

BAMBOO BRIDGE OVER THE BURMO-CHINESE FRONTIER.

GOTEIK VIADUCT ON THE MAYMYO-LASHIO RAILWAY.

TRAVEL & COLONISATION

AT THE SIGN OF THE WORLD'S CROSS ROADS.
From Pretoria to Cambridge.

MR F. B. SMITH, C.M.G., who has been Secretary for Agriculture in South Africa since the formation of the Union in 1910, has resigned that position in order to take up the post of Reader in Estate Management at Cambridge University. In making this change Mr Smith is only returning to his first love. He was one of the brilliant company known as "Lord Milner's young men," and before he went out to South Africa at the beginning of the century had started a distinguished career as an agriculturist in this country. He is a Cambridge graduate who has studied both the science and practice of farming and estate management, not only working on farms in various parts of the country, but serving his articles with a firm of estate agents in order to become acquainted with the details of office work. In 1894, when thirty years of age, he was appointed Lecturer in Rural Economics at the Wye Agricultural College, then but newly formed, and quickly advanced to Professor of Agriculture and Vice-Principal. Lord Milner, when he became Governor of the Transvaal after the Boer War, selected Mr Smith as his agricultural adviser, and appointed him Director of Agriculture for the Transvaal, a position which he held from 1902 onwards. The Transvaal Department of Agriculture became the nucleus of the Union Department, and Mr Smith naturally passed on to the position of Secretary for Agriculture in the Union. The development of the Department, notwithstanding setbacks due to the war, owes much to Mr Smith's wise direction and enlightened initiative. He has travelled widely in Canada and the United States, as well as in South Africa, and not the least notable feature of his administration has been the development of agricultural education in the Union. This year the Union Parliament has voted for the purpose of the sum of £156,000, or nearly half as much again as last year. Colleges have been multiplied, and the spirit abroad in South Africa to-day is such that the candidates for admission are more numerous than the vacancies.

"The White Man's Grave."

West Africa is still very far from being a place to which Europeans resort for their health, but the conditions of residence there are much better than they were in the days when it earned an unenviable reputation as the white man's grave. The climate has not altered, but sanitary conditions have improved, and the white residents have learned what rules they must observe to avoid needless risk. At any rate, the Parliamentary Paper relating to British West Africa, "Vital Statistics of Non-Native Officials," which makes a welcome reappearance this year after being suspended since 1915, shows gratifying changes in both the death rate and the invaliding rate since the early years of this century. Then the death rate ranged between 80 and 30 per thousand annually; last year it was 12.5 per thousand. In the same period the invaliding rate has declined from between 60 and 70 per thousand to 27.5 per thousand. Neither the death rate nor the invaliding rate in 1919 was the lowest on record. The effects of the war continued to be seen in depleted staffs, the average number of white officials being only 2396 against 2535 in 1913. It has not been possible to make up all the arrears of leave, and it will take time to recover completely from the effects of the long-continued strain and privations of the war period. Still, the report is able to record a practical elimination of malaria and yellow fever as primary causes of death; last year not a single death from malaria was recorded, and only one from yellow fever. The most deadly disease is blackwater fever, to which eight officials fell victims out of a total of thirty deaths from all causes. As evidence of the increasing ability of white officials to serve for long periods without a break-down, the report shows that the retirement on pension on account of ill-health were, for the first time, less than those on other grounds.

THE NORTHERN SHAN STATES.

THE NORTHERN SHAN STATES comprise a group of five or six native states situated on the north-eastern frontier of Burma, adjoining the Chinese province of Yunnan. The chief means of approach is from Rangoon via the Burma Railway, which has a terminus at Lashio, some fifty miles west of the Chinese frontier. The journey from Rangoon to Lashio takes two days and two nights, travelling via Maymyo, which is the hill station and summer residence of the Government of Burma. Each state is under its own native ruler, and the group is controlled by a representative of the Government of India, the Superintendent of the Northern Shan States, whose headquarters are at Lashio.

The physical characters of the country are those of a corrugated plateau. The general level is some 2000ft., but is broken by narrow valleys and by mountains which rise in several instances to over 7000ft. Much of the country closely resembles the mountainous uplands of the Montgomeryshire-Merionethshire borders. The rivers are not navigable to any extent, and with the exception of a mining company's railway, some forty miles in length, which connects the ore deposits at Bawdwin with the Burma Railway at Nam Yao, communications are maintained by means of jungle paths and mule tracks. Along the last a considerable caravan traffic passes to and from China. The native population is composed chiefly of hill tribes—Shans, Kachins, and Palaungs—among whom the Shan element predominates. They live in small, isolated villages of some fifty inhabitants. The alien population—Europeans, Indians, Chinese, and Burmese—is mostly found in the neighbourhood of the railway and mining settlements. As might be expected in such a polyglot country, there is no satisfactory "lingua franca," but the most useful language to a European is Burmese, and next to it Hindustani; most of the village headmen understand the former.

The native population is essentially agricultural, but the physical characters of the country militate against its ever developing to any appreciable agricultural value. Cattle rearing is mostly in the hands of Gharuka immigrants from Nepal. The chief industry is connected with the silver, lead, and copper properties of the Burma Corporation at Bawdwin. The deposits were worked in a crude fashion centuries ago by the Chinese, and the remains of their workings, bridges, and entrenchments are still extant. The country was completely deforested by these ancient miners for miles around, and to-day is quite bare of even the ubiquitous

bamboo. When the local supply of wood was finished, and they had to go farther afield for their fuel, rather than carry the wood to the workings they chose to carry the ore to the wood; and remains of their slag can still be found in small jungle streams ten to fifteen miles away across mountainous country.

Although the Northern Shan States are situated in the tropics, the climate is by no means tropical. During the dry (cold) season, November to March, European clothes and even fires in the bungalows are necessary, though at midday the temperature is about that of a July day in England. The rainy season commences in May and lasts till the end of October. The country as a whole is remarkably healthy, except for spasmodic epidemics of cholera, plague, smallpox, and lately influenza, which invade the country either from Burma or via the Chinese caravan trade from Yunnan.

As to the sport obtainable, mabseer are plentiful. In the Nantmu River, which is about the size of the Severn at Welshpool, it is by no means rare to see six or more, ranging in weight from 20lb. to 50lb., in the same pool. I have repeatedly fished the Nantmu with almost every conceivable variety of tackle, except live baiting, without success. I suspect that most of the mabseer caught in this country have been obtained by means of "Nobel's Persuader," which, I need hardly say, is illegal.

Duck and teal are found only in a few isolated places; snipe, wherever there is wet padi, Peacock, pheasant, partridge, woodcock, and two varieties of green pigeon are numerous. The same remark applies to jungle fowl, which closely resemble the ordinary fowl seen in England, and are without doubt the toughest and most deceptive birds I have ever shot. One is apt to underestimate their speed, which is quite equal to that of a high pheasant. The amount of shot they will carry is astonishing. In Borneo I often found that it took more lead to kill a sambar than a bison, and a similar comparison may be drawn between these small jungle fowl of the Northern Shan States and the pheasants. Unless one has an efficient retriever, a wounded bird is seldom bagged; the only native, sportsmanlike though it may seem, is to shoot a wounded bird on the ground.

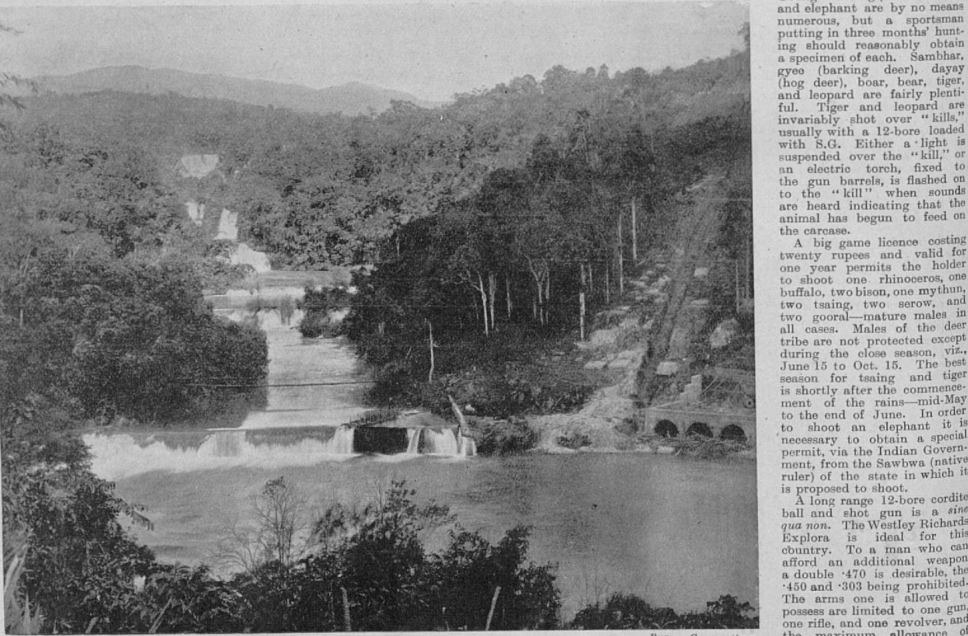
Major Evans, in his excellent book, *The Big Game of Upper Burma*, states that with the exception of thamin the same variety of game is found in the Northern Shan States. But that a long journey into independent territory is necessary. With this I fully concur, but I would mention that the rhinoceros is very rare, as also is the bison (*Bos gaur*),

which the Burmese call Pi-Young. Tsang (*Bos sinensis*) and elephant are by no means numerous, but a sportsman putting in three months' hunting should reasonably obtain a specimen of each. Sambar, gzye (barking deer), dayay (hog deer), boar, bear, tiger, and leopard are fairly plentiful. Tiger and leopard are invariably shot over "kills," usually with a 12-bore loaded with S.G. Either a light is suspended over the "kill," or an electric torch, fixed to the gun barrels, is flashed on to the "kill" when sounds are heard indicating that the animal has begun to feed on the carcase.

A big game licence costing twenty rupees and valid for one year permits the holder to shoot one rhinoceros, one buffalo, two bison, one mynah, two teasing, two serow, and two goral—mature males in all cases. Males of the deer tribe are not protected except during the close season, viz. June 15 to Oct. 15. The best season for teasing and tiger is shortly after the commencement of the rains—to the end of June. In order to shoot an elephant it is necessary to obtain a special permit, via the Indian Government, from the Sawlwa (native ruler) of the state in which it is proposed to shoot.

A long range 12-bore cordite ball and shot gun is a sine qua non. The Westley Richards Explora is ideal for this country. To a man who can afford an additional weapon, a double 470 is desirable, the .450 and .303 being prohibited. The arms one is allowed to possess are limited to one gun, one rifle, and one revolver, and the maximum allowance of ammunition is 100 rounds for each weapon.

J. P. WILLIAMS.
Nantmu, Northern Shan States.



MANSAN FALLS ON THE NAM YAO RIVER, NORTHERN SHAN STATES.

A large hydro-electric plant is being erected at these falls. The conduit and the early stages of the power station are seen on the right-hand side of the photograph.