

## SPORTING TROPHIES.

His Highness the Maharajah of Kuch Behar is one of the Indian potentates who came to England on the occasion of her Majesty's Jubilee, bringing with him the trophies of his prowess as a sportsman, which have been preserved and mounted by Mr. Rowland Ward. Behar is one of the old Mahomedan provinces of India which form part of the valley of the Ganges. Its climate is temperate and its soil fertile; the royal tiger of Bengal harbours within its limits, and its chase is the sport of its rulers and the princes of the land. The skin that is represented in our paper is one of the finest shot by the Maharajah. From the nose to the tip of the tail the animal measured 10 feet 1½ inches; the skin, however is always stretched during preparation, and is now 11 feet 7 inches in extreme length and 5 feet 9 inches wide. Suspended as it is in Mr. Ward's jungle in Piccadilly it is truly a noble trophy.

On the opposite page are further results of the Maharajah's skill; to the right may be seen a representation of a very large fan made of the wing feathers of the giant argus, the largest of the family of the pheasants. These feathers are ornamented with eye-like spots, each looking like a ball in a socket; but during life they are never seen until the bird raises its wing so as to meet above its back, and display its plumage to its mate.

In the centre of the page are the heads of two Indian one-horned **rhinoceroses**, shot by the Maharajah, who, we may remark in passing, is renowned for his great hospitality to English officers and sportsmen, who seek in his more temperate region a respite from the heat of the plains. The **rhinoceroses**, of which there are several distinct species inhabiting Africa, India, and the adjacent islands of Borneo, Sumatra, &c., are characterised by one or sometimes more horns borne on the bones of the nose. They are amongst the most fierce and dangerous to approach of any of the large herbivora, and many are the tales of hairbreadth escapes told by their pursuers. In some species the skin is so dense and hard as to ward off a soft leaden bullet unless fired point blank at a short distance from the animal.

This dense skin has, by a process which Mr. Rowland Ward has perfected, been turned into a variety of novel and beautiful articles. In its natural state it is one of the most difficult materials to work for any useful or ornamental purpose, but Mr. Ward has succeeded in working it almost as tractable as wood, whilst it is, after treatment, as beautiful as tortoise-shell. There is, for example, among the articles he has prepared for his Highness the Maharajah, a beautiful little table of the most exquisite polish and beautiful texture, which looks as if it had been fashioned out of some beautifully-veined transparent marble or clouded amber. Many other articles are made from the same material, such as boxes, trays, riding whips, photograph frames, &c.

The skulls are valuable, for amongst some of the natives of the East the scraped horn administered internally is presumed to possess almost miraculous curative powers.

The head of the arnee bull is interesting. The arnee is the wild buffalo of the swamps of India; its horns sometimes measure over 6 feet each in length; there is a pair of still greater length in the Natural History Museum. They frequent the immense tracts of long grass abounding in dense, swampy thickets, bristling with canes and wild roses; and in these spots, or in the long elephant grass on the banks of jheels, the buffaloes lie during the heat of the day. They feed chiefly at night or early in the morning, often making sad havoc in the fields, and retire in general before the sun is high. They are by no means shy (unless they have been much hunted), and even on an elephant, without which they could not be successfully hunted, may often be approached within good shooting distance. A wounded one will occasionally charge the elephant, and, as we have heard from many sportsmen, will sometimes overthrow the elephant. A small herd will occasionally charge, but a shot or two as they are advancing will usually scatter them.

The head of the wild boar is a trophy of which every Indian sportsman is proud. The Indian wild hog differs from that of Europe; it is lighter, more active, and consequently more dangerous to attack; its size occasionally reaches as much as 40 inches at the shoulder, and the skull ranges from 14 inches to 16 inches in length, with tusks 7 inches long. "Spear- ing the wild boar," says Jerdon, "is one of the favourite sports of India wherever it can be pursued, and is one of the most exciting pursuits, the dash of danger intermingled with the excitement of the chase giving it a zest wanting in fox-hunting; and the greater address and personal skill required giving it also the palm over tiger-shooting. The speed of the wild hog for a short distance must be tried on a good horse before it can be realised. Now and then, as before stated, even the tiger has fallen a victim to the impetuous dash of the wild boar, and the sudden onslaught of a wounded hog when brought to bay occasionally proves too speedy to be avoided even by a timorous and active horse."

In addition to the trophies collected by the Maharajah, we may present a few samples from other sources. The superb African elephant was one which was shot by his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh in South Africa. The African differs from the Indian species in the larger size of its tusks, which yield the finest ivory, and in the monstrous size of its ears, which well-nigh cover the shoulders of the animal. The chase of the elephant is, as may be imagined, not unattended with danger. Heavy balls are used; but the brain is so small and deeply situated in the bones of the skull that it is not always reached by the bullet, and then the hunter is in great peril unless some aid is at hand. This specimen is said to have been shot in the forehead as it was advancing on the Prince.

The noble pair of antlers are those of the wapiti, or large deer of North America. They are the property of Mr. Frank Cooper, of Bulwell, Notts, having fallen to his own gun when shooting in North America. Mr. Cooper is one of the most enterprising and indefatigable of sportsmen, and is now engaged in large game shooting in South Africa along with that well-known hunter, Mr. Selous.

Sporting trophies are not restricted to any one region of the globe. There are hundreds of homes in England adorned with spoils from various parts of the world, belonging to animals of various families. The quaint aquatic pachyderm the tapir adorns the halls of more than one sportsman in Great Britain. These animals are natives of both the Old and the New World, frequenting the rivers of South America and India; and in the Malay Peninsula several species are known, varying with the localities. All are remarkable for the flexible prehensile nose, which makes an approach, however slight, to the greatly elongated nose, or as it is usually called the trunk, of the elephant.

We have been recounting trophies of the chase; but there are others of more peaceful victories, our engraving shows the head of a champion beast that has won its pride of place at the Smithfield Cattle Show made into as attractive a trophy as any of its savage congeners. Such evidences of success in breeding improved stock are not uncommon in many country mansions, and are regarded with great interest and pleasure by those who have been sufficiently fortunate to secure them.

There remains for notice but one artistic trophy. When Mr. Ward registered this design, he must have had in his mind the words of the poet:

The moping owl doth to the moon complain  
Of such as wandering near her ancient tower  
Molest her silent solitary reign.

Here the owl and the crescent moon are brought into apposition, and as an artistic grouping with admirable effect.—*Queen.*