

On Some BORNEO TRAPS.

By SYDNEY B. J. SKERTCHLY, F.G.S., M.A.I., &c.

[WITH PLATES IV TO X.]

[Read February 25th, 1890.]

THE following descriptions were written and the accompanying sketches made in the jungle of North Borneo. The traps were made for me by my own Dyaks, some for the purpose of illustration, some for the purpose of filling our scant larder.

The words, whether Dyak or Malay, are spelt phonetically, and the meaning given whenever it is known to me.

I. The *Jerat*. (Plates IV and V.)

The *Jerat*, Figs. 1 and 2, is a spring and noose trap of universal use amongst Dyaks and Malays in the forest. The word *jerat* with slight modifications is known far and wide through the archipelago, thus:—

The Malay and Dyak is	<i>jerat</i> .
„ Sunda	„ <i>jiret</i> .
„ Batavian	„ <i>jirat</i> .
„ Tagala	„ <i>dalat</i> .

The Dyaks also call this trap *penjuk*.

The word *jerat* means literally a running noose, and the full name of the trap would be *jerat burong* = bird noose, or *perangkap jerat burong* = trap-noose-bird.

The *jerat* consists of the following parts:—

- Fig. 2. a. The *Tidat* or trigger.
 b. The *Bunkang*, or hoop.
 c. The *Peningkas*, or catch.
 d. The *Ambar*, or noose-cord.
- Fig. 1. e. The *Pantar*, or platform.
 f, f. The *Liar*, or guard-sticks.
 g. The *Baur*, or spring.
 h. The *Sabar* or *Pagar*, or fence.

The *Bunkang* or hoop (Malay, Jav., Sund., *benkang*, curved) is of pliable wood, about the thickness of a lead pencil, and the size of a croquet hoop. It is firmly fixed in the ground.

The *Tidat*, or trigger, is a small stick about three inches long. Its upper end is tied to the cord or *ambar* about two feet from the noose-end.

The *Peningkas*, or catch, is simply a stick rather longer than the width of the *bunkang*, or hoop.

The *Ambar*, or noose-cord, is of twisted bark, or, where obtainable, of stout string, the noose being a variety of running bowline. This is the real *jerat*. The word *ambar* may, perhaps, be allied to *ambur*, *hambur*, spread, but this is doubtful, as *ambur* means rather to spread about as in sowing rice, than to spread wide open.

The *Pantar*, or platform (? Malay *pantat*, a base or bottom), consists of four or five straight sticks about nine inches long.

The *Liar* are only sticks placed on each side of the *bunkang*, or hoop, to protect it.

The *Baur*, or spring, is a flexible stick which acts exactly like the stick in a common mole-trap.

The *Pagar*, or fence, is rapidly made by cutting branches, sticking them in the ground at an angle, and bending them so as to roughly catch. It is only made about eighteen inches high.

Jerats were always used by me in preference to other traps for catching argus and other pheasants and jungle fowl.

A place is sought showing the beaten tracks of the birds, and a long *pagar* is erected, right across a valley for instance. Openings for *jerats* are left every twenty yards or so, and *jerats* are also placed across every bird track.

The *jerat* being made it is set as follows :—

The *baur*, or spring, is bent down, and the *tidat*, or trigger, passed over the *bunkang*, or hoop, the head of the trigger catching the back of the hoop. At the same time the *peningkas*, or catch, is slipped under the *tidat* and the *baur* released. The trigger is now set. The *liar* are now placed, one end on the ground, the other on the *peningkas*, and on the platform so formed the *ambar* or noose is spread, and then concealed by a few leaves.

The *pagar* is so slight that a bird could easily get through it, but they don't. When foraging, the birds are not particular where they go so long as the way is easy and the food plentiful. Hence the slightest obstacle will turn them. They saunter along the *pagar*, come to an opening and start through. The moment they step on the platform it falls, releases the trigger, up goes the *baur*, and the victim hangs suspended by the legs.

It is my favourite trap. Six can be made in an hour at no cost, and it is very effective. I have caught argus, fire-back

and Bulwer pheasants, jungle fowl, porcupine, wild cat, civet cats, &c., in them. Once we got a monkey, but a friend released him. Many times we got planduk, or mouse-deer, into *jerats* but they always got away.

II. The *Bubuang*, or *Krinkap*. (Plates V, VI)

This is a fall trap for birds. The *bubuang* may be allied to *bubu*, a fish trap something like an eel creel, and does not seem to have any connection with *buang*, to throw out, a word which has many prefixes, but not *bu*.

The word *krinkap* I suspect to be a Dyak modification of the Malay *perangkap*, a common word for a trap, signifying literally that which catches.

The *bubuang* is a clumsy contrivance used for catching jungle-fowl and pheasants. It is neither so easily made nor so effective as a *jerat*, and as it nearly always kills the victim, is not in use by the Moslem Malays. The only ingenuity about it is the trigger.

The parts of a *bubuang* are as follows:—

- Fig. 3. a. The *Kalung*, or drop.
 b. The *Tiang*, or posts.
 c. The *Baur*, or spring.
 d. The *Tali*, or cord.
 e. The *Pagar*, or fence.
- Fig. 4. f. The *Pungayet*, or catch.
 g. The *Tuil*.
 h. The *Peningkas*, or trigger.
 i. The *Runut*.

A fence or *pagar* about eighteen inches high is erected, at one end of which two stout sticks, *tiang*, supporting a cross-stick in the forks, are placed. At the other end of the *pagar* a small log of wood blocks up the opening. A roof, or *lantei*, rests loosely upon the end log and also upon the *kalung*, or drop, also a block of wood.

The heavy *kalung* with the roof resting on it is hung by bark cords to the *baur*, or spring-stick, at the farther end of which a string, *tali*, connects it with a trigger.

The trigger is placed inside the *pagar* on the right hand. It consists of a stick, *pungayet*, with a tine, and is firmly fixed in the ground. The end of the *tali* is attached to a straight stick, *tuil*, which catches under the tine and rests upon the double pointed *peningkas*, or trigger. The *tali* thus pulls up the *tuil* and presses it upwards against the tine and downwards on to the top of the trigger.

To the upper part of the trigger a fine string is attached and passes across the trap to the opposite side where it is fastened to the trigger. This cord or *runut* is about five inches from the ground.

A bird entering the trap presses against the *runut*, the trigger gives way, releasing the *tuil*, and the *kalung* falls with the *lantei* on top of it.

The words *tiang*, *tali*, *lantei*, and *pagar*, are common Malay words signifying respectively post, cord, floor, and fence, and are not technical terms.

III. The *Kelung*. (Plate VII.)

The *kelung* now to be described is a deer trap consisting essentially of an oblong enclosure of rough poles, roofed, and having a portcullis-like door.

The word *kelung* is in universal use in the Malay states for the extensive fish-stakes which form such a feature along our shores, and I was somewhat surprised to find the name in use both by Dyaks and Malays for a deer trap. I hope to write a separate paper on fish traps, and will only here remark that the fish *kelung* is a labyrinth of split-bamboo mats leading into a central enclosure.

The deer *kelung* consists of the following parts:—

Fig. 5. The enclosure or *Pagar*, with its *tiang*, &c., as in the *bubuang*, but of course much larger.

a. The *Pintu*, or door.

b. The *Baur*, or lever.

c. The *Tali*, or cord.

Fig. 6. d. The *Tuil*.

e. The *Sekang*.

f. The *Peningkas*.

g. A peg with no special name.

h, h. The *Runut*, or lines.

The height of the *pagar* is about 6 feet (1 *depa*), and the length twice as much. The trigger is placed outside the *pagar* near the end furthest from the door.

It will be noticed that what is here called the *sekang* is the *tuil* of the *bubuang*, and the *tuil* of the *kelung* is the *pungayet* of the *bubuang*. I could get no explanation of this though I made special inquiries.

The *sekang* catches in a notch in the *tuil* at one end, and in a similar notch in the *peningkas* at the other. The *peningkas* also engages with the peg by a notch.

Two lines, *runut*, lead from the *peningkas* to the far side of

the enclosure to which they are fixed. These *runut* are made of a fine black liana, and if string be used it is always dyed black.

In the pagar behind the *runut* a quantity of pandan (*Pandanus*) leaves and a little salt are placed as bait. The deer enter the pagar, press the *runut*, displace the peningkas and the door falls.¹

IV. The *Pėti*. (Plate VI, VIII.)

We now come to two very interesting methods of taking larger game such as pigs and deer.

The *e* is very short and the word is in sound much like the French *petit*. It may be allied to the Malay *petik*, to "touch" a stringed instrument.

The *peti* consists essentially of a spring armed with a fixed spear, and as will be shown, may help us to understand how the bow might have been produced.

The parts of a *peti* are as follows:—

- Figs. 7 to 9. *a, a.* *Pangat*, or posts.
b. *Mata siah*, or spear.
c. *Unkrung*, or ring.
d. *Tuil*, or trigger.
e. Has no special Dyak name.
f. *Mutan*, or band.
g. *Runut*, or cord.
h. *Klandu*, or toggle.

The size of the *peti* depends upon the game sought.

For pigs the *pangats* are about 1½ depas (9 feet) and the *mata siah* 1½ jenkals (11 inches). The *mata siah* is generally made of bamboo, and the binding cords and *runut* of bark cord.

Two stout posts, *pangat, a*, are firmly fixed in the ground, and to the top of one of them a tough elastic stick is bound by one end and acts as a spring. Near the end of this the *mata siah, b*, is attached. The *unkrung, c*, is a ring of plaited split rotan, about 2½ inches in diameter and half an inch wide. This is quite loose. The *tuil, d*, or trigger, is a thin stick 4 inches long, tied to the free end of the *mutan, f*, or band, which is fastened to a *pangat*. A longer stick, tough and elastic, completes this part of the mechanism.

To set the *peti* the *pangat a*³ is pulled back towards *pangat a*²; the *mutan, f*, is then passed round *pangat a*³ below the *mata siah, b*, the end of the *tuil, d*, pressing against the opposite side of *pangat a*³ as shown in the plan. The stick, *e*, is passed

¹ Deer are sometimes caught with a large Jerat, having a hook in place of a noose. I have not yet seen this in use.

beneath the *tuil*, *d*, touching it¹ and its other end sprung back to the opposite side of *pangat* *a*². Over the ends of *d* and *e*, the *unkrung*, *c*, is placed to prevent *d* and *e* flying apart; *d* and *e* by their outward pressure holding *pangat* *a*³ in position.

To *pangat* *a*¹, at the height of the *unkrung*, is tied the *runut*, *g*. This passes through the *unkrung* and terminates at the *kalanduk*, *h*, a thin stick or toggle somewhat longer than the diameter of the *unkrung*. The *runut* is nearly horizontal.

An animal passing between *pangat* *a*¹ and the *mata siah* pushes the *runut* outwards, draws up the *kalanduk* which pulls off the *unkrung* and releases the *mata siah*, which flies to *pangat* *a*¹ with terrible force, often stabbing the victim to the heart.

The *peti* is a fearful machine by which many Dyaks have lost their lives. It has been effectively used to kill the rhinoceros. My men were well acquainted with its use, and I had to prohibit it for fear of accident. It is forbidden in Sarawak.

V. The *Pēti Lanchar*. (Plates IX, X.)

The *peti lanchar* is even more interesting than the *peti*, combining in itself some of the principles of the bow and catapult.

It is not known to every Dyak tribe, and most of my men, Kalakas, were ignorant of it. It was, however, speedily adopted by them till I put a stop to it. In Sarawak it is not allowed to be used.

My mandore, Sali, a Sarawak Malay, made the first for me, and the names of the parts are those he gave me. None of my Dyaks knew any words to represent the parts.

- Figs. 10, 11. *a, a, a.* *Tiang*, or posts.
b. *Jimbang* or *Jimbattan*, or bridge.
c. *Galang* or *Kalung*, crotched sticks.
d. *Juran*, or spring.
e. *Pungati*, or trigger.
f. *Chinchin*, or ring.
g. *Sasawat*, or string.
h. *Mata peti*, or arrow.
i, i. *Tukul bubu*, or pegs.

The *peti lanchar* consists of three *tiangs*, *a*, from 18 inches to 2 feet high, cleft at the ends to receive the *jimbang*, *b*, and *kalung*, *c*. These five parts form the rigid frame.

A long elastic pole, the *juran*, *d*, is fixed at one end in the

¹ It is not necessary, though preferable, for the stick to touch the *tuil*. A figure is purposely drawn with the parts free, to show the arrangement of parts.

ground and further secured by two pegs or *tukul bubu*, *i* (trap pegs), one on each side. These hold the *jurun* rigid while it is bent back in setting.

On the *jumbang*, *b*, the *chinchin*, or ring, *f*, of rotan, travels, to which is attached the *sasawat*, *g*, a cord of thin black creeper. The *pungati*, *e*, is a piece of pointed stick attached to the *tiang*, *a'*, by a short cord. The arrow, or *mata peti*, is a stick or bamboo pointed at one end and notched or forked (*gingin batar*) at the other.

To set (*passang*) the *peti* the *jurun*, *d*, is bent backwards against *tiang a'*; the string of the *pungati*, *e*, is then passed over it and the butt end of the *pungati* pressed against the *jurun*, the point being inserted in the *chinchin*, or ring, *f*.

The *sasawat*, *g*, is led across a deer path, the trap being hidden in the jungle. No pig or deer would pass a white *sasawat*, hence it is always black.

The victim pressing against the *sasawat*, pulls the *chinchin*, or ring, from the *pungati*, the *jurun* is released and the *mata peti* shot forward. The *mata peti* rests against the *jurun* and on the *galung*.

It is evident that such a trap fires its arrow in a very uncertain direction. Hence, where bamboo can be obtained, the *mata peti* is inserted in a bamboo on each side of which a groove is cut. The *jurun* presses against the notch as before, and the bamboo, acting as a barrel, makes the arrow fly straight.

VI. The *Peti* and the *Bow*.

It is singular that the Dyaks having invented the *peti* and the *sumpitan* never designed the bow, which is also unknown to the Malays of Borneo. Yet the *peti* contains all the elements necessary for making a bow.

The common *peti* is a bow with an arrow fixed to it, and the string attached to one end by a temporary catch. If the arrow worked loose it would shoot away when the trap was sprung.

In the *peti lanchar* a step in advance can be seen. The arrow is moveable; but the string is still detached from the bow.

The bamboo barrel is most likely a suggestion from the *sumpitan*.

VII. *Etymology*.

A few words may be said respecting the etymology of the terms used. Not speaking the Dyak language my information was derived through Malay, and my instructors failed to give

me the meaning of many of the words. "What does *lanchar* mean?" I would ask. "Why this is the *lanchar*," would be the reply. As many of the Malay words are in common use it may be most of the Dyak words also are not technical terms. In the following notes D. stands for Dyak, M. for Malay:—

Jerat, pr. *Jer'-at*, D. and M.

Tidat, pr. *Tē-dat*, a trigger, D. and M., appears to be synonymous with *pungati*.

Bunkong, pr. Bunk'-ong, a hoop, D. and M.

Peningkas, pr. Peuing'-kas, D. and M. is applied to a stick which falls to the ground from a very small distance, as distinguished from *kalung*, which falls from a height.

Liar, pr. Lē-ar, D. and M., synonymous with Malay *sabar* and *sawar*. The sticks or broken branches used to mark the route when in the forest are called by their names, which are not given by Swettenham, Maxwell, or Favre.

Pantar, D. and M., in common use in N. Borneo.

Baur, pr. Bough-rr, D. and M., an elastic stick or spring.

Kalung, D. and M., see *peningkas*.

Sékang, pr. S'kang, D.

Lanchar, D.

Pungati, pr. Pung'-ati, see *Tidat*.

Sasawat, pr. Sasar'-wat, D. and M., a thin cord, as distinct from *tali*, a cord which may be string or a cable. Synonymous with *runut*.

Runut, D. and M., see above.

Tukul Bubu, D. and M., *Tukul* = pig *bubu*; = trap.

Mata Siah, D. and M. *Mata* here means sharp. It is quite distinct from *mata*, eye. Malays here say *mata pisan*, to sharpen a knife. *Siah* is Dyak and its meaning unknown to me.

I must leave this subject to competent philologists, and here only record the little I know, because the words do not occur in ordinary dictionaries.

All the Borneo natives use pit-falls with sloping sides, like native graves, but there is nothing of particular interest in them. This paper does not pretend to be exhaustive, but merely records accurately the traps I have seen.

Explanation of Plates IV to X.

A series of figures of Borneo Traps, sketched by Mr. Skertchly, to illustrate the foregoing paper.

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Plate IV, fig. | 1.—The Jerat, or spring and noose trap. |
| ” V, ” | 2.—The trigger of the Jerat, set. |
| ” ” ” | 3.—The Bubuung, or Krinkap. |
| ” VI, ” | 4.—The trigger of the Bubuung, set. |
| ” ” ” | 7.—The Peti, a trap for large game. |
| ” VII, ” | 5 and 6.—The Kelung, or deer-trap. |
| ” VIII, ” | 8.—The trigger of the Peti, set. |
| ” ” ” | 9.—Plan of the Peti trigger, set. |
| ” IX, ” | 10.—The Peti lanchar. |
| ” X, ” | 11.—The trigger of the Peti lanchar, set. |
-

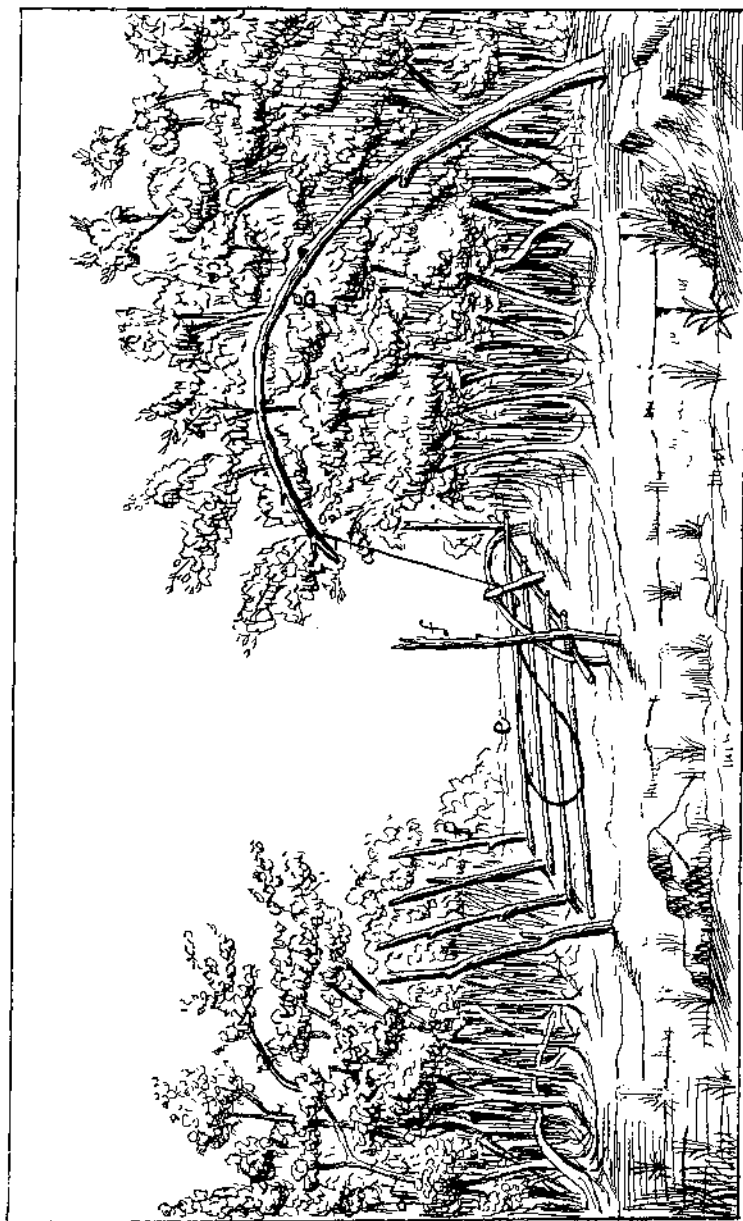
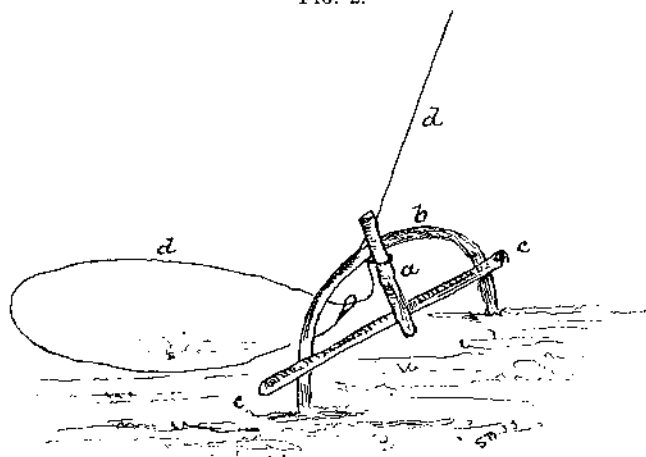


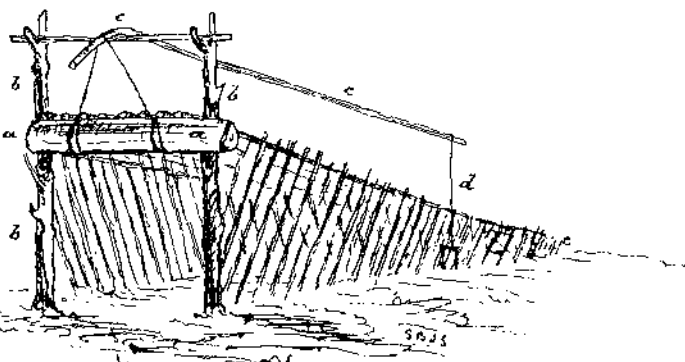
FIG. 1.—JERAF.

FIG. 2.



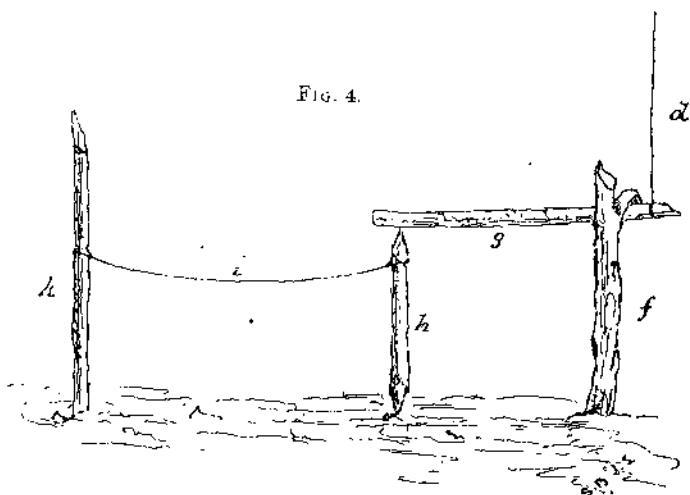
TRIGGER OF JEBAT, SET.

FIG. 3.



BUBUANG.

FIG. 4.



TRIGGER OF BUBUANG, SET.

FIG. 7.

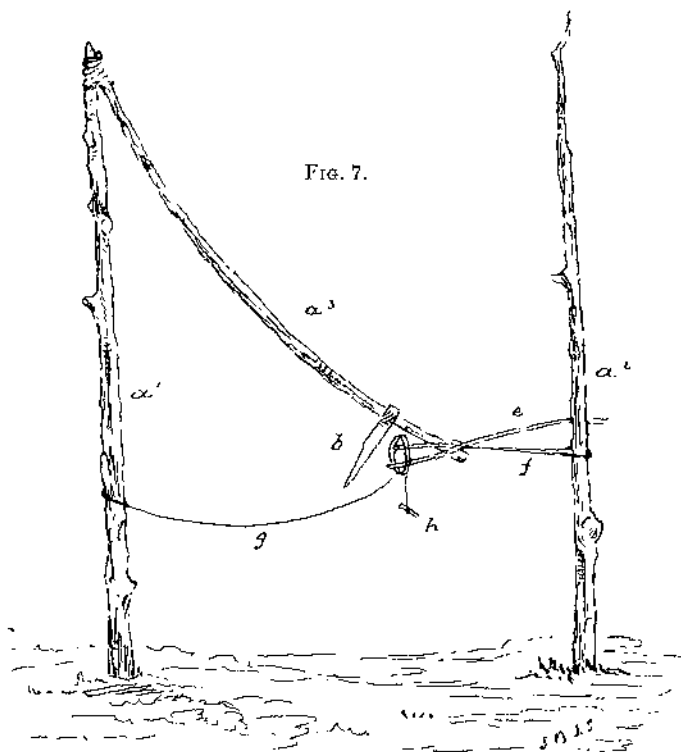


FIG. 7.

THE KELDUNG.

FIG. 5.

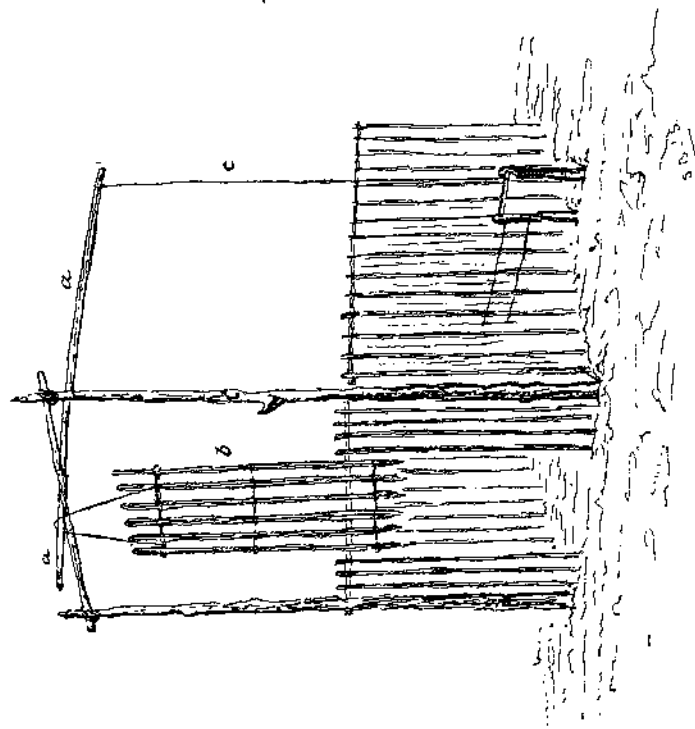


FIG. 6.

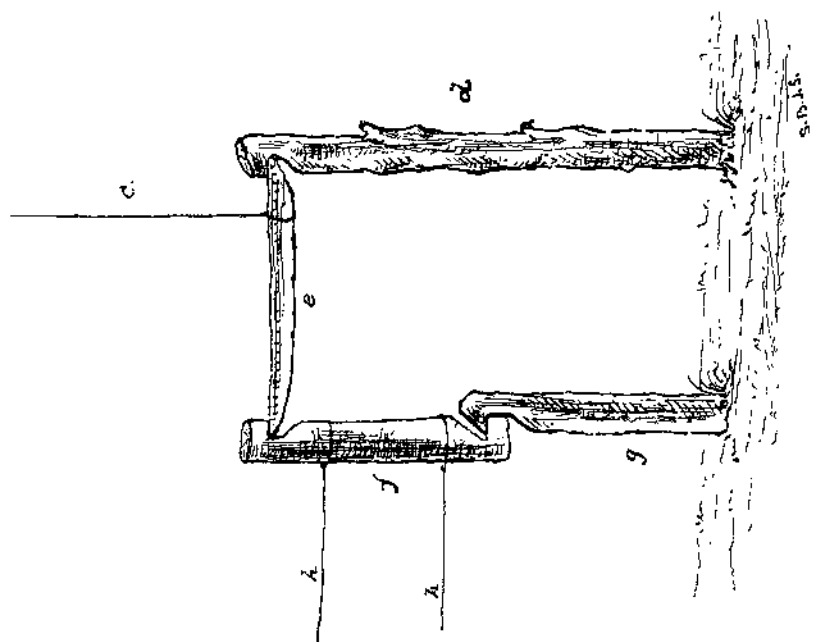
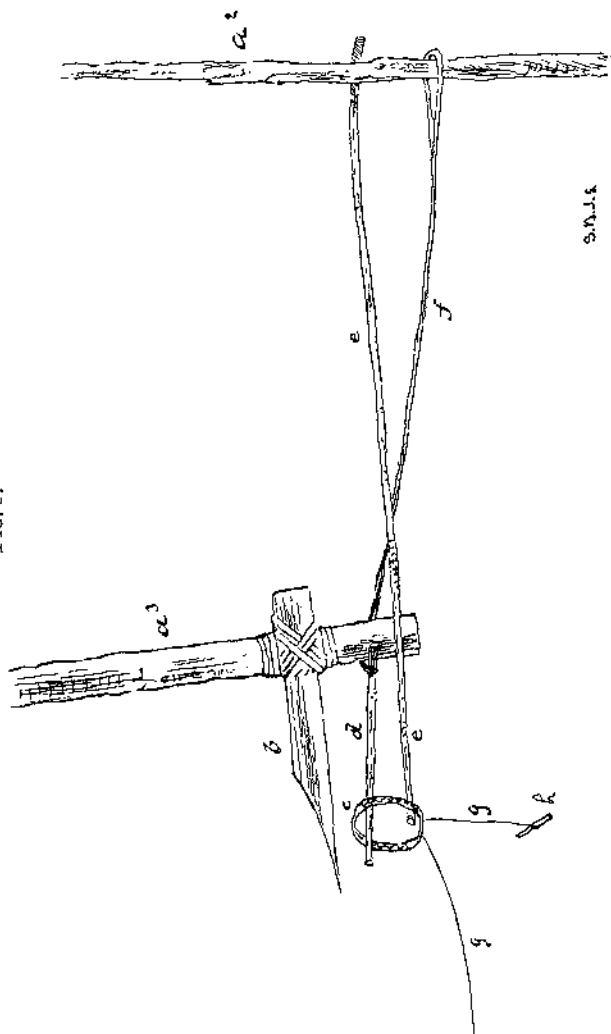


FIG. 8.



S.P.J.A.K

TRIGGER OF PETI, SET.

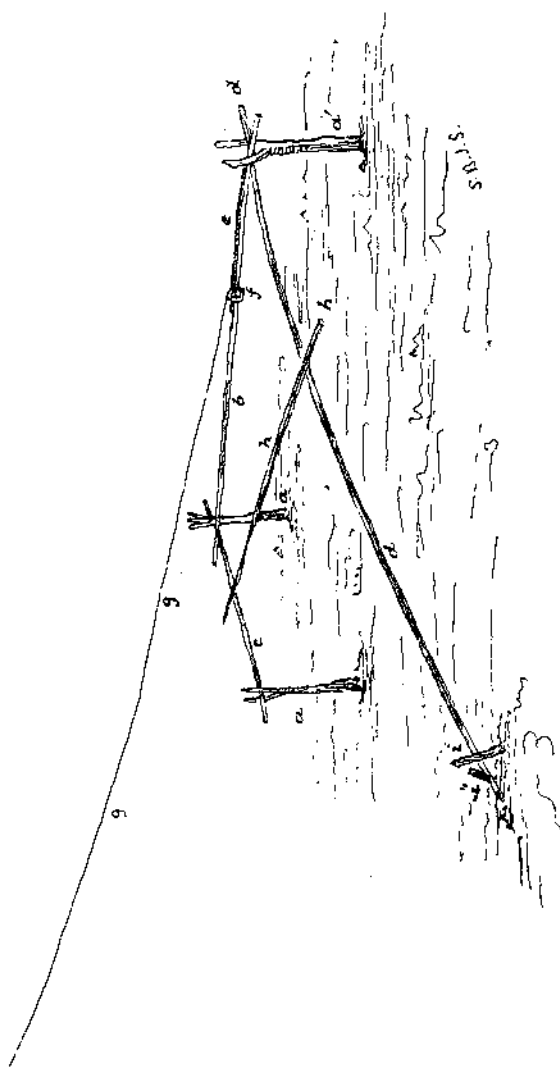
FIG. 9.



S.A.J.S.

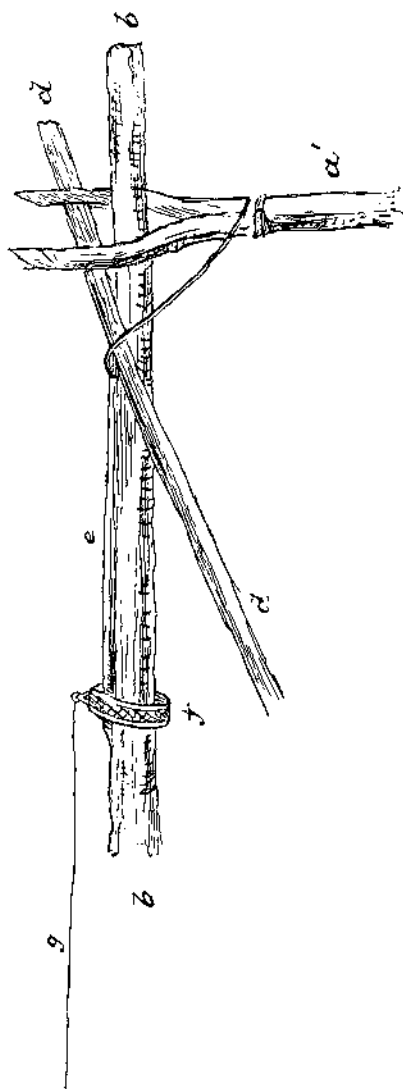
PLAN OF PETI TRIGGER, SET.

FIG. 10.



THE PETI LANGCHAR.

FIG. 11.



TRIGGER OF PETI LANCHAR, SET.