was almost in a state of insensibility; and Kleine Van Jansen was so weak and exhausted from constant attacks of fever that he was unable to sit up, and seemed perfectly helpless. As soon as the waggons came up I had a consultation with Stevenson, and we made up a quantity of cooling drinks and a strong decoction of quinine, with which we dosed the whole camp, for they all looked as yellow as guineas, and more or less ailing. Hans Van Jansen, his brother-in-law, Schmidt, Stevenson, and I then performed the last rites over the young fellow who had died the day before, taking the precaution to bury thorny bushes over the grave to prevent the corpse being disinterred by hyenas. The next morning, finding there was a marked improvement in the appearance of our patients, I persuaded Van Jansen to make a move and shift his camp to some high ground overlooking the river, where there was fine shade, whilst, at the same time, if there was a breath of air stirring, we were sure to get the benefit of it. By my directions an ox was killed and boiled down into strong soup, for the use of the sick; and leaving Stevenson in medical charge, with directions to administer strong doses of quinine every four hours, Van Jansen and I mounted our horses, and, attended by about a score of our followers and a party of Bushmen, went up stream for the purpose



AFRICAN MONKEYS.

of killing some game for camp use. I was astonished to see the number of different kinds of water-fowl that swarmed on every side. Pelicans, flamingoes, cranes, herons, geese, ducks, teal, snipe, and scores of eagles, falcons, and hawks were circling about, uttering their peculiarly shrill wild cries; whilst every now and again we passed numbers of huge crocodiles floating on the surface of the water or basking in the mud on the sloping banks. These repulsive-looking brutes, although extremely tenacious of life, are easily enough killed in the day, when they plunge into the water upon the approach of man; but at night they are always prompt to attack, and as they lie in wait for animals coming to quench their thirst, they may be easily mistaken for logs of wood; consequently one is obliged to be extremely careful when venturing near water at night. Although I always endeavour to extirpate these vermin if I find them anywhere near the haunts of man, on the present occasion, notwithstanding I had several chances of favourable shots, I forbore to fire, lest the report of my rifle might disturb other game; and after a tramp of about two hours, during which we put up several pallahs and quaggas, we came to a reed marsh formed by a bend in the bed of the river, in which a troop of about eighty buffaloes were browsing.

Making a *détour* so as to get on some tolerably high cliffs of red earth that fringed the bank of the river, we approached, under cover of low bushes, to the brink of the scarp which commanded an admirable view of the herd, who, unconscious of our presence, were indulging in a *siesta* after their morning feed. Although several were within easy shooting distance, I begged my companion not to fire, as I never before had such a splendid opportunity of watching the doings of these animals in their own wild haunts, and I wanted to observe them. Some were lying down asleep, others lazily nibbled the younger green shoots of herbage, whilst at a short distance off, a couple of young bulls were engaged in single combat, which several of the herd seemed to watch with great interest. With heads lowered and tails erect, they charged each other repeatedly, and from the

crashing noise of their massive foreheads meeting, the shock must have been paralysing, were it not for the protection the base of the horns affords. As it was, very little actual damage appeared to have been done to either combatant; they were very evenly matched, and after having fought several rounds, until they were both pretty well out of breath, they moved off in different directions, each being accompanied by a few special admirers.

Having somewhat gratified my curiosity, and severely tested the patience of our native followers, before whose eyes floated visions of an unlimited supply of beef, I left Van Jansen in order to out-flank the herd on the other side. I strolled gently along the edge of the cliff, keeping closely under cover, until by careful stalking I got within a hundred yards of a mighty bull who, unsuspecting of danger, was lying down surrounded by his seraglio, each member of which seemed to be more or less engaged in administering to his bovine comfort: two cows licking him behind the ears, whilst a third was rubbing him down with her muzzle and massive forehead. The old patriarch denoted his satisfaction at these gentle attentions by alternately caressing one or the other with his tongue, and now and then giving vent to his feelings by a low guttural bellow, preceded by a succession of moaning grunts. All at once a gentle ripple in the air wafted the taint of man's presence to some of the outlying stragglers who were scouting in the direction where Van Jansen was posted; the signal denoting "danger afoot" was given by an old cow and repeated on all sides, and in a moment the whole herd were crashing wildly through the reeds. On the first intimation of alarm being given, the old bull sprang on his legs, and rushing forward a few paces, stood for a moment with his nose stretched high in the air, as if sniffing in the wind; and his brawny chest being fully exposed, I raised my rifle—a double 8-bore, by Westley Richards—and gave him the contents of both barrels in rapid succession, aiming at the point where the neck seemed to enter the body. On receiving the first shot he staggered back a yard or two, but at the second he pitched heavily forward and fell

stone dead, whilst his companions, faithful to their allegiance, notwithstanding their manifest alarm at the reports, charged gallantly in different directions, as if to challenge the intruder who had dared to invade the domain of their stricken lord, returning from time to time to the fallen bull. Taking my second rifle from Nagoma, I dropped a young cow with a bullet behind the shoulder, and was about to pull trigger at a half-grown calf, when I heard a wild shriek, followed up by a couple of shots a short distance behind me; and immediately afterwards one of the Damara guides told me that two "keitloa" (the two-horned black rhinoceros) had turned our rear, and suddenly charged down upon our people without their offering them the slightest molestation.

When the buffalo were first sighted we sent all our followers, except the gun-carriers, with the horses to the rear, there to await our return; and it appears that two of their number, whilst in search of wild fruit, disturbed the "keitloa," who were enjoying a snooze under the shade of a grove of kushshai-trees. The rhinoceros were lying down on their sides fast asleep when first discovered; but awakened by the voices of the men, in the twinkling of an eye they were on their legs, and undismayed by the shouting and a couple of shots fired at them, they charged the men furiously, and obliged them to take refuge in trees, when, enraged at their escape, they gave vent to their spleen by tearing down the bushes in their path. Van Jansen, who had killed one buffalo and wounded a second with his heavy roah, now rejoined me, and we determined to follow up the spoor of the rhinoceros. Having carefully re-loaded my big rifle with a Jacob's shell in the right barrel, and a hardened 3 oz. round-headed cylindrical bullet in the left, I lent my companion an 8-gauge double smooth-bore, as a second gun, and accompanied only by Nagoma carrying my spare rifle, we made tracks for the scene of the Damaras' discomfiture. The fresh spoor was everywhere to be seen, but the trails crossed and recrossed each other so frequently that it was scarcely possible to discover the actual line of retreat. We had followed the spoor some distance



RHINOCEROS GOING THE PACE.

when we found it doubled back to a patch of thick bush close to where we first took it up ; and we were considering what the next move should be, when suddenly our suspense was terminated in the most abrupt manner, for the male rhinoceros, with a fiendish shrill snort, came tearing down at us with horns lowered and tail straight on end, closely followed by his mate. I sprang on one side so as to let them pass ; but Van Jansen, who was also right in their line of charge, trusting to the efficiency of his heavy roar, stood his ground and coolly let drive when the huge brute was within half a dozen paces of him. Although the shot must have told severely at that short distance, it did not disable him or even stay his course for a second : he merely staggered from the shock, and swerved a little to one side. As he passed me, I let drive and planted the shell just behind the near shoulder ; when, almost instantaneously, every vital function in the whole frame of the animal seemed to be checked, for he dropped in a heap, doubled up with his knees under him, at Van Jansen's feet. I had hardly pulled trigger when the widowed mate, cocking her head on one side in a most knowing manner, with a vicious rolling of her cunning little eyes, and a scream of rage mingled with distress, bore furiously down upon me ; but as she lowered her head as she approached, I aimed at the centre of her brawny neck, and the heavy bullet, after smashing some of the vertebræ, passed into the region of the heart ; for rolling head-over-heels in the most extraordinary manner, she fell stone dead within a few yards of her spouse.

"In death they were not divided."

"Hondred duizend losgebroken duivels ! But this is hot work for a man with a large family !" exclaimed the Dutchman, as soon as he had somewhat recovered his usual equanimity of mind ; for although brave as a lion, his nerves were somewhat shaken at his narrow escape from impalement. "If it had not been for your lucky shot, that horn would have spoiled the seat of the biggest pair of breeches in Namaqua Land, I'll be bound," continued he as he

measured the front horn, which was nearly six spans, or 54 inches, whilst the hinder one was somewhat less than a foot.

On examination of the bull, I found that the heavy bullet of Van Jansen's roah had ploughed up the forehead and entered the neck, but somewhat too high up to prove mortal, whilst the Jacob's shell I had administered behind the shoulder, bursting in the region of the heart, had caused instantaneous death. Having assembled the people by a call from my hunting-horn, I cut off the horns, which are joined to a knob of bone attached by strong ligaments to the nose and firmly set in the skin, and returned to the marsh where we had killed the buffalo. The bull and two cows were lying dead, whilst the fourth, a handsome young bull, was standing as if keeping guard over the dead cow killed by Van Jansen, with one of its fore-legs dangling, the roah-bullet having shattered the fore-arm. All the rest of the herd had disappeared, having made their way up stream along the bed of the river. Knowing from experience what a formidable antagonist a wounded buffalo is, Van Jansen and I approached with great caution, and when within sixty yards, as he turned his ponderous head round, my companion fired; but his bullet struck too high and glanced off the rocky mass at the base of the horns: although knocked back on his haunches by the shock of the blow, he was on his legs again in a moment, and uttering a most unearthly bellow, came tearing down at us upon three legs. I now gave him a shot; but as I pulled trigger, my foot slipped in a large rat-hole, and I fell on my knees, my bullet singing through the air wide of the mark. Whilst on the ground, however, I let drive with my second barrel, and the bullet entering his muzzle, partially stunned him, and again he rolled over; but such was his tenacity of life that he once more got on his legs, and with low subdued moans, indicative of pain, but still full of pluck, tried to drag himself towards us. The crashing effect of our heavy projectiles, however, told with fearful effect, and again and again he tottered and fell.

Van Jansen—who in the meantime had re-loaded his roah—now

stepped up and gave him a *coup de grâce* behind the ear, when, with a surly groan, he staggered and fell dead.

We now re-mounted our horses and rode back to camp, sending a waggon and pack bullock to bring in the buffalo-hides and flesh. The rhinoceros meat we left for the natives who gathered round on hearing the shots; as, although the white rhinoceros, when young, is not bad eating, the flesh of the keitloa is as tough as old boots. The change of camp had proved beneficial to our fever-stricken patients, and all, whilst doing well, expressed themselves most grateful to Stevenson for his constant assiduity in administering to their comfort. Round the watch-fire that night, Van Jansen related our adventure with the rhinoceros; and, under the soothing influence of a bottle of hollands, it was unanimously decided that Stevenson and I should be made free of the Boer territory, to come and go as we liked; and from that time we both received almost brotherly kindnesses from everybody in camp.



SKULL OF A HIPPOPOTAMUS.

CHAPTER XXII.

SOUTHERN AFRICA.

An impromptu stronghold—An anxious night—"Skarms"—A night in ambush—
Elephants—Sounding the alarm—A tight-and-left shot—A bag of five elephants—
Combat between elephants and keitloa rhinoceros—The elephants worsted.

THE pasturage being nearly exhausted in the immediate neighbourhood of our camp, and the fresh traces of lions being too numerous for us to allow the cattle to stray to any distance from it without being closely watched and guarded, we "*treckked*," shifted our quarters some twenty miles to the north-east, and halted on some high and well-wooded ground, that formed a kind of peninsula between the fork of the Mokoka river and another tributary stream. Here we found abundance of good water and pasturage for our cattle, whilst the numerous spoor and fresh sign of elephant gave us every reason to anticipate good sport. We therefore determined to make this our head-quarters for some days; and, to save ourselves trouble and anxiety about the safety of our cattle, constructed a rude kind of *abattis* of felled trees, interlaced with brushwood from one stream to the other, thus enclosing a good-sized strip of ground tolerably secure from night attacks of wild animals. The entrance was closed by rude gates, and furthermore guarded by a huge watch-fire, round which most of our native followers slept.

The sun had hardly sunk below the horizon when a nocturnal chorus commenced, which proved the wisdom of our precautionary measures. Most of the "*vleys*" or rain-pools in the neighbourhood being dried up in consequence of an unusually severe drought, a

great number of wild animals came down to the river to drink, and the game was followed by several distinct troops or families of lions, whose terror-striking roars occasioned great alarm and disquietude amongst our oxen. Several times in the early part of the night the lions came close to our fence, but they never attempted to force it, being probably deterred from so doing by the taint of man's footsteps, which they—in common with all other wild animals—will avoid crossing if possible.

During the early part of the night, whilst peering into the darkness from the gate, I frequently saw the glimmering of lions' eyes, on which the blaze of our watch-fire was reflected as they prowled round about our camp, attracted by the smell of the cattle; but they were too wary to come near enough to offer a certain shot, so I would not pull trigger at them, and towards midnight they took themselves off. We had all worked hard at the barricade, and were too tired for any of us to think of watching for game that night, but on examining the banks of the river the next morning, we found that it had been visited by separate herds of elephant, as the spoor showed that each party had come and gone in different directions. There were also "signs" of rhinoceros, buffalo, hartebeeste, pallahs, sassabyes, and reed-buck having drank at the stream within the last three days.

After having reconnoitred the immediate neighbourhood to make sure that none of the marauders who had serenaded us during the night were lurking about, we commenced the construction of two large and comfortable "skarms," or ambuscades, which commanded the gaps in the banks of the river, down which the animals came to drink. The skarm, to be properly made for elephant-shooting, is a pit from 12 to 14 feet long, 4 feet wide, and 4 feet deep, so that two persons can lie or turn comfortably in it. About 7 feet of the centre part is strongly flat-roofed over with stout logs, which are again covered with earth, and young bushes are often planted over it. Thus it resembles a barrow having two entrances, which are left open at each end, and here the hunters sit with only the upper part

of their heads above the ground. Great care must be taken that the general appearance shows no deviation from the common order of things, and that there are no signs of human occupation about it. The more natural it appears, the better chance the hunters have of close shots ; and of course great attention must be paid that the skarm is constructed to leeward of the track by which the game is likely to come, otherwise their keen sense of smelling will instantly detect the atmosphere tainted by man's presence.

A couple of hours before sunset, Stevenson and Schmidt took up their quarters in one skarm, whilst Hans Van Jansen and myself, accompanied by Nagoma, occupied the other. Some time before sunset a troop of zebras came gambolling round about our skarm, but we allowed them to go unscathed, as their flesh—although eatable when nothing else is to be had—is rank and strong, having, moreover, a peculiarly disagreeable odour. They were followed by a herd of pallahs, but as these drank at a bend in the river, almost out of gunshot, we contented ourselves with watching their doings. The next visitants were a fine male koodoo, with a grand pair of spiral horns, and three does, who came within sixty yards of us ; and both Hans and I, firing double shots at the same moment, managed to drop the buck and two fine fat does that would have graced any larder. The report of our rifles brought half a dozen of our native followers from the camp, which was not more than a quarter of a mile away ; so we sent the game in, and at the same time gave strict orders that none of our people should venture outside the gates until morning. Hardly had we retaken our position, when a running fire of five shots in the other skarm told us that its occupants were having their turn of sport ; and shortly afterwards Stevenson came round and informed us that they had killed a large white rhinoceros. This proved to be a very fine specimen of the kobaba, the anterior horn being 56 inches long. Both Schmidt and Stevenson had been so devoured by mosquitoes that they determined to return to camp ; but, as these pests of the river-side had not troubled us, we remained in our skarm, and bidding Onkombo

keep a bright look-out, and awake us if he saw anything, we were soon in the land of dreams.

We must have slept soundly for some hours, when I was suddenly awoke by a curious blowing noise, which I at once recognized as being one of those peculiar sounds emitted only by elephants. Cursing my own stupidity for entrusting the watch to a native, I seized my rifle and peered cautiously round ; but no elephants were in sight, although two black rhinoceros were wallowing in the river, and hordes of hartebeeste and sassabyes were browsing on the young vegetation on its banks. They, too, had heard the ominous noises ; for the rhinoceros, uttering grunts of defiance, made their way up the stream, whilst the antelope gathered round their leaders and prepared to make a move. Giving my henchman a *gentle reminder* for sleeping on his post, I roused Van Jansen, and in a moment we were on the alert. The moon was now well above the horizon, and, our ambuscade being on high ground, we could see a good way up and down the river.

We remained on the *qui vive* for nearly half an hour, and I had begun to think that the taint on the air of the dead game had scared away the elephants, when—without the slightest sound or intimation of their approach—seven mighty bulls glided noiselessly as shadows into the open ground before us, and stood with their trunks raised and their great ears distended, as if seeking to wind the taint in the breeze and catch the slightest sound. The leader, whose large white tusks glistened in the pale moonlight, stood perfectly motionless for at least ten minutes, as if undecided whether to advance or retreat ; and his reverie might have continued further to try our patience had not a couple of hyenas for once served us a good turn. Attracted by the scent of the dead rhinoceros, they brushed boldly past the elephants, and, passing within a dozen yards of our hiding-place, made their way towards the other skarm where the dead beast lay. The fetid stench that these animals leave behind probably overpowered any other suspicious odour that might have led the leader to suspect danger, for he now fearlessly

approached our skarm, closely followed by the others. So stealthily, however, did they move, that no sound of their footsteps betrayed their presence: not a stone rattled, not a leaf rustled, nor a twig cracked under their ponderous weight, and they had advanced to within twenty yards of us, when suddenly the leader gave a snort, followed by a shrill scream of alarm, and, throwing up his trunk, trumpeted loudly. He had come to the spot where the koodoo had fallen, and detected the smell of the fresh blood.

For some time I had watched every movement, with my rifle pointed towards his massive shoulder, and on the first intimation of alarm I let drive right and left, aiming just behind it, whilst Van Jansen also fired two rapid shots at the "*dood plek*" (a fatal spot behind the shoulder) of a second bull, scarcely inferior to the leader in height, but not so squarely built. Van Jansen's aim was more certain than mine, for the elephant he fired at fell dead in his tracks, whilst the leader, trumpeting hoarsely with rage, tore frantically towards the river, followed by his frightened companions. Having re-loaded, we stepped out of our ambushade to reconnoitre, and found the herd all gathered round their wounded leader, and evidently attempting to hold him up with their trunks, for he staggered and reeled about from side to side, unable to stand without help. Seeing at a glance that he had been struck and was in his last throes, we paid our attention to the others, and, taking advantage of the fairest shots offered, both fired together at different elephants. This time I was more successful, for I dropped one stone dead with a bullet between the eye and the ear, and rolled over a second with a Jacob's shell, which entered at that vital spot where the outstretched ear appeared to spring from the head. Van Jansen was not so lucky; for although the bull he fired at dropped to his shot and floundered on the ground, he soon recovered his legs, and, accompanied by an unwounded pal, charged, tail on end, straight at us. Luckily my second rifle was loaded with Jacob's shells and 6 drachms of powder, and as they came tearing down with upraised trunks, I opened fire at them right and left, aiming at their massive

chests—and, with scarcely a groan, they rolled over and over. We again re-loaded and approached the stricken leader, who had fallen to his knees from extreme weakness ; but he seemed too far gone to heed our presence, so, stepping up, I gave him a *coup de grâce* just behind the ear, when—a tremor passing over his body—he sank gently to the ground, dead.

Only two escaped out of the herd, and they, on making their way along the bed of the river, were attacked by the rhinoceros, which turned out to be of the black “keitloa” species, the most savage and vindictive animal in Africa. We re-loaded our rifles, and made our way to the scene of conflict, intending to take action against both combatants ; but the field of fight being a large swamp overgrown with high reeds, above which only the backs of the elephants were visible, as they charged or wheeled round to avoid the attack of their infuriated adversaries, we declined to enter the lists, and contented ourselves with watching operations. From all appearance the elephants were getting the worst of it, for they emitted the most piteous cries of distress, whilst their opponents indulged in hoarse savage grunts and snorting noises of menace. At last the elephants, thoroughly worsted, took to the water ; and, with the aid of my night-glass, I could see them wading and swimming down stream in full retreat. The rhinoceros remained master of the field, and had won the fight. As matters stood, we did not care to spoil the victors, but returning to our skarms, rolled ourselves up in our carosses and slept till daylight, when we were awakened by the yells and screams of delight of the Damaras and our other native followers, at the prospect of an unlimited quantity of food and great stores of elephant-fat.

During the day we constructed two other skarms at a spot farther up the river, as the strong smell of decomposed flesh was sufficient to prevent elephants from quenching their thirst near the old place ; and here we had great sport, killing seventeen bull elephants to our four guns in five days, besides quantities of other game. At the end of this time, our invalids being in a fair way towards convalescence,

we made "tracks" towards Notoanis, as ominous rumours were about concerning a grand cattle-lifting raid in the Nylstroom district, which had been perpetrated by one of Moselikatzee's former allies ; and a severe encounter had taken place between the natives and a Boer *commando*, in which the latter was said to have come off second best. Van Jansen and his people would not hear of our proceeding to the Zambesi until we had first seen their home, enjoyed their hospitality, and been presented in due form to the *Landroost*, or head magistrate of the district, who appeared to exercise the functions of civil governor, so we continued our way together.



CHAPTER XXIII.

REMINISCENCES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

Head-quarters of the Van Jansens—A hunter's Paradise—Dutch Boers—The biggest men in the world—Boer beauty—An elephant-hunting party—Building a kraal—Commercial value of a dead elephant—Buffaloes bathing—A splendid elephant—His last trump.

NOTOANIS, the head-quarters of my friends the Van Jansens, is a small hamlet, consisting of seven or eight comfortable one-storey farmhouses, two or three smaller domiciles, and numerous cattle-kraals and outbuildings, built on an elevated ridge overlooking the Nylstroom river, and surrounded with fields of maize and corn, whilst in the background rise the Kangslip Mountains, with their blue valleys and lofty granite peaks, which in the early morning, when wreathed with grey mists, put one in mind of the wilder parts of Scotland. Here, surrounded by their numerous flocks and herds, close upon a dozen Dutch families lived a thoroughly patriarchal kind of life, varying the monotony of farming by frequent hunting expeditions, for the surrounding country was alive with game. Two kinds of bustards—*corans* and *paaw*—guinea-fowls, four varieties of partridges, quail, and ortolans were plentiful all about the cultivated lands, whilst in the *veldt*, or open plain on the other side of the river, herds of different kinds of antelope were constantly to be found. Besides being a hunter's Paradise, nowhere in South Africa have I seen such evidence of luxuriant fertility. Fine trees of graceful foliage overshadowed the houses, and bananas, figs, apricots, peaches, pomegranates, and several native fruits flourished in the gardens, whilst the vineyards looked in admirable condition. The whole of the cultivation was carried on

by native labour, Kaffirs, Hottentots, and Zulus, if managed with tact, making excellent outdoor servants. We found the Dutch Boers very good-natured and agreeable fellows; and I think they certainly are the biggest race of men in the world, for scarcely an adult man in Notoanis stood under 6 feet, whilst several exceeded that height by 4 inches or 5 inches, and the average of their weight must have been between 14 stone and 15 stone. Their breadth of shoulders, girth of chest and limbs, and muscular development are as striking as their height; but from their inert mode of life and the vast quantity of food they consume, they generally run into flesh at a very early age, and become ponderous and awkwardly unwieldy. This, however, is not the case with those who are fond of field sports; and amongst the Boers I have found famous hunters that few men would excel in energy, activity, or endurance. The women, as a rule, were fair, plump, handsome, of goodly proportions, and most prolific, as all the Benedicts in the settlement seemed to be blessed with large and increasing families, and every house was full of fair-haired boys and girls, the picture of robust health. There were also a number of grown-up young ladies. During our sojourn several dances were got up, and my friend Stevenson, who was a fair performer both on the violin and the cornet, was in great request on these festive occasions, as the only other musical instruments in the settlement were a quaint ramshackle kind of harpsichord and a couple of guitars.

After enjoying the hospitality of the Van Jansens for nearly three weeks, and shooting only antelopes and small game of different kinds for the pot, Stevenson and I determined to make a move for the hilly Makalaka country north of the Limpopo, where elephants were said to be very numerous. Our hosts and a large gathering of stalwart hunters from different parts of the country determined to accompany us, and we looked a most formidable party as we debouched from the valley, and scoured across the plain in a widely-extended line. With the exception of our guides and a few after-riders, with spare horses for carrying in any game

we killed on the march, all our native following remained with the waggons, in order to extricate them in case of meeting with obstructions *en route*; and in this manner we tracked for some days along the Nylstroom river until we came to its junction with the Limpopo, which stream was too deep and rapid to ford, so a large raft was constructed, and our waggons and gear were ferried across.

We were now in a grand game country, and in many places by the river the fresh spoor of rhinoceros and elephant were plainly visible; but the low lands were very unhealthy, and as there was great danger of our losing our horses by tsetse, we continued our route by forced marches in a north-easterly direction for twelve days longer, up the Schaschi river, when we came to a fine table-land, round which rose the Masiringee Mountains. Here we encamped in a beautiful wide valley, full of green trees of various kinds, the most conspicuous of which were the majestic nwanas, that towered high above the surrounding verdure like mighty monarchs of the forests. Close in front of our camp flowed the Tulne, a tributary of the Schaschi river, which at that time of the year had dwindled down to a narrow stream not more than a dozen yards wide and scarcely knee-deep; but in places there were deep *vleys*, or pools, where elephant and the larger description of game came down to drink. As we had determined to halt here for some days, all hands set to work to construct a large kraal to protect our cattle from marauding lions, whose nocturnal serenades had on several occasions kept us on the *qui vive* during the dark hours; round this our followers dug a deep trench, throwing the earth inward, so that from the outside our construction resembled a field-work with an *abattis* along the crest. Our party consisted of twenty-three hunters and about eighty native followers, and the former were divided into three sections, one of which, by turn, remained at home as a camp guard in case of any hostile demonstration being made by marauding Kaffirs; whilst the other two sections started in different directions soon after dawn every morning, and scoured the country in search of game. This is ar



A COUPLE OF GIANTS.

excellent arrangement for a large hunting party like ours, travelling in a country where

" Might is right,
And he may take who has the power,
And he may keep who can."

Not only is the camp always more or less secure from attack, but also both hunters and their horses have one day's rest in three, which in the long run is conducive to their general welfare, considering the hard work they go through, and the hard fare they have often to put up with. The life of a professional elephant hunter is one of considerable peril and privation; in the end most of them come to grief, either from accident, or, perhaps more frequently, from sickness, brought on by constant over-exertion of physical strength under the intense heat of a tropical sun, the scarcity of wholesome water, and the want of nutritious food. Still, there is intense excitement in the sport; and it is an additional satisfaction to know that every good tusker bagged adds, on an average, a £50 note to the exchequer.

The second day of our arrival, as Ruyter, one of the most experienced of the Dutch hunters who belonged to our mess, was returning to camp in the evening, laden with eland beef, he came across the spoor of a large herd of elephants, which had evidently been drinking in a neighbouring *vley* the night before. As there was a good moon, Van Jansen, Ruyter, Vandermeir, Stevenson, and myself determined to watch by the water in case they might again drink at the same spot; and about seven o'clock we mounted, and, accompanied by about a dozen followers, who were to take charge of our horses upon our arrival near the pool, set out on our expedition.

Moonlight nights in South Africa are brilliant beyond conception, and even the most commonplace scenery, when viewed at such times, appears to possess a weird and mysterious influence that is not discernible in the daytime. Again, many nocturnal animals, whose forms are rarely seen by sunlight, boldly walk the night; and when

every bush and hollow tree emits strange noises, caused by the invisible insect world, the fiend-like cry of the jackal, or the hysterical laugh of the spotted hyena, rouses the echoes and produces startling effects. As we rode along we passed a couple of white rhinoceros and several troops of pallahs and hartebucks, making their way towards the water to drink ; but we were after nobler game, and allowed them to go unscathed. Shortly afterwards we nearly came into collision with a large herd of buffalo, who at first seemed inclined to dispute our right of way, but eventually, after snorting defiantly, as if to challenge us to do our worst, swerved off to our rear ; which we were not sorry for, as elephants were heard trumpeting in the bush on the opposite side of the river, and had we been obliged to fire at our assailants in self-defence, the reports of our rifles might have deterred them from coming down to the river to drink. Soon after this little episode we came to a deep pool in a bend of the river, at one end of which a troop of pallah, intermixed with zebra, were drinking: here Ruyter and Vandermeir resolved to watch, while Stevenson, Van Jansen, and myself continued our way up stream to another *vley* at the foot of a rocky gorge about a mile and a half farther to the northward.

Having selected a somewhat sheltered spot between two huge boulders of rock for our people and horses to remain in, we lighted a fire, where it was not likely to be seen from any distance, as a protection against wild animals ; and, accompanied by three of our followers carrying spare guns and waterproof rugs, we made our way to the water. At the head of the *vley* rose a semicircular ledge of rock, some 18 or 20 feet high, over which a small stream of water trickled down from the densely wooded ravine above, so that the valley we were in here formed a kind of *cul-de-sac*. The water was, however, pure and limpid, and evidently much frequented by all kinds of wild animals, notwithstanding its secluded position ; for on both sides, where the bank was low and sloping, the fresh spoor of elephants were plainly visible, whilst the slots of different varieties of antelope were innumerable. When we first approached the water

a troop of doe koodoos, with fawns at heel, were drinking ; but they were soon scared away by a couple of ill-conditioned hyenas, who howled malignantly as their prey escaped from them. These were succeeded by five old bull buffaloes, who revelled in a cool bath, followed by a roll in the mud. Whilst they were enjoying themselves, a lion gave a most appalling roar from some low bush a short distance down stream ; and the buffaloes, retiring from the pool, formed up in close order, and " made a strategic movement towards the rear," dashing their horns about in a most menacing manner.

We waited with breathless impatience for some time, expecting every moment to see the royal beast approach the water ; but, finding that he did not make his appearance, Van Jansen suspected that he had detected the presence of our horses, and suggested that one of us should remain with our people ; so we drew straws to determine which of us should go. Stevenson drew the shortest ; so we escorted him to their retreat, and again returned to the pool, where we ensconced ourselves behind some rocks, in front of which grew a patch of high reeds. Hardly had we taken up our position, spread our rugs, and made ourselves comfortable, when, without the rustling of a leaf, the cracking of a branch, or the slightest sound denoting his approach, a magnificent bull elephant stepped forth from some dark cover and stood out in bold relief in the bright moonlight. Fortunately, what little breeze there was blew from him towards us, so that he did not catch our wind ; but, with the habitual caution of his race, he stood motionless for quite five minutes, with his trunk elevated and his great ears extended, so as to drink in the slightest sound.

He now advanced a few paces, showing his vast proportions ; the moon's bright rays lighted up his white tusks, which protruded over 4 feet from his upper jaw, and again he stood, a dark, still mass, with a clearly-defined outline, as if chiselled out of solid rock. He now appeared satisfied, gave a low "*Urmph ! urmph !*"—the signal to the rest of the herd, who came tearing down towards the river—and strode rapidly forward until he was knee-deep in the water, not



SOUNDING THE ALARM.

more than thirty yards from our ambushade. Hardly had he entered the stream than he winded the taint in the air, caused either by our presence or that of the Kaffirs who were with us, and throwing up his trunk, he trumpeted loudly his note of alarm. It proved his last signal; for whilst his head was elevated and his massive throat exposed he offered a most tempting shot, of which I took advantage, and, aiming at the centre of his gullet, just where the head is set on the neck, I let drive right and left with my Westley Richards 8-bore, that carried two 4 oz. spherical-headed plugs, each driven by 7 drachms of powder. Before the smoke had cleared away a mighty splash drenched us, and the huge monster, reeling backwards at the shock, fell over flat on his side, and after a few convulsive struggles, ceased to move. The affair was over before my Dutch friend could get up his rifle; and, although he doubtless felt somewhat disappointed at not having had a finger in the pie and being able to claim one of the magnificent tusks, he was very good-tempered, and merely remarked, "*Das was sehr schlimm.*" The rest of the herd, which consisted of eight or nine majestic-looking bulls, never gave us a chance. The fall of their leader struck them with panic, and they set off at a good round trot in the direction from which they came. Van Jansen and I now returned to the bivouac where we had left Stevenson and our horses; and, having made up the fire and dried our clothes, as the moon became overclouded, we wrapped ourselves in our rugs and slept until daybreak, when we were joined by Ruyter and Vandermeir, who had wounded two bull elephants, and killed two elands and a water-bok with magnificent horns. We accordingly sent a messenger back to camp with the information that "elephants were afoot," and desired that a waggon should be sent to carry in the meat and ivory; and soon afterwards our party received a reinforcement of eight Boer hunters and our pack of dogs, in which quantity made up for quality, for never do I think such a lot of mongrels were seen together. Some of our Kaffirs, who had started at early dawn to spoor up the elephants that had visited our *vley* the night previously, returned, having tracked the herd up to a

dense belt of wood, some five or six miles distant, where they were quietly browsing. They reported having left two of their number to watch their movements, so it was resolved to beat up their retreat the first thing after breakfast.



GIRAFFE.

CHAPTER XXIV.

REMINISCENCES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

Rival suitors—A lion's love story—Death of the *causa teterrima belli*—Sudden collapse of one of the combatants—His antagonist's surprise—A lament over a lost love—Hunting the survivor with dogs—At bay—Dying game—Kaffir superstition—Elephants again—Elephant-hunting on horseback—Seven pair of tusks for one day's sport—Attacked by rhinoceros—Satisfactory punishment—A troop of eland—Two thousand pounds weight of tusk ivory in three weeks—Return to headquarters to recruit.

THE Boers are all more or less sportsmen, having been accustomed to ride and use the rifle from early childhood ; but, as they are for the most part big heavy men, and stout in proportion to their height, they must be very well mounted to hold their own in a long chase after wild animals. Out of about a dozen Dutch hunters who took part in the hunt I am about to describe, scarcely one of them could have weighed less than 17 stone as they turned out equipped for the chase, with their long roahs, ox-horn powder-flasks, and broad leather belts that contained bullet and cap pouches, tinder-box, knife, axe, and half a dozen other appurtenances ; whilst many of their number as they rode would have turned the scale at 20 stone ; still their sturdy, well-knit little horses hardly seemed over-weighted as they bounded across the plain, evidently as eager for sport as their riders. Stevenson and I, being both in fair condition from constant hard work, scarcely weighed 10 stone, so that we were lightly handicapped in comparison with the rest.

Our Kaffir guides led the way at a pace which kept the horses at a fair amble, when, as we were crossing a plain between two belts of mimosa and mokala-bush, they pointed out the pugs of a lion



THE RIVAL SUITORS.

that were evidently quite fresh, and appeared to lead into an isolated patch of cover about a mile off. As there was but little chance of the reports of our rifles alarming the elephants, whose retreat was still some miles farther on, it was resolved to lay the dogs on the trail ; so half of our number rode ahead so as to command the farther side of the cover, whilst the Van Jansens, Ruyter, Vandermeir, Stevenson, and I tracked up the pugs until the dogs, which were some distance in the rear, could be brought up.

Long before we got near the thicket, smothered roars and loud growling noises told us that a battle royal was going on amongst the great carnivora, so Kleine Van Jansen and Vandermeir rode back to hurry up the dogs, whilst Ruyter, Hans Van Jansen, Stevenson, and I rode up to reconnoitre. The fearful snarling noises that continued to issue from the cover, intermingled with grumbling, moanings, and stifled whimpers, testified as to the obstinacy with which the contest was being maintained ; so Stevenson and I, who were determined to get a sight of the combatants if possible, in spite of Van Jansen's and Ruyter's remonstrances, dismounted, and tethering our horses, crept as noiselessly as possible into the cover. Guided by sounds of war, we soon reached the arena, and found that two magnificent full-grown lions were engaged tooth and nail in mortal combat for the favours of a skittish young lioness, who was looking on, and encouraging the rivals by walking round them as they were locked in each other's grasp, and making peculiar loud purring and whimpering noises. It was a grand sight, for the two noble animals were well and evenly matched, and neither seemed to have gained any material advantage ; although it was evident, from the severe injuries that each had received, as well as from the trampled herbage and the appearance of the ground, which was torn up in places, that the fight had been going on some time before we came up. As all parties were too much engaged in the fray to notice our approach, we managed to clamber up into a tree which commanded a capital view of the field of action without being perceived, and both of us were too fond of fair play to spoil the sport

by interfering. For quite ten minutes we watched the exciting struggle with intense interest, as the two huge creatures rolled over and over like two great cats, their deep-drawn grunting and hard breathing being only varied by crunching and rending noises, as fangs and claws tore up each other's flesh.

Suddenly the yelping of dogs was heard at no great distance, and the lioness showed symptoms of uneasiness, and stood motionless a moment as if listening; then she whined and commenced growling, as if to attract the attention of the lions to the suspicious sounds; but they paid no heed to her warning, and she was slinking sneakingly away, when, as she passed close under the tree on which we were sitting, Stevenson raised his rifle and rolled her over stone dead with a well-directed bullet, which entered the back of the skull and penetrated the brain. Neither the loud report of the shot nor the fall of the lioness appeared to be noticed by the two enraged combatants, as they did not, even for an instant, relinquish their grip of each other; but, as the dogs were evidently near at hand, and there was no prospect of seeing the fight right out, I took the opportunity, when the brawny shoulder of one of them was fully exposed as he stood broadside on to me, to let drive a right-and-left almost simultaneously, and, both bullets penetrating the vital region of the heart and lungs, he fell heavily on his side to the ground, writhing in his last agonies. His antagonist, evidently surprised at his rival's sudden collapse, stood over him for a moment as if bewildered, until a bullet from Stevenson's second barrel cracked loudly against his flank, when, attracted by the smoke, he raised his head in our direction, and then for the first time became aware that other assailants were in the field. Uttering a long tremulous roar, he rushed forward a few paces, and for a moment I thought he intended to spring upon us, for we were quite within his reach the forks upon which we were standing not being more than ten feet from the ground, and neither of us was loaded—when suddenly he caught sight of the dead lioness, who lay doubled up in a heap as she fell on receiving her mortal wound: with a peculiar whine of

recognition, utterly regardless of our presence, he strode towards her, licked her face and neck with his great rough tongue, and patted her gently with his huge paw, as if to awaken her. Finding that she did not respond to his caresses, he sat upon his haunches like a dog, and howled most piteously, until his attention was attracted to his late antagonist, who drew up his limbs convulsively at the moment of dissolution ; with a sullen growl he sprang up and stood over him, roaring defiantly three or four times. At this moment the yelping of the dogs and the cries of encouragement of the Kaffirs sounded close at hand ; and, leaping over a low bush, he beat a hasty retreat, for which I felt extremely thankful, as reloading when perched up in a tree is rather an awkward operation.

Soon after his departure the pack made their appearance, with Kleine Van Jansen and his party of Dutchmen, and we had some difficulty in driving the dogs away from the dead lions, and putting them on the trail of the survivor ; but the Kaffirs, after a vigorous application of their hippopotamus-hide zamboucs, managed to do this at last, and soon afterwards they again gave tongue, and appeared to push forward in pursuit. We followed up in their rear as fast as we could, and it soon became evident that the lion was retreating but slowly, as at times he turned upon his pursuers, who came yelping back towards us as if seeking our protection. This work continued for some time, until at length he got to the skirts of the cover, and made a bolt out into the plain. There he was met with a volley from the Boers' roahs, and struck by several bullets, when he broke back into the cover, and after a few minutes was brought to bay by the dogs. Although severely wounded, he committed great havoc amongst them before we could get up : it was a grand sight to see him sitting on his hind quarters, carelessly regarding the swarm of yelping curs that surrounded him, until one or two of the boldest of them, encouraged by his apathetic inaction, came within reach of his paw, when in an instant they were hurled back maimed, mangled, or lifeless.

. We arranged that the Dutchmen should fire first, and Ruyter took



AT BAY.

the lead with a huge roar, which, exploding like a young cannon, broke the lion's fore-arm only, and brought him down on three legs in the midst of the pack, who rushed forward at the report. Hans Van Jansen now fired, and his bullet, entering the chest, rolled him over; but in an instant he was again upon his legs, and stood undaunted and undismayed, grand beyond conception, with fire flashing from his eyes, his long black mane straight on end, and the crimson life-stream flowing from his open jaws. Although grievously wounded, and so weak from loss of blood that he could not charge, he still faced his foes with indomitable resolution, and growled his defiance until a well-directed bullet from Stevenson's rifle entered the corner of the eye and ended his career. Scarcely was the breath out of his body than the Kaffirs rushed up and each took a mouthful of the blood that was trickling from his numerous wounds, as they believe that it is a specific which imparts strength and courage to those who partake of it. Leaving some of our people to strip the spoils from the fallen monarchs, we continued our course after the elephants, and by noon arrived at the bed of a small river fringed with patches of thick bush, in one of which it was that the herd were. The two Kaffirs who had seen them enter at early morning informed us that this was a favourite resort for elephants, as there were three or four deep pools, overshadowed by great forest trees, where they bathed during the heat of the day, previous to sleeping in the cool shade.

After making a careful reconnaissance of the ground, we found the fresh spoor of several elephants leading into the cover; and, as we could not find any traces of their having again left it, it was only natural to suppose that they were still there, notwithstanding that no sounds were to be heard indicating their presence, which seemed strange, as the belt of jungle, although stretching for some distance along the banks of the river, was of no great extent; and when unsuspecting of danger and undisturbed, a herd, when browsing, may generally be heard breaking down the young branches on which they feed,

We now held a consultation to arrange our plan of action, and, as the jungle in which the elephants were was very dense and full of wait-a-bit thorns, it was determined to set fire to the line of dry reeds and high grass along the bed of the river, so as to drive them into the open, which was tolerable riding-ground, where our horses could be brought into play. The wind was favourable to our project, and our native followers soon fired the whole line of reeds, whilst the mounted hunters, dividing into two parties, took up their posts on each flank of the cover, it being arranged that the herd should be allowed to get some distance over the plain before the pursuers gave chase, otherwise they might try and break back into the cover, or cross the river where the country was densely wooded. For some minutes we waited, anxiously listening; but although from time to time we heard the crackling of the fire, with occasional rustlings amongst the bushes, we could detect no sound that indicated the presence of elephant. At last we heard a low grumbling noise, and an old surly buffalo made his appearance, followed by a troop of springbok, and almost immediately afterwards a herd of ten bull elephants noiselessly emerged from the cover, and strode leisurely across the plain. They were all of goodly proportions and appeared to carry heavy tusks, and it was a grand sight to see them debouch into the open and form up into an irregular line. A huge monster with a very thick pair of ivories brought up the rear, having been the last to break cover; and Stevenson and I determined to devote our special attention to him. When the herd had got about half a mile over the open country, they swerved off and began to quicken their pace, so it was evident that the other party had commenced the pursuit, and that the elephant had got their wind and taken alarm.

All further concealment was now unnecessary, so away we went after them as fast as our horses could carry us. Elephants can get over the ground at a good speed for a short distance, but they soon get blown, and after the first burst a horseman can easily overhaul them. Yet a stern chase is ever a long one, and so we found it in

this instance, for the herd got a good start, and our horses were pretty well blown before we got up to them. Stevenson, who led the van by some lengths, was the first to commence operations, and as he shot alongside the big tusker we had marked, he planted a right-and-left well behind the shoulder, and wheeled off just in time to avoid his charge; round the brute came with a shrill scream of rage, and passed at no great distance from Van Jansen, who, in self-defence, was obliged to fire; and the heavy bullet of the roah, entering just behind the ear, tumbled him over and secured the ivory. In the early part of the chase my horse put his foot in a hole and came down a cropper, giving me an awful shaking; but finding that no bones were broken when I picked myself up, and that my nag was altogether uninjured, I continued the chase, and although considerably thrown out by my purl, I soon managed to get close up in the wake of an old bull with decent sized tusks, and forging up to his near side, gave him the contents of both barrels in the temple, which brought him to his knees; in a moment, however, he scrambled on to his legs and continued his way, although his tottering gait, drooping ears, and listlessly swaying trunk showed that he was hard hit and in great distress. Seeing that he had no intention to charge, I pulled up, re-loaded, and again gave chase, and this time I caught him just behind the shoulder whilst his forearm was well advanced, and he dropped with a crash to the ground. In the meantime, on every side were heard the loud reports of the Boers' heavily loaded roahs, followed by the shrieks and trumpeting of the wounded elephants that were rushing wildly over the plain, each followed by one or two hunters, who, on their strong and enduring horses, would doubtless have exterminated the whole herd if the chase had not led towards a belt of thick forest, in which three of the number found refuge. As it was, we had no reason to complain, for seven pairs of tusks were secured amongst us; not an unprofitable day's work, as the ivory must have weighed over 4 cwt.

Our long chase after the elephant had led us quite twenty miles

from our camp at Masiringe, and as the day was nearly spent, we knocked up a kind of impromptu kraal for the protection of our horses, a couple of huts for ourselves, and in less than an hour had established a comfortable bivouac for passing the night. Large watch-fires were lighted, round which we reclined and talked over the events of the day and our plans for the morrow, and it was decided that three of our number, with a party of Kaffirs, should remain to collect the ivory, whilst the rest of us returned to camp to send back a waggon for its transport. All our people were regaling themselves to surfeit on elephants' flesh, and as the night came on it was a strange sight to see them cutting up the carcasses by the light of huge fires, like so many demons.

Hardly had the sun gone down than we were serenaded by a party of lions, and during the livelong night the camp was entertained by the dismal choruses of hyenas and jackals, who, attracted by the smell of the flesh, collected in great numbers round the dead elephants. The next morning we were afoot and at breakfast soon after dawn, and the sun was just making his appearance above the horizon as we got into the saddle. Leaving some of our number to make their way back direct to camp, Ruyter, Van Jansen, Stevenson, and I took a southerly direction, so as to skirt the edge of the Linguapo Hills; a range said to be full of game, lying on the left bank of the river Schaschi.

We had ridden over an undulating plain for about an hour without putting up any other game than a few pallah and reitbok, when Stevenson, after sweeping the horizon with his telescope, pointed out a couple of sable antelope that were grazing about a mile distant. Stevenson and Ruyter taking one flank, Van Jansen and I the other, we made a circuit before commencing the pursuit, as all antelope, when alarmed on a plain, make off with their heads to the wind; and our object was to get on each side of our quarry before starting him. With a little management this was effected, and the chase began. For the first mile the antelope got over the ground at a great rate, and seemed to go two yards to our one; but before

the second mile was covered they were quite blown, and Stevenson and Ruyter, who were admirably mounted, were almost within shooting distance, when we lost sight of them in a dried-up water-course overgrown with bush and high reeds. Here a strange *contretemps* happened, for which we were quite unprepared. As Stevenson and Ruyter were spooring up the antelopes' slots, two black rhinoceros suddenly made their appearance, and, without the slightest provocation, charged and knocked down Ruyter's horse before he could get out of their way. Stevenson, who was riding close to him, managed to wheel his horse round, scramble on the bank, and discharge both barrels at the assailants just as they were returning to the charge; and Van Jansen and I, who came up at the time, gave them a volley which made them beat a retreat. Both Ruyter and his horse were a good deal shaken by the fall, but no bones were broken, and neither of them was seriously hurt; so, after a mouthful of "schnaps," we agreed to follow up and punish his assailant. The spoor was plain enough; and that one was hard nit we could see, as blood had flowed freely as he went along. Still, it was necessary to keep a bright look-out, as a wounded and infuriated borèlè is one of the most vindictive and formidable animals a hunter can encounter. As we were following up the spoor of the rhinoceros, the two sable antelopes sprang up from behind a bush where they had been lying, and, by a fortunate shot, I hit one of them at the back of the head, and secured a magnificent pair of antlers; while, almost at the same moment, the two borèlè broke out into the plain. Our task was now a comparatively easy one, and, moreover, it afforded considerable fun. They charged us repeatedly, and fairly snorted with rage when they found that they could not get near our horses in the open. At last, after repeated discharges, they succumbed, and we left them as they fell, for their flesh is too tough and bitter to be eatable.

The black rhinoceros are much smaller than the white varieties, and have but comparatively short horns; but they are much more vicious and pugnacious. The black rhinoceros live upon thorny

bushes, and their flesh is bitter and worthless, whilst the white varieties are essentially grass-eaters, and their flesh is succulent and of good flavour. The black rhinoceros is a difficult animal to kill. Besides being extremely tenacious of life, his brain is so small and his skull so thick that there is very little use firing at his head, unless with hardened bullets driven by a very large charge of powder. The most vulnerable point is just behind the shoulder when the fore-arm is moved forward: there the bullet, if fired from a proper angle, is most likely to penetrate the heart or lungs. Unless confronted or annoyed by them, I generally made it a practice to give them a wide berth, as they have no spoils worth taking, and their flesh is useless.

After having disposed of the rhinoceros, even to Ruyter's satisfaction, we continued our route, and as we neared the Linguapo Hills a troop of seven eland were descried. It was determined to drive them towards our camp if possible. Had our party been larger this would have been an easy matter, for a line of horsemen would have guarded each flank and obliged them to head in the direction required. As it was, the task required very careful strategy to ensure success. However, my companions were up to every move on the board in driving game, and they anticipated no difficulty. Stevenson and Van Jansen made a *défour* so as to get between them and the wooded hills, whilst we rode some distance on their flank so as to start and drive them forward, although without giving them any unnecessary alarm. This was satisfactorily accomplished; and Van Jansen and Stevenson at the same time showing themselves on the other flank, they set off at a rapid pace in the direction in which our camp lay, distant about seven miles. Our object was not to press them, but they went a great pace of their own accord, and kept us going at a smart hand-gallop to keep up with them. After the herd had got over about three miles of ground, they became blown and relaxed their speed, gradually subsiding into a shuffling trot. We kept them going for a couple of miles farther, when they became thoroughly done up, and almost

as easy to drive as tame cattle. At last they were so exhausted that they tried to separate; and this was the signal for slaughter, which was dexterously accomplished by Van Jansen and Ruyter shooting them in the back of the head, so as not to spoil the meat. We were now little more than three miles from camp, and Ruyter rode in to bring out a waggon and people to carry in the meat, whilst we broke it up and prepared it for carriage. In about a couple of hours a number of people came out and the beef was carried in, such parts as could not be consumed whilst fresh being converted into "belthorn"—*i.e.*, salted, dried in the sun, and smoked over wood-ash fires. Prepared in this manner it keeps good for several weeks, and, if well soaked before being cooked, is not at all unpalatable food.

As the country teemed with game of different descriptions, we remained hunting in this neighbourhood for over three weeks, by which time Stevenson and I had accumulated over 2,000 lbs. weight of ivory, killing in one day, near the Tscharibe Hills, nine elephants to our two guns. At the end of this time, our horses being worn-out and quite out of condition, we returned to Notoanis to recruit.



WILD ASS.

CHAPTER XXV.

REMINISCENCES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

"I'll tell you the story; but pass the 'jack,'
And let us make merry to-night, my men.
Ay, those were the days when my beard was black—
I like to remember them now and then."

A fresh expedition—Our party—Plentiful game—A two months' bag—Giraffe-hunting—A giraffe attacked by a black-maned lion—The hunter hunted—Bad news—Two of our party killed by elephants—Chase of the murderers—Their punishment and death—A torchlight burial—A night in "skarms"—A false alarm—A snap-shot in the dusk—A night's sport—Return to Notoanis.

IT was not long before we organized and started on a fresh expedition. Our camp was situated between two tributaries of the Zambesi, the Longwe and Sepungwe rivers, which rise in the Matopopo range, and flow in a northerly direction through the Matbele country. The party consisted of my old comrades, Captain Stevenson, Hans and Kleine Van Jansen, their brother-in-law Schmidt, and two stalwart Boer farmers, Emile and Yacobus Vandermeir, who were noted elephant hunters. Having left all our heavy gear at Notoanis, Van Jansen's head-quarters, we took with us only three lightly laden waggons, containing food supplies and goods for barter; each of us having a couple of salted or seasoned horses for hunting, besides half a dozen dogs of one kind or another, which together formed a numerous if not a select bobbery pack, that proved most useful in driving animals out of cover, or in engaging their attention and keeping them at bay until the hunters came up.

Game of all kinds was very plentiful in this part of the country,

and in two months we had killed more than forty elephants, besides rhinoceros, buffalo, and other animals.

One morning two bushmen came in with the account of a large herd of bull elephants having been seen in a somewhat extensive *vley*, near the river Longwe; and the younger Van Jansen, Schmidt, and the two Vandermeirs, who happened to be in camp when the news came, immediately started off in pursuit. Stevenson, the elder Van Jansen, and myself were absent at the time, having started at break of day after a large herd of buffalo, of which we killed four, and whilst we were cutting up the meat, a troop of seven giraffes were seen browsing at no great distance. We immediately girthed up our horses and gave chase: after a spurt of quite two miles at a very fair pace, we each singled out one, and, putting on the steam, managed to get alongside, and let drive at the shoulder.

I had selected a fine old bull who seemed to be more massively built than the others, and "Old Stag," my horse, having soon brought me within easy range on his off side, I planted a 2 oz. ball from a Westley Richards smooth-bore just behind his shoulder, and followed it up with a second shot in very nearly the same place: to my surprise, however, although I heard both bullets crack loudly against his hide, he made no alteration in his gait, and continued to forge ahead much as before. I had to pull up my nag to re-load, a proceeding that in those days took some little time, during which the quarry had got a start of about three hundred yards, and I was just commencing a somewhat unpromising stern chase, when suddenly the giraffe wheeled round and came doubling back in my direction at full speed. Being somewhat puzzled at this unexpected stroke of fortune, I rode up just as a large black-maned lion had fastened upon the scared animal's haunches, and was being carried along. Before my horse got wind of the marauder, I let drive a fair double shot at the back of his head, and as I swerved off saw him relax his hold and roll over. My horse now became fidgety, and although he was generally full of courage, on this occasion he seemed to lose head, and I could not stop him, even by circling round, until I



THE HUNTER HUNTED.

the scene of the accident. There we found that the tale was too true. Schmidt lay dead, with his blue eyes wide open, his long fair hair besmirched with mud, and the lower part of his face and throat covered with blood, for his chest was stove in. Emile Vandermeir was trampled into an almost undistinguishable mass; he had scarcely a bone in his body left unbroken. Not seeing either Yacob or the younger Van Jansen, we anticipated further misfortune, but some of the people told us that they had started off on the trail of the elephants a few minutes before we came up.

"So must we," replied Van Jansen; "for unless poor Schmidt is avenged, I shall never be able to look my sister again in the face."

Nothing remained to be done; so, remounting our horses, we followed up the trail, and soon came up with Yacob and Kleine, whose horses were dead beat and could hardly move one leg before the other. Seeing their exhausted state, we induced them to go back, and leave the pursuit to us, as our cattle were comparatively fresh.

They gave us the account of the disaster, by which it appeared that soon after daybreak they spoored up a herd of fifteen bull elephants, of which they killed three in the open "*veldt*," and severely wounded two others, who, with the rest, got into a patch of thick cover, full of "*wagt ein bætje*" thorn, through which it was impossible to force the horses. Kleine Van Jansen and Jacob Vandermeir rode round to the other side of the belt of bush to intercept the herd in case they broke through, whilst Emile and Schmidt dismounted and followed up the spoor of the wounded elephant on foot, which they could distinguish from that of the others by the blood that marked their route. The bush was very dense, somewhat dark, and perfectly impenetrable, except by the track made by the herd, which, however, enabled the pursuers to enter some distance into the cover. Presently they fell in with an elephant, at which they both fired: at this moment, one of the other wounded elephants, who had cunningly doubled back in a line parallel to the path made by the herd, noiselessly took them in the rear, first

killing Schmidt by knocking him down and trampling upon him, and then attacking Emile, who pluckily tried to rescue his comrade, and pounding him piecemeal. He now attacked the two natives, who witnessed the transaction ; but they escaped by clambering up into a tree ; he then again returned to Emile Vandermeir's lifeless body, and, screaming with rage, pounded it with his feet and knelt upon it, until it was almost kneaded flat, and the entrails got entwined round his legs. Having vented his spleen on his fallen foe, he rushed off trumpeting through the bush ; and his cries of rage were distinctly heard by Kleine Van Jansen and Yacob, although they had no conception of the dismal tragedy that had taken place till an hour or more after it had happened, when the herd was found to have vacated the bush, and the bodies were recovered and carried into the open.

Hans and I had no difficulty in spooring up the herd, for the trail of the wounded animals was plainly distinguishable, as their steps were very irregular in length, and at times they had evidently stopped to rest, from marks of blood and froth which were found on the herbage ; a sure sign that they were very sick, and too hard hit to travel far. My conjectures proved to be right, for on approaching another patch of cover, through which the spoor led, we heard noises that convinced us that elephants were not far off. Before commencing operations, I reconnoitred the ground, and found that the bulk of the herd had left their wounded comrades behind, and gone away at speed straight ahead, as their spoor was plainly marked on the plain beyond the cover, where we had heard the suspicious noises. I had a 10-gauge double rifle, and a double 2 oz. smooth-bore, both of Westley Richards' manufacture ; Hans had his trusty roah, and another of my 8-gauge smooth-bores as a second gun ; besides which two of our pluckiest after-riders were entrusted with other spare guns. All were carefully loaded, and carried heavy charges of powder and hardened projectiles ; so we had no reason to complain of our armament.

As soon as we were ready, we slung our spare guns on our



A MURDEROUS PAIR.

shoulders by the belts, and crept as noiselessly as possible through the bush, halting every few moments to listen to the strange gurgling noises that from time to time struck our ears. We had not penetrated very far into the cover when, whilst I was leading, and stooping almost to the ground, I saw something that at first sight I took to be the trunk of a tree move, and almost immediately, with an unearthly shriek, a splendid tusker, followed by another bull elephant, charged, with his ears expanded like two huge fans, in the direction of one of our after-riders in the rear, who had incautiously showed himself. As he dashed past, within ten yards from the spot where I was couching, I sprang up, gave a loud shout to attract his attention, and, getting a momentary glance at his temples, rolled him over stone dead with a bullet through the brain. Van Jansen brought the second one to his knees with an admirably planted "*dood plek*" just behind the shoulder, and we gave him his *quietus* with a double discharge as he was vainly attempting to get once more upon his feet. That one of these brutes was the destroyer of our friends I have no doubt, as they had both received several fresh gunshot-wounds; and the one I had killed first was evidently a very cunning fellow, as he must have been standing listening to our approach for some time before he made his charge. We both believed that he was the guilty party, as his knees, as well as his hind feet, were covered with dried clotted blood that could not well have issued from his own wounds, which were in the shoulder and seemingly well planted.

Having avenged our comrades' death, we felt as if a weight were lifted off our minds, and returned to the scene of the catastrophe in much better spirits than when we left it. Here we found the waggons had arrived, and two deep graves having been dug side by side on a little eminence, we buried the remains of the two hunters by torchlight, Stevenson reciting such portions of the burial service as he could remember, and improvising a short prayer before the graves were filled up.

The next morning at daylight we tracked on to the river, which

we found nearly dried up, except in deep pools ; so we continued our course up stream until we came to a *vley*, where, from the general appearance of the place, there seemed every likelihood of our cattle getting some good forage.

Having selected a suitable spot for our camp on a rising ground some two hundred yards away from the river, near some fine shady trees, we held a consultation, and determined to make a halt for some days, so as to give our animals a rest. Whilst the people were engaged in constructing an enclosed fence as some safeguard against the carnivora, Stevenson and I strolled down to the river, where we found two deep pools in the bends about half a mile from each other. The one nearest our camp offered every facility for watering our animals, so, after we had filled the casks for our own use, horses, oxen, and dogs came tearing down the slope, and plunged into the pool, where they wallowed for a time in perfect happiness.

Yacob was entirely prostrated with grief at the loss of his brother, from whom he had never been separated, and the Van Jansens were also very much cut up ; so I did not care to return to camp, but, shouldering my rifle, strolled to the other pool for the chance of falling in with some kind of game. As I went along the dry bed of the river, I saw several fresh pugs of lions, as well as the spoor of the elephant and rhinoceros, and any number of slots of different kinds of antelope. The second pool was surrounded, except on one side, with reeds and low bush ; the water was remarkably clear wherever the banks were steep ; but at both ends, which were shallow, the water had assumed the consistency of porridge, from the pounding up of the mud by the trampling of elephants' and rhinoceros' feet. Numberless spoor of both animals crossed and re-crossed each other in different directions, and all around the margin of the pool were runs and paths in the reeds, made by different kinds of antelope and other wild animals. Some of these marks were evidently quite fresh ; so we directed our people to construct a couple of substantial "skarms" or underground ambuscades, sufficiently large to hold two persons comfortably, one at each end of the pool. These were

strongly roofed over with stout logs, covered with earth, leaving only a small opening at each end, and, being on the same level as the plain, were scarcely distinguishable from the adjacent ground even in broad daylight. At each end of the pit I had a broad plank fixed so as to form seats, upon which we could sit comfortably, with the upper parts of our heads only showing above the surface of the ground; otherwise we should have been obliged to stand during the long hours of the night.

The banks in some places were overshadowed with huge forest trees, amongst which the matundo and two gigantic mowana or boababs in full foliage, and covered with pendent white flowers, were most conspicuous; whilst in the bends of the river were beds of high canes and reeds, the haunt not only of numerous gigantic cranes, storks, herons, egrets, and white and black ibis, but also of hideous monsters of alligators and scarcely less repulsive smooth-headed snakes, which glided about half hidden by rushes and strange unnamed weeds. Wherever the water was shallow and somewhat clear of reeds, were patches of beautiful liliaceous plants, with flowers of every shape and hue, over which hung glittering in the sunshine gorgeously painted giant butterflies, strange metallic-coloured insects, and gauze-winged dragon-flies.

In these regions, during the heat of the day a dreamy silence reigns, or rather a strange living, murmuring stillness, which is only felt in tropical forests, and which seems to extend a sense of extreme lassitude and inaction not only over the animal but also the vegetable world; for at this time, when all nature seems hushed, and all living things seek refuge in the shade, the most delicate leaves droop, although completely sheltered by overhanging trees from the direct rays of the sun, and even the flowers for a time cease to disseminate their odours. The mosquitoes and some few of the insect world alone resisted the drowsiness of the hour, and murmured softly as they glided by or buzzed round the thin gauze veil that protected my head and neck.

The uninitiated in woodcraft may talk of the dull uniformity of the

forest, but the real lover of Nature knows that the aspect of the woods is ever changing. No one can really appreciate the forest who has not passed whole days in watching it from the early morning hours to the deep dark shades of night. Different animals, birds, insects, and flowers emerge from their secret hiding-places, and make their appearance at different times. As each hour passes away, the scene assumes a new aspect. The voices of the feathered songsters have their appointed hours, and even the aspect of the foliage and the perfume of the flowers change with the march of the sun.

In the afternoon I returned to our camp for dinner, after which Stevenson and I adjourned to the ambuscades, as the others were in no mood for shooting. Stevenson took the skarm nearest the camp with one of his people, whilst I and my Hottentot boy, Hans, went to the farther one, which was about a mile beyond. Here we arranged a tarpaulin, mats, and rugs, so as to make our abode pretty habitable; and, having trimmed the bull's-eye lantern, stowed away the food and cold tea, and looked to the arms, we took up our position, one at each end of the skarm. My battery consisted of a double 10-bore rifle, and two double 2 oz. smooth-bores, carrying the boluses of the Bishop of Bond Street.

Towards eventide scores of graceful antelope, zebras, and quagga came and slaked their thirst; and troops of chattering monkeys scrambled down the banks and drank from their small hollow palms, pausing every moment to look round with a wary, suspicious glance, to reassure themselves that no scaly denizen of the pool was lurking in their immediate vicinity. Guinea-fowl, partridges, pigeons, doves, palm-birds, and finches of every hue came unsuspectingly to the water and drank; whilst large flights of flycatchers kept up a fluttering sound in mid-air, like the zephyrs rustling amongst forest leaves.

There is something peculiarly fascinating in watching the habits and propensities of wild animals in their own haunts, and as long as daylight lasted, having constant visitors, the time passed pleasantly enough. Just as it was getting dusk, two pugnacious keitloa, or

black rhinoceros, came close by my skarm, and evidently got my wind, although they could not catch sight of me, for they rushed forward with their noses facing the wind, sniffing and snorting in a most defiant manner; and had I not been waiting for elephant, and feared lest the report of my rifle might scare them away, I could easily have rolled both over, as they presented most tempting broadside shots. Whilst they were looking away from me, I hit one with a clod of earth, in order to drive them off, and he, thinking his companion had assaulted him, lowered his head, and, catching him unawares, almost rolled him over. After this they left, and a couple of water-buck, one of which had magnificent antlers, took their place in the foreground, whilst a large flock of flamingoes, with white bodies and scarlet wings, alighted and formed up close to the water's edge like a row of soldiers, or rather ballet dancers, for they had rose-coloured bills and pink legs.

The night soon became dark as pitch; nor moon nor star were visible; mist and wreathing vapours seemed to hang over the dark surface of the water, on which the moaning night breeze raised a gentle ripple, that gurgled against the shore with a dull monotonous lap.

As I was peering into the darkness, listening to the unearthly noises that seemed to float on the night air, I stretched forward, leaning against the edge of the pit, when I suddenly felt something clammy and soft moving under my hand. Feeling startled, thinking it was a snake, I sprang back with such haste as nearly to smash my skull in against the logs forming the roof of the skarm; and hearing something fall into the pit, I was in a state of mortal funk until, by turning my bull's-eye lantern round, I discovered that the intruder was only a harmless green frog, who, doubtless, was quite as frightened as I was at the rencontre. Having dislodged my visitor and thrown him into the pool, I felt considerably relieved, and taking a long pull at my cold tea, resumed my vigil.

Now and then there was a low rustling amongst the bushes, and distant breathings; but the night was too dark for us to discern

anything, although at times dark, shadowy creatures seemed to pass silently in front of us, like ghosts in Indian file, winding amongst the bush. That their presence was real, however, we knew from the creaking of the reeds as they passed through them, the twittering of startled birds, the flapping of wings, and the quick plunges and splashes in the water, caused by the scared bull-frogs taking to their native element. But there were other creatures than the loud-throated bull-frogs moving in the pool, for at times we could hear great fish or scaly reptiles swimming slowly round under the bank, and causing the water to ripple in their wake, as they darted in pursuit of their prey.

At times we could hear close at hand the subdued moaning of hyenas or the dismal howling of jackals; and occasionally a darker shadow of some large animal came suddenly out of the gloom into view, only to disappear in a moment like a phantom, leaving somewhat startling impressions behind upon the imagination. On either side we looked into depths of blackness as unutterably dreary to us as the gloom of the grave. Ever and again we heard, with a nervous bound, a rustling of some creature moving rapidly behind us, while on all sides weird shadows crossed restlessly to and fro.

In these dark hours a dread feeling of helplessness seems to creep over the frame, for the hunter, however experienced he may be in woodcraft, and confident in his aim, at such a time feels that he is powerless. His right hand's cunning is useless, and it needs no ordinary nerve and great self-reliance to keep cool and ready to act on an emergency. At such a time the dread of an unknown danger weighs upon the spirits, and I have felt inclined to relieve my lungs by a lusty shout to assure myself that the shadows that appeared to float before me were not imaginary, and creations of a diseased brain. On this occasion there was no room to doubt, for hoarse, deep whimpers came booming through the darkness, which I knew denoted the presence of lions, even had I not heard them lapping the water, and breathing heavily as they paused now and again between their draughts to draw breath. Breathlessly I gazed into

the darkness or bent forward with one ear turned towards the earth in the direction of the ominous sounds.

Before night drew in I took the precaution to close up the other end of the skarm, as my henchman Hans, although really a plucky and devoted fellow, was an incorrigible sleeper, and no danger or excitement could ever keep him awake. Moreover, I had to kick him repeatedly to prevent him snoring loud enough to be heard fifty yards off on a still night. I had just stooped below to administer a gentle reminder of this kind and pull up the wick of my bull's-eye lantern, when, as I returned to the opening and was about to reseat myself, a loud "wh'uff!" "wh'uff!" was heard just overhead, followed by the heavy breathing of some animal that was clawing the ground and sniffing close to the other entrance of the skarm. I gently cocked both guns, rested one noiselessly against the corner of the pit, and had just peered over the outside edge when I was greeted by another "wh'uff!" followed by a low sulky growl in the opposite direction, and then I knew that my footsteps had been tracked up to my retreat by a troop of lions, who were only waiting for my appearance to commence hostilities.

Although I felt my heart thump against my ribs and my pulse quicken with excitement, I determined to take the initiative; and at that moment, catching sight of a pair of greenish fire-like orbs shining in the dark, scarcely four yards from me, aiming right between them, I fired both barrels almost simultaneously. With a mighty bound the lion sprang many feet over my head, and began rolling over and over, evidently hard hit and very sick. The moment I fired I stooped, so as to get hold of my second gun; an action, perhaps, that saved me from a mauling, as the lioness rushed forward at the cry of her mate, and I almost blew her head to pieces by a double snap-shot aimed at her eyes, that glowed like red-hot coals, as she stood whimpering over his writhing body. I do not think she was more than 3 feet from the muzzle of my gun when I fired, as what remained of her face was all singed and blackened when I found her in the morning.

Hans was now all awake, and slipped my rifle in my hand directly the other was discharged ; but I kept my last two shots in reserve until I had re-loaded the other guns, notwithstanding a constant moaning, varied by angry snarls, which told me that the game was not yet over.

It was too dark to discover anything, although the moon was just beginning to rise, and as my antagonists could see in the dark, whilst I could not, I thought discretion was the better part of valour ; so I fastened the tarpaulin down over the entrance of the skarm, and lay down on my rug to wait until the moon gave me sufficient light to resume offensive or defensive operations. In spite of my efforts to keep awake, I must have dozed off and slept for some time, for I was roused up by the Tottie, evidently in a state of great alarm, who bade me listen. Pulling myself together, I caught hold of my rifle, and gently raised the tarpaulin, when I found the moon's rays were making the night clear as day. The lioness lay dead close to the skarm ; but the lion had managed to crawl away to the water, where he was surrounded by two other troops, one consisting of three, and the other of four, whom he kept at bay by repeated snarling and threatening growlings.

Now and again the leader of one or the other troop would give a roar of defiance, which was at once replied to by his rival ; and at times they would couch down, as if to make a spring, and tear up the earth with their claws. They were evidently so engrossed with each other's presence that my ambuscade did not attract any attention ; so watching my opportunity, I levelled my rifle, hit one leader of a troop hard just behind the shoulder, and gave the other one the contents of the second barrel in the same place, as near as I could judge. Shooting by moonlight is very uncertain work, even at short ranges ; so I was not much surprised that neither fell, but, rushing madly at each other, were soon locked in mortal combat. I re-loaded my rifle, and dropped my first antagonist, the old lion, with a bullet in the back of the head ; and with the second barrel tumbled over a lioness, who was looking inquisitively in my

direction in a manner that boded me no good. Picking herself up, she was couching for a spring in my direction ; but I ended her career with a right-and-left in the chest, when she rolled upon her back, and, after pawing the air for about half a minute, lay motionless. The two lions were still at it tooth and nail ; so I re-loaded and let drive four shots at them as they were locked in each other's



A DUEL.

arms, and although I heard the heavy bullets crack against their flanks, neither fell, and before I could again re-load, they made off into the bush.

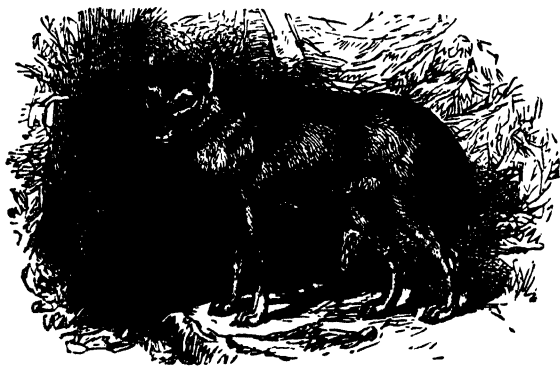
At this moment I heard some heavy and continuous firing from the direction of Stevenson's post, and a few minutes afterwards a troop of about a dozen bull elephants came tearing down along the water-side, their white tusks gleaming in the bright moonlight. As they got near the dead lion, they must have winded the blood, for they turned off sharp in my direction. Picking the biggest tuskers,



LION-SHOOTING BY MOONLIGHT.

I gave them the contents of all six barrels, at ranges varying from fifteen to forty paces ; and had the satisfaction of seeing one drop in his tracks, and another tumble about in the reeds as if he could not rise from his knees and regain his legs. As soon as my arms were re-loaded, I scrambled out of the pit, bounded over the dead lioness, who gave a "squelsh" as I trod on her side, which somewhat scared me, and after four more shots I managed to put the wounded elephant out of his pain and secure the ivory.

As soon as I had re-loaded, I ventured to look round at my night's work, which consisted of a lion, two lionesses, and two bull elephants, all of which were lying within two hundred yards of each other. I now felt dog-tired, so once more crawled into my skarm, closed up the entrance, rolled myself up in my rugs, and slept until broad daylight, when I was awakened by Stevenson, who had also been lucky, having killed an immense bull elephant and three white rhinoceros. Later on in the day we spooed up the wounded lions, and found one dead, and the other so weak that he could not get away from the dogs ; so we gave him a *quietus*, which ended his pain. Hans Van Jansen killed three fine bull elephants the next evening, and in less than a fortnight we got about 12 cwt. of ivory amongst us ; but we began to lose our horses by the tsetse fly, and were obliged to commence a retrograde movement for Notoanis.



WOLF.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE GAME OF ABYSSINIA.

Species of game met with in Abyssinia—Arrival at Zoula—On board H.M.S. *Coromandel*—A shooting excursion organized—Bad commissariat—A great *yäger*—A valuable gun—An Abyssinian lion—The *yäger's* prowess—"Two wild camels"—My bag in Abyssinia—Native customs.

IN Abyssinia, like every other mountainous country, the game is extremely varied, the same species of animal being rarely found both in the high lands and in the low country. All around Annesley Bay, and on the low ground extending from the sea to the spurs of the tableland, vegetation is extremely scanty, consisting chiefly of mangrove, stunted bramble-bushes, and different species of the mimosa and other tropical plants requiring but little water. Here, in the dry season, elephants and the feline race are rarely to be met with; but to my surprise I found other game abundant, and on this sandy tract, where both water and cover was scarce, I killed wild boar, antelope, Ben Israel gazelle, bustard, guinea-fowl, florakin, spur-fowl, sand grouse, rock-pigeon, and three different kinds of francolin, whilst the nights were made horrid by the constant yelling of packs of jackals, varied only by the more unearthly cry of the spotted hyena. During the rains and for some time afterwards, when the country is green and water is to be found, herds of elephants make their way from the forests in the interior, and have been seen grazing on the young herbage close to the seashore. I saw old spoor on several occasions, but never had the luck to come across any myself, although some were killed by officers who were quartered in the low country. I only once saw a lion in

this part of Abyssinia, and our meeting took place under the following circumstances.

On my arrival at Zoula in October the heat was intense, and as camp life was almost unbearable on account of dust-storms, or the clouds of fine sand that were being continually raised by the wind, and at times darkened the air, I established my head-quarters on board H.M.S. *Coromandel*, and in company with her gallant commander, Hewitt, and his officers, made several very jolly shooting excursions to different parts of the coast.

One day, in an unguarded moment, I accepted an invitation from the Bunda-master, or custodian of the pier, then in progress of construction, to accompany him and a party of friends in a shooting excursion to the head of the bay. Our host, although a first-rate officer and a very good fellow, was but a miserable caterer for a shekar party, for he never thought of the necessities of the inner man or creature comforts, and we actually embarked at 5 A.M. without breakfast and a clear hold. There was not even so much as a keg of water in the boat. These arrangements not appearing good enough for this child, he tried to back out of the excursion, and it was only on his urgent representation that he would not start upon an empty stomach, that a Bologna sausage, with some biscuit and beer, was procured from one of the ships, and divided amongst us. A cask of water was then put in the boat, and we started for the hot-water springs of Atz-fat. Although this place is scarcely eight miles from Zoula, our Lascars took nearly four hours pulling the distance, so that the sun was high over our heads by the time we got to our shooting-ground, and our chances of finding game were very small.

Besides our host, my *compagnons de voyage* were two officers of the Bombay Marine, and a "foreign party," who informed us that he was a great "*jäger*" in his own country, an "*un tireur de première force*," although by his style and get-up I should have taken him to be a converted missionary who had a call, or indeed anything else but a sportsman. His gun—which he handled as a monkey

does a hot cinder—was evidently bran new, and might perhaps in Liège have cost fifteen francs, but it scarcely looked safe to fire, of which fact I made him aware, to his intense mortification.

As the Lascars were pulling lazily along the shore, we caught sight of an antelope browsing amongst some low bush; and landing between two patches of mangrove, an attempt was made to stalk it, but without success: we could not get within shot. It was then resolved to beat some likcly-looking ground, and make our way towards one of the ravines in the Eidalle Mountains, which range runs parallel to the coast; and so we started, the "*yüger*" remaining behind to prove his gun by tying it to a tree and pulling the trigger with a long cord.

My companions were perfect novices, and I soon gave up all hopes of making a bag, for when I tried to persuade them to keep in line, they got it into their heads that I wanted to come the "old soldier" over them, and practise "drill manœuvres," and they coolly told me that, although such kind of shooting might do for marines, it did not suit blue-jackets. Finding myself in the minority, and feeling somewhat disgusted, I resolved to part company with the greenhorns, and was striking out a line of my own, when a couple of spur-fowl getting up from close under my feet, I brought them down right and left. Hardly had the report died away when I heard a low growl, and one of the Lascars, who was carrying my rifle, yelling out "*Bagh! bagh!*" ("tiger! tiger!") shot past me like a skyrocket. A slight rustle in the brushwood followed, and in a moment more I saw a fine young lion looking deliberately at me from over a bush about twenty paces distant.

He had no mane, and at first sight little more than his head and neck were visible. I thought he was a lioness, but as he bounded away I got a better view, and made him out to be a fine-grown three-year-old lion. I had no time to re-load before he bolted, and the Lascar, thinking discretion was the better part of valour, and making himself scarce, I could not get a shot. I was trying to find consolation by an examination of the pugs, when a double dis

charge took place in my rear, and a sharp tingling on my western side told me that some one had been "making game" of me. Luckily I had on one of Bird's leather shooting-coats, so the shots did not enter the flesh, but—

"When in trouble, to be troubled
Is to have your trouble doubled."

With a roar that would have scared many a bolder sportsman than our "*yäger*," for he was the delinquent, I rushed forward in the direction the report came from, and saw that individual diving through the bushes as if Old Nick was behind him. He had taken me for a bear!

There is art even in running away. The "skedaddler" requires coolness and presence of mind, or he will come to grief. Besides having to look back to mark the movements of his foe, he must look forward and choose his ground, taking care not to fall, or woe betide him. A heavy crash in the bottom of a thickly-wooded watercourse told me that the "*yäger*" was for a time *hors de combat*, so I contented myself by advising him "to shoot me dead next time he fired at me, for if I was only wounded I would return the compliment with the contents of both barrels." Not hearing any reply, I continued tracking up the trail of the lion until I fell in with the Bunda-master, and we made our way to the hot-water springs, near which we found the old spoor of a herd of elephants, but only killed a couple of hares and a few spur-fowl.

Finding game scarce, we made our way back to the boat, and would have returned on board in time for dinner, but the "*yäger*" did not put in an appearance, and after waiting three or four hours we had to go in search of him.

After some time he made his appearance, and with great glee told us that he had killed "two vild camels." His information was soon afterwards corroborated by a party of Shohos, who came to complain that two of the Government camels had been killed by one of our number. This was above a joke, and I launched out in any-

thing but parliamentary language to the unfortunate "yäger," but all to no purpose. He said, "There vere vild elephants, and vy not vild camels too?" "I was jealous of his 'superior shooting,' forsooth." Cutting the matter short by threatening to punch his head if he did not hold his tongue, I waded into the boat, the salt water making my shot-wounds smart, which in no way improved my temper, and I growled and grumbled all the way back like a bear with a sore head.

Arriving on board the *Coromandel* at about 10 P.M., Hewitt gave me a capital dinner, and after a time I could afford to laugh at my miseries; but I registered a vow that I would never run in such company again—and, reader, I intend to stick to it.

This was the only time I came across a lion in Abyssinia, and, although I beat all the country round about the hot springs of Ailet, where they were numerous in the time of Mansfield Parkyns, I never even found a fresh pug. Indeed, there could have been none in the neighbourhood for some time, or the people would have taken care of their cattle, which wandered about the bush without molestation. In the passes above Ailet I killed a black panther, and a young leopard near Amba Saul; but as these were the only ones I saw during the seven months I was in this part of the world, I do not think feline animals are very numerous. During the seven months I was in Abyssinia, however, I killed over two thousand head of game; which was not bad sport, considering that our route to Magdala lay chiefly along the watershed, where animals are far less numerous than in the more densely wooded districts.

In some places I have seen guinea-fowl in flocks of several hundred: by getting some of my people to drive them slowly towards me, I have killed as many as a dozen at a double discharge, and, by keeping concealed, have bagged a mule-load in a few minutes. On the high land near Lake Ashangi and Mussageeta, grey and Egyptian geese, different kinds of duck and teal were very numerous, and, as their flesh, though tough, was a change to our ration beef, I went in for heavy bags of water-fowl. My best day's work was thirty-seven

brace of geese, and five couple of mallard, shovelbills, and teal. With the exception of a few elephants and leopards killed in the low country, very little large game was seen, although we had some of the best sportsmen of India with the force ; and from what I saw of the country, and the information I could gather from the people, I do not consider that the eastern shores of Abyssinia are desirable hunting-grounds.

As to the people, the less said about them the better, for "manners have they none, their customs are beastly, and their company is undesirable."



OSTRICH.

CHAPTER XXVII.

SPORT IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

New York to Chicago—Chicago to Omaha—Omaha to Fort Laramie—The bear of the Rocky Mountains—The black bear—Hibernating—The grizzly bear—Its enormous strength—Insufficiency of small-bore rifles—A fight with a grizzly—A narrow escape.

PERHAPS there are few districts more celebrated in the annals of sport than the Rocky Mountains, and the vast prairies of Wyoming and Montana that skirt the western base of the range. Now that the network of railways has not only extended right across the continent, but its numerous branches and ramifications intersect the country in all directions, it is an easy matter, comparatively speaking, for the sportsman to transport himself and his gear in the greatest comfort to the very heart of these famous hunting-grounds. As nearly three hundred thousand people go annually to the United States, the great competition engendered has so systematized and regulated the arrangements incident to the voyage, that little or no discomfort is experienced in any of the immense steamers that make the transit in about ten days—vessels in which passengers have at their command all the luxuries and conveniences of a first-class hotel. From New York to Chicago, on Lake Michigan, a distance of about nine hundred miles, the traveller has the choice of four lines of rail ; the passenger express trains of which accomplish the journey in a little over thirty hours, all the *through* trains being provided with drawing-room and sleeping-cars.

First, the "New York Central" route. The lines comprising this route are the New York Central and Hudson River Railway to Buffalo ; thence by way of Cleveland and the Lake Shore, or by

way of Detroit, the Great Western Railway of Canada, and the Michigan Central Railway, to Chicago. As the railway winds along the valley of the Hudson, some of the finest river scenery in America is to be seen by this route.

The second, the "Erie" route, is much resorted to as the most direct route between New York and Buffalo, and as affording views of the singularly beautiful scenery in the region of the Catskills and farther Alleghanies, and of the picturesque slopes drained by the headwaters of the Delaware and Susquehanna rivers. Just before reaching Buffalo, the traveller may take the Atlantic or Great Western Railway for Cincinnati or St. Louis, and the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway for Chicago; or, by Niagara, the Great Western Railway of Canada for Detroit, and thence by the Michigan Central Railway to Chicago.

The third is the "Pennsylvania" route, which passes through Philadelphia and Pittsburg, crosses the successive ranges of the Alleghany Mountains, and has branch lines connecting it with Cincinnati and St. Louis.

The fourth is the "Baltimore and Ohio" route. By this the traveller bound for the West goes by the Pennsylvania Railroad to Philadelphia; thence to Baltimore, and through Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia to Parkersburg on the Ohio; and finally *via* Cincinnati to Chicago.

We now enter upon the second stage of our journey—that from Chicago to Omaha—and here we again have the choice of three routes by which to reach the Union Pacific Railway at Council Bluffs, which is on the east bank of the Missouri river opposite Omaha. These routes are the "North Western," the "Burlington and Quincy," and the "Rock Island;" all of which run in almost parallel lines across the States of Illinois and Iowa, and convey their passengers to their common terminus with equal comfort and in about the same time.

We now commence the third section of our route, from Omaha to Laramie by the Union Pacific line, on which only one train leaves



MONTANA MINERS.

daily, running through to the Pacific. Passing the Elkhorn river at Fremont, we catch our first view of the Platte river, along the banks of which the line runs as far as North Platte, crossing the whole length of the immense grazing-fields of Nebraska, which one day will become one of the finest corn-growing districts in the world, as the soil is of inexhaustible fertility.

At Antelope, four hundred and fifty miles west of Omaha, we have our first view of the Rocky Mountains, whose snow-capped peaks rise high against the clear blue sky; and at Cheyenne, the junction of the Denver Pacific Railway, we enter the State of Wyoming, which, before the line of railway was completed, was once a famous sporting district. Leaving Cheyenne, we at once begin to ascend the slope of the Rocky Mountains by a steep gradient, and at Granite Cañon, twenty miles from Cheyenne, we are some 7,000 feet above sea-level. We continue to rise until we reach Sherman, which has an elevation of 8,224 feet, and is the highest portion of the line. From Sherman to Laramie, the train runs without steam down the incline, which has a gradient of $47\frac{1}{2}$ feet per mile, under the control of the air-break; and here our long but pleasant railway journey terminates. Notwithstanding the enormous extent of country traversed, such is the comfort of the Pullman sleeping-cars and the excellent arrangements of the hotel or victualling department, that little or no fatigue is experienced even in the longest transits. There is a good fire at both ends of the drawing-room car, ensuring warmth in the coldest weather, whilst double doors and double windows exclude draughts of air. The sleeping-cars have comfortable beds, washing-places, and every convenience, and the traveller can always recruit his spirits at the restaurant and bar.

Fort Laramie is now a growing place, and may one day become a thriving city, as it is at the entrance of the Laramie Plain, a well-watered and fertile tract, which in a few years will be covered with homesteads; but when I and my party visited the district some years ago, it consisted of a stockaded enclosure on a rising ground,



on the left bank of the Laramie river, in which was a barrack containing three companies of infantry and some fifty light horse. Two or three settlers' drinking-booths, and a cluster of Sioux lodges, were pitched under the walls; and an encampment of miners, who were going prospecting for gold, lay on the opposite side of the river.

Now, I hear, Laramie possesses excellent hotel accommodation, and stores where most necessities can be obtained. Here the party of sportsmen must halt for some days to buy horses, baggage mules, and travelling gear; for they must now provide themselves with all they require for the road. Presuming that they have brought their arms, ammunition, saddlery, camp equipments, and medicine chests with them, they will not experience much difficulty in obtaining all else they require; and the Government authorities will assist them in procuring trustworthy guides and servants. If they are lucky, they may also be able to engage a couple of half-breed hunters, who know all the surrounding country, and can furnish much valuable information about the haunts of the different kinds of game. Perhaps the best line to follow would be the Medicine Bow Creek, as far as the confluence of the Sweet Water river, thence continuing the route up stream to the Wind River Mountains. Fine sport may be obtained all along that range, and amongst the many tributaries of the Big-Horn river, which flows in a northerly direction until it falls into the Yellowstone branch of the Missouri.

The principal large game likely to be met with will be the grizzly and black bear, the buffalo or bison, the wapiti, carcajow, and white and black-tailed deer; the prong-horned antelope, the bighorn or mountain sheep, the grey and prairie wolves, the jackass hare, the sage rabbit, and the beaver; the wild turkey, mountain grouse, sage hens, and several kinds of water-fowl, and snipe.

There are two species of the bear tribe to be found in and about the Rocky Mountains, namely, the black bear or musquaw, of which the cinnamon bear is only a variety, and the far-famed grizzly. The black bear, which is also common in most of the large American forests and the adjacent sparsely populated districts, is about 6 feet



STALKING A GRIZZLY.

4 inches in length, and stands about $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet at the shoulder. He is covered with a smooth close-set coat of thick hair, which varies from dark brown to glossy black, according to the age of the animal and the season of the year. When the coat is quite black, there is always a cinnamon-coloured patch on the muzzle and a crescent or horseshoe-shaped mark on the breast. The average weight of a full-grown black bear is about 300 lbs.; although I have heard of some specimens being killed at the fall of the year, when, laden with fat previous to hibernating, that were said to have weighed over 500 lbs. Bears are all great wanderers, and travel over a vast extent of ground in search of food, being anything but dainty; and although as a rule they prefer vegetable to animal diet, a stray pig or a sheep never comes amiss, and, when very hard pressed, even snails and wood-lice are eaten. Their great weakness, however, is for honey, and their olfactories are so keenly developed that they can detect the smell of a bees' nest at a long distance: notwithstanding that the combs may be hidden away in the hollow of some high tree, with the aid of their sharp claws they will swarm up the trunk, work away with their teeth, and gnaw away the wood, until they have made a hole of sufficient size to get in their paws, when, regardless of the bees' stings, they will scoop out the combs and devour the whole mass. The musquaw hibernates at the fall of the year, just before the cold weather sets in, and at this time he is especially fat, beechmast, blueberries, and other wild fruits being extremely plentiful in the forest at this season. The decayed trunk of a pine is often selected for hibernating, but if such is not procurable, a dry cave or a hole underneath a shelving rock is scraped out, until it forms a comfortable winter retreat. There, accompanied by his partner, he turns in for the winter months, and sleeps with his forepaws curled round his eyes, and his muzzle embedded in the fur of his chest, until the comparatively mild weather of March or April sets in. About the end of February the female generally gives birth to two cubs, which, when first born, are scarcely as large as Newfoundland puppies of the same age, and she manages to nourish

them without taking any food herself until the warm weather sets in. No doubt the fat with which the body is loaded in autumn maintains the animal heat, and thus, until it becomes absorbed, they are enabled to exist during this winter fast of four months.

The grizzly bear (*Ursus ferox*) is by far the largest and most formidable of his race, and his tremendous strength and wonderful tenacity of life makes him one of the most dangerous antagonists a hunter can meet with. From nose to rump, a full-grown grizzly measures about 8 feet; he stands about 52 inches at the shoulder, and often weighs 800 lbs. He has a broad and somewhat flattened forehead, and a long narrow muzzle, with large powerful canine teeth. His ears are small and rounded, and his tail is so short that it is completely concealed by the surrounding hair on the flanks. The grizzly varies much in colour. When he is young, he has a rich brown fur, often very long and close, and of much finer texture than the adult animal. Generally his coat is of a dullish brown, freckled over with steely-grey hairs, which gives a somewhat grizzly appearance to the surface of the fur. "Old Ephraim," as the male grizzly is commonly called by the Rocky Mountain trappers, has wonderful feet, measuring about 18 inches in length, broad in proportion, and armed with sharp and strongly made claws about 5 inches long, which he can use separately like fingers. These, besides serving as terrific weapons of defence, enable him to dig for roots, climb trees, or make holes; it being his general practice, after he has made a meal upon any animal he may have killed, to bury the remains, so as to protect them from the wolves and coyotes, until he again feels hungry.

The grizzly is perhaps the most powerful of the carnivorous animals, as I have seen him, when disturbed, carry off a caracow deer as easily as a dog would a hare; and the Indian hunters say that they have known him to kill a buffalo on the prairie, and carry it entire to a patch of cover two miles distant. Mr. Dougherty, who has hunted in the prairies east of the Rocky Mountains, relates an extraordinary instance of the amazing strength of a grizzly. He

had shot a bull bison, and, having marked the spot, set off for the purpose of getting assistance to skin it and carry back the meat.



WINTER QUARTERS.

When he returned with his party, however, the bison was gone. Being quite sure that the bison was dead, he set about searching

for the carcase, and presently found it at a considerable distance buried in a pit; and that the pit had been scratched out and the



IN LUCK

dead bison conveyed thither by a grizzly bear, was evident from the spoor plainly indented in the moist earth."

Considering that a bull bison, if in fair condition, exceeds 1,000 lbs. dead weight, the strength of a full-grown grizzly must exceed that of any of the feline race. Luckily for the hunter, they cannot spring upon their prey; and notwithstanding that these heavy, thick-set, awkward-looking animals possess wonderful mobility of limb and great proportional agility, they are not such very dangerous customers to tackle, provided the hunter is armed with a large-bore breech-loading rifle throwing a heavy bullet, and keeps his wits about him. The American hunters are generally armed with small-bore rifles, which are as much out of place against such an assailant as they would be against elephants or rhinoceros; and I attribute the numerous accidents that have occurred in hunting the grizzly to the insufficiency of weight in the projectiles generally used. The most vital spots to aim at are the temples, just under the throat when the head is raised, the horseshoe-shaped curl upon the chest, or behind the shoulder just clear of the fore-arm and shoulder-blade. It is a somewhat grotesque sight to see one of these huge monsters sitting upon his hind legs, with his small, cunning, pig-like brown eyes sparkling maliciously, as he catches sight of the approaching hunter. Should he not be shot through the brain or heart, unless his assailant maintains his presence of mind, and puts in his second barrel well and quickly, the chances are that the latter will come to grief, if his comrades fail to come to the rescue; as "Old Ephraim," when wounded, becomes desperate, and strikes tremendous rending blows with his fore-paws, generally aiming at the face of his antagonist. In one instance an Indian was completely scalped, the skull being laid bare and the hair turned right over the face by a single blow from the paw of a grizzly.

My own experience leads me to believe that the grizzly, like every other forest animal, will rarely interfere with man unless he is either molested or pressed by hunger, as those which I stalked and killed in the Montana district never attempted to molest me until wounded. In fact, upon two occasions, after watching our approach most attentively for some time, they turned round and

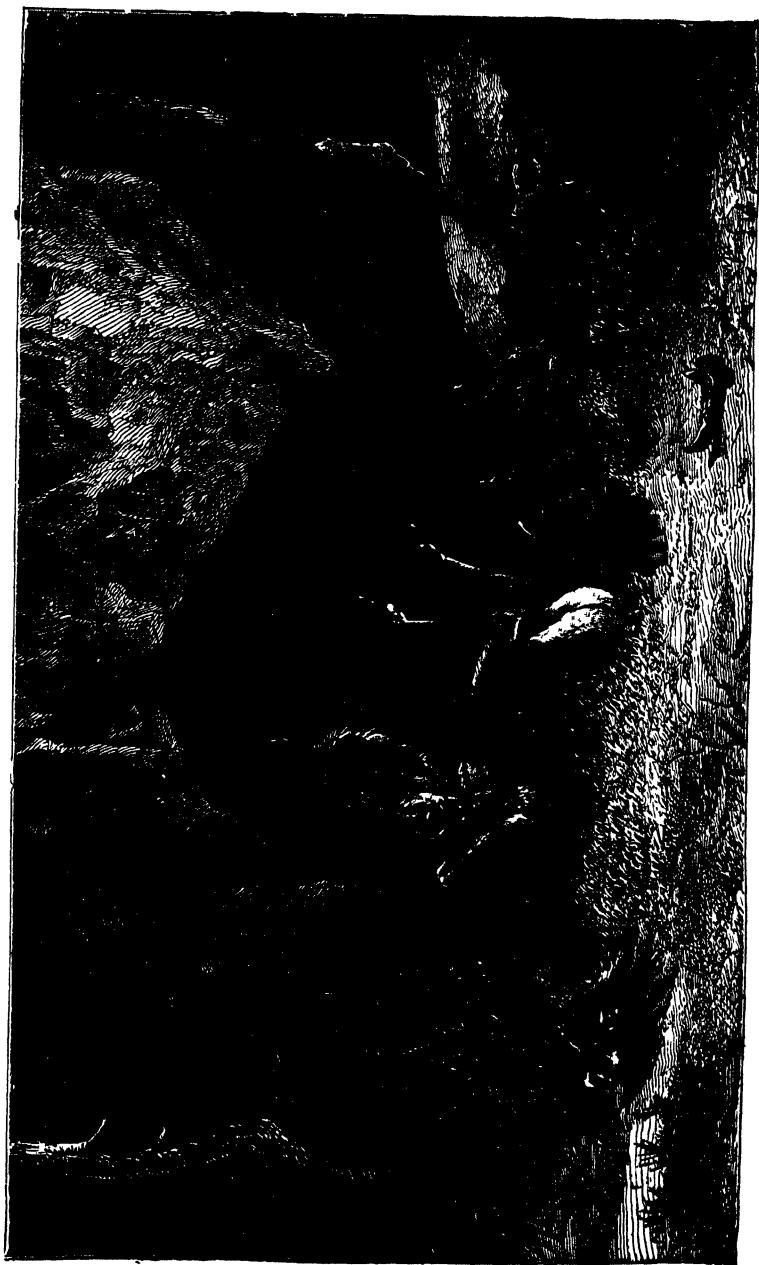


A GRIZZLY BROUGHT TO BAY

attempted to shuffle off. The following instance, however, shows that they sometimes assume the initiative, and, when hungry, will attack either horses or men.

We were encamped on the Wind river, a considerable stream that takes its source in the Rocky Mountains to the north-east of Fremont's Peak, and flows into the Big-Horn river, a tributary of the Yellowstone, when at daybreak one dreary morning a cry of alarm rang through the camp, and I was awoke by our people hurrying to and fro in noisy confusion. As some of our scouts had recently seen "Indian sign," and rumours were prevalent of predatory bands of Pawnees, Sioux, Arapahos, and Cheyennes being out on the war-path, I made sure that the hostile redskins were out and trying to stampede our horses and mules. I need not say that my toilet that morning did not take long, and just as I had looked to my rifle and mounted, a couple of smothered shots were heard on the outskirts of the camp, followed by loud cries and desultory firing.

The rain was falling in torrents, and the river and hills were more or less obscured in mist, and looked dark and gloomy, so that a long ride after redskins before breakfast in such weather was anything but a pleasing prospect. However, there was no help for it, so I rode forward towards the clump of red cedars from whence the sound of firearms seemed to issue. As I drew near, one of the half-breeds came running back and informed me that the row was occasioned by a grizzly, who had tried to carry off one of the baggage ponies, but that he had been driven off by the guard, who had fired at him, and that in revenge he had carried off an Indian boy who had charge of the dogs. Guided by the shouting which still continued, and accompanied by Pierre carrying a second gun, I entered the copse, and found a big grizzly evidently the master of the situation; for although three or four of our Blackfoot scouts were holloaing round him, he did not appear to notice their menaces, but confined his attentions to Crib, a bull-terrier, which pluckily kept him at bay by dancing about all round him, without risking a mauling by getting within striking reach of his paws. I was mounted



A SNACK IN THE FOREST.

on a thoroughly broken Indian mustang, that neither feared buffalo nor grizzly, and I rode pretty close up before I saw that the Indian boy was lying on the ground apparently so badly hurt as to be insensible, whilst the faithful old dog was doing what he could to protect him by harassing his huge antagonist.

On my riding up to about twenty yards' distance "Old Ephraim" raised himself on his hind legs, and cocked his head knowingly on one side, as if he was going to make a rush: whilst he was in this attitude, his brawny chest being fully exposed, I gave him the contents of both barrels almost simultaneously, which rolled him over on his back, where he made several convulsive motions with his paws, as if he was catching flies; so, dismounting, I took my second gun from Pierre, and administered a *coup de grâce* behind the ear, when with a peculiarly melancholy whining moan he stretched out his great limbs and breathed his last. The game being ended, I turned round to look after the wounded boy, but to my surprise he was *non est*: he afterwards told me that, finding himself encircled by the paws of the grizzly, he had closed his eyes and feigned to be dead, and that when the brute dropped him upon being fired at by some of the people, he had not dared to move lest he should again get hold of him. My plucky dog, it appears, had twice endeavoured to pin "Old Ephraim" by the nose whilst the boy was in his clutches, and without doubt it was his persistent attacks that compelled the monster to release his hold. The youngster, thanks to the dog's aid and his own presence of mind, was not seriously injured, although he had received several nasty cuts in the back and ribs from the bear's claws; but these soon got well under Le Messurier's treatment.

Many and many a spirit-stirring yarn have I heard related round the watch-fire by different hunters, of their perilous encounters with the much-dreaded grizzly; but one bear story is so like another that I shall desist from relating them, and only observe that, from my own experience, I should always give "Old Ephraim" a wide berth if I was not armed with a thoroughly serviceable breech-loading rifle throwing a heavy bullet.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

BUFFALO-HUNTING.

The home of the buffalo—The prairies of the Far West—Buffaloes and their habits—
Their annihilation simply a question of time—Suggestion for their preservation by
the establishment of a close season—Riding down buffalo—Mode of hunting
adopted by the Red Indians.

WHEN the early Spanish explorers, forming a part of De Soto's party, left the Atlantic seaboard and penetrated the great central prairies west of the Mississippi, they beheld for the first time countless multitudes of bison that covered the face of the plains; and they forthwith called the district the "Land of Wild Cows." Although naturalists have clearly demonstrated that these animals are of the genus bison, in the old days they were dubbed buffalo, and by this name they are still generally known.

The true home of the buffalo is the great prairie region between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains, the forests of Texas, and the Saskatchewan river; although the numerous bleached and whitened bones found in different districts seem to show that in former days herds of these noble beasts reached the shores both of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The periodical migrations of the buffalo in the present day may be said to extend from the Gulf of Mexico on the south to 62° north latitude, and from Kentucky and Indiana on the east to the dark gorges of the Rocky Mountains. At certain seasons of the year a mighty impulse seems at once to seize upon countless thousands of these animals, and they surge backwards and forwards—heading north or south—moving along as the waves of the ocean driven by the wind. ,

on a thoroughly broken Indian mustang, that neither feared buffalo nor grizzly, and I rode pretty close up before I saw that the Indian boy was lying on the ground apparently so badly hurt as to be insensible, whilst the faithful old dog was doing what he could to protect him by harassing his huge antagonist.

On my riding up to about twenty yards' distance "Old Ephraim" raised himself on his hind legs, and cocked his head knowingly on one side, as if he was going to make a rush: whilst he was in this attitude, his brawny chest being fully exposed, I gave him the contents of both barrels almost simultaneously, which rolled him over on his back, where he made several convulsive motions with his paws, as if he was catching flies; so, dismounting, I took my second gun from Pierre, and administered a *coup de grâce* behind the ear, when with a peculiarly melancholy whining moan he stretched out his great limbs and breathed his last. The game being ended, I turned round to look after the wounded boy, but to my surprise he was *non est*: he afterwards told me that, finding himself encircled by the paws of the grizzly, he had closed his eyes and feigned to be dead, and that when the brute dropped him upon being fired at by some of the people, he had not dared to move lest he should again get hold of him. My plucky dog, it appears, had twice endeavoured to pin "Old Ephraim" by the nose whilst the boy was in his clutches, and without doubt it was his persistent attacks that compelled the monster to release his hold. The youngster, thanks to the dog's aid and his own presence of mind, was not seriously injured, although he had received several nasty cuts in the back and ribs from the bear's claws; but these soon got well under Le Messurier's treatment.

Many and many a spirit-stirring yarn have I heard related round the watch-fire by different hunters, of their perilous encounters with the much-dreaded grizzly; but one bear story is so like another that I shall desist from relating them, and only observe that, from my own experience, I should always give "Old Ephraim" a wide berth if I was not armed with a thoroughly serviceable breech-loading rifle throwing a heavy bullet.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

BUFFALO-HUNTING.

The home of the buffalo—The prairies of the Far West—Buffaloes and their habits—
Their annihilation simply a question of time—Suggestion for their preservation by
the establishment of a close season—Riding down buffalo—Mode of hunting
adopted by the Red Indians.

WHEN the early Spanish explorers, forming a part of De Soto's party, left the Atlantic seaboard and penetrated the great central prairies west of the Mississippi, they beheld for the first time countless multitudes of bison that covered the face of the plains; and they forthwith called the district the "Land of Wild Cows." Although naturalists have clearly demonstrated that these animals are of the genus bison, in the old days they were dubbed buffalo, and by this name they are still generally known.

The true home of the buffalo is the great prairie region between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains, the forests of Texas, and the Saskatchewan river; although the numerous bleached and whitened bones found in different districts seem to show that in former days herds of these noble beasts reached the shores both of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The periodical migrations of the buffalo in the present day may be said to extend from the Gulf of Mexico on the south to 62° north latitude, and from Kentucky and Indiana on the east to the dark gorges of the Rocky Mountains. At certain seasons of the year a mighty impulse seems at once to seize upon countless thousands of these animals, and they surge backwards and forwards—heading north or south—moving along as the waves of the ocean driven by the wind.

"Reasoning at every step he treads,
Man yet mistakes his way ;
While meaner things, whom instinct leads,
Are rarely known to stray."

No physical obstacles stay them on their march : great rivers, with overhanging banks and shifting sands, are swum or forded ; deep chasms and earth-rent gulches are crossed ; but still the horde moves on, night and day, like a resistless tide. Hunters may thin their numbers, and prairie wolves cut off stragglers and such as from fatigue cannot keep up with the herd ; still the van keeps on moving in the one direction, and countless thousands of dusky monsters pass *en masse*, like a cloud, over the land.

The home of the buffalo—the much-vaunted region of the Far West—consists of great undulating wastes of coarse rank grass, occasionally interspersed with fertile verdant spots and patches of stunted forest, and watered by the tributaries of the Missouri, the Arkansas, the Grand Canadian, and the Red rivers. The illimitable extent of these eternal and monotonously dreary plains at first sight impresses one with an overwhelming sense of awe by their extreme vastness ; but the beauty of the scenery has been greatly overrated and exaggerated, whilst the difficulties of travelling are much enhanced by the scarcity of water. Pure and limpid streams of running water are rare and far between, and the hunter has often to drink from stagnant ponds or sluggish brooks, whose feebly trickling currents just serve to link together a series of half-brackish pools. Captain Butler, in his admirable work, "The Great Lone Land," thus describes prairie scenery :—

"In summer a land of sound, a land echoing with the voice of birds, the ripple of running waters, the mournful music of the waving pine-branch ; in winter a land of science, a land hushed to its inward depths by the weight of ice and thick-falling snow, by the intense rigour of a merciless cold,—its great rivers glimmering in the moonlight, wrapped in their shrouds of ice ; its still forests rising weird and spectral against the Aurora-lighted horizon ; its

notes of bird or brook hushed as if in death ; its nights so still that the moving streamers across the northern skies seem to carry to the ear a sense of sound, so motionless around, above, below, lies all other visible nature."

The unending vision of sky and grass, the dim, distant, and ever-shifting horizon ; the ridges that seem to be rolled one upon another in motionless torpor ; the effects of sunrise and sunset ; of night narrowing the vision to nothing, and morning only expanding it to a shapeless blank ; the sigh and sough of a breeze that seems an echo in unison with the solitude of which it is the sole voice ; and, above all, the sense of lonely, unending distance which comes to the *voyageur* when day after day has gone by, night has closed, and morning dawned upon his onward progress under the same ever-moving horizon of sky and grass. Wave upon wave of upland

"In airy undulations far away stretch,
As if the ocean in its greatest swell
Stood still, with all his rounded billows fixed
And motionless for ever."

Only two wild creatures have made this grassy desert their home. The wild red man, who has roamed these wastes for countless ages, back into that dark night which hangs for ever over all we know or ever shall know of early America, in "the time before the white man came;" and "surging millions of dusky bison." These animals, although but little taller than our Scotch cattle, are larger and deeper in the body ; the shoulders and fore quarters being very massive, whilst the hind quarters are comparatively light. All the varieties of the ox have only thirteen pairs of ribs, but the American bison has fifteen. The legs are short and slender, more resembling those of a deer than an ox, and at first sight give one the impression that they are over-weighted by the huge carcase above them. A large bull will weigh about 2,000 lbs., a fat cow about 1,200. A full-grown bull in the winter is covered with a thick long curly fur coat, whilst a mane of long brown shaggy hair envelopes his neck

and forehead, hanging down over the eyes and partially concealing the horns, so that the head appears to be of immense size, and, with the long black bearded chin, savage-looking muzzle, and black flashing eyes, gives him a very ferocious appearance. In reality, however, the bison is a timid animal, and takes to flight instantly on winding an enemy, which its acuteness of scent enables it to do from a great distance. It is only when a bull bison imagines himself unable to escape that he becomes desperate, and therefore to a certain extent dangerous from his great strength. When assembled in numbers they are less wary than at other times.

From the end of July to the beginning of September the bulls are engaged in settling family matters for the year to come, and at this period the bulls fight viciously for the favours of the cows. At this season the young bulls promote themselves by establishing a retiring board, and driving the old and useless patriarchs out of the herd. The leader of a herd is generally a splendid young bull who, having fought himself into that position, holds himself ready to maintain his rank by the same prowess that gained it. It may be needless to remark that this party has constantly a fight on hand. The principal food of the buffalo is a short fine grass that grows in tufts and only to the height of 4 or 5 inches. This is known by the name of buffalo-grass, and is very nutritious either for horses or cattle during the winter months. Buffalo are in the best condition for eating during the fall of the year. The Indians have a queer way of denoting the season. They have the "fat buffalo moon," the "thin buffalo moon," the "moon in which to find the buffalo with much hair," and the "moon when the hair is gone." Such is the red man's calendar.

The best hunting-grounds at the present time will be found between the Republican and Arkansas rivers, and between the sandy bluffs of Nebraska and the forks of the Missouri, where the buffalo are still tolerably plentiful at certain seasons. They are not now found in any numbers east of the Missouri river or south of Colorado, but in 1861, before the rush of miners came, they were

very abundant in South Park, where they are now exterminated. The habitat of this "monarch of the prairies" is contracting year by year, and its numbers are gradually diminishing. Like the Indian, the buffalo seems doomed to disappear before the overwhelming tide of advancing civilization, and before long, though not in our day, be known only in history. The nature and needs of both are diametrically opposed to the spirit of the white man's progress, and in the inevitable conflict—with them for bare subsistence, with us for supremacy—they cannot hold their own. Comparatively speaking it will be but a short time before the buffalo, like the great tusk elk, the mastodon, the dodo, and other extinct animals that have lived since the appearance of man upon the earth, will only be known to us by its bones. With this advantage, however, over the mastodon, its character, habits, and the territory over which it formerly ranged are all accurately described by the historian and naturalist, as well as the causes which are leading to its extinction.

In a paper lately read by Mr. W. T. Hays before the New York Lyceum of Natural History, it is stated that for many years the annual number of robes brought to market has been about 55,000; and when it is known that the skin of the cow only is preserved, and that only in the winter, when the fur is at its best, and that the cows are generally with calf at this season, and that the skin is not taken from more than one in ten of those animals that are killed, some estimate may be formed of the rapid destruction of the buffalo at the hand of man. Without taking into consideration the deaths from natural causes, accidents, &c., it is a low estimate to place the number of animals destroyed by man each year at not less than half a million.

The indiscriminate slaughter of cows at all seasons of the year has very materially reduced the number of these animals; and unless stringent laws are enacted, limiting the season for hunting, and doing away with the wanton destruction and wholesale annihilation that is now going on in the very breeding-grounds, within

a few years the race will become extinct, for they are rapidly vanishing from the land.

During the past year the destruction of buffalo was carried on with a rapidity almost unprecedented, although it has been a matter of regretful comment for years. One firm in Leavenworth received 30,000 hides per month, while two others in Kansas City received 15,000 each in the same time. This is at the rate of 2,000 slain per day. The immense piles or stacks of hides to be seen at all the stations along the line of the Kansas Pacific Railroad bear witness to the immense slaughter that must be continually taking place. The two largest buyers of buffalo-hides are Messrs. Durfrie, of Leavenworth, and Mr. Charles Bates, of St. Louis: it is said that 200,000 hides have passed through their hands in a single year. The prices paid by large dealers in New York, who buy by the hundred bales, is sixteen dollars fifty cents for first-class robes, twelve dollars fifty cents for second, and eight dollars fifty cents for ordinary skins.

It is to be hoped that Congress will take early action to prevent the extinction of the buffalo, by enacting public laws for their preservation in a reservation of lands set apart for the purpose. The Government of China has preserved several species of animals from extinction in the imperial parks and preserves; the Indian Government has done the same with the elephant; and the Czar has protected the European bison in the old forests of Lithuania. Surely the same protection might be afforded to the American bison by the enactment of laws preventing cows being killed during certain times, so as to allow for their increase.

"What shall we do?" said a young Sioux warrior to an American officer, on the Upper Missouri, some fifteen years ago. "What shall we do?—the buffalo is our only friend. When he goes all is over with the Dacotahs. I speak thus to you because like me you are a brave."

It was little wonder that he called the buffalo his only friend. Its skin gave him a house, its robe a blanket and a bed, its un-

dressed hide a boat, its short curved horn a powder-flask, its meat his daily food, its sinew a string for his bow, its leather a lariat for his horse, a saddle, bridle, rein, and bit ; its tail formed an ornament for his hut, its inner skin a book on which to sketch the brave deeds of his life, the medicine robe of his history. House, boat, food, bed, and covering,—every want from infancy to age ; and, after life itself has passed, wrapped in his buffalo-robe, the red man waits for the dawn.

Of the various modes of hunting buffalo adopted in the States, no true sportsman will hesitate to pronounce in favour of the only legitimate way, which is by running them down and killing them at close quarters by a rifle or revolver-shot. This is capital fun, for the animal, besides being swift enough to give a good horse enough to do to close with him, often wheels round with such quickness as to baffle both horse and rider for several turns before there is any certainty in bringing him down.

The hunter should always get as near a herd as he can without being observed, and then, having singled out his quarry, rush in and endeavour to detach it from the rest : this arrangement is easily effected when the hunter has a well-trained horse, which enjoys the chase as much as his rider. Give such a one the rein, and with ears set back and tail playing in the air, he will soon bring you alongside of your game, and, with a free steady stride, keep pace with the buffalo, careering along in a "lob-lolloping canter," within 10 feet of you. Until this time, your revolvers should be in your belt or holster in case of accidents ; then, with the thumb of the hand in which the pistol is held, you cock the weapon, the hammer being raised as the pistol is thrown up, and, aiming just behind the shoulder-blade, and about two-thirds down from the top of the hump, you deliver your fire, the report being the signal to your horse to wheel off and prepare for squalls. The rapid motion of the horse and the game is not favourable for any steady aim by means of sights ; so for this kind of work a rifle is not necessary, for a hunter who can use his revolver properly, whose hand and eye

are accustomed to act together, seldom shoots far from the point aimed at, even at a gallop. If your quarry does not fall in his tracks, but continues to forge ahead, repeat the process until you are sure of the meat. You can generally tell the probable effects of your shots, as if a buffalo shows blood from the nose and mouth it is a sure sign that he is hard hit with a mortal wound. If the shots are not well placed, a buffalo will carry off any amount of lead; but a single revolver-ball of good size, well placed, is sufficient to bring down the stoutest bull. The buffalo, when first started by the hunter, generally carries his somewhat short tail close down between his legs; but when wounded or tired he switches it about; and if intending to show fight or charge up, it goes straight on end.

If your horse is not well up to his work, and the buffalo is but slightly wounded and viciously inclined, the tables may be turned, and then comes the probable sequence of the hunter being hunted. The horse now becomes frightened, perhaps the rider feels that he has nerves, loses his head, and is not careful in picking his way, when, if the horse's foot gets in a prairie dog's burrow and falls, there is a fair chance that horse or man will come to grief from the pursuer's horns.

The different Indian tribes hunt the buffalo in various ways, but generally from horseback, with the lance or the bow, for they are but indifferent shots with the rifle. The bow used for this purpose is very short, being more convenient for handling on horseback, but it is made of great strength, so that the arrow may be sent with sufficient force to penetrate to the heart. The Grosventres, Black-foots, and Assinaboines often destroy hundreds of buffalo at a time, by driving them into large pens or parks formed by two converging fences that have a deep precipice at the end: in the frantic rush that takes place, the masses behind force the foremost ones over the brink. The flesh of the animals killed in this wholesale manner is converted into "pemmican," the Indian's ordinary food when on the war-path or when game is scarce.

In the Far West, near the fountain sources of the great rivers, Nature is still in all her wild grandeur. Here the forest is untouched, the prairie unbroken ; vast herds of buffalo and clusters of the red-man's wigwams are still to be seen ; but, as you leave the fountain sources, in an almost inaccessible country, the marks of civilization appear, and by degrees it is seen that the resources of the soil are being developed by the industry of man. The bosoms of the great rivers are teaming with the wealth of their shores ; and cities and villages are springing up on the margins of the mighty rivers, with a rapidity which in time will make them the most populous regions of the world. It is not alone in the forests and prairies, in the mountain-cliffs, verdant valleys, and cities that alternately skirt the banks of these mighty rivers, that the mind is interested. There are other features replete with interest to the scholar and antiquary. There are numerous *tumuli*, or mounds, some of which are nearly a mile in circumference at their base, and more than 100 feet in height. The rearing of these mounds must have cost years of labour. They are all of a conical shape, and the layers of earth can still easily be traced. There are ruins also of old fortifications, of acres in circumference, exhibiting all the skill of modern engineering ; and the remains of ancient cities regularly laid out, and apparently once largely inhabited by a civilized people. These mounds, fortifications, and cities existed far before the advent of the white man in these regions. They were built by some race of people even anterior to the Indians, for the skill of their construction, and the amount of labour and time required, preclude the most remote possibility of that race having reared them. Even tradition is almost silent concerning the people who built them, and a mist, which man cannot disperse, will for ever hang over these mysterious remains of a lost race.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SPORT IN THE "FAR WEST."

Our party in the Far West, and its equipment—We fraternize with the Blackfoot tribe—An Indian Camp—Scenery in the Rocky Mountains—Precautions against surprise—A forest ranger's life—News of buffalo—A periodical migration—The passage of the herd—Episodes of a buffalo-hunt—A goodly store of beef laid in.

EARLY in September I joined a party of four ex-Confederate officers in a hunting expedition on the prairies skirting the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains; intending, after a cruise in the Geyser region, near the source of the Yellowstone river—a tributary of the Upper Missouri—to make our way through Wyoming and Montana into the Saskatchewan, which is British territory.

Herbert Slade, Gerald Moore, Léon Villebois, Dr. Le Messurier, and myself had been boon companions during the hard struggle on the James river, where rest many of our pals, who

"Went down to their graves in bloody shrouds;"

and when the game was at last played out, and God helped the big battalions, we "made tracks" for other scenes. Colonel Slade was a Virginian, Moore hailed from the old country, or rather from the Emerald Isle, and Le Messurier and Villebois from Canada; but all were men of the right grit, and never did a party pull better together. Both the Canadians were experienced woodsmen, and, as they had hunted together over this district for two consecutive seasons, they not only knew the ground well, but had established friendly relations with several trappers and some of the Indian tribes. Five negro servants, who preferred remaining in our service to availing themselves of their newly-acquired freedom, and three

half-breed hunters, who were engaged at Fort Laramie, made our party just a dozen strong. We were all fairly mounted, and our baggage, which consisted of two small tents, ammunition, a fair stock of tea, coffee, sugar, flour, and condiments, with a few changes of under-clothes, was carried in saddle-bags on the spare horses.

We looked a somewhat heterogenous crew, clad in grey blouses or leathern hunting-shirts, leggings of dressed deer-skin, fancifully ornamented mocassins, and green wide-awake hats; but each man had also his rifle slung at his back or at his saddlebow, and a revolver, knife, and small axe in a broad waist-belt. Thus equipped and provided, we felt equal to any emergency, and were perfectly independent of external aid, either for maintenance or protection. When the weather was fine we bivouacked under trees or in the open; if rain fell, there was room in the tents to shelter all the party, although our followers rarely availed themselves of it, generally preferring to construct impromptu shanties.

We had killed *en route* five bears and plenty of deer, wild turkeys, and prairie chicken, but had seen no fresh sign of buffalo; when on a bright and sunny morning, as we were pursuing our way parallel to the Big-Horn river, one of the hunters pointed out a fresh Indian trail, and, following it up, we came to the summit of a rocky ledge, from whence we had a wide prospect of the surrounding country, which was diversified by waving lines of undulating hills and groves of trees. Deer slots were tolerably numerous, and, as several of the trees were freshly scored with the claws of bears, every one was on the look-out in the hope of starting game: suddenly two of the dogs gave tongue, and an Indian boy broke out of some cover close at hand, and was giving leg-bail, when he was brought up by Colonel Slade, who was scouting ahead, and at once recognized to be of the Blackfoot tribe. Our half-breeds, who understood his language, at his instigation struck off into some thick bush close at hand, and returned in a moment carrying a second Indian, who was apparently helpless. It appeared that these two, who were father and son, had been scouring the country

for some days in search of buffalo sign, when the elder one was badly kicked by his horse, having the left leg broken some inches above the ankle, and the other knee severely bruised. Seeing at a glance that he was in terrible pain and entirely disabled, two of our people carried him on a litter to the banks of a stream, where we intended to make a halt; and here Le Messurier set his leg, and made him comfortable. The Indian, finding himself unexpectedly well treated by white men, made great demonstrations of friendship, and informed us that a part of his tribe were encamped about two days' march from where we were, at a point on the Wind river which the buffalo always crossed on their way north. So it was arranged that the youngster should go on ahead and inform his people of his father's condition, and of our intention to visit their camp and join their hunt.

On the second day after, as we were travelling slowly along, our scouts ahead observed a couple of horsemen apparently riding in a parallel direction to us, and watching our party. They were evidently Indians, but the distance was too great for our people to distinguish whether they were Blackfoots, Sioux, or some other tribe.

Our march was always conducted with certain precautions, so as to be prepared for eventualities, the baggage being in the centre in charge of the negroes, whilst the rest of the people were told off as scouts, flanking parties, and rear-guards. So, giving the word for the ranks to close up and remain on the alert, Slade, Villebois, Pierre, and myself rode forward to reconnoitre.

On arrival at a small clearing, we saw a party of about twenty mounted Indians, armed with spears and rifles, approaching us. Upon our hailing them the band halted, whilst the boy, whose father was in our camp, and two chiefs came up to us and commenced shaking hands. They were evidently apprehensive as to the safety of their wounded companion, who was one of their principal chiefs, so we took them at once to the horse-litter on which he was: as soon as they had ocular demonstration of his

well-being, they were profuse in their expressions of gratitude, and forthwith invited us to their camp, that was pitched in a small valley through which a small tributary of the Wind river flowed.

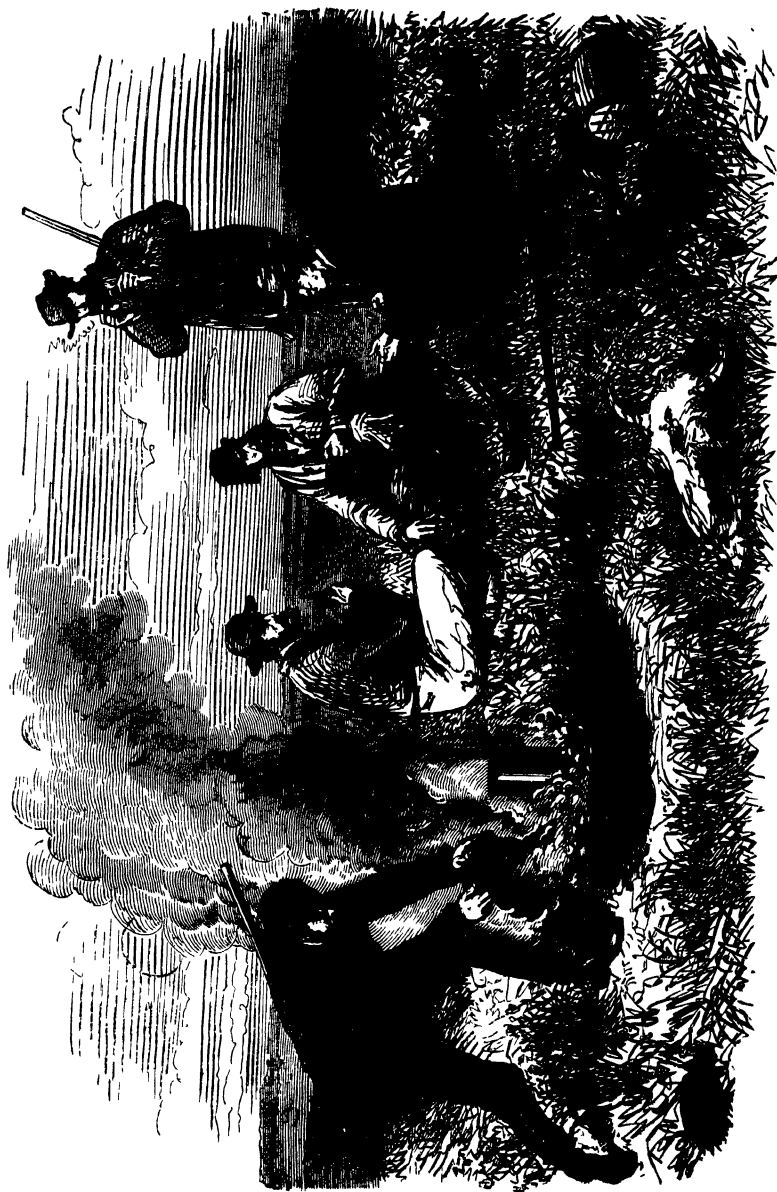
Here we found some twenty lodges, and the presence of numerous squaws and children was a sure sign that the party had started with pacific intentions, for the weaker sex never accompany their lords and masters when on the war-trail.

We were received with great demonstrations of friendship, and invited to encamp close to their wigwams; but this was scarcely deemed advisable, so we pitched our tents and erected shanties on a small upland about a quarter of a mile above stream, which afforded every convenience for wood and water. We also constructed a kind of rope pound, to prevent our horses straying at night.

As the district skirting the Rocky Mountains over which we intended to shoot was, at this season of the year, the resort of numerous parties of predatory Indian tribes, who established transient hunting camps near the best localities for intercepting the herds of buffalo in their periodical migrations, our expedition partook of a semi-military character: a vigilant watch was kept night and day, and one-third of our number was told off daily as a camp guard. Both ourselves and our followers were admirably mounted and armed with repeating rifles and revolvers, so that we should have proved awkward customers to tackle even for a large force of Indians.

Our camp presented a most picturesque appearance. In the background rose the glistening, snow-clad Freemont's Peak, which is between 13,000 and 14,000 feet in height, surrounded by a deep cerulean blue sky, variegated by fleecy clouds and the dark shadowy gorges of the Rocky Mountain chain; whilst the prairie and the river scenery were beautifully diversified by shining reaches bordered by willow copses, oak openings, clumps of cotton-wood, rich emerald green bottoms, and towering forest trees, the many-coloured foliage of which presented that weird-like yellow autumnal tint which in the

rays of the setting sun gives the landscape the glorious golden hue that Claude Lorraine so loved to depict. In the glen on the one side, under gigantic trees from which wild vines hung in countless festoons, was our little camp, with the bivouac fires, round which our people were lounging whilst the cooking was being conducted in true hunters' style, the venison and wild turkeys being stuck upon spits and broiled so as to retain all their natural juices, and maintain their peculiar flavour in such a manner as would have tickled the palate of an alderman. I never found venison or game birds so delicious as when cooked in this simple manner; and I profess to be a *gourmand* in my way, and quite up in Mansion House feeds, thanks to the profuse hospitality of the most worthy of City magnates, Sir Sidney Waterlow,—“may his shadow never grow less!” The Doctor and the half-breeds were busy stretching and dressing the skins of different animals that had been killed; Slade was going his usual rounds and inspecting the horses as naturally as if the trumpet for “stables” had just sounded; whilst Moore was superintending the *cuisine* arrangements and keeping the negroes up to their work—that of washing our flannel shirts and socks in the stream. Villebois, our interpreter *en chef*, was surrounded by a troop of Indian braves, who were evidently much amused and well pleased at what he had been telling them; for, in spite of their usual stoical bearing and taciturn manner, they were grimacing and talking amongst themselves in their strangely guttural language in the most animated and lively manner, and at times, throwing themselves on the ground, made the woods resound with peals of hoarse laughter. Villebois was a man after their own heart, who spoke their language fluently, as well as that of the Dacotahs and Sioux; and they shook off their habitual dignity and roared again at his versatile humour and whimsical stories, which were repeated in the wigwams to the squaws and spread through the encampment. He had lived for years amongst the Indians, both in the forests of Canada and the prairies round about the Rocky Mountains; and, having shown his mettle in many a sturdy combat both against men and beasts, he was



AN OPEN BIVOUAC IN THE FAR WEST.

looked up to as a famous brave, and respected by all who knew him.

The surrounding country abounded with game; so both our camp, as well as that of the Indians, was well provided with provisions, and there was continual feasting. I can conceive no existence so free from care and so fruitful of pleasing excitement as that of a well-equipped and experienced hunter who, with a few trusty associates, has the range of an almost unlimited extent of forest abounding with various kinds of game. A forest ranger, free from the conventionalities of society and the boring routine of every-day existence amongst dwellers in cities, acquires in youth that manly bearing, simplicity of character, and self-dependence, that have ever been conspicuous in the greatest men of all ages. As the absurd cut of fashionable clothes impedes every movement of our limbs, so do the stringent rules society has imposed upon itself clog and thwart the best impulses of our hearts; and never does a man who has once enjoyed this wild life feel so free, so truly at home, and so supremely happy, as when he is once again in the forest or on the prairie, completely beyond the pale of civilization. Our party was equipped and provided so as to be independent in every sense of the word, being competent not only to protect but also to maintain itself. Every man was prepared at all points for immediate action, either against man or beast, having a trusty rifle and revolvers, a good horse, and a sufficient quantity of ammunition. This gear is an ample stock-in-trade to a sportsman on these prairies.

The next morning, Pierre, one of our half-breeds, and two Indian scouts came in with the long-wished-for intelligence that they had come upon recent traces of buffalo, and that a small number had actually crossed the river during the night. This news caused great excitement in the camp, and put every one in high spirits. The Indians had sent out the greater part of their hunters in a different direction, where they expected to fall in with the vanguard of the herd; but some half-dozen of those remaining in camp joined our

party, and proved very useful as guides. We rode out a distance of about six miles, and emerged upon an undulating prairie, covered with somewhat parched and dry-looking herbage, where several fresh signs of buffalo were apparent.

The first view of a prairie is an impressive sight not to be forgotten: it may be said to resemble a vast undulating sea of green verdure, extending on all sides to the horizon, and only broken at rare intervals by a fringe of trees and low bush, forming the margin to some creek or watercourse. But there is something inexpressibly monotonous in riding for day after day over such an immense extent of landscape without meeting with a sign of human life; and when the first novelty of the scene has worn off, one begins to get very tired of the intense loneliness and dreary solitude of prairie travelling. In this instance, however, the exciting anticipations of buffalo-hunting kept the whole party on the *qui vive*.

The sun had got high above the horizon, and we were thinking of seeking the shade of some friendly cover, when our scouts, who from early morning had taken post on elevated knolls from whence they could survey a vast expanse of prairie, made signs that something was moving, and directed our attention towards the spot by pointing their lances in the direction. At first we could see nothing from the low ground; but shortly afterwards a pack of seven black wolves crossed the prairie, and catching sight of us, made for some low bush, where they deliberately lay down. "They are after the same game," said Villebois, "and are about to *cache*, and form an ambuscade to catch stragglers;" and we were engaged in watching their movements, when a slight cloud of dust became apparent on the distant horizon, which might have been raised by a troop of Indians or the van of a herd of buffalo.

Having taken up a hole or two in the girths and looked to our arms, so as to be prepared for whichever might turn up, we mounted; and shortly afterwards one of the sharp-eyed half-breeds, whose powers of visions were as strongly developed as a hawk's, galloped to a slight eminence, and in a few moments returned with the in-

formation that a vast herd of buffalo were advancing over the plain. We drew up and halted in a hollow until the return of our scouts, who had pushed ahead to mark the direction taken by the herd and then, after a short council of war, it was decided to divide our force into two bodies, each of which should hang on the flanks and attack as the herd passed. Slade, Le Messurier, and four of the best mounted of our party made a dash ahead, so as to take post behind a ridge not far from where the wolves had formed an ambush, which, it was supposed, the herd would skirt, from the direction their leaders were heading; whilst Villebois, Pierre, two Indians, and myself remained *perdu* in a little copse of willow-bush that fringed a shallow gulch. The herd were advancing rapidly, and soon an indiscriminate drove of cows and calves appeared, having a flanking party of a few old bulls.

"Let the van forge ahead before we show ourselves," whispered Villebois, "and then for a burst."

I forgot to mention that my armament consisted of a Westley Richards 12-bore breech-loading rifle with short barrels, expressly for use on horseback, and a brace of Adams's large-bore army revolvers, which I generally loaded with a flat-headed plug and as much powder as I could get in the chamber. Breech-loading revolvers had not then been brought to the perfection they now are, and re-loading was then more difficult; but the latest improved army pistol, invented and patented by Adams, the contractor to the Government, is the *ne plus ultra* of weapons, whether against man or beast, as it can be re-loaded whilst at a gallop, and is so simple and strong that it will stand any hard usage without getting out of order. For buffalo-running it is the most suitable arm I know of.

But I am digressing. It was a grand sight to see the approach of the close-ranked phalanx, and to mark its noble array as the herd came careering past, with their long, black, shaggy manes flowing like pennons in the wind, whilst the clatter of such a multitude of hoofs made a peculiar rushing sound, such as I can only compare



RIDING DOWN A BUFFALO

to the cyclone through the forest after a long-continued drought, when every branch and tree seem to emit a rending noise, the whole forming an almost deafening chorus.

Whilst I was looking on in perfect astonishment as the immense horde swept past, Villebois, to whom the sound was no novelty, roused me from my contemplative mood to a sense of what was expected of me by shouting above the clattering roar of thousands of hoofs against the hard prairie, "Wake up, old man! Meat is wanted, so choose the juiciest-looking cows." I immediately gave my impatient nag the rein, and, like a shot, he was off, for he was used to the sport and gloried in the fun. The ground was good going, and less than ten minutes sufficed to bring me up with the herd, who were travelling at a good hand-gallop. One hairy monster appeared to tower above all his kin, and, disregarding Villebois' injunctions, I resolved to devote my attention entirely to him, and endeavoured, in vain, to force my horse between some cows, so as to get at him or separate him from the herd.

My labours were all in vain for a time, until I bethought me of my revolvers, for I was reserving my rifle for the bull. However, to clear my way up to him, I fired at four cows one after another, aiming just behind the fore-arm, but considerably higher up: to my surprise, two dropped in their tracks, and the two others lagged behind, leaving me a clear opening, through which I forced my horse, and in the twinkling of an eye I was riding alongside of the mighty bull, whose immense weight of head caused him to labour heavily, whilst his eyes flashed in a most diabolical manner, and his tongue hung half out of his open mouth. As I closed upon him he attempted to sheer off; but on that side the herd were closely packed, so, with tail erect, he began flinging his head about and presenting the points of his short black horns in my direction, as if he meditated a charge. Before he could make up his mind, although my horse was very much harassed by a pack of frantic cows, I managed to throw up my rifle and let drive a right-and-left just behind the shoulder, which brought him down. So engrossed was



THE DYING MONARCH OF THE PRAIRIE.

I at his fall, that I did not take proper care of my horse ; for, as he swerved off after firing, we were cannoned by another brace of mad cows and nearly came to grief. Drawing my second revolver, I made after my assailants, and separating them from the herd, brought them both to their knees, though not before I had expended all the loaded chambers of my revolvers, for my horse's nerves were somewhat shaken in our *mille* with the herd, and he became too unsteady to make accurate shooting. The herd, which had divided into two columns, had now moved onward, except a few stragglers who formed the rear-guard ; and, having re-loaded my rifle and revolvers, I returned to the fallen patriarch, who, to my surprise, got upon his legs as I approached, and lowered his head as if he intended to charge ; but he was too far gone, and fell. Whilst he was struggling to get on his legs again, I dismounted and put him out of pain with a shot in the centre of the chest. One of the other cows was still showing signs of life, and I was obliged to fire two more shots at her before I could put her out of her agony. The game was now over. I had killed a bull for my own gratification, and five cows and a good-sized calf for camp use and the manufacture of pemmican. My companions had not been idle : each had killed his four or five cows, whilst Villebois had dropped seven to his own rifle as well as a white wolf. Moore had got a severe shaking from a nasty spill ; his horse, whilst in pursuit of a buffalo, having put one of his feet in a prairie dog's burrow and fallen heavily with his rider. No bones were, however, broken, and a few days' rest set him all right again.

This appears to me the chief danger of buffalo-hunting ; for a well-armed man has but little danger to fear from the animal itself if he only exercises common precaution. I consider it very tame sport, and felt somewhat disgusted with myself at having taken any part in the shooting of cows ; but the herds only pass twice in the year, and the Indian tribe near whom we were encamped had travelled some hundreds of miles in a southerly direction to kill the meat and make pemmican for winter consumption.

On our return to camp there was great rejoicing at our success; but I lost caste amongst the Indians for having wasted my ammunition upon an old bull. At night there was great feasting and revelry, and at our evening meal buffalo tongues and marrow-bones were the sensational dishes of every mess.

When night set in, the braves who returned empty-handed gave us a "buffalo dance;" but it was a stupid and uninteresting performance, and I was glad when it was over and our camp was cleared of redskins, which arrangement I saw carried out before I turned in, as their little game is always "plunder."



BUFFALO.

CHAPTER XXX.

SPORT IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

The "Noble Savage" or the "Red Cuss"—The Indian's true character—The prairie trapper—Indian cruelty—Horse-stealers—A buffalo-hunt changes into an Indian skirmish—The redskins disappear—The Gallatin valley—A vale of beauty—Grand sport—Bighorns and mountain goats—Fishing—A puma—Return to headquarters.

THE noble savage or the Red Indian as portrayed by Fenimore Cooper was a very interesting kind of being, but unfortunately he never existed save and except in a sensational novel, and those who are best acquainted with the character, habits of real life, and social condition of existing Indian tribes, are quite satisfied that it is by a very wise dispensation of Providence that they are gradually disappearing from off the face of the earth before the advancing strides of civilization. Washington Irving, who, from having lived amongst the red men, had every opportunity of judging their true character, has not a good word to say of them. He says:—"As far as I can judge, the Indian of poetical fiction is like the shepherd of pastoral romance—a mere personification of imaginary attributes. In fact, the Indians that I have had an opportunity of seeing in real life are quite different from those described in poetry." Cruelty, treachery, and an innate love of thieving are the distinguishing characteristics of the red men of the present day; and, to give them their due, they are the most cunning and accomplished cattle-lifters on the face of the earth. Their blood-thirsty nature, habitual laziness—except when engaged in some predatory expedition—and intemperate habits will ever be a bar to their being admitted within the pale of civilization; consequently



CHEYENNE INDIANS.

their eventual extermination is only a question of time. Hunting and smoking appear to be the only occupations of the men ; for, naturally indolent and slothful—although they will go through great privation and fatigue when hunting or on the war-path—they will not work, and look upon labour as a disgrace. Their women do all the drudgery, cultivate maize and tobacco, and carry all the burdens and portable property from place to place. Neither the men nor the women are good-looking, for although they have all piercing black eyes, they generally incline downwards towards the nose, which is broad and flat. They have thick lips, high cheek-bones, narrow foreheads, and shaggy straight black hair ; and, to make themselves more hideous, if possible, their faces are usually smeared over with some bright-coloured pigment in stripes or patches. They are besides disgustingly dirty, and generally well stocked with loathsome vermin.

The various predatory tribes that rove over the prairies round the Rocky Mountains, and far south in Colorado and Arizona, have no fixed residence, but wander at will over the territory, making raids upon the borders of civilization—killing men, women, and children indiscriminately—stealing horses, mules, and cattle—destroying villages, haciendas, and ranches, and then retreating into the mountain fastnesses, where they can defy pursuit. In character they resemble the prairie wolf, being sneaking, cowardly, and revengeful, with scarcely a redeeming quality. Such is their general character, although now and again a chief is to be met with who has some slight notion of personal honour, inasmuch as he will not allow a stranger who is an inviter's guest to be molested whilst under his protection, although he would not hesitate to steal his cattle or take his scalp as soon as he had got clear of his village. From a residence of some weeks amongst a hunting party of the Blackfoot tribe, I gathered a good deal of information as to their social life, which may be tersely described in the words of an old traveller who wrote in the fifteenth century :—"Manners have they none, and their habits are beastly." The red man's religion is a strange one :

he believes in good and evil spirits, and performs certain rites to keep straight with the Evil One, whilst he scarcely troubles himself about "Manitou," the Great Spirit, who, he believes, is too good to do him harm. His idea of heaven appears to be quite as rational as that of some sects of Christians—who imagine their future lies amongst the clouds, where, with awkward-looking wings, long hair, white flowing drapery, and palm-branches in their hands, their chief occupation will be chorus singing—and somewhat less sensual than that of the followers of Islam, who believe that, after having passed over the bottomless pit—the abode of Shitan—by a bridge narrow as the sharp edge of a sword, they will enter the blessed Land of Houris, where seventy green-'kerchiefed virgins will continually wait on them and minister to their comfort.

The red man, according to his lights, conceives heaven to be a vast ever-green forest, an illimitable hunting-ground, where there is a never-decreasing stock of game and perpetual fine weather, and where he, his favourite horse and squaws, will never be exposed to the vicissitudes of hunger, thirst, and cold. That he may make his appearance in these regions like a chief and a brave in fitting state, his favourite mustang, his best dress, wampum belt, arms, scalps, and pipe are buried with him. Each and every sect seem to have their own peculiar ideas of "that bourne from which no traveller returns;" and perhaps those are the happiest and the most fearless of death who believe the future to be only an eternal rest after the toilsome and anxious journey through life is ended; a creed that comes naturally to all who are not schooled in certain grooves, and who think for themselves; and the only one that appears to be in entire accordance with the never-changing laws and teachings of Nature. Such is the faith of most of the hunters, trappers, and backwoods-men whom I have fallen in with in the Far West; and as a rule these are men of indomitable bravery, who, in the pursuit of their dangerous calling, carry their lives in their hands, and constantly owe their escape from their Indian enemies to their cool intrepidity, promptitude of action, and skill with the rifle. Fine, tall, sinewy,

athletic fellows these solitary hunters are ; and, although somewhat taciturn and reticent to a stranger, they are boon companions when their confidence is gained, and men of sterling metal in a fray. Their usual costume is a fringed leather hunting-shirt, buckskin breeches, leggings, and mocassins ; and their armament is a heavy single small-bore rifle, a brace of revolvers, and a bowie-knife. Their equipment consists of a saddle-horse, and two or three mules to carry their packs, which contain reserve ammunition, a few pounds of tobacco, a certain number of traps, and their peltries. Such men are the pioneers of civilization in the Far West : from the greater part of their lives being spent in solitude, with no other companion but Nature herself, their powers of observation get to be wonderfully developed ; being constantly exposed to dangers of all sorts, they become callous to them ; and as they look upon the red man as their natural enemies, they are always as ready to take life as they are to expose their own. As their calling often obliges them to remain in the neighbourhood of Indian tribes, their lives constantly depend upon incessant vigilance ; and they can detect the slightest sign that betrays the presence of their wily foes. Many a spirit-stirring tale have I heard from these simple-minded men, of their hair-breadth escapes and adventures, as we sat and smoked round the watch-fire ; and from all that I can gather, for every white hunter who has "gone under," a dozen of the redskins' scalps dangle round the trappers' rendezvous. The Indian looks upon the white man as an intruder on his domain, and never neglects an opportunity of doing him an injury. Should he be taken prisoner by a hostile tribe, he is put to death by the most horrible tortures : even of late years instances have been known of hunters having been skinned alive, or of their entrails being drawn out by the women ; so that it is no wonder that in retaliation the red man is hunted down and "wiped out" whenever the white man comes across him. Thus war is continually waged between the races on the frontiers of civilization, and travelling in these regions is dangerous unless the party is sufficiently strong to hold its own against all comers.



INDIAN CRUELTY.

The Wyoming and Montana prairies, extending from the Dakota Territory, on the right bank of the Missouri river, to the base of the Rocky Mountains, is the great haunt of the buffalo and various other kinds of game. These great grassy plains are the hunting-grounds of all the surrounding Indian tribes, who are constantly at feud and warring with each other, so that none of them have any permanent residence in this territory; although at certain seasons of the year the Grosventres, Osages, Mandans, Unkapas, Sioux, Pawnees, Cheyennes, Arrapahocs, Blackfoots, and Comanches repair there in numerous bodies to hunt the buffalo, and manufacture pemmican for winter consumption.

In these expeditions the hunters are all prepared for offensive and defensive action, and should the war parties of adverse tribes meet, sanguinary conflicts ensue, in which no quarter is given. Sportsmen wishing to hunt over this debatable ground should go in sufficiently strong numbers to be able to hold their own in case of attack; and a vigilant watch should be kept over the horses and cattle night and day, as predatory bands of Indians will hang about a camp for days together, seeking for a favourable opportunity to carry off the horses. Their usual mode is for two or three of their number to creep unseen amongst the horses at night, and unfasten their hobbles and picket-pins as they are grazing, then quietly to mount, and start off suddenly at full speed, when the chances are that the whole troop will follow, as nothing is so contagious amongst horses as a night panic; and it very often happens that one or two horses breaking away in this manner will alarm the whole number, and cause them to set off and follow their leaders at full gallop. The Indians are the most adroit thieves, and manage to spirit off horses and cattle before the very eyes of their owners, in the most unaccountable manner, often getting out of rifle range before they are detected, when, urging their prizes into a gallop, they are soon out of reach of pursuit. The following account will give a pretty fair idea of the danger of hunting in the prairies skirting the Rocky Mountains, a few years ago.

We had halted for three days in the valley of the Sweetwater river, on account of the fine grass, which furnished good food for our animals, when, in the course of the afternoon, two waggons and a party of miners came up, and encamped near us. My friends, Villebois and the Doctor, had met them at Laramie, and invited them to our camp, as we had killed a good deal of game, and had plenty of fresh meat. The party consisted of eleven men, four women, and several children, and they were on the way to Fort Boise, on the Snake river, by the South Pass, which lies at the head of the Sweet-Water river. As they only had some fifteen days' stock of provisions, a long distance to go, and many mouths to feed, we determined to have a grand hunt, so as to obtain a good quantity of buffalo meat for them, none of the men having much experience in woodcraft.

The next day, Colonel Slade, Moore, Le Messurier, Villebois, and I, accompanied by our half-breeds, a score of Blackfoots, and a couple of Irish miners, who drove the waggons, which we took with us to bring back the game, started at dawn, after having provided for the safety of the camp, and, taking a northerly direction, made for the tributaries of the Big-Horn river, where it was reported that buffalo were plentiful. Towards noon we came to a grove of cotton-wood, where we found signs of a late Indian encampment, as discarded poles of lodges and fresh skulls of deer and buffalo were lying about. Villebois, who was well versed in "Indian sign," and the half-breeds, after a short examination of the ground, at once pronounced that it was the deserted camp of a large party of Sioux, who were evidently on the war-path, as there were no traces of women having accompanied the party. This opinion was confirmed by our Indian scouts, who estimated their number at over a hundred; so, after a careful scrutiny of the trail, which was not above two days old, it was resolved to reconnoitre the country round about before commencing to hunt, lest the report of our rifles should draw down upon us a large force, who might commence an attack whilst our party was scattered about looking after

game. After following up their trail some distance, we came to the banks of a small stream, where tracks of numerous horses showed that a large force of mounted Sioux had crossed on their way to the westward, in the direction of the north fork of the Platte river, which stream flows through their country. Thinking that they had turned their faces homeward, and that we were in no danger of being molested, we resumed our northerly course, and, striking the Big-Horn river, halted near a willow grove, as a fine herd of pronghorns and several outlying bands of buffalo had been seen by the scouts. After about an hour's ride, we saw a troop of some thirty or forty buffalo slowly defiling along the slope of a hill about half a mile to our right; and, halting our party a few moments until they began to descend the other side, so that our approach would be concealed by the crest of the undulation, we divided into two parties to outflank them on both sides, and gave chase.

After a burst of a few minutes we got to the top of the rise, and were within four hundred yards' distance of the herd before our presence was discovered; then each hunter, selecting his quarry, gave chase, and in a few minutes we gained on them sufficiently to open fire.

The prairie was hard, and very good riding ground, and my nag being in very fair condition, I was enabled to forge ahead and outflank them. Seeing the leader, a young bull, was trying to cross my course, I pulled up and gave him a shot behind the shoulder, which brought him to the ground for a moment; but the bullet, although it had broken the upper part of the fore-arm, had not struck a vital part, and he immediately got up on his three legs and tried to scramble along. He was evidently hard hit, and kept falling forward; and I was riding up to give him his *quietus*, when another young bull tore frantically between us, and to my intense surprise sheered up alongside his wounded mate, as if endeavouring to support him. I was much struck with this display of fraternal affection, and, although I followed pretty closely after, forbore firing until the second buffalo, with a snort of rage, lowered his



A BUFFALO SUPPORTING HIS WOUNDED MATE.

head, and, with tail on end and eyes flashing, charged my horse, which wheeled round short, and in two or three bounds was out of reach of his ferocious-looking adversary. Seeing the tables were likely to be turned, I gave him the contents of my second barrel, and the heavy bullet, entering the neck just behind the jawl, penetrated the brain, and he fell in a heap, stone dead. I now rode up to the bull I had first wounded, and put him out of his misery with a single shot behind the ear, from one of Adams's large-bore revolvers, which is by far the handiest weapon for buffalo-running, as it is not so cumbrous as the rifle when mounted, and is very effective from the heavy projectile and large charge of powder it carries.

Having cut off the tails of the dead bulls and attached them to my saddle, I slung my rifle on my back, and gave chase to three cows that were labouring heavily up a low hill covered with a scanty growth of absinthe-shrubs.

After a hard chase all three succumbed to repeated discharges from my revolvers. As each dropped I cut off the tails, so as to prevent disputes as to the meat, and was so much engaged with my own affairs that I did not pay much attention to the doings of the rest, when all at once ping! ping! ping! went three bullets in my direction, although considerably overhead; and on looking round I saw a group of Indians advancing in my direction. My horse saw them too, and from the excitement of the chase became so skittish that I could hardly get into the saddle; but I scrambled up and made my way at a hand-gallop to the rest, who had seen the hostile Indians before I did, and were forming up to show a bold front to a large troop that appeared to be endeavouring to cut off our retreat to the waggons. No time was to be lost. I hastily re-loaded both rifle and revolvers, and then we divided our little force and arranged that Villebois, Slade, Moore, and myself, with Pierre and the three half-breeds, who were all well mounted and armed with rifles and revolvers, should act as skirmishers, whilst Dr. Le Messurier and the Blackfoot scouts should act as a reserve

and slowly retreat upon the waggons, which were about a mile in the rear.

The hostile Indians, who proved to be a second war party of Sioux, Rapahocs, and Suchangu Dacotahs—their allies—were divided into three bands, only one of which was within long rifle range, and these had halted to allow those behind to close up. We therefore determined to make a vigorous attack on the nearest band before their force was augmented, and having arranged that some of the Blackfoot scouts—who as a rule are bad shots—were to be in readiness to hold our horses, in the face of a desultory but ineffective fire that was opened upon us and sundry flights of arrows, we rode up to within five hundred yards, and, dismounting, knelt down and took several steady pot-shots at the group, just as they were preparing to charge down upon us. At this range our aim was pretty accurate, and several of our antagonists were put *hors de combat*; but without waiting to see the result of our doings, we re-mounted and beat a hasty retreat upon the waggons, which we found already on the move, as the party left in charge, hearing the report of our firearms, had got the mules harnessed ready to carry in the game. The Sioux were now yelling like fiends all round us, but they took good care not to come within range of our rifles, and we cared but little for their war-whoops.

We now held a council of war, and it was determined that as we had still three hours' daylight, we should make the best of our way back to a patch of thick cover about four miles distant, near a cañon, at the bottom of which was a fine stream of water, and there encamp for the night. Dividing our little force into an advance-guard, flanking parties, and rear-guard, with the waggons in the centre, we boldly pushed forward, and Slade, Villebois, Moore, Le Messurier, and I, who were all armed with breech-loading rifles and revolvers, rode in the van, and recommenced the game by opening fire at about six hundred yards distance, at which range our weapons killed and wounded a few men and horses, whilst their arms were quite ineffective. Seeing that they were unable to cope with us as

long as daylight lasted, from the superiority of our arms, they retired as we advanced ; and we took the opportunity of cutting away some of the meat from the three cows I had killed, which we passed *en route* for the cover, for our stock of provisions was not large in case we should be besieged for any length of time by superior numbers.

The Sioux, who had lost several of their number without inflicting any harm on our party, drew up in two bodies on our flanks and rear, each troop appearing to number over a hundred horsemen. We were seven whites, four half-breeds, and about a score of Black-foot scouts, but our superior armament put us upon pretty equal terms.

As we approached the cover, the ground became undulated, and intersected by natural ridges and depressions ; and Villebois, who was up to every move in Indian warfare, proposed that we should have one more brush with the enemy whilst the daylight lasted ; so on passing the next ridge, Slade, Villebois, and myself, dismounting, gave our horses in charge of the half-breeds, and hid ourselves amongst a small patch of low shrubs. The Sioux, not expecting this manœuvre from so small a force as ours appeared to be, came carelessly on, only watching the party round the waggons. Presently we saw a detached troop of about a score approaching our ambuscade, each second bringing them more distinctly into view. When they were well within range, Slade gave a low whistle, the signal to fire, and three double shots were delivered, which cleared a great gap in their number, and caused the remainder to execute a speedy retreat ; but our breech-loaders were soon re-loaded, and we dropped two or three more before they got out of range.

After they had withdrawn to some distance, Villebois, noticing that two of the Sioux seemed to be moving, sent out Pierre and some of the scouts to fetch them in at the same time giving him strict injunctions not to allow the dead to be scalped. When the Sioux saw their two dead and two wounded carried towards our waggons, they fairly yelled with rage, naturally supposing that the



A SKIRMISH WITH INDIANS.

last indignity had been offered to them; but we had no such intentions, and leaving the dead as we found them, Le Messurier bound up the wounds of the other two, both of whom were very badly hit, as one was shot through the groin, and the other had both sides of his lower jaw carried away, and laid them down, so that their friends could carry them away. This done, we again moved on, and reached the cover unmolested, where we made extensive preparations, in case the Sioux should attempt a night attack. Several large poplars were cut down so as to form an *abattis*, and the horses and mules were all tethered together round the waggons, so as to prevent a stampede. There was no danger of our being attacked in rear, as the banks of the cañon were almost scarped and quite 40 feet in depth. We posted a line of sentries in the front, and made our cooking fires in a hollow, so that their light would give the enemy no advantage; and having taken every precaution, half of us remained on the watch whilst the others slept, and taking turn and turn about, we passed a somewhat anxious night. The next morning at daylight our scouts reported that no hostile Indians were in sight, and it was evident that they had gone some time, as two or three troops of prong-horn antelope were quietly grazing on the ground over which we had skirmished the evening before. Sending some of our scouts to follow up the trail of the Sioux, so as to make sure that none were lurking in our vicinity, we made a "surround," and managed to bag nine fine antelope.

After having ascertained that our antagonists had "vamosed," we retraced our steps and recovered some of the buffalo meat that had been shot by our people the day before; and having killed three other cows which had been previously wounded, either by some of our own party or the Sioux, and loaded our waggons with meat, we once more turned our horses' heads towards the Sweet-Water valley, arriving at our camp as the sun was going down, when we forgot our troubles in the enjoyment of a luxurious supper, in which buffalo tongue, marrow-bones, and choice morsels of broiled venison were conspicuous.

After several days' somewhat monotonous marching,—for we dared not straggle much to hunt, on account of the number of hostile Indian marauding parties that were hanging about our flanks and rear, ready to take advantage of any unguarded moment, and attack our camp or carry off our horses,—we again entered the mountains by a gap in the Wind river range that led into the Gallatin valley. Here we struck the Gallatin river about sixty miles south of its junction with the Madison river and the Jefferson Fork, all of which are tributaries to, and form the head-waters of, the Missouri. These streams take their rise in basins formed by successive mountain ranges, and flow in a northerly direction through separate gorges of cañons, which concentrate at the head of a broad valley, having high lateral mountains, indented with beautifully wooded ravines.

The surrounding scenery was certainly very grand, although scarcely to be compared with the Alps, much less the Himalayas. To the southward rose the Gallatin and Madison Peaks, the Three Tetons, and Fremont's Peak, whose lofty snow-capped summits had formed our principal landmarks for the last two hundred miles of our route northward; whilst to the northward the Rocky Mountains rose in successive ranges, each overtopping the preceding one until they culminated in the massive cloud-capped, snow-crowned chain, the dividing ridge between the Atlantic and Pacific watersheds.

It must not be supposed that the Rocky Mountains consist of a single lofty but narrow range; on the contrary, they are a succession of ranges or separate chains, which run more or less parallel to each other, and form a continuous mountain system, in some places nearly two hundred miles wide; not including numerous offshoots and outlying spurs, such as the Big-Horn range, and the Wolf Mountains in Wyoming and Montana. The region comprised within these ranges is so varied in its characteristics as to afford a sublime field for the landscape painter, although its luxuriant parks, lovely winding valleys, wild cañons, and desolate ravines, walled in

by cliffs and snowy peaks that pierce the clouds and cast all ki of fantastic shadows below, almost defy the pencil of the artist.

Our route along the Gallatin valley was simply too beautiful for description. We passed between high serrated mountain ranges, which in the early morning were enveloped with fleecy white clouds along the summit, whilst every gorge and chasm on their rugged sides was distinctly discernible ; and castellated rocks of white and red sandstone, and cliffs of basaltic formation, half hidden by groves of pines, reminded one of the ruined castles one often falls in with in the valleys of Germany and Italy. In some places cliffs of massive rock rose precipitously, pines and dark cedars clothing the overhanging ledges where they could find a foothold and sufficient nutriment, the cliffs appearing bare and rugged where the scarps were too steep for vegetation to grow.

The valley being well watered with numerous murmuring streams, fringed with cotton-wood and willows, was filled with the richest pasturages, alternating with glades of short delicate buffalo-grass, with its clusters of pink flowers and piñon groves ; these again generally gave place to thickets of locust and scrub oak as we neared the lateral hills, while on the more elevated slopes were clusters of noble pines and stately cedars, variegated with groups of good-sized oaks. At elevations where the tree forest ceases, and the only vegetation consists of stunted shrubs and hardy ferns, the explorer will find thousands of wild flowers, some of them blossoming even in the snow. Here spring comes late in June, and the brief August summer clothes the heights with odoriferous grasses and Alpine primroses, one of the richest and rarest of wild flowers ; but I saw none of the delicate, sweet-scented *edelweis*, which is, I believe, peculiar to the higher elevations of the Alps.

Between the pine belt and the perpetual snow are to be found troops of bighorns (*Ovis montana*) and white mountain goats (*Capra Americana*), besides whistlers or mountain badgers, two kinds of marmots, numerous mottled grouse and ptarmigan, and occasionally grizzly and cinnamon bears and moose, which are some-

times driven up to the higher altitudes by the pest of flies. The valley of the Gallatin was a favourite resort of buffalo, and we constantly came across herds of cabree or prong-horned antelope, which latter had evidently not been much disturbed, as they were by no means wild, and with a little tact we could generally manage to get within range. During the months of October and November the weather is beautifully mild and favourable for hunting expeditions, as the forest is in good condition for examining the tracks of animals, as well as for stealthily approaching them by gliding noiselessly in mocassins from tree to tree. At this season of the year, when sombre grey is the prevailing colour of the woods, it takes a practised eye to discern deer amongst the trunks of trees which they nearly resemble in colour. Tracking deer at this time, too, requires considerable experience, for although the slots may be plain enough in the soft damp leaves, it is not always easy to determine whether they are fresh or a day or two old.

Along this romantic valley, in the midst of thick pine woods, turbulent mountain streams dash over rocky beds and down steep descents into the Gallatin river, forming numerous waterfalls, or "*ha-has*," as the Indians call them; while here and there, in depressions evidently caused by volcanic agency, were pretty miniature lakes and tarns, connected one with another by little purling brooks, which, shut in with woods and buttressed with walls of rock, tumble over great bluffs into the low land at their own wild will. The primeval forests by which they are surrounded have an inexpressible fascination for the explorer of their solemn and mysterious domains. At times, so profound is the ghost-like silence which reigns in these wilds, that even the twitter of the squirrel or the hollow tapping of the woodpecker is positively a relief, and dispels gloomy and depressing thoughts. Here strange sights constantly meet the eye, and strange sounds fall upon the ear; but of all the weird-like, hollow cries that come vibrating over the water, like the scream of a gnome, that of the loon, or the great northern diver, is the most startling and demon-like, although it is one that accords

well with the wild associations of a primitive American forest. Again, in some places where the tangled vines interlace the tree-tops, innumerable birds infest the woods, filling the air with interminable chatter, whilst black, red, or grey squirrels are seen chasing each other and gambolling on the branches overhead.

The valleys of the Gallatin, the Madison river, and the Jefferson Fork being exclusively the hunting-grounds of the Blackfoot tribes, with whom we were on the most friendly relations, we had no longer any cause to apprehend attack from hostile Indians, and therefore resolved to halt for some days in this district, which abounded with game, so as to obtain a sufficient supply of dried flesh and pemmican to see us well on our way, in case of our finding game scarce farther on. Selecting a small cliff-like promontory that overhung a bend in the river as a defensible position in case of accidents, with the aid of some half a dozen of our Blackfoot guides, our people, under Villebois' direction, in the course of a couple of days constructed three comfortable log shanties, roofed with birch-bark, which afforded ample accommodation for our party, as well as a screened shed for the best of our cattle. This was a necessary precaution, as in these mountains sudden showers are frequent, coming up in a few moments and enveloping the valleys in gloom and obscurity, which are again suddenly dissipated by a burst of sunshine.

Here, beside this rippling stream, we established a home such as the true hunter's heart yearns for, and, with lofty mountains and dense forest all around, we lived for some weeks in the highest physical and social enjoyment. Venison, buffalo meat, bighorn mutton, wild turkeys, grouse, wood duck, and fish never failed us. We enjoyed grand sport, and the days flew serenely by, whilst at night we gossiped, played whist, told yarns, and sang round a roaring camp-fire of glowing embers until the drowsy god made his visit, when we turned into our hammocks and enjoyed our well-earned sleep. The *réveille* always sounded at the first break of day, by which time the negro servants had generally a substantial breakfast ready, to which we did ample justice after a refreshing dip

in the stream ; then we divided ourselves into two or three hunting parties, one remaining by turn in charge of the home-guard, there to superintend the drying of the meat and the stretching of buffalo-skins ; for we now contemplated returning eastward by the Missouri, and required well-prepared hides for our boats, craft of this material being more durable and commodious than birch-bark canoes.

One day Colonel Slade, Villebois, and I, accompanied by Pierre the half-breed, and three of our Blackfoot scouts, made a lengthened expedition to the higher ranges that lay to the west of the Gallatin Peak. After two days' hard travelling, we came to a beautiful mountain lake of considerable size, which is said to be the source of the Henry's Fork, one of the head-waters of the Snake, better known as the Columbia river, which falls into the Pacific at Astoria. Here we had fine sport amongst the bighorns and mountain goats, for the ground was very favourable for stalking ; and the game, perhaps having never been disturbed, was anything but wild. The summit of the ridge was of serrated secondary rock, sometimes heaped in strata like immense slates, while at others its gigantic boulders were heaped promiscuously one on the other, as if shivered and heaved up by some violent convulsion of the earth. Here and there were beautiful slopes and glades carpeted with aromatic-scented grasses, and the more sheltered sides of the walls of scarped rock that rose in ridges from the centre plateau were generally clothed with many-coloured mosses. In some places long grey mosses hung from the scarped rocks, like frayed and dusty banners on the walls of old cathedrals. Occasionally, cropping up from the sandstone, were masses of limestone, greenstone, and quartz, richly veined with silver and lead ore ; whilst on some specimens of quartz I found both gold and copper. The higher up we ascended, the thinner became the layer of soil, and the scantier the vegetation. I could nowhere see any protruding ridges of primary rock, although here and there gigantic fragments of granite, with gneiss and mica slate, had been thrown out by the action of volcanic agency, and lay above the secondary and tertiary formations. Mountain scenery in America has aspects

peculiarly its own. It resembles a bleak Scotch deer forest denuded of heather, an Alp without *latschen*, but rugged and bare.

We had encamped in the pine forest at a high altitude, and the night was extremely cold, so that, notwithstanding we slept between two huge fires, and had plenty of coverings and buffalo-robcs, we became keenly alive to the change of temperature, and from time to time found ourselves crouching round the fire. Early morning saw us awake and stirring; and as soon as the grey mists lifted, we packed up our gear and re-commenced the ascent, as we hoped to catch the bighorns feeding on ground where we had seen fresh tracks the day before. We were not disappointed: hardly had we cleared the outskirts of the pine forest, when we saw a flock of three rams and four females quietly browsing in a grassy hollow some five or six hundred yards distant. We immediately retreated to the cover of the pines, and there, separating into two parties, commenced to outflank the game, so as to get the herd between two fires. The nature of the ground was such that this was easily accomplished; and, after a little careful stalking, Slade and I managed to get well above them to the left, whilst Villebois and Pierre occupied a similar position on the right. Our manœuvre had been carefully watched by the Blackfoot scouts, who had remained under cover of the pine forest; and when they saw that we were fairly posted, they issued out and showed themselves, when the bighorns, after gazing inquisitively at them for a few moments, quietly turned round and began to ascend the mountain in single file, the old ram that was leading now and again turning round to watch the intruders. Seeing that they were not followed, they became quite unsuspecting of danger; and as they edged off towards our ambuscade, I dropped the leading ram in his tracks and broke the spine of a female, whilst Slade killed two other females that ventured quite close to us in their panic, and Villebois, by a fine shot, dropped another ram. Thus, in less than a minute, we were provided with a rare stock of food. The horns of the old ram, although nearly 16 inches in circumference at the root, were very much broken and very imper-

fect as specimens, and the flesh was too rank to eat. So, whilst Villébois was superintending the galloching and cutting up of the



BIGHORNS.

females, Slade and I clambered up to the crest of the slope, from whence we had a very good view of the surrounding country. With the aid of my field-glass I soon discovered two other flocks of bighorns; and after watching their movements for a short time, my

companion went after one troop, whilst I set to work to stalk the other. As we had already nearly as much meat as we could carry, I only wanted to secure a fine pair of horns ; and whilst I made my way along the scarp below which the game was unsuspectingly browsing, I marked a fine ram who was far more engaged in paying delicate attentions to the female part of the community than in attending to his breakfast : getting within easy range without being perceived, I put an end to his flirting with a shot between the withers, which ended his career. The report of my rifle caused a general stampede, and the herd ran about to and fro as if bewildered, passing and re-passing me at least a dozen times before they finally made off ; and if I had wanted meat, I could easily have secured two or three more of their number ; but as my object was accomplished, I let them go scatheless, and, after a hard scramble, managed to reach the fallen ram. I found the flesh was as rank as that of an ibex in the rutting season, so I simply contented myself with carrying off his head, for the horns, although not very large, were perfect and well shaped.

Slade, whilst creeping round towards the other flock of bighorns, came across a covey of ptarmigan sitting close together under a rock ; and, firing a couple of raking shots, he managed to secure three of their number, which turned out admirable eating. On our return to Villebois, he informed us that Pierre had wounded a fine white goat, and was tracking it up by the blood ; and shortly afterwards that individual returned with the head and skin of his quarry, which he found dead. The bighorn of the Rocky Mountains is as tall as a good-sized donkey, having a head like a goat, and spiral horns that curve round most gracefully, in the same way as those of an English ram. The largest pair of horns I obtained were very nearly 40 inches in length, following the curve ; but Villebois killed an old ram whose horns measured 42 inches in length, and 16 in circumference round the base. The bighorns are covered with coarse ash-grey hair, which becomes white on the belly and inside the thighs ; and the old rams are considerably darker than the

young ones. The female is much smaller than the male, and has horns somewhat like those of a ewe, but straighter.

Having collected our meat, we made the best of our way back to the lake, and were glad to find ourselves once more in a temperature where we could perspire from exertion, as the intense cutting cold of the higher altitude was very trying to all of our party. Here we lighted a huge fire and established a comfortable bivouac; and after a substantial supper, a glass of stiff grog, and a good night's rest, in the morning our fatigues were forgotten, although a certain stiffness remained, which I think was the chief cause of our turning our attention to fishing as the day's occupation. Slade and Villebois were both keen votaries of "y^e gentle arte," and had provided themselves with all kinds of tackle; so they soon commenced work, and, the trout being hungry, in a few moments half a dozen of the spotted beauties were jumping about on the land, the largest being about a couple of pounds in weight. I am no angler either in theory or practice; but I have of course fished in my time, sometimes for want of food, and at others for the sake of companionship, and my lines have often fallen in pleasant places; still, I never took to the sport as a diversion. Wordsworth was fond of it, whilst Byron held it in contempt. Nelson continued to fish after he had lost his right arm, holding the rod with his left hand; and Paley, upon being asked when a book of his would be finished, replied, "My lord, I shall work steadily at it when the fly-fishing season is over."

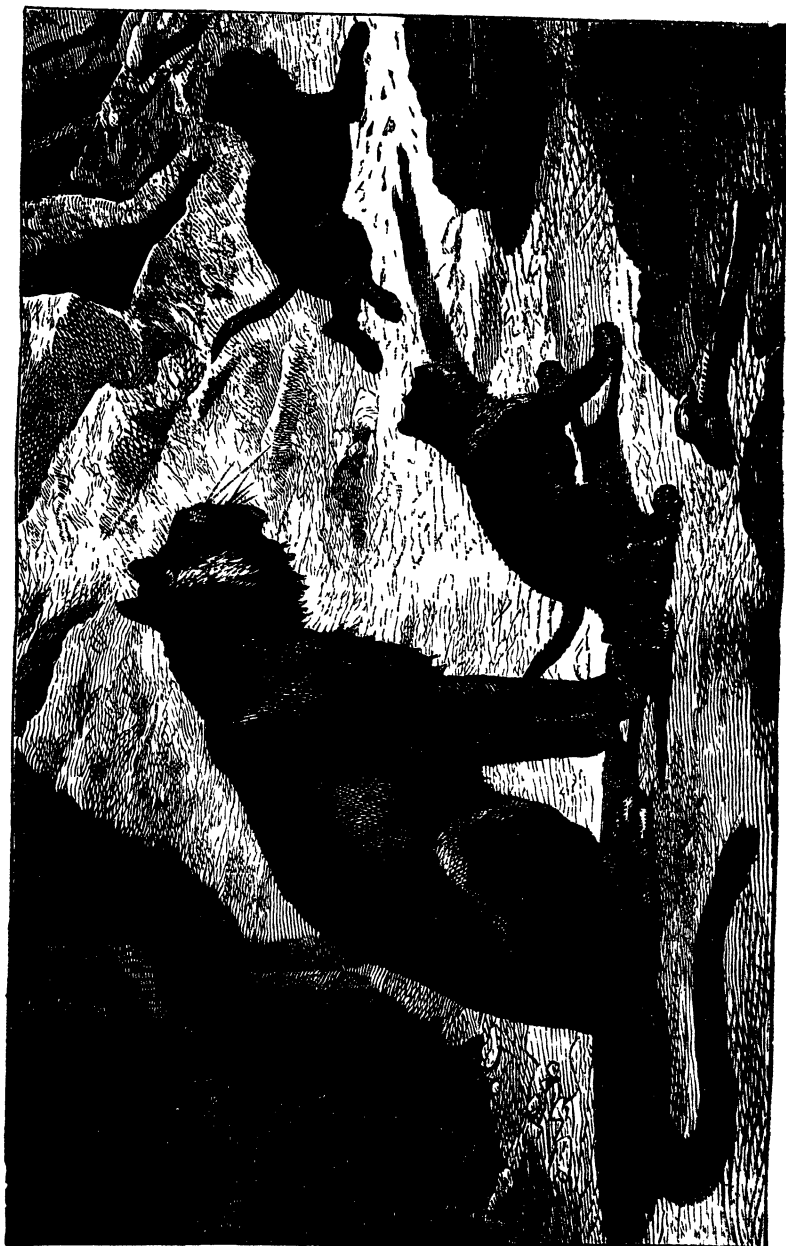
Notwithstanding that so many great men have found indescribable pleasure in this diversion, I always preferred the gun to the rod. Having seen, therefore, that my friends were settled down to their sport, I started with Pierre and one of the Blackfoot scouts for a cruise round the lake. This was of no great extent, and in the course of a couple of hours we came to the Henry river, flowing out of it, and forming a series of beautiful cascades as it tore down into the ravine below.

Whilst I was looking round and admiring the extreme wildness of the scenery, I suddenly heard the crashing of branches at no

great distance, and almost immediately afterwards a black-tailed deer came rushing past at full speed, followed by some other animal, which, from a momentary glance, I thought was a large grey wolf. As the line they were taking led to the river, which flowed in a chasm of rock and was impassable, I knew that if the chase lasted they must double back and pass near where we were standing ; so Pierre and I took up positions on large boulders of rock, from whence we could get a fair view of the surrounding ground.

Whilst we were thus waiting, a crash in the bush, followed by a heavy fall and a cry of distress resembling the bleating of a sheep, told us that the quarry had been run into ; so, descending from my position, I crept stealthily forward, and, my mocassins enabling me to tread with a perfectly noiseless step, guided by the sounds of the scuffle, I gained the spot. Looking over a low bush, I saw a magnificent male puma, couched his full length on the ground, with his back and hind quarters turned towards me, and his teeth evidently buried in the throat of the deer, from which he was sucking the blood. He was perfectly unaware of my approach, and, as he was not more than twenty paces from me, I had a famous chance, and aiming at the back of his head, I pulled trigger ; the cap, however, missed fire, and, startled by the click of the hammer, the puma raised his head, and fixed his glittering eyes full upon me, evidently meaning mischief, for his tail lashed his sides, and every hair stood erect upon his body.

No time was to be lost : taking a rapid aim between the eyes with the second barrel, I let drive ; and simultaneous with the report was the angry roar of the monster and his spring, as he bounded and fell in his last agony close to where I was standing. Had the second barrel missed, or the wound not proved immediately mortal, I should in all probability have paid dearly for my sport, and got a severe mauling before Pierre could have come to my assistance. I had, however, luck on my side, and came off scatheless ; but the game was intensely exciting whilst it lasted, and I was glad when it was over.



PUMAS.

I found, on a *post-mortem* examination, that my bullet had entered the right eye and passed out at the back of the head, splintering the skull considerably; no wonder, therefore, it proved an immediate settler. The puma much resembled the leopard in shape, but the skin was smoother, closer, and finer, and of an ash-grey colour. I had no means of measuring the body as it lay, but the skin was 7 feet 2 inches in length from the tip of the nose to the end of the tail, which appendage appeared long compared to that of a leopard. Its height at the shoulder must have been about 3 feet, or perhaps a trifle over.

Although the puma is certainly not so strongly built as the Indian panther, which it much resembles in habits, it is considered by the Indians to be almost as dangerous a customer to tackle as the grizzly, as it greatly excels him in activity, and is very tenacious of life. I do not, however, believe that it will ever attack men unless previously wounded or hemmed-in in a corner; although Pierre told me that he had known instances of Indians having been attacked and killed at night, whilst sleeping, by these animals. Having carefully despoiled the carcase of the skin, the Blackfoot scout cut off some of the joints and tit-bits, as the flesh is considered delicate eating by the Indians, and, slinging the whole to a pole made out of a young sapling, we retraced our steps to camp, highly satisfied with our sport. The fishermen had laid in a fine stock of trout, besides killing a poacher in the shape of a large dog-otter with a good skin, which, after it had been prepared by the Indians, Slade converted into a most comfortable travelling-cap.

During the night a party of five hungry wolves, attracted by the smell of meat, visited our camp; as the moon was well up when their presence was discovered, two of their number paid for their indiscretion with their lives, whilst most of the survivors received buckshot-wounds, as their trails were marked with blood. The next morning we started on our return to head-quarters on the Gallatin, which we reached late on the following day. We found that a great hunt had taken place a couple of days after our

departure, and that the camp was full of buffalo meat: this was rather a godsend, as our scouts informed us that a famous Blackfoot chief and his suite were about to pay us a friendly visit, and we were consequently about to have several extra mouths to fill.



BEAVER.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE DEER OF NORTH AMERICA.

The deer of North America—The moose described—A moose-yard—Hunting in the snow—Moose calling—The cariboo—Cariboo-shooting—The wapiti—The Virginian deer—The black-tailed deer—The prong-horn antelope—Stalking on the Western prairies.

THE principal deer found in North America are the moose, the cariboo, the wapiti, or Canadian stag, and the common or Virginian deer.

The moose, or North American elk, is the largest of the ruminant family; an adult bull averaging eighteen hands at the shoulder, whilst his head and antlers rise considerably above that height, and his weight, when in good condition, often exceeds 1,200 lbs. The muzzle of the moose is very broad and protruding, being covered with reddish coloured hair, except just in front of the nostrils, which are so large that a man may thrust his arm into the cavity. The antlers of a bull moose often measure 5 feet from tip to tip, and weigh 60 lbs.; they are palmated and fringed with short tines, the lowest being somewhat separated, and extending well over the forehead, supplying the place of brow antlers. They shed their horns by the end of January, and the new ones begin to sprout in April, attaining their full growth by September. In the middle of April the winter coat is shed, and for some time the animal presents a very rough appearance. The moose has a short thick neck, and both sexes have a kind of ruff or mane round the throat. The coat is composed of long stiff bristles of a dark brown colour, which in the bull changes to black in winter. Under the throat, pendent from the spot where the head joins the neck, the bulls



MOOSE FIGHTING.

have a fleshy appendage termed the "bell," from which grows a fringe of long black hair that at a short distance looks like a beard. The bristles on the muzzle and jowl are of a reddish hue, and the hair covering the belly and inside the thighs is of a light sandy colour. The neck and shoulders are covered with very fine short wool, curiously interwoven with hair, and out of this the Indians manufacture beautiful winter gloves.

The moose lives chiefly on the leaves and young shoots of bushes and the smaller deciduous trees, such as the red and other maple, the white birch, mountain ash, poplar, and balsam. To get at foliage beyond the reach of his muzzle, he frequently charges a young tree, and bends it down till he has brought the leaves within his reach, pulling the young branches into his mouth by his mobile and prehensile upper lip, and biting them off. Unless the grass is very tall, or growing upon a convenient bank, the moose will seldom attempt to crop it, his neck being too short to admit of his performing the operation of grazing with anything like comfort; he can graze only by straddling his legs and stooping awkwardly, which may be taken as certain evidence that green shoots and tender buds, and not grasses, are his proper food. He is, however, very fond of the broad-leaved grass growing in the dried bogs, and the roots of the yellow pond-lily, upon which he feeds when he takes to the water during the summer to avoid the flies. When the plague of flies commences—which is equally annoying to the hunter and the moose—the animal strives to free himself by plunging into the water and allowing only his nostrils and mouth to remain above the surface. He is a famous swimmer, and has been known to hide himself from his pursuers on reaching a lake by diving and remaining a long time below the water.

Much as we may be struck by the massive proportions of the moose, it must be averred that he is far from being a handsome animal, either when at rest or in motion, as his head is ugly beyond description, his form decidedly ungainly under every aspect, and his eyes lack the brilliancy and prominence of the rest of the deer family.



A MOOSE YARD

The usual habitat of the moose being in the densest forests, the sense of sight is not so highly developed as in most other species of the deer tribe; but the enormous nasal cavity, great expansion of its chambers, and extent of surface covered by the olfactory membrane, together with the large ear-couches, attest his great powers of smelling and hearing. The moose is of cautious and retiring habits; in the autumn his usual haunts are in the forest adjoining the margin of lakes or mossy swamps in which the cinnamon fern—his favourite food—grows luxuriantly. There he revels with his consort, and their wonderful faculties of scent and hearing are so keenly developed that at this season of the year they are extremely difficult to approach unless by stratagem. One can hardly conceive an animal with such a spread of horns making his way at speed through the forest; but, throwing his antlers well back upon his massive withers, his strong limbs and stout neck enable him to overcome all obstructions, and he can make his way through an alder swamp at a much greater pace than the hunter can follow up in the path he has made.

Moose may be said to range from the mouth of the Mackenzie river to the shores of the Atlantic at the eastern extremity of Nova Scotia; in former years they were found as far south as the State of New York. For some time past they have been steadily decreasing, and, indeed, considering the wholesale destruction practised both by settlers and Indians, it is remarkable how any survive. I never could see any sport in the extermination of moose as practised in some parts of Canada during the winter months. At this season the cows with the young bulls and calves herd together, and, when the snow comes thickly down, form what is called a "moose yard;" that is, they select a sheltered part of the forest, generally upon a hill-side fruitful in brushwood of a deciduous nature, and diligently tread down the snow in a circle round it, so that an embankment encircles the yard and secures the inmates from the attacks of wolves and bears. Here they remain the whole winter, unless discovered by the hunter, who, if



INDIAN CHASING MOOSE IN DEEP SNOW.

alone, will only make a note of the whereabouts of the yard, and mark it so that he may find it again, for there is no occasion for the least hurry. The longer the moose are allowed to live the fatter they become, and there is little or no chance of their escaping unless a sudden thaw should take place. At last the fatal day comes, and a party armed with firearms of all kinds surround the yard and commence an indiscriminate massacre, sparing neither cows nor calves. The old bulls rarely remain with the herd during the winter months, preferring to wander about the woods feeding and chewing the cud; but when the snow lies deep, they too are often wantonly destroyed in a wholesale manner both by the Indians and settlers, who are enabled to get over the snow in snow-shoes, as shown in the engraving, whilst the moose, with its fetlocks and hocks streaming with blood, flounders through the half-frozen snow, often sinking shoulder-deep in its exertions to get away from the dogs. At last exhausted, it falls helpless, and whilst unable to extricate itself from the snow-drift, the hunters come up and blow its brains out, or more frequently knock it on the head with an axe.

Although this is considered to be fair sport in Canada, I look upon it as "poaching of a very low order." It is disgusting to see a fine bull slain in such an unseemly manner, when in a few weeks' time it would tax the best energies of a hunter experienced in woodcraft to approach within range of him.

The legitimate time to hunt the moose is towards the end of summer and in autumn before the horns drop; but few of the settlers can spare time for hunting at this season of the year; besides, none except professional and experienced hunters possess the woodcraft necessary to stalk and kill the animal fairly.

The engravings (pp. 567, 572) represent the hoofs of the moose and the reindeer. It seems strange that Nature should have been so considerate towards the latter, and so neglectful to the former, inasmuch as the reindeer, with his light, hollow, and expansive hoofs with rounded points and sharp edges, can travel with ease

over frozen snow and hard surfaces; while the other, with his sharp-pointed hoofs, flounders about and sinks up to his haunches, perfectly helpless against man and beast.

The bull moose utters loud cries both by day and night during the rutting season, which is described by the Indians in their guttural voices as "*Quoth, quoth!*" a sound somewhat resembling the long-drawn bellowing of a bull. The cow utters a strangely wild



MOOSE HOOF.

prolonged call, which is closely imitated by the Indian hunter through a trumpet composed of rolled-up birch-bark. During the rutting season, which lasts from the beginning of September to the end of October, the bull is easily attracted by this "calling" to within range of the hunter's rifle. The bull at this season forgets his natural caution and shyness, and as soon as he hears the call which is audible at a long distance, he dashes through the forest in a bee-line to within a very short distance of the place whence the sound proceeded. There are amongst the Indians professional

callers who are very expert in luring both moose and other deer : during the autumn months I have killed many a fine head of game by their aid.

Our plan of proceeding was as follows. Setting out so as to arrive at the haunts of the moose before nightfall, we established our camp, and supped comfortably ; after which, donning our leather hunting-shirts so as to protect ourselves from the frosty night air, we sallied into the forest as the moon rose, shedding her broad and silvery light upon the rocks and trees, upon the leaves of which the autumn tints had already appeared. Making our way along alder swamps or through pine clumps, now scrambling over logs and fallen trunks, or sinking knee-deep in the soft moss round the old hemlock spruces which spread their gnarled branches and feathery foliage on every side, we arrived at the entrance of a gorge between the hills, where a gigantic pine-tree rose like a huge mast far above the surrounding underwood, which chiefly consisted of dwarfed maple. This was considered a favourable spot for commencing operations by my Indian companion ; so, whilst I looked to my rifle and selected my place of concealment, he climbed high up into the tree, so as to give the sound of his call the advantage of diffusing itself throughout the forest. His trumpet consisted of a roll of birch-bark twisted into the shape of a speaking-trumpet, about 2 feet long, and through this he emitted a prolonged, long-drawn-out note, which resounded far and wide through the still night air. This cry he repeated with slight variations at intervals, but for the best part of an hour there was no response, and I had made up my mind either that there were no moose within hearing, or that they were too well engaged to pay attention to the "voice of my charmer," when suddenly I heard the distant crashing of branches and the rattling of antlers against the trunks of the trees, and I knew the game was afoot.

Shortly afterwards a deep hoarse bellow, more resembling a feline than a bovine roar, rose from a patch of alder-bushes, and to my surprise this was answered by two other animals far off, in



MOOSE-SHOOTING.

different directions on the hill-side. My companion, now thrusting his arm up the trumpet, uttered a still lower and more plaintive cry, and immediately after a succession of deep grumblings and grunts, accompanied by the snapping of brushwood, betokened the near approach of our quarry. A moment more, and a fine bull moose, with bristly mane erect and huge palmated horns lowered for immediate action, stood before us sniffing in the air with his immense nostrils, and snorting and tearing up the ground with his hoofs. As the weird light of the moon shone upon him, he appeared to be of colossal size ; and I felt the blood coursing quickly through my veins, and my heart thumping audibly against my ribs, as I noiselessly raised my rifle, and aiming at his fully-exposed brawny chest, fired a right-and-left shot almost simultaneously. The "thud" of the bullet was followed by a heavy fall and a slight struggle ; then all was still, and I was about to rush from the cover and examine the spoils of the fallen, when the bellowing of a second moose sounded, apparently close at hand.

I hastily re-loaded and remained on the *qui vive*, whilst the Indian continued to emit the peculiar suppressed low moaning noises made by moose cows when browsing ; but some minutes elapsed and there was no response, and I began to think that, forewarned of danger by the smell of blood, he had stolen away, when a great animal rose directly in my rear ; the first intimation I had of his presence being the snort of defiance that preceded his head-long rush. Luckily I was prepared, and let drive a snap-shot at his head, which stopped his career and brought him down upon his knees ; and before he could recover his feet, a second shot through the chest stretched him lifeless at my feet. He had evidently made a long *détour*, and noiselessly and cautiously manœuvred so as to get well to leeward of our position. Luckily there was scarce a breath of wind stirring, and he was unable to detect our presence until he got right upon us, when he charged without hesitation.

My companion wanted me to go to another likely place and repeat the game just before daybreak, which is said to be the best



CARIBOO IN AUTUMN.

time for moose-calling, but I had had enough; so sending him to the nearest settlement to get people to bring in the venison, I made a big fire, and rolling myself up in my buffalo-robe, slept until morning, when I was awakened by a pack of cayotes, who had scented the game, but were scared from approaching it by my presence and the fire. Soon after daybreak a party of settlers came up, and the venison was divided, I retaining one of the heads, as it had fine antlers with eighteen points, and weighed close upon 50 lbs.



REINDEER HOOF.

The cariboo, or reindeer of North America, is a strongly-built, thick-set animal, carrying magnificent antlers. These vary both in shape and size very considerably in different specimens, there being generally certain marked peculiarities perceptible in all the bucks of one herd which distinguish them from those of another. Some have horns palmating towards the upper ends, others with branches springing from the palmated portions; but in most instances there is one developed brow antler, the other being a solitary curved prong. In this species the females also have horns, but they are small and weak compared to those of the males, which are very massive, and often exceed 30 lbs. in weight.

The buck sheds his horns in the latter end of November, but the female retains hers during the winter months, and by this wise provision of nature she is enabled to protect her young from the male, and prevent him from destroying his own offspring, which he is very apt to do if he gets the chance. The cariboo is gregarious, males, females, and the young fawns herding together at all seasons. No sooner does the return of spring rouse the dormant reproductive energies of the system than the budding antlers begin to show themselves, and the rapidity with which these "branching honours" are reproduced is something wonderful. The stags are in the greatest perfection in the month of September, when the velvet is worn off the horns, and their hide and carcase are in the best condition.

The cariboo is covered with dark brown brittle fur, the neck, throat, rump, and tail being white, whilst a band of the same colour encircles the legs from above the fetlock to the hoof. In the winter months, when the hair grows very long, the ends become almost white; so at this period the coat assumes a greyish-white appearance.

The cariboo is wonderfully provided by nature for existence in snow-covered districts and for travelling over broken ice, for during the winter months the frog of the foot becomes almost absorbed, gradually wasting away until the edges of the hoof, now quite concave, grow out in sharp ridges, each division on the under surface presenting the appearance of a mussel-shell: this singular conformation, which is represented in the engraving, gives the foot a lateral hold in maintaining a foothold on slippery surfaces. The frog does not fill up again until spring, when the antlers bud out. All around the fetlock long stiff bristles grow downward, which serve as a protection against broken ice and frozen snow, which would otherwise cut the legs to pieces. The cariboo is thus enabled to traverse snow-covered plateaux, cross frozen lakes and rivers, or ascend icy precipices with wonderful ease, and can easily get away from either man or beast, when the moose, which is often found in the same district, falls an easy prey to his enemies.

The cariboo is a migratory animal, the early spring and autumn being the two well-defined periods of migration. During the winter months they are also continually on the move: one day numerous herds may be found quietly feeding in the forest, while three days afterwards not a straggler will be found in the district. In severe winters they wander to the southernmost limits of their range, even crossing inhabited and cultivated districts; but in the summer months they retire to the mountain ranges and colder latitudes to avoid the flies. Cariboo are generally found in herds, or rather families, varying from ten to thirty in number: they may be met with across the whole width of the continent, being most numerous to the west of the Rocky Mountains in Northern British Columbia. Here numbers of them are killed every year for the manufacture of pemmican, which is a compound of the pounded dried flesh mixed with the fat and the marrow.

Although the cariboo appears to be identical with the reindeer of Northern Europe, he has never been domesticated and trained to draw sledges as in Lapland; but perhaps as the desolate districts he ranges over become more and more populated, he may yet be subjected to man's power, and become a useful beast of burden. The cariboo affords but tame sport to the true hunter, on account of his utter fearlessness and apparent stupidity. Lamont says:—"I have repeatedly known deer which I had failed in approaching unseen come up boldly of their own accord until they were within easy shot of me, although I was not only in full view but to windward of them. Neither does the report of a rifle much alarm them; but that is more easily understood, as they are no doubt accustomed to hear the cracking of the glaciers, and the noises caused by the splitting of rocks by the frost in winter. On one occasion my companion found a troop of five deer, and, obtaining a concealed position whence they were within range of his rifle, knocked over four of them by a bullet from each of his four barrels; the survivor then stood sniffing his dead companions until Kennedy had time to reload and consummate this unparalleled sporting feat by polishing



CARIBOO IN WINTER.

him off likewise." Again:—"In the first valley we came to we espied some small troops of deer feeding within half a mile of the shore. We landed, and I killed nine of them without much trouble. I might easily have shot as many more; but I got disgusted with such a burlesque upon sport, and left them alone."

The wapiti, or, as it is sometimes called, the Canadian stag, is one of the largest and finest specimens of the deer species, as he grows to the height of the tallest ox, and is endowed with wonderful power and activity. The buck has long branched horns, separating in serpentine curves that often measure 6 feet from tip to tip; as he dashes at speed through the forest, these lie close to his back, scarcely affording any obstruction as he makes his way through the trees. The general colour of the wapiti is dark ashen-brown, but the head is of a yellowish-tan colour, covered with long red and black hairs; whilst round the throat and down the chest the coat is very thick and long.

Wapiti are sometimes found in herds considerably over a hundred strong: it is a grand sight to see so large a number of these magnificent animals making their way through the forest under the leadership of some old buck, who exacts implicit obedience from the rest of the herd.

The wapiti are perhaps the fiercest of the deer tribe, and during the rutting season, when the bucks are always fighting for the favours of the hinds, the weakest are frequently killed by thrusts from the huge horns of their stronger rivals.

Many a hunter has been charged and badly hurt by an infuriated wounded wapiti, who will not hesitate to turn upon his human assailant, if he is brought to bay, and sees no other means of escape. When hard pressed, he will plunge into a swift-flowing river or lake and breast the current in the most gallant style; and there have been instances known of his having attacked his pursuers and capsized their birch-bark canoes.

The wapiti lives on the young shoots of certain trees, grass, herbs, and lichen; which latter food he obtains in the winter by digging



STALKING WAPITI DEER.

great holes and scraping away the snow with his fore-feet. His flesh is dry and coarse, but the hide is much prized by the Indians, as it makes the best and softest of hunting-shirts, which do not turn hard after being wet, as is the case of the leather made from the skins of other deer.

The Virginian deer, or karcajow, is found in large herds all over the least populated portions of the United States; in size and general appearance it much resembles the fallow deer. The antlers are slender, and have numerous branches on the interior sides; but they are entirely destitute of brow antlers, as shown in the engravings.

In the neighbourhood of salt lagoons, karcajow congregate in vast numbers at certain seasons, being particularly partial to the crystallized saline particles adhering to the surrounding earth, left by the evaporation of the salt water. They are never found far from lakes or rivers, which they visit at least once during the twenty-four hours.

The prong-horn (*Antilocapra Americana cabree*), or goat antelope, although termed an antelope in America, is more allied to the deer family, and in so many particulars is so unlike the true antelope genus, that naturalists will be either compelled to enlarge the character of that class, or to create another. The three essential points in which the prong-horn differs from any others of the antelope species are :

First. Its horns are branched, which is not the case in any other of the antelope or gazelle species.

Secondly. It is destitute of suborbital sinus or lachrymal openings, with which all the antelope genus, without exception, are furnished. This is one of the chief characteristics distinguishing the genus antelope from the deer tribe.

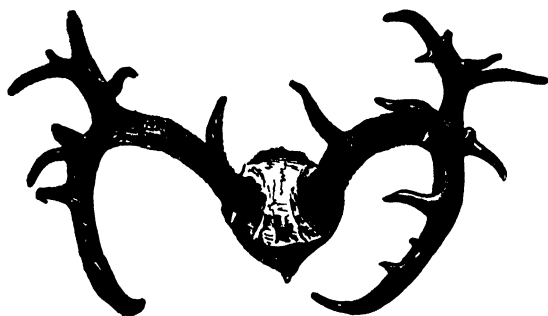
Thirdly. It is entirely deficient in the posterior or accessory hoofs, there being only two on each foot.

The engraving not only gives an accurate representation of this beautiful animal, but also depicts the extraordinary horns which distinguish it from all other varieties of its class.



DRIVING VIRGINIAN DEER.

The horns of a full-grown buck are about 18 inches in length, curving upwards and backwards, and having a triangular prong inclining inwards. The shafts of the horns are pearled and striated, and immediately above the prong they diminish to less than half the thickness they are below. The prong is smooth and unwrinkled, about 6 inches in length, and blunt at the extremity; the width between the root of the horns is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The ends of the horns are sharp-pointed, and a very old buck has often two or three



HORNS OF A VIRGINIAN DEER.

little irregular points growing out on each side. The doe has small straight pointed horns, about 3 inches in length, and without the prong. The buck prong-horn has an elegant and stately form, is about 50 inches in length from the point of the nose to the root of the tail, and about 38 inches in height at the shoulder. The female is somewhat smaller, and the neck is shorter. The general colour of both sexes is a reddish-dun, the throat, belly, and disc on the buttocks being a greyish-white. Encircling the throat and on each side of the neck is a white band, with a dark brown one just below it. The does are faintly marked in comparison with the bucks, which have in addition a ridge of coarse hair resembling a short mane running along the crest of the neck during the winter months. In summer there only remains of this a black stripe on the upper surface of the neck.



THE PRONG-HORNED ANTELOPE.

The rutting season of this species commences in September; the bucks run for about six weeks, and during this period fight with great courage, and even with a degree of ferocity. When a male sees another approaching, or accidentally comes upon one of his rivals, both parties run at each other with their heads lowered and their eyes flashing angrily; and while they strike with their horns, they wheel and bound with prodigious activity and rapidity, giving and receiving severe wounds. Sometimes, like fencers, getting within each other's "points," each hooks his antagonist with the recurved branches of his horn, which bend considerably inwards and downwards. One of these combats is shown in the engraving.

The prong-horned antelope brings forth its young about the same time as the common deer—from early in May to the middle of June: it has generally two fawns at a birth. The young are not spotted like the fawn of the common deer, but are of a uniform dun colour. The dam remains by her young for some days after they are born, feeding immediately around the spot, and afterwards gradually enlarging her range. When the young are a fortnight old they have gained strength and speed enough to escape, with their fleet-footed mother, from wolves or other four-footed foes. Sometimes, however, the wolves discover and attack the young when they are too feeble to escape, and the mother then displays the most devoted courage in their defence. She rushes on them, butting and striking with her short horns, and sometimes tosses a wolf heels-over-head; she also uses her fore-feet, with which she deals severe blows, and, if the wolves are not in strong force, or desperate with hunger, puts them to flight, and then seeks with her young a safer pasturage or some almost inaccessible rocky hill-side.

On approaching the "rolling prairies," or "foot-hills," where the Rocky Mountains first break the level of the plain, the hunter will most likely come across the prong-horn, as the lower spurs of this range are their favourite resort.

The prong-horn usually frequents the low prairies adjoining the covered woody bottoms during spring and autumn; but is also

found on the high and upland prairies, amid broken hills, or along the margins of rivers and streams. They swim very well, and occasionally a herd, when startled, takes to the water, and may be seen crossing a river in straggling files, but without disorder, and apparently with ease. Their walk is a slow and somewhat pompous gait, their trot elegant and graceful, and their run light and inconceivably swift; they pass up or downhill or along the level plain with the same apparent ease, and males and females are found together at all seasons of the year. In some instances they are found in pairs, whilst in others several hundreds may be seen congregated in a herd. They are always shy and timid, and their large and beautiful eyes enable them to scan the surface of the undulating prairie, and detect the lurking Indian or wolf, creep he ever so cautiously; and should some intervening elevation or copsewood conceal his approach, the chances are that his presence would be detected by their keen sense of smell, if he did not approach well to leeward. In stalking these animals, great caution and patience is necessary, as the hunter must move very slowly, and only at intervals, when the animals are feeding with their heads to the ground, or averted from him. They appear to live on the short grass of the prairies, mosses, buds, and young shoots of certain shrubs; in hard winters, when the snow lies deep on the ground, and they cannot obtain their usual food, they suffer greatly from hunger, and often perish in great numbers. When the snow is deep and soft, they are often caught by the Indians in snow-shoes.

They are quick to scent danger, and the first one which notices the approach of man gives its peculiar call of warning, when the whole herd quickly runs in a body. An old buck antelope, generally the largest, will step out a few paces from the rest to make observations. He looks but for a moment, stamps the ground impatiently, and then bounds away with the speed of the wind, followed by the entire flock, until they are entirely out of sight. The hunter who hopes to have a shot at them with his rifle generally finds himself mistaken. As they dash away, they can only be seen at intervals,

crossing the knolls on the prairie. In a few moments nothing is discernible but a line of white objects, which, viewed through a field-glass, prove to be white patches on their backs.

The white man conducts his hunting excursions in various modes suited to his tastes, and adapted to the nature of the country in which he resides. In mountainous rocky regions, where horses cannot be used with advantage, he goes on foot, armed with a rifle, takes no dog, and seeks for his game in such situations as his sagacity and experience suggest. He either espies it in its bed, or silently steals upon it behind the covert of the stem of a large tree, whilst it is feeding, and takes a steady and fatal aim. On the contrary, in situations adapted to riding, where the woods are thickly clothed with underbush, where here and there wide openings exist between briar patches and clumps of myrtle-bushes, or on the open prairie, antelopes are chased with hounds, the hunters being all mounted.

Large well-trained dogs, when run in pairs by relays, will often overtake and pull down antelopes under favourable circumstances. Those who possess well-trained dogs, capable of outrunning the antelope, prize them highly, not only for the sport they give, but from the fact that they can catch wounded animals of all kinds, which would otherwise escape. Audubon, the great American naturalist, gives the following graphic description of the habits of the prong-horn :—

“Reader, let us carry you with us to the boundless plains over which the prong-horn speeds. Hurrah for the prairies and the swift antelopes as they fleet by the hunter like flashes or meteors seen but for an instant, for quickly do they pass out of sight in the undulating ground, covered with tall rank grass! Observe now a flock of these beautiful animals: they are not afraid of man; they pause in their rapid course to gaze on the hunter, and stand with head erect, their ears as well as eyes directed towards him, and make a loud noise by stamping with their fore-feet on the hard earth; but suddenly they become aware that he is no friend of

theirs, and away they bound like a flock of frightened sheep,—but far more swiftly do the graceful antelopes gallop off, even the kids running with extraordinary speed by the side of their parents ; and now they turn around a steep hill and disappear, then perhaps again come in view, and once more stand and gaze at the intruder. Sometimes, eager with curiosity, and anxious to examine the novel object which astonishes as well as alarms them, the antelopes, on seeing a hunter, advance toward him, stopping at intervals, and then again advancing ; and should the hunter partly conceal himself, and wave his handkerchief or a white or red rag on the end of his ramrod, he may draw the wondering animals quite close to him, and then quickly seizing his rifle send a ball through the fattest of the group ere the timid creatures have time to fly from the fatal spot."

Westward ho ! Far away to the west of the great Mississippi, on the rolling prairies that encompass the Rocky Mountains, you must travel, gentle reader, if you would stalk the prong-horn, or American antelope. There, undisturbed by anything but the songs of the birds and the hum of insects, vast herds of these beautiful animals may be seen careering over the undulating plains, from which this vast range of wild and desolate heights (alternating with deep valleys and overhanging gorges) rise abruptly, often appearing to be near—owing to the illusion caused by the wonderful clearness of the air—when it would require a long day's journey to reach them. The atmosphere on the Western prairies is so pure that antelopes are easily seen when fully a mile off, and the hunter can tell whether they are feeding quietly or are alarmed ; but, beautifully as the transparent thin air shows all distant objects, we have never found the great Western prairies equal the flowery descriptions of travellers. They lack the pure streamlet, wherein the hunter may assuage his thirst ; the delicious copses of dark leafy trees ; and even the thousands of fragrant flowers, which they are poetically described as possessing, are generally of the smaller varieties ; while the Indian who roams over them is far from the

ideal being—all grace, strength, and nobleness in his savage freedom—that we, from these descriptions, conceive him.

The hunters of the prairies of the Far West are ardent and indefatigable in the pursuit of game, and the life they lead is full of pleasurable excitement. Up long before dawn, while stillness yet reigns upon the earth ; on foot at dewy eve and late in the night, reckless of danger, careless of exposure, they are ever on the watch, observing the habits of the denizens of the woods and mountains. Those only who have lived in these wild regions,

“Lone as the rivers of unpeopled lands,”

know the extreme pleasure of being afoot in the forest at early morning, while there is a haze over the landscape, listening to the gradual awaking of animal life around, and hearing how the very earth shakes off its deep slumber. At last, as day begins to break, the hunter sees strange weird-like forms emerge from the gloom, stealing silently with ghost-like tread ; and he then has admirable opportunities for observing the habits and instincts of free, nature-impelled forest creatures. The bark or call-note of the prairie wolf announces the near approach of daylight ; and the hunter, at once afoot, does not require much time for the duties of the toilet : he makes a fire, boils his coffee, and broils a bit of venison or wild turkey. Then he treads the paths along which the sign shows that animals pass in returning from their nightly rambles to the covert usually their resting-place for the day ; or, perhaps, he ascends an elevation from whence he may discover his quarry feeding in the lower grounds.

We have wandered amongst the Rocky Mountains for months together, and have passed many days of excitement, some, perchance, of danger, on the prairies in the wilder portions of the Western States, whilst in pursuit of the grizzly bear, the buffalo, the large horned sheep, the Rocky Mountain goat, and the prong-horn antelope : at times memory indeed, recalls adventures still

more hazardous, for the Indian tribes were then out on the war-path, and it was only because our party were known to be well armed, and always upon the alert, that we were not attacked.

THE END.



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