

J. D. S. Fraser
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H. K. H.

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH,

K. G., K. T., G. C. S. I., G. C. M. G., R. N.

IN INDIA.



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On the way to camp, after leaving Luckimpore, the rivers Ool, Chowka, Surjoo, and Khagi were crossed, all except the Chowka being fordable. The night was dark, and *mussals* (torches) were needed all the way. The effect in passing through some of the belts of forest within the Khyreghur district, and in wading the streams, was very wild and picturesque.

February 23rd.—The camp is situated just on the river bank, and the exact spot is known as Kullean Ghaut. The narrow stream divides the British territory from that of Nepaul; the tract of country on the opposite side having been given over to the Nepalese since the mutiny. It contains the finest forest land in India. The gift was probably more valuable than it was at the time supposed to be. The Royal Standard of Britain is hoisted on one side, whilst that of the Prime Minister, the virtual ruler of Nepaul, is on the other.

The Mohāna abounds with alligators and gurrials. On the 22nd one of Sir Jung's men was carried off and eaten by an alligator, when bathing in the river.

Fourteen years ago this used to be a splendid hunting ground. It is said to be so still, notwithstanding the encroachments of civilisation and cultivation. A tiger has already been heard of, and after breakfast he is to be sought for. Sir Jung Bahadoor is to cross the river to meet H. R. H. in British territory after breakfast, and will accompany him throughout the day. The weather is getting warm, fleecy clouds obscure the sun, but diffuse rather than intercept its rays. Sir Jung's camp resounds with barbaric music.

After breakfast the Nepalese Minister crossed the river on a bridge thrown over for the occasion, and rode up to H. R. H.'s camp. He was preceded by his body-guard and a band of music. H. R. H. and suite received Sir Jung, with Colonel Lawrence, the Political

Agent, Colonel Thomson, the Commissioner of Seetapore, Captain Young, Settlement Office^r, and eight of his principal sirdars, nearly all Colonels, who were presented to the Duke. The Maharajah, who is a slight active and wiry-looking man of about fifty-three, with fair Mongolian features, was dressed in a military uniform, and was decorated with the Grand Cross of the Bath. His head dress was made of the most costly jewels, said to be worth about £15,000. The visit lasted only a few minutes, and shortly after H. R. H. got into the howdah, and, crossing the river, was joined by the Maharajah, Sir Jung Bahadoor, in a plain blue cotton shooting dress, with a broad sola hat; and the Maharajah Sir Digbija Singh, G. C. S. I., of Bulrampore, in a dress very like it, only colored green. The combined party, with a line of ~~about~~ ^{ab} four hundred elephants,—one hundred and thirty belonging to H. R. H.'s camp,—proceeded in the direction of an extensive grass and tree jungle, where the tiger had been marked down, and where, during the last few days, he had killed several buffaloes. On the way some small game was shot, but on approaching the vicinity of the tiger's abode all firing ceased, and arrangements were made by Sir Jung for surrounding the brute. After beating in a long line through a belt of sâl forest, skirting the long grass, the line was gradually formed into a circle, and the elephants were brought so close as to touch each other. It certainly was a magnificent sight, and one seldom witnessed. They were all thoroughly trained, and staunch, as the result proved when the tiger tried in vain to break the line, or rather circle. The enclosure being complete, H. R. H. on the same howdah, a large square one, with Sir Jung Bahadoor, went into the circle, and the tiger soon revealed himself, although the grass was as high as the howdah, with occasional vacant places. He was fired at by the Duke alone, as all the rest of the party were requested not to fire unless the tiger got on any

The camp does not move to-morrow, and it is hoped that the search for tigers may be more successful than it has been to-day.

February 25th.—The camp of H. R. H. is on one side of the Kundwarra, a small and very winding tributary of the Mohan. That of Sir Jung Bahadoor is on the opposite side, and together they must consist of from three to four thousand men, with above five hundred elephants. The Nepaulese Minister has been recently catching wild elephants in the Terai, not many miles from the present camp, and he is very anxious to take H. R. H. to see a fresh herd, which has already been surrounded, caught, but unfortunately time does not permit.

Sir Jung has several very large and powerful male elephants which are used for catching the larger wild elephants. They are kept at some distance from his camp, as they are fierce and sometimes dangerous. After breakfast three of the party went with Colonel Lawrence to Sir Jung's camp to see the Nepaulese feats of cutting wood with the kookrie, a heavy trenchant weapon, with a peculiar curve in the blade and short handle, with which, as Sir Jung said, they do everything from cutting down a tree, or killing a tiger, to making the finest work in wood or other material. His Excellency the Minister was good enough to show how the weapon was used, and cut through a piece of green wood about a foot in circumference with one cut. Some of his people also used the weapon, and one man cut across a piece of semel wood, sixteen inches in circumference, with one blow. The young tree is either let into the ground, and the end bent down, so as to make it spring when the cut is made on the convexity, or one end is rested on the ground, and the other on a forked branch. The end projecting from the crutch is the part to be cut. Like many other things, it is much easier than it looks, and as it is only done in succulent green wood the feat is not so very remarkable, and there is not the least doubt that any English swordsman would, with a week's practice, with the kookerie do all that the Nepau-

lese can do in mere cutting. They expressed amusement when some of the party expressed a wish to try the experiment, and some astonishment when they saw them cut through some young cotton tree that had just been divided by the man who was put forward as the best of the group present. Sir Jung himself is an adept, and he told his visitors that he had on one occasion saved the life of a companion, an English officer, by cutting a tiger in two pieces with the kookerie, just as he was on the point of seizing him.

After breakfast H. R. H. and party got into the howdahs, and soon formed line in quest of a tiger. He was not found, however, and general shooting commenced. The line of about three hundred and fifty elephants was worked by the bugle calls; it extended over more than a mile, and had the howdahs distributed at intervals. The river was crossed, and the beat lay through grassy plains, and often in the forest. One wing of the line indeed was in the forest nearly all the day.

The bag was a varied one, consisting of about eighteen spotted and hogdeer, many hares, black partridges, pea, and jungle fowl. Florican are scarce, but some were shot to-day.

The day was fine, and the heat not great. The Nepaul hills were distinctly seen, and the scenery of the magnificent sâl forest beautiful. The game is found in the grassy plains, very little in the forest, except on the edges, where the spotted axis is often seen. It is too early in the season for tiger shooting. The grassy plains and glades in the forest are too extensive, and it is only by accident that they can be found now, or when they are marked down after killing and eating a cow or buffalo. When gorged the brute is lazy and indisposed to leave the spot. A month or six weeks later the grass is burnt, and the tigers are then confined to particular spots, where they are more readily found and killed.

There was *khubur* of no less than three yesterday, but notwithstanding the excellent arrangements made by Sir Jung and his people, and the line of three hundred and fifty elephants, nothing but their foot prints could be found.

The party has been increased since the 24th by the presence of Captain Speedy, the officer who has charge of the young Abyssinian Prince, and who now holds an appointment in Oude.

The camp will move from Dhunpal, or as some call it Peihlwan Gowrie, ~~on the 26th~~ to-day.

This part of the Terai is almost uninhabited, except by Taros and Bunjarras, nomadic people, probably ~~descendants~~ ~~of~~ the autocthones of the country. A few cattle herding stations called gowries are met with here and there. The rest is grass and forest jungle, in some parts of the terai abounding in game of all kinds, from the elephant and rhinoceros to the miniature pig (*Porculia salvania*) described by Mr. Hodgson, the late Resident in Nepal, and yet a great desideratum for any museum collectors.

February 26th.—The Maharajah, Sir Jung Bahadoor, crossed the river, and came into the camp, bringing with him some of his men, who exhibited their skill in cutting pieces of green wood with the kookrie. Soon afterwards the party got into their howdahs, and the usual beat in line with the same elephants commenced. The beat lay again through the same sort of country, grassy plains, and forest consisting chiefly of *sâl* and ebony. The Mohan was recrossed, and the tents now in British territory again were in sight, when a Goorkah came up and said he had just seen a tiger kill a cow. The cover was perfect for tigers, the country wild and uncultivated, long grass by the river side, and clumps of forest scattered here and there. The howdahs and pads were gradually got into line on the receipt