

I decided that it would be much better for to go and get something to eat.

This we accordingly did, I revolving in my own mind that the great *Trab-Wettfahren* of the great exhibition of Vienna of 1873 was a very great delusion and a snare.

HAFIZ.

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### RECORDS OF SPORT IN ASSAM.

(Continued from page 162 of the Magazine for April 1874.)

I SEE that an enquiry is made in the December number of the *Oriental Sporting Magazine* anent tigers killing their own game only or whether they would partake of any offal they may come across. A better authority than Colonel Douglas Hamilton, the "Velvet Foot" of the former *Sporting Magazines*, there could not be on the subject. I should have imagined that most men who have spent much time in the jungles would have learnt, beyond a doubt, that tigers are not particular about their food, and that they prefer it high to fresh. So voracious are they that when two tigers fight and one gets killed, he affords a meal to his conqueror. Not only are tigers foul feeding, but so are bears and the mighty boar. Amongst the Burmese and in former days, when officers were either fonder of sport or spent more time after it, it is and was a common custom after the death of an elephant, killed in anything like fair jungle, to erect a *machan* on the nearest tree and to sit up over the carcass, but not till after the third or fourth day by which time putrefaction had well set in; and I have been assured by those who have tried it, that it was no rare occurrence to see two or three tigers at a time tearing away at the putrid flesh. I have been urged to sit up over and over again by the Burmese, but I never could stand the stench. I remember, after killing my first buffalo in Burmah, visiting the spot a few days after, and I found the carcass dragged a good hundred yards away from the place where the animal had been killed, and the whole ground covered over with numerous foot marks of tigers. I have killed many a dozen buffaloes since, but I don't think I ever saw a more huge brute than the one I am alluding to, and I cannot believe that any one tiger could have dragged the body away, even after putrefaction had set in, and the contents of the stomach scattered. Once I came upon a bear tearing away at the carcass of a tame buffalo which had died several days before, and at another time I was disgusted at seeing a boar emerge from the inside of an elephant lying dead, and so offensive that it was impossible to go within hundred yards of it.



Only a few months ago in my last shooting trip, we came upon and killed a tiger eating a rhino which we had shot some days before. Instances could be multiplied were it necessary, but on so well-known a subject as that under discussion it is scarcely worth while to devote more space to it. In the cold weather especially, a tiger, after killing a cow and sucking its blood, will drag it away and lie near it for a day or two before touching it, and were this idiosyncrasy more generally known, many a tiger might be killed in fair fight, or where sportsmen are not to be found nothing could be easier than to poison it. An officer in charge of a district in Assam a short time ago poisoned a kill, and found the next day four tigers dead! To show the fearful nature of poisoning by strychnine, a leopard was brought in dead from the effects of partaking of a kill so poisoned; a pariah dog coming up just licked the tongue of the dead leopard, and in a few seconds died. Bears do more harm in Assam than tigers, and they are more difficult to come across. If those who have authority over elephants in Assam either took to sport themselves or would be more liberal in the loan of their elephants, many a tiger which now commits depredations in the vicinity of large towns like Gowhatty and others, might be disposed of; but unfortunately they are very chary of either using their elephants themselves or of lending them to other people. Thus one hears of cattle and people being killed all round, and the tigers are left unmolested.

I now continue the records of sport in Assam. I hope this year, 1874, probably my last for some time in Assam, we shall have grand sport, as we have made up a large party to meet at Doobree in April and to go along the foot of the Bhootan Dooars, a portion of which has never been shot over and is full of game of all sorts.

*13th April 1872.*—Left Gowhatty at 12 and went on till dark. Had a bathe, dined on a sand-bank, and then continued journey by boat till midnight, when we pulled up, being afraid of overshooting our mark.

*14th April.*—At daylight found ourselves about five miles from the ghat and got there about 7 A.M. Found the elephants all right, and reached Burpettah at 11½.

*15th April.*—Sent our things off to Raha in the morning, and cantered over there ourselves in the evening. Met C. and Cornish just outside the village. Slept in an open shed, and five of us sat down to dinner.

*16th April.*—Two of our party had to return to Burpettah, so Cornish and I got on to our elephants whilst C. rode. We saw very little game. I got two partridges and a rum kind of hare with



short ears and a rough hide more like a pig's than a hare's. I also got a large boar; the latter tried to charge the elephant, but failed miserably. I also killed a peacock, but it fell across a nullah difficult to cross, so had to leave it. We got to Mina Mattee at 1 P.M. Found no huts built, but the villagers turned out and soon rigged us up sufficient shelter to answer our purposes. We had a splendid bathe in the evening.

*April 17th.*—We started pretty early hoping to get a good day's sport, but were regularly sold. We saw a few deer, but they kept out of range, and we would not fire rashly, hoping to come across some large game. We saw lots of marks of deer, buffaloes, and rhinos, but the animals themselves were very scarce. We got off to breakfast, and had scarcely sat down when there was a great rustling close by, and the *mahouts* called out a "rhinoceros." We got into our howdahs as fast as we could and went in chase, but it was no use, the brute got into jungle where we could not follow, so to spite him we set the grass on fire, and soon had a glorious bonfire. We then resumed our breakfast, and went on afterwards; we saw some buffaloes, but could not get at them. I shot a partridge, and Cornish wounded a sambur, but lost it. We got to the Manass at 1, got out our fishing tackle; the river was rising, and the stream very swift; the boats were manned by coolies, who did not understand how to manage them, and they could not propel them against the stream. Cornish went in one boat, and C. and I in the other. We did nothing but swear at the boatmen, and they wound up by upsetting us into the river! We got off with a good ducking, the water as cold as if it were freezing instead of being, as it is now, the height of the hot weather. This is a peculiarity of this river; its waters are always bitterly cold, sufficient in few minutes to cool beer and wine so as to frost the glasses. Our traps arrived at 3 P.M., having gone a roundabout way. Our people said they came across a herd of wild elephants, and saw a rhino or two. We found some constables here, and they had been shooting a good deal, and I fear have disturbed the jungles. They had a deer which they had just shot.

*April 18th.*—C. stayed to fish, whilst Cornish and I went out shooting a short way out. Cornish saw a deer lying down and asked if he should shoot it, but before he could get a gun ready, the brute bolted. We then saw a deer, but did not fire at it. I then bagged a spotted deer, the first I have seen for the last twenty years! I knew they were on the other side of the Manass, but did not know they were to be found on this. Whilst we were padding the deer, up came two rhinos; they were about sixty yards off. I got two shots at the largest, and brought him down



on his knees, but he got away. Cornish fired two shots into the other one, but that, too, escaped into tangled jungle. We then went on till we came upon fresh tracks, then formed line. Cornish came upon two rhinos and hit one badly. I went off after the other, but my elephant behaved very badly, bolting and refusing to go on. Cornish polished his off; it had a nice-sized *butcha* with it, which we determined to try and catch. We then went on to the Poho Marah river, and out of a thicket on its banks rushed two rhinos, the larger pretending to charge, and I knocked them both over right and left. They were nearly of a size, but had no horns to speak of. We then saw another rhino, but the wind blew a perfect gale, and the brutes twigged us miles off. In the afternoon we saw several herds of buffaloes and two rhinos, but it was useless trying to get at them with such a wind blowing. It rained cats and dogs towards evening and gave us a good ducking. Near home Cornish shot a pig. C. had caught two nice-sized mahseer.

*April 19th.*—I went very early to fish, but after two hours' sweat caught nothing. I then bathed and dressed, and Cornish and I went after the *butcha* rhino to try, and catch it. Poor little brute; it was lying by its dead mother's side; we tried to catch it, but had no nets, so after a while it got frightened and bolted, and we lost it; whilst trying to catch the *butcha*, another rhino came towards us, but bolted before we could get a decent shot at it. To-day I made a good shot and bagged a peacock with ball. I had another shot at a rhino later in the day; the brute charged savagely, but I stopped him before he could close, and my *hattee* hooked it as fast as he could. There was lots of blood, but we never got the brute. I got one deer going home. Cornish shot an iguana about six feet long. Got to camp about three, and crossed over to the other side of the Manass.

*April 20th.*—One of our party having work to attend to, it was determined to make a move towards Bijnee to a place called Borgoan, shooting our way there. We fortunately sent some of our traps by boat. We kept no other elephants with us but those we were riding. The rest with our traps we sent direct to Borgoan. We ourselves went over the most lovely looking country I ever saw either for sport or scenery. Marks of bison and every sort of game plentiful, and lovely forests for stalking in. We also saw lots of spotted deer, Cornish got off to stalk them, but as the country was too open he could not get near them; we found hog deer in numbers in short grass in one of the numerous beds of the Manass. Cornish shot two and C. one, but I missed every one. We saw a herd of about fifteen buffaloes,



they did not seem to mind our shots a bit, but when they got our wind, they bolted fast enough! We went to the high table-land where Campbell took some friends a few months previously. The marks of game most plentiful, but dangerous shooting on unsteady *hattees*, as the ravines are numerous with precipitous sides, and a bolt would result in certain death. Seeing no game, as the grass was short, but a lot of buffaloes, I opened fire upon them. A shell of mine bursting in front of them, they right about faced and passed between C. and myself, Cornish a long way to the right. C. polished off the big one, and between us we killed four others. Cornish, notwithstanding that he was some 500 or 600 yards off, opened fire, and fired off every barrel he had, to our great danger, if not to that of the buffaloes. The big buffalo had horns 9 feet 10 inches long. Whilst following up these buffaloes—for every one of the herd was badly hit—we put up a rhino with a good-sized *butcha*, and after a long chase C. and I killed it between us. Where the *butcha* went I don't know. Being pressed for time, and no one knowing exactly where Borgoan was, we had to leave these happy hunting grounds, the best I have seen in Assam. We had great difficulty in getting through this country; on every side nullahs with perpendicular sides from 150 to 300 feet high. What an immense river the Manass must be in the height of the rains. Whilst following up one of these nullahs in the hopes of finding an outlet, I came upon a rhino within ten yards of me; two shots from me followed by two from Cornish laid him low where he had stood. A large male with small horn. In this ravine we also came across a buffalo and a pig, but they got away. We had the greatest difficulty in getting on at all to-day. No sooner had we surmounted the banks of one nullah, than we came upon another with equally impracticable banks, so we wandered about all day, making but little progress and not having an idea where Borgoan was. We saw two other rhinos, about 70 to 80 buffaloes, and I should say several thousands of marsh deer. The whole country, some 150 to 200 feet above the Manass, and with a gradual slope from the foot of the Bhootan range, covered with grass not more than four feet high, and with numerous mud holes. Marks of every sort of game abundant, but we could not stop to hunt first; onwards was the cry. At last darkness set in, and we got into a marsh with great reed jungle averaging from 20 to 30 feet high; which way to go we did not know. The nullahs we came to were quagmires through which the elephants could scarcely struggle. Cornish and I got separated from C. We were bitten to death by musquitos, and altogether we were in a nice fix. The elephants had to crash their



way, the best way they could, in a pitchy dark night, and after about three hours floundering about in this impenetrable jungle we got to a piece somewhat less heavy. We then set to work to fire off our guns to attract C's attention. After waiting about an hour, we were glad to hear shots in return, and at last C. joined us. One of our *mahouts* had an idea we could not be far from our destination, and he knew the general direction, so we continued to force our way through the jungle, and at last were cheered by coming to some open ground and a little cultivation. Here we had the good luck to get hold of a couple of people who guided us to our huts, where we found our servants with the things that had been sent down by boat. Where our elephants with the rest of our baggage were, we did not know in the least. Our hut was a miserable one, but we were lucky enough to get any shelter at all, and after a hasty dinner we gladly turned into our beds.

*April 21st.*—We had to halt here and to send off our elephants in search of our baggage animals, which turned up at 1 P. M. I found that most of my traps, including my ammunition box, my fishing tackle, India-rubber boat, &c., had been left behind in the jungles by a rascally *mahout*, who said his elephant was too done up to bring them on. So we gave him a good thrashing and sent him back for them.

*April 22nd.*—The rascally *mahout* returned saying he could not recognize the place where he had left my traps; so nice for me! So he got another thrashing, and we sent him back with Sookur and went on to Biznee.

*April 23rd.*—Cornish returned to Goalparah, we halted here, and in the evening my missing traps turned up. We went on to Sidlee in the hopes of getting antelope, but the weather changed and it came on to rain, so after a day or two's miserable work we got back to Goalparah. So ended this wretched trip; it was too hurried altogether for sport or comfort.

(To be continued.)

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## THE PURNEAH SOUTHERN HUNT CLUB.

BY MAORI.

How am I to begin? I have but to shut my eyes, and give rein to my imagination, and I am once more in the howdah. I feel the slow rocking onward tread of the tusker. I see the bounding flight of that noble stag, as, mad with pain and terror, he runs the gauntlet down the line. I hear the quick sharp reports of