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THE GOVERNMENT STUDS.

SINCE our last remarks on this important question were penned, several additional communications have appeared in the Magazine, and we trust that general attention has been drawn to the subject. We are sorry that the Stud Officers, or their representatives, have not contributed their valuable remarks so freely as they might have done, as it appears that they do not admit the correctness of the basis on which so many suggestions have been founded. We trust that they will think better of this, as our only object is public advantage, which is only to be attained by fully hearing, not merely both, but *all* sides of a question regarding which there is so much to be said. In the meantime we request attention to one of our extracts, being a letter lately addressed to the Calcutta *Englishman*, and which evidently issued from the Stud Department.

Adhering to the intentions stated in our March number, we do not propose to enter into the *pros* and *cons* ourselves, but to direct attention to the chief points for consideration.

It will be observed that several of our correspondents make different suggestions with a view to improve the breed of horses, on the ground that the breed has much deteriorated of late years and the horses are unfit for Government purposes. Some say that they are good enough for Cavalry, but not for the Artillery, and some that they are not good enough for either; and on this point of present unfitness for all Government purposes, almost all our correspondents are more or less agreed. On the other hand, the Stud Officers, we understand, deny the premises altogether, saying the breed has not deteriorated at all, and that the Stud horses are good enough for both services, though we gather that it is admitted that as yet they have not been able to turn out quite enough Artillery horses. This is an important difference of opinion on the cardinal point of the whole question, and the main objects of those interested in it should be to get the facts ascertained as regard this point.

It is very generally stated that Government are either conducting an enquiry about the Studs, or are about to do so immediately; and if

The Doctor had declared to win with *Xenocrates*, had backed him through thick and thin, and had not a penny on *Epicurus*, but most unfortunately had forgotten to tell his jockeys this, so that, though he won the Cup, he lost every bet except the one he had made against *Radamanthus*.

So much for the luck in racing, and for this Cup in particular; and it chanced that I was once right, if I never am again, when I said to myself it is "not for *Joseph*."

MOSS TROOPER.

RECORDS OF SPORT IN BRITISH BURMAH AND ASSAM.

(Continued from page 466.)

May 14th.—Pushed on to Myet Chin; got there by 4 p. m., but found nobody there. Lloyd and George promised to meet us there this day.

May 15th.—Hill and I saw to-day some eight different herds of bison; but, owing to the jungles having been over-burnt, we could not get sufficiently near them; they require heavy cover to retire into during the heat of the day. We saw a fair sprinkling of deer, but I only bagged one buck sambur, and Hill one thamine.

May 16th.—We made for the Nya Bein, and en route came across a buck sambur and five does standing in the open. I made a good shot at about 200 yards off at the buck, wounding him badly with the Lang rifle. After an exciting chase, bagged him. He had very fair horns. As soon as we had padded this, which, owing to the weight of the animal, was no light task, we went towards the heavy jungle, and soon came upon marks of bison and buffaloes, but our luck was very bad, and we did not sight one of these animals. We also made some ridiculously bad shots. Hill missed a young dakaél standing and looking at him, and not more than 15 yards off—firing over. I also missed a sambur, which, however, Hill killed in first-rate style. To-day I fired at a pig, and the ball cut its throat very neatly, but it would have escaped had Hill not potted it. Hill bagged a sambur, and I got another; and when in sight of our sheds saw some "Thamine." We got off and stalked. I got the first shot, and killed a buck neatly, and wounded another; in chasing the latter, lost sight of the first one, and should never have found it, though it fell dead, had Hill not kept his eye on the spot where it fell. Hill wounded one too, but both his and mine got away.

May 17th.—We started very early, hoping to find bison at or near the vicinity of the salt lick, but the shikarees lost their way,

and we never got to the place all day. Soon after starting I made a lucky shot, killing a sambur dead with a ball through the head; left the carcass in a karon shed, and told the people to give our camp followers notice of the kill, to enable them to take it home. We went on then through a tree jungle, putting up very little; at last I shot a pig through the body, but missed it with the left barrel. As it passed Hill, he missed it too, so it got away. Hill soon afterwards killed two buck sambur, but one unfortunately fell upon one horn, and snapped it off close to the head. We came upon the fresh trail of bison, and followed them up; they had gone down wind, so before we got within shooting distance they smelt us and bolted. We then turned our attention to the deer, and shot three more during the day, of which Hill got one. On our return home, found George there. Lloyd had ridden back to Tongho, but would be down by boat to-morrow or the next day; at Tuen they had bagged a cow bison and a young bull, and two sambur; and George, *en route* here, had seen a tiger, which trotted along quietly in front of him, but as George was wet through, and none of his guns would go off, no harm was done. He also came across pig and a lot of deer. He looked half-drowned when he reached us, but a stiff glass of grog and a bath soon set him right.

May 18th.—Hill rode to Kyanker to see after his Police, so George and I went out together. We had not gone far, when George made a capital shot at a dalaël, knocking it over; and most unfortunately disturbed a herd of sine or wild cattle. We jumped off our elephants and followed at a jog trot after them. We came upon the herd, the rear being brought up by a magnificent bull; but he would not let us get near him, and as we were quite done, we had to give in. We sat down, rested, and when the elephants turned up, which they did not do for upwards of an hour, we breakfasted and had a good drink. We came upon bison too, but could not get near them. During the day George shot a dalaël and a fine sambur. I was lucky in bagging two sambur with one ball each. On our return home, found Hill had returned with Watson late in the evening; Lloyd also, arrived.

May 19th.—Although it was raining like mad, we all started. I had a hood on my howdah, so I did not mind the wet much, but the others looked very miserable. After passing the tree-jungle, George broke the foreleg of a buck sambur, and I killed it for him. Going on further, out of a solitary clump of long grass, a bison got up literally right under Lloyd's elephant, and such a peppering as he got from everybody as he bolted; but he escaped. I was the only one who did not fire, as I was too comfortable under the hood, and did not care to cast it down to get myself and guns wet. We followed up the wounded one, and soon came upon the herd scattered about. One fine bull let us get within 150 yards of him. I gave Hill the shot, he fired, and hit hard. Lloyd fired at another. Hill went full chase after his, and Lloyd after his own. George and I followed Hill,

as he had the grub with him. Now, Hill's elephant was the fastest by a long way, and we soon lost sight of him. We were cheered by hearing him occasionally fire, but we did not sight him till past 11, and by that time we were all swearing at him for going on in such an inconsiderate way. We had nothing for it but to follow, as he did not know the jungle and had no shikaree with him to shew him the way home, otherwise I think we should have left him to his fate. Lloyd fired at least a dozen shots, and when he did rejoice us was very savage at our not having followed him instead of Hill, as he had wounded his animal badly and had seen six or eight others; and had we been all together, we might have given a better account of the herd than we did. However, there was no help for it, but to grin and bear it. When at last Hill allowed us to overtake him, he was greeted with yells, but he was far too good a fellow for any one to be angry with long, and his anxiety to bag a bison almost excused his running away from us all. In following up this bison, we got out of our beat altogether, and for the rest of the day saw nothing to speak of. We tried new ground with but ill success. I missed a lot of things, and bagged but one buck sambur. George and Hill each got a sambur, and Lloyd a dalaël and a young pig, which proved first-rate eating. I shot two snakes right and left with ball to-day; they proved the dreaded Hamadryads, a snake as large as a boa and as deadly as a cobra.

May 20th.—Heavy rain all day, which interfered with our shooting. We did not see any signs of bison all day, and only bagged a few deer and pigs. Lloyd bagged a buck sambur, Hill a boar, George a sambur, and I a pig.

May 21st.—Very heavy rain all day. Neither George nor Hill would come out, so Lloyd and I went together. At first we had indifferent luck. The ground had become so spongy, owing to the incessant rain, that elephants did not like moving over it at all. We each shot a sambur, and getting disgusted, turned towards home. Something kept running in front of Lloyd, who followed it up, thinking it was a dalaël. Presently, on reaching a deep but narrow watercourse, the animal sprang across it, and Lloyd taking a snap shot, broke its back. It turned out to be a fine tigress. I was just in time to get a shot before she expired. We padded her, and had not gone half a mile when I fired at a dalaël, and in so doing started a bison, but could never get near it. In the open I shot a thamine. We got home by 3 P.M., and though the tigress had not been killed three hours, she already smelt unpleasantly. She had a cut right along the inside of the thigh, evidently inflicted by a pig. She measured just ten feet as she lay.

May 22nd.—Only Lloyd went out to-day; it rained so incessantly that George and I would not venture out, and Hill and Watson returned to Kyankee. Lloyd came home with two deer. As it cleared up towards the afternoon, we went out and came across a great number of deer and pig. I got two deer, George two deer and a pig, and Lloyd two pigs and a deer. The ground is now so heavy that it is

cruel work taking out the elephants, so we have made up our mind to leave off shooting, and to get home.

May 23rd.—A general move. Lloyd and George went to Baulong. I went across country to Tuen. I wounded a buck thamine and a boar *en route*, but lost them both.

Lloyd and George shot a few deer at Baulong, but had to give it up; the monsoon had set in so steadily. The next day I rode back to Tongho. Thus ended our last trip but one.

January 8th, 1868.—Having to inspect works at Burpettah, I sent the elephants on to Baish-a-wah ghat a week ago, and started in a boat at 5 P.M., making for this ghat in preference to Tarra-barree, as the Assistant Commissioner of Burpettah Sub-division had written in to the Deputy Commissioner begging that any one fond of shooting would go to Baish-a-wah, as there were no less than five man-eating tigers there. Combining pleasure with duty, I determined to look these animals up, and Captain Bowie, Deputy Inspector General of Police, and Mr. Barry, a Tea Planter, accompanied me. We ought to have reached the ghat soon after daybreak, but the fogs were particularly heavy, and the boatmen did not know where they were. However, it cleared up about nine, and while floating down, some way ahead of us, on a sand bank, we espied a buffalo. Having nothing better to do, we determined to shoot it, and as it conveniently lay down in the water, head down stream, it aided us in getting within shot of it. When we got within 100 yards of it, it stood up, but on moving we ascertained by its movements that it was a wounded beast; we opened fire, but every one missed! Our second venture was equally bad, but on my third attempt I hit it on the hip-joint, and it at once fell; we then got ourselves carried on shore, and killed it with two or three more shots. It turned out a big cow, with a good head, but emaciated, sick, and lame. Our victory was not much to brag of. We arrived at our destination at 3 P. M., found the elephants there all right, but devil a bit of *kubbur* could we get of the man-eating tigers. The villagers knew nothing about them. It was too late to attempt to proceed to Burpettah, so we pitched a tent and remained on the sand bank, but retired to the boats at night to sleep.

January 10th.—Got off after a great deal of trouble with our coolies. The Assamese are the greatest set of beasts I ever met; they wont work, they wont get up of a morning, and are generally so stupefied by the effects of opium, that they are till late in the day useless. The country had been over-burnt, and did not promise well for sport. We only saw one deer, which Bowie and I both missed. We came upon a

herd of buffaloes, wounded two or three, but did not bag any; and as they went in the opposite direction to the one we wanted to go, we did not go after them. We then made straight for Burpettah, and got there at 2½ P.M. In the evening we went after florikin, but saw none. I got two black partridges and one duck.

January 11th.—Busy all the morning. In the afternoon went after florikin: saw none. I have never been out here before without coming across a lot; where they can have gone to I can't imagine. I only got two black partridges.

January 12th.—Barry went along the road with the traps, whilst Bowie and I went across country. Barry got charged by a cow buffalo, which he killed dead with one ball, and afterwards caught her young one. We saw lots of marks of rhinoceros, buffalo, and deer, but saw none. I did fire at a boar, but missed. I shot a duck, two partridges, and a snipe to-day. Got to Barry's first garden about 1 P.M. In the afternoon we went out after small game: saw no florikin. Bowie shot a peafowl and a black partridge. I bagged a couple of partridges and wounded a jungle cock, but lost it. In the evening saw a florikin a long way off, but failed to get a shot.

January 13th.—As usual, great difficulty in getting coolies: we did not get away till 9 A.M. *En route* came to a likely-looking bit of ground for florikin. Scarcely had we gone off the road when up got three of these birds. We got off the elephants and tried after them on foot: did not succeed in putting them up. We then mounted and put up two. One was too far off to shoot at. The other got up in front of Barry, who missed fire. I blazed at it, but did no harm. I then went after it on foot, got a long shot, and wounded it, but it flew a long way, and very nearly escaped. However, I put it up at last within shot, and killed it. I also shot a partridge. We saw one or two small deer, but no big ones. We got to Minah Muttee at 4 P.M., and had quite enough to do to pitch the tent and to make ourselves comfortable before dark. A lascar even cannot be got in Assam.

January 14th.—Bitterly cold this morning and very foggy, the country well-burnt. We soon came upon the first tracks of a rhinoceros, but in following it up, my elephant got frightened, trumpeted, and set the rhinoceros off. The mahout I had is a splendid tracker. We came upon two other tracks, and he followed them until we got into very high null, at least 18 feet high. I was leading, and just ahead of me a rhinoceros began to grunt. My elephant pulled up dead. Bowie's bolted, and where Barry went to I have not the least idea. Thus we remained for a few minutes, my elephant refusing to move, the rhinoceros grunting and squeaking away a few yards in front. At last the mahout drove my elephant in. She charged trumpeting. The rhinoceros ran off, but gave me a snap shot at its shoulder about 40 yards off. The ball told, the animal fell on its knees, picked itself up, and went into such awful jungle that I half funked to follow. But as there was no way of getting at the rhinoceros, except by following on its track, I followed up very cautiously. I could hear it every now and then.

Barry came up, but Bowie's elephant would not move, except to the rear.

I heard a grunt to the right, and looking in that direction, saw the rhinoceros crossing the open bed of a nullah, and immediately discharged both barrels of my breech-loader, a rifle by Lyell, carrying three ounces conical and five drachms of powder, into its back. It ran up the bank roaring, and when hidden by the long grass, turned to charge. My elephant had behaved splendidly, and ran on without hesitation. Another shot turned our quarry, who had to run across an open piece of ground. Here I got two good shoulder shots, and reduced the animal to a walk, and three more shots killed it. It turned out a female, full grown, and with a good horn—size 13 inches, weight $1\frac{1}{2}$ seer. Both Barry and Bowie had very bad luck, not getting a single shot. Barry was on a pad, and he was kind enough to come out more to show us sport than to indulge in it himself, having shot lots of these beasts when he formerly resided here. We cut off the head and breakfasted. Barry, being seedy, went home; Bowie and I going on. We soon came upon fresh tracks, and in a dense piece of jungle up got two rhinoceros. One came towards me, and a lucky shot behind the ear killed it dead. Seeing the other bolt, and the mahouts calling out frantically "Shanah, shanah," I fired and brought it down. The jungle was so heavy that I could not see whether it was a large or a small one, and not knowing the meaning of the word "Shanah," I was eager to kill, thinking it was some rare kind of rhinoceros. However, my disgust was great when the fallen animal picked itself up and came towards me in the shape of a half-grown calf rhinoceros. Seeing it was mortally wounded, Bowie and I fired, and put it out of its agony. A rhinoceros of this size is worth 800 Rs., so it may be imagined how sorry we were at having killed it. Bowie's elephant behaved a little better this time. It used to be staunch enough when her own mahout was with her, but she funks and wont obey with the new man. The first killed proved a fine female, with a horn not quite so large as the one killed before breakfast. Got home by 12. In the evening I shot a florikin; so did Bowie.

January 15th.—We went towards the Boorie Nuddie: wanted to see about limestone, and also to shoot anything we could come across. Bowie on my elephant, I on his. We saw a lot of deer, but would not fire at them. Bowie saw a large herd of buffaloes. In the long grass we got separated, and both crossed the river at different points. I soon hit a rhinoceros off, but the grass was so heavy that I could not get a shot, and the elephant would not charge in. I followed it for about two hours; at last gave in and re-crossed the river, picking up a lot of limestone. Hearing two shots fired in quick succession, I went towards the sound and came across Barry, who had wounded a panther as it ran up a tree; but lost it. I saw some peafowl, and in going after them came across fresh rhinoceros marks, but could not come across one. Going towards home I shot a peafowl, and knocked over and lost two partridges. Near the tent I turned off to

the florikin ground, and saw Bowie coming after me; so stopped for him. He told me he had come across an immense rhinoceros, had knocked it down, but had lost it. The mahout, who has seen many killed, said it was the largest he had ever seen, and that it was very badly wounded. Whilst talking, up got a florikin: we went after it and I shot it, and then went home to breakfast. In the evening we again went after florikin. I made a wonderful shot at a cock bird, good 80 yards off, and killed it dead. Bowie got a hen bird.

January 16th.—Only Bowie and I went out. We made for the jungle where I got the shots last June. We soon came upon fresh tracks; followed, and put up a huge rhinoceros. I gave him a right and left, and Bowie fired up his bottom, inflicting a bad wound. His elephant then refused to move, so I ran on to cut the rhinoceros off. He fortunately took to the open, and I ran up to within 50 yards of him, emptied all my rifles into him and brought him to the ground, but it took me some time to kill him outright. He proved a huge monster, with splendid horn, size $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches, weight 2 seers, and worth about 90 Rs. The report of our guns attracted the villagers, who had assembled like vultures for the sake of the meat; they took all we shot, but would not help us a bit in any way. We came upon two fresh tracks and followed them up. The way my mahout tracked was worth seeing. For good two hours he went round in circles, following every movement of the beasts as they had been feeding. I thought he was going over the same tracks over and over again, but he said—"No, I am on their track," and sure enough, when we both had given them up a long while past, he brought us up to them standing close together. Bowie killed the bigger with one ball behind the ear, and the other we polished off between us, she charging viciously several times; but each time she was met by such a volley that she had no chance. The one Bowie killed would have had a very fine horn, but it was unfortunately broken; the other had only a small horn. More vultures in the shape of men turned up to cut up these animals, whilst we went home well pleased with our day's sport. After this, while we were marching about, we had very little luck, bagging only a few florikin, partridges, and peafowl. One day we saw at least 500 deer, but could not get near them.

THE EFFECT OF SNAKEBITES ON THE PORCINE FAMILY.

It does not seem to be at all well known that swine, both wild and tame, are perfectly indifferent to the bites of the most poisonous snakes. Whether the accumulation of fat and gristle on their snouts prevents the venom of the reptiles from thoroughly impregnating their systems with the poison, or to what other cause it may be attributed,

I regret to say I am not sufficiently versed in piggish anatomy to state; but that such is the case I can certify, having on two occasions been an eye-witness to pigs being severely bitten by cobras without it affecting them in the least.

The first time I witnessed this fact was in Ceylon, in 1856. When on a visit to a Sugar Planter residing in the South of the Island, at a village called Baddagamma about sixteen miles from Point de Galle, I was returning one morning from snipe shooting with a tolerably fair bag of birds, when my attention was arrested by watching about a dozen semi-wild pigs belonging to my friend most perseveringly engaged in endeavouring to turn over with their snouts the half-rotten stem of a palmyra palm, which had fallen a victim to age or the elements, and was lying within a few yards of the trash house. So perseveringly did the pigs act in a body, and so ardently did they strive to turn over the stem in question, that it struck me, at the time, they must have some particular object in view, and curiosity to see if they would succeed in their endeavours, for I had never seen pigs work so unanimously, in concert before, caused me to stop and watch them.

After two or three failures they gained their point, turning the tree half-round, when a whole family of cobras, large and small, glided from under it. After them the pigs scampered helter-skelter, showing as much activity, although only half-wild, as a Bengal boar would do. So completely was their attention taken up by the sport before them, that they allowed me to approach much nearer than usual. A very large cobra, fully five feet in length, (it must have been pater familias or the mother of the interesting progeny) was seized by a half-grown sow within twelve feet of me, and whilst she was crunching up the horrible writhing *bon bouche*, which had been seized about the middle of its body, I distinctly saw the reptile bite the sow twice on the snout, without the animal apparently caring the least about it; the pleasure of consuming the luscious titbit entirely compensated for any annoyance or pain that the pig might have felt at the time; and out of the whole batch of cobras, I do not think one escaped from the omnivorous maw of the swine. I saw the sow mentioned above some days afterwards not the least affected in any way by the bite of the cobra.

The second instance was on a small island, yecept Pulobbin, situated in the narrow channel of the sea between Singapore and the mainland of the Malayan Peninsula. I had gone over to Pulobbin to endeavour to shoot a man-eating tiger which was creating great havoc amongst a few wretched Chinese convicts, stationed on the island to split granite and ship it to Singapore for building purposes. In this instance, I had been out all the morning in an unsuccessful search for the man-eater, and on my return, feeling rather done up, I stretched myself at full length in the raised portico at the entrance of the shooting hut, and was enjoying my pipe and siesta, when I noticed a large black cobra slowly gliding along the top of a bank within twenty feet of me. At the spot where the hut was constructed, a hill rose rather abruptly from the edge of the sea, and the bank was caused by the hollow, cut