THIRTY YEARS OF SHIKAR.

From time to time the suggestion has been made to me by Anglo-Indian friends that I should write an account of my experiences in the wide field of Indian shikar, and up to the present time I have always repelled this idea as impracticable, or at least unprofitable. Hitherto I have always been very chary of telling tiger stories *viva voce*, from a confirmed conviction that the most brilliant conversationalist could not make any such narrative palatable to his audience. Conversation nowadays does not lend itself to monologue; the anecdotal person is as much out of vogue as pigtails on English heads; and the man who went about describing how he killed this or that tiger would now be regarded by society as an anachronism as intolerable as that princess of interminable tales—Scheherezade—would be in the present day.

But I have lately been encouraged to believe that the narrative which would be wholly unacceptable if administered orally, may meet with a more indulgent reception if it appear in print. Even in this age of hurry there are in the lives of most men odd hours of leisure, during which sporting reminiscences may afford a wholesome relief to the mysterious murder of the sensation novel or the intrigue of the French yellow-back, or the miscellaneous crimes of other branches of fiction devoted to the annihilation of the Decalogue; and for those leisure hours I write. I shall be no more autobiographical than I can help, and if I touch upon some of the doings of Anglo-Indians of a bygone generation, this ancient history will be, as far as possible, confined to the matter in hand—Indian shikar.

And now that I try to conjure back out of the distant past the incidents in my sporting career, memory fails me save as to the most salient points. Phantasmal tigers, panthers, and other *fauna* of the jungle, pass in dim array before my mind's eye, a procession longer far than that of ghosts which tortured Richard on Bosworth field, or the string of apparitions that Macbeth interviewed in the witches' cave. I say with the latter usurper—

"Another yet! A seventh! I'll see no more:
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass
Which shows me many more;"

and oddly enough, the most conspicuous are the tigers I did not shoot. That bygone period seems to have commenced at a time as remote almost as those days when men measured the passage of the hours by the clepsydra or Alfred's candles; and, sooth to say, I have never cared to keep my memory in practice by recounting the bags made, or chances missed. Sufficient and very keen was the joy of pursuing the quarry, but deadly uninteresting that pursuit as the subject of subsequent conversation. This, I fancy, is very much the case with every man who has killed much big game, however thrilling the incidents that may have accompanied the slaughter.

It did not seem, when I went out to India to join the mercantile house of a relative in Calcutta, that very large opportunities in the way of sport would present

themselves for me. My work consisted of sordid office details relating to Indian produce, and sale and barter; it was sedentary, save for an occasional run in an office *jaun* to the Custom-house or elsewhere, and provided no occupation or thought beyond invoices, ships' manifests, fluctuations in prices, and similarly humdrum commercial items. It soon became revealed to me that this was not work after my mind; I had no desire to become a merchant prince; my aspirations inclined rather to the career of leather-leggings than of Dick Whittington, and so the mercantile bonds, that were strained from the first moment of my wearing them, snapped in the course of a year or so, and set me free from the city of palaces to make my way in the great beyond hazily known to me as the Mofussil. Heredity, not I, was to blame for this; my forebears had been sportsmen, good with the gun, the rod, and in the saddle, and I was no degenerate scion of my race.

Yet during my term of bondage in Calcutta, I served in some sort my shikari apprenticeship, and made, with great pleasure to myself, the acquaintance of some notable pillars of every form of sport. Those Calcutta days were so long ago that a fair maiden who then adorned Chowringhee society, and claimed to be the original Becky Sharp, was still young, and still, I suppose, on the look-out for her Rawdon Crawley. And Calcutta was then a much more go-ahead place, socially considered, than it is at present. For in those good old days, when John Company was king and Downing Street an unimportant factor in Indian administration, the Haileybury civilians of the Bengal Presidency commenced their career by entering the college of Fort-William; I do not say they began active service by passing through that college, for in some instances they did not pass out of that institution at all—one collegian, who was a hero in his day, although now forgotten, having spent seven years off and on as a Fort-William undergrad. and then retired.

And these students, who by no means studied over-deeply, if at all, were many in number, accomplished in manly sports, admirable in the ball-room and cricket-field, and prized in the matrimonial market as good for £300 a-year dead or alive. As far as this mercenary appraisement went, it should be stated that it sometimes erred as to the value of the living collegian, inasmuch as he generally was worth many thousands of rupees less than nothing. For those were the glorious days when credit abounded and the shroff was ever ready with the loan required by embryo rulers of the land. Fine old times, when the young civilian could, and did, live at the rate of £4000 or £5000 a-year on an income of £400—making things go merrily during his collegiate days, and recking nothing of the years of sadness that should follow, when with slow labour and quick regret he came to pay the heavy cost of those Calcutta joys. All that has been changed; the latter-day civilian goes not now into a Presidency college to become a social ornament, but is drafted off promptly to some Mofussil station to learn his work; the money-lender in these degenerate times is coy in the matter of advances, and even the tailor looks to be paid in the course of a year or two.

But in the pre-Mutiny days the Haileybury civilians in Calcutta were towers of strength in the

C. C. Club and the Calcutta hunt. Many a pleasant day have I spent on the smooth turf of the Calcutta Cricket Club playing against the garrison or any eleven that came to hand, when the victory that crowned our efforts was mainly due to the skill of the Haileybury men; and wherever the hounds met, there was to be seen a strong contingent of these unemployed, well mounted, and good for going while their horses or the run lasted.

Not very satisfying were those runs to the sportsman. I fancy that most of us engaged in them had to make believe largely, after the manner of Dick Swiveller's marchioness, that we were really enjoying the sport of kings. For mostly the pack, newly imported year by year on account of the climate, was in no condition for travelling: the jackal was, we found, a sorry substitute for the fox, and the country hunted was generally devoid of those features that delight the hunting man in England. I have seen the hounds dead-beat and brought to a standstill in actual sight of their jackal. And as the climate of Calcutta has not changed, I suppose the Calcutta hounds are still newly imported every season, and that now, as then, a morning with the hunt does not always repay the hunting man for getting up in the night and driving in the dark to Dumdum or Cox's Bungalow, or wherenot. Many a one of the gilded youth of that old time has had a smarter burst with a bailiff behind him than ever he had with a jackal in front. For then the bailiff was, as Pope remarked, a mighty hunter, and his prey was man.

But we made believe some of us, preferring any apology for sport to pondering over the Baghobahar or Mahabharat in the company of a moonshi, or drawing up bills of lading with a Banyan's aid; and so we hunted *con amore*, and were as glad over it as we could manage. We were eminently hilarious one Christmas night on the eve of a meet at Dumdum (then the headquarters of the artillery in Bengal), when a dozen or so met in one of the gunner's quarters after mess, in view to making a night of it. We made believe that we wanted a roaring fire, and, fuel running short, some of our host's furniture was requisitioned. We caroused there by the blaze of table-top and chair-legs, and we finished up making a night of it some time in the small hours, when most of us had to get on to the roof to extinguish a fire that was burning merrily round the chimney-stack. Satisfied with this new form of house-warming, we retired to our couches for a couple of hours' sleep before starting for the meet. One of the revellers of that Christmas night was he who, not many years afterwards, made India ring from end to end with a shout of admiration at his heroism, and caused each British heart to mourn the loss of such a soldier in the moment of his glorious achievement. He it was, the gallant Willoughby, who in 1857 blew in the gate of Delhi, and died in the execution of this duty.

He is gone. Lives there yet, I wonder, that man (an indigo-planter) who lent me a mount one day at Dumdum? And if he survives, has he yet fully repented the wrong he did me by that loan? I had my own hireling hunter there, a discreet animal of mature age and much experience in the art of saving himself. He was good enough for the purpose of the day, however; he could be reckoned upon to clear the sunken roadways and ditches that inter-

sected fields and the banks raised above them; he might be depended upon to jump into, if he did not jump over, the streams that here and there occurred; and, at any rate, he was as good a goer as the hounds. But there at the meet was this planter, a hail-fellow-well-met man of deceptive appearance, in that he looked guileless as the callow chick, and with him a string of splendid walers in tip-top condition; and there were placed at the disposal of such as chose to accept the offer a dozen horses. There was nothing in this liberality that necessarily excited surprise or suspicion: indigo-planters were known for their lavish hospitality, their open houses, and their love of sport. Who could regard this one as a Greek to be feared even when he brought gifts? I entertained no doubt of him or his stud; I chose a noble beast that looked like a flier, mounted and rode off with the crowd, leaving my hired Rosinante to stroll back to town. Oh, what a time I had of it in that hunt! My steed was a flier, it is true, but the flight was whitherward that erratic beast inclined, and not where I would have had him go. Obviously the bit was an unknown form of torture to him, or he had a mouth of iron corresponding with a will of the same material, and when he was not occupied in running me into difficulties, amidst bamboos and so forth, he devoted all his energy (which was considerable) to bucking. Once he shot me over his head by the latter method, twice he put me down heavily by running me into timber, and it was only because time and opportunity failed that he let me off with those three spills. If at the end of that penitential ride any one had put to me the question of the courtly Chesterfield, "If man ever hunted twice?" I should have felt disposed to answer, "No man but a fool." However, nobody put that question; instead of it, I was asked by that perfidious planter whether that beast of his had carried me well. He had the effrontery to ask me this with an air of seraphic joy and artlessness; and when I endeavoured, out of respect for his feelings, to tone down the eccentricities of his animal, blandly informed me that it had never been broken, or, as far as he knew, had a saddle on its back. Ah, they were fine, free-spirited, open-hearted fellows, those Bengal planters, and (at all events this one was) generous with the ribs and necks and collar-bones of other people.

But I had not been long in Calcutta before, by a lucky chance, the joys of pig-sticking were revealed to me. If hunting the fox be the sport of kings, surely pig-sticking is the sport of kaisers—especially when the Bengal boar is the quarry. Well enough, as a substitute, is the boar of the Ganges, Kadirs, and thereaway; but he cannot gallop, and does not fight after the manner of his Bengali congener, which goes like a greyhound for a few furlongs, when he elects to move, and dies fighting to the last, or, possibly, goes not at all, but opens the attack, and charges again and again, until, a dozen spear-wounds in his sides, his life gives out. Splendid is the race for the first spear when the boar flies, and quick is the race when the gallant beast is young: cups are given to those who take most first spears in the Cawnpore and Meerut Kadir hunts; *kudas* is for him of Bengal the sole but sufficient mode of honour. But better even than the race is the fray that lasts while the boar can stand.

Many were the songs sung by pig-stickers of Bengal in honour of the creature they hunted—songs with a refrain that was generally to the effect that "the boar, the boar, the mighty boar" was blessed with all the virile virtues. Possibly in moments of enthusiasm and wassail this animal may have been over-praised. He has not a pleasant temper, his habits are open to unfavourable criticism, he may fail in his family relations—but he has plenty of pluck. He will fight anything that comes in his way; not even a tiger daunts him, and, what is more, the tiger sometimes succumbs to the terrible tushes of the boar. I have seen a boar bearing away from such heroic battle the marks—deep and frequent marks—of a tiger's claws, and that boar swam the Ganges in flood,—a sufficient feat for an unwounded animal, and one that should set at rest the question whether pigs can swim.

A dangerous brute is that Bengal boar. Throughout the whole of my sporting career only two of my beaters were killed, and one of these was cut to death by a boar; a leopard killed the other: not one was either killed or mauled by tigers.

But my first experiences in this line were, I regret to say, less connected with the mighty boar than with the sow, which, though it cannot rip up a horse's flanks or belly as can the boar, can gallop a little, and, instead of ripping, can bite. This chase of the female swine I saw what time I was out with the Calcutta Tent Club in their beats on either side of the Hooghly, between Calcutta and Diamond Harbour. A memorable club was this in its palmy days, and of some importance when I saw it in its decadence. It is celebrated by a large engraving from a picture by Mr William Taylor, B.C.S. (brother of the better known artist Frederick Taylor), which once was a familiar object on the walls of Indian sportsmen. In that presentment of the Club were shown several lights of the Indian turf and sporting world — Baron H. de Larpent, Jim Patton, the two Brackens, and others; including that distinguished member (the central figure of the group, unless the prostrate boar be so considered) Billy Pitt, the huntsman of the Club.

I first attended a meet of the C. T. C. as a guest of William Bracken, a sportsman known principally in connection with tiger-shooting. In that pre-railway time, when the Mofussil beyond Barrackpore was only to be reached by slow and wearying travel by palanquin, or slower journeying by river in the old-time boat-house of India—the *budgerow*—the great majority of Calcutta men passed their lives without penetrating into the interior farther than a buggy would carry them; but William Bracken made an annual expedition into the tiger country along the Ganges between Bhagulpore and Maldah, and there spent a month in the pursuit of big game. That was *the* month of the twelve for him, and for the other eleven he made out his time by an occasional jaunt with the Tent Club and week-end gatherings at his country house at Budge-Budge, near which quail and snipe, and perhaps an alligator, were to be shot; and where also in their season the mango fish, dear to the epicure, was to be eaten in its prime. There was a billiard-table too, almost as a matter of course, for every Indian house of any account possessed one; and there was occupation for the lazy or meditative ones in watching from the wide verandah of the

upper floor the argosies that passed to and fro along the river—those argosies that then were to be seen carrying their white sheets from stem to stern and from deck to topgallant yards, and gliding majestically over the waters with silent strength — not the latter-day titanic craft of many funnels and dismal smoke and racket that puff their way along with vulcanic strength that is destitute of grace.

It was on the Budge-Budge gram-fields, when we were shooting quail, that I had my first gun accident. Loading the right barrel while the left was loaded, the latter contrived to discharge itself; some of the shot knocked off the peak of my wide-brimmed *sola topee*, and that was the sum total of the damage done on that occasion. But not long after that, while I was shooting snipe in a Howrah jheel, and when the snipe were more plentiful than I had ever seen them, the same mishap occurred; and that time it was the end of my thumb, not my hat, that was carried away. I made a desperate effort to continue shooting when the flow of blood was stayed and the mutilated digit bandaged in a pocket-handkerchief, but with only partial success. Breech-loaders, I need hardly say, were unknown in those days; and even when they had come to be common, I perversely stuck to my muzzle-loaders for two or three years. I lost a good many snipe by this ultra-conservatism; but my old chum Jacky Hills profited thereby, in that when we shot Oudh jheels together, the pedestrian advantage I enjoyed through length of limb and lighter body was neutralised by my having to stop to load.

William Bracken had experienced and survived a much more perilous incident than mine above described—an incident which was commemorated in his library by a tiger's skull, in the jaws of which a shoe was held. That shoe, with Bracken's foot in it, had been held clutched by the cruel teeth of that skull while the tiger lived. Bracken had wounded the tiger, a fighting one that charged the elephant upon which Bracken rode; the elephant fell and threw its rider; the tiger seized upon the foot that wore that shoe; the latchet of the shoe was partly severed by the tiger's fangs, and Bracken was able to pull his foot out of its dangerous position, leaving the shoe behind for the tiger's delectation, until a bullet from another howdah made an end of the tiger and the episode. Bracken's foot was sorely wounded: the effects never wholly disappeared; but this accident stayed not those annual expeditions to the Ganges Churs.

In my first Doorgah Poojah I graduated finally in pig-sticking. The Doorgah Poojah is a Hindoo holiday very strictly observed in Lower Bengal, and I observed it with the keenness of a Brahmin. This festival gave me almost a fortnight's freedom from mercantile affairs, and enabled me to go with Jack Johnston after the pigs of Berhampore and Kishnaghur. It was a sufficient privilege to be his companion. It was bliss unalloyed to share his sport.

Any man might well be proud of having served his novitiate under so perfect a master. The king of spears he was called: with him it was in very truth a case of *a cuspide corona;* and where he rode few were the first spears that went to others. What a happy fellow he was, and how much he did to make his companions happy! He was a man of fortune when

associates of his own age were owing their way on pittances of Rs. 400 or Rs. 500 a-month. He had a stud of fourteen or fifteen horses, all but one of which were the best Arabs that money could buy; and every horse in his stable except one or two racers, did he drive in his buggy or lend to his friends as if it had been a Rs. 300 hack instead of a creature worth Rs. 2000 or Rs. 3000. And while still a young man he was free to come home to England, where he has so far succeeded with his English stud that he has won his Derby.

What a revelation of sport was that fortnight spent with the jovial and hospitable indigo-planters of the Kishnaghur borderland! There was no question of hunting sows thereaway; boars were there sufficient for the purpose, if not in quantity to satiate; and every day brought to the six or eight horsemen engaged two or three chances of blooding their spears, if not always the first chance.

And that expedition led the way to another and more ambitious one of some months later, when in very much the same country Henry Torrens, the Resident at Moorshedabad, held his great gathering of pig-stickers. I think that meet must have been then, and still remain, unique in its way. Nearly a hundred elephants marched in line through the long kassia grass, where the pigs had their lairs; six or seven horsemen rode on either flank in pairs or threes, ready, when the pigs should break from their cover, to separate the boars from the sounders and ride them down; and on some half-a-dozen howdah elephants were sportsmen of a less enterprising kind, or enterprising sportsmen without available mounts, who helped to drive the pigs by a fusilade directed against hog-deer, black partridge, florican, leek, and hare. Twelve days did this incomparable chase endure, and ninety and nine were the boars whose skulls and tushes recorded the hunters' prowess. I seem to remember that, on the last day of those happy dozen, we were all eaten up by anxiety to bag the round hundred, and how, when that day was spent and night bore down upon our happy hunting-ground, we were unanimous in preferring our tally of 99, because, as we argued, people to whom we narrated the history of the great Torrens' hunt might be incredulous if we said the boars killed were a hundred, neither more nor less. Possibly we were moved to argue thus by that old-time story of the Indian colonel who, being asked why he had not given a full thousand as his day's bag of snipe instead of 999, gravely observed,—"Sir, do you think I would perjure my immortal soul for a single snipe?" However this may be, we rejoiced heartily on that last night of Torrens' hunt: we drank toasts and made speeches, of which none were worth remembering save that of our host, and most were worth forgetting straightway; and we sang songs, principally in honour of the noble boar, with rattling choruses in any tune and to any time, oblivious of the fact that a dirge to that animal would have been more appropriate and quite as tuneful; and, finally, we carried our host in his palanquin to the *ghât*, some two furlongs off, where his boat was moored—an agonising exploit for our unpractised shoulders—and shouted ourselves hoarse until the founder of the feast was carried down the stream out of earshot.

Apropos of the above snipe yarn, I wonder if the Indian colonel continues to the present day to play

the Munchausen. Somehow, it always happened in my time that the colonel monopolised this *rôle* in public estimation, and one might have justifiably believed that the army was traduced, and the civilians let off too easily in this connection. It was of a colonel (the brilliant if erratic Teddy Oakes) that people told the tale how, being at sea in a violent storm when hope was abandoned, and the passengers were bidden to pray, his nearest approach to orison was, "Oh, Pilot, 'tis a fearful night!" It was a colonel who, according to fable, declared that on a voyage round the Cape his ship was spoken (thousands of miles from land) by a man in a tub who would not come on board the ship, but took in a supply of biscuit and water and was left in mid-ocean. It was a colonel from whom the wily snake escaped by entering a bamboo tail first, after that colonel had twice pulled it from that refuge by the tail. And according to popular belief, a colonel told that story about the quail which nearly resulted in his prompt discomfiture. For that colonel described a flight of quail that clouded the sky, and then, having settled, covered the parade-ground in close-packed swarm; and he told how he got out an 18-pounder cannon and loaded it almost to the muzzle with powder and No. 10 shot, and trained that gun to volley its contents into the thick of the birds, and then he asked of those who sat at mess, "How many do you think I shot?" and a subaltern of more wit than veneration answered him "a million." Whereupon that colonel changed his tactics to meet the situation, and said "No, by G—, sir, not one!" These things were old, old chestnuts a generation since: perhaps, like many another of their kind, they have had a neogenesis.

In those Calcutta days there was often a day or half-day when I could get away into a snipe jheel, and on many occasions I was able to make bags of twenty and twenty-five couple. That Howrah jheel was the nearest, as it was the best, of those within easy reach. It was not as well known as others, and it was as much in the country as if it had been fifty miles away. The E. I. Railway, which for many years had its terminal station at Howrah, was not then, or had only recently been, constructed. The Hooghly had not then been bridged, and one made one's way from Calcutta to my jheel by dinghy across the river, and then about a mile on foot. Many a pleasant picnic of one have I had on the banks of that swamp, where the shade of luxuriant tropical vegetation made the mid-day halt restful to eye and limbs, and where a refreshing draught of cocoanut-milk was to be had in season straight from the trees that spread their broad leaves above. The jheel was just enough for one gun; it could be compassed in an hour and a half or so; and birds that were roused in one part of it would generally, if the gunner permitted, settle in another. In later years I fancy the snarers have spoiled this and other jheels round the Bengal metropolis by netting snipe for the Calcutta market; but the Howrah jheel was a really good one in my day, and dear to me for other reasons than because it was the tomb of—part of me. Why sport should be spoiled by this netting of snipe I am at a loss to conceive: to the Calcutta Khansamah any bird of attenuated bill and legs—snippets, water-rail, &c. —passes for a snipe, just as any bird not bigger than the house-sparrow answers to his conception of ortolan. I have seen the impostor snipe—a very mocking bird

—on dinner-tables outside Calcutta, and the fraudulent ortolan enters into the *menu* of most of India's provinces. For the genuine ortolan —that delicious mouthful—is, as far as my experience goes, very strictly localised. I have seen, shot, and eaten them in only one district (Kishnaghur); but I have had ground larks, sand-martins, and many other small fowl offered to me in the name of the ortolan in twenty districts and in three provinces. The sport provided by this winged delicacy is, I need hardly say, poor; it is in fact demoralising, for there can be no question of aiming at this bird or that: the shootist has to fire his charge of dust shot into the brown of the swarm that whirls over the dusty plain like unto a cloud of dust. But if one cannot get ortolan save by shooting them, then I should feel inclined to shoot.

After a year or so of town life, which was brightened by occasional spells of sport, and dimmed more frequently by wearying consideration of freights and custom dues, and grey shirtings and madapolams, and other items of commerce, I broke the bonds that bound me to a desk in Clive Street, and made for the Mofussil. I could not shake the dust of Calcutta off my feet in a literal sense, because I quitted that capital during its mud season, but I did so figuratively, and from that hour ceased to be a townsman.

I made for Kishnaghur, the happy centre of a series of snipe jheels, that came almost up to the compounds of some of the bungalows: I travelled in a *bauleah* —a smaller edition of the *budgerow*—but I did not make direct for my destination. I had an important engagement with myself (now my only master) to keep by the way. I had to visit a snipe jheel (then famous above all to the happy initiated) where a record of fifty couple in a day had been made, and I had to break that record if I could. At that season—*i.e.*, the month of October—this jheel was accessible by water, with some amount of running aground in the navigation of the nullah that ran past it and into the Hooghly, two or three miles distant. It was touch and go with us as the *bauleah* was hauled up this shallow stream; indeed there were innumerable touches, but, happily, there were as many goes, and ultimately my ark was brought to anchor at the very verge of the shooting-ground, just as night fell, and my floating home was lighted up for a short evening; and then dinner came, and mosquitoes and countless winged creatures that dashed themselves against the candle-shades in battalions, and upon the burning wicks in platoons, and generally make night terrible for any one but the most ardent entomologist in a new field of research. I was not a scientist that way, if in any way, nor were these flying torments novelties to me, so I sought early slumber in the darkness.

Next morning I was up betimes, to make as long a day as possible for my record-breaking expedition. The Kanchrapara jheel was about a mile in length, and of a breadth that admitted of three or four guns shooting in line. I had it all to myself, and had to get over fifty couple of snipe out of it. It was an epoch-making occasion, and, refreshed by a long night's sleep, I felt equal to the task and in a mood to shoot my best. My first half-hour among the birds encouraged confidence and hope. Snipe were plentiful: at one time I had five couple down upon the ground, all killed before my coolies commenced picking up: when half my

allotted time was done I had bagged just thirty couple, and I had then some untried portion of the jheel ahead, and all the birds that had gone back upon my course, to reckon with. At the close of the day, when I had shot to the end of the jheel and back to my boat, I had on the snipe-sticks 51½ couple: I had broken one record and set up for myself another that, in several years of steady shooting, I have never again accomplished. Other Indian shootists (including colonels) may have got bigger bags—notably in the best days of that splendid snipe country that lies along the Oudh and Rohilcund Railway line, some twenty miles from Allyghur; but that is my record, and I am satisfied with it.

I devoted the following day to that jheel and the ambitious attempt to outdo my first effort. Ambition on that occasion, as is not uncommon with it, got me into trouble. I attempted to beat up some dangerous ground in the middle of the swamp—treacherous yellow bog that shook under foot, and, its crest being broken, absorbed one slowly but with disagreeable certainty. I went up to the middle in this; saved myself from sinking deeper by spreading my arms out on the unbroken surface; and was eventually dragged out, covered with mud and ignominy, by my coolie attendants. That was a grand day's shooting also, and I brought to bag forty-nine couple, including two or three birds wounded on the previous day. I thought then, and I have always since thought, that there is no shooting to compare with that of a good snipe jheel.

Do any of Maga's readers know whence the snipe come and what instinct directs their migrations? They come into Great Britain and Ireland in the early winter, say in November: that is the season, also, in which they arrive in Northern India—*i.e.*, in November and the early winter; but they arrive in Australia and Tasmania in the same month, although that month commences the Australasian summer. This seeming incongruity of migratory purpose one might explain by the assumption that the time of their arrival in the places named does not depend upon the climate of those localities, but upon the necessity that drives them forth from their summer home (*i.e.*, their habitat between May and November): that they are obliged to leave that Oxygean home about November, and betake themselves to any spot whatever where their feeding-grounds are to be found. But the question is further complicated by the erratic conduct of Indian snipe. These birds arrive in Northern India, as I have said, in November, when the weather is fairly cold, or at least cool; but they come into Bengal and Southern India in September, when it is blazing hot. On two 1st of Septembers I have shot them (some two or three couple) in the Kishnaghur jheels. Do these snipe of the south start from that unknown habitat of theirs two months before the rest of their kind? and if so, why? I am told that these birds of Southern India are of a different variety from those of the north, although I could never distinguish one from the other; but that affords no explanation of the snipes' vagaries, but rather the reverse—for if all Indian snipe were of one variety, the question in hand might be disposed of (as far as India is concerned) by the bold assertion that these migrants first settled in the south and moved up northwards later on.

Their migrations are very bewildering. Thirty years ago there

was snipe-shooting in Tasmania almost equal to that of India. Officers attached to the Tasmanian garrison of that time have told me of their bags of twenty-five and thirty couple. To-day snipe are found in but few places, and only in small numbers. One of my Tasmanian friends was good enough to reserve a small snipe-shooting for me one year: there were only three snipe in this preserve, and the curious thing is that every year three, or perhaps four, snipe come to that same patch of marsh. The decadence of Tasmanian snipe-shooting cannot be attributed to any physical or climatic change in the country—the birds have not been driven away from that land by drainage, as has happened with our Lincolnshire fens. There is nothing but the snipes' caprice to explain it.

This capriciousness on one occasion sold me terribly. I was shooting over a chain of jheels in Oudh, and about sunset came to the last of the series, a small one close to my camp. Although small, it often held a fair number of birds, and might generally be reckoned upon as good for at least six couple; but that evening it was alive with snipe. Even in the failing light of a land that knows no twilight I might have bagged eight or ten couple if I had shot there then, but I resisted the temptation, and fired not at all: to-morrow I promised myself a splendid bag out of that swarm. When I went there next day, brimful of hope, there was not a snipe to be seen, nor were there any number to speak of anywhere that I went after them. And this did not happen in the season when snipe gather together for their departure into space. Even the poor apology that migratory reasons compelled them to disappoint me was not forthcoming. Curiously enough, it happened shortly after I penned the above paragraph that I took up vol. xvii. of 'Longman's Magazine,' in the March number of which is a paper by C. T. Buckland, B.C.S., at one time of Hooghly. He speaks of the Kanchrapara jheel as a magnificent shooting-ground, known then to few besides the men of Hooghly, and tells how a friend of his could bag his fifty couple there. He also mentions a spot in Chittagong where he could always get a couple of snipe on the 1st September.

For some three years I made the most of such shikar as was to be had in Kishnaghur and the neighbouring districts. I had charge of zemindarees and indigo factories, and my work was mostly in the saddle, where also was a good deal of my recreation. I had a tolerable stud of five or six horses, a cast-iron constitution, and a passionate love for field-sports, compared with which my attachment to business was decidedly platonic. Wherever pig-sticking was to be had, in Kishnaghur, Berhampore, or Burdwan, I rode with the hunt. Wherever there was a snipe jheel, I paid it frequent attention. Quail and jungle-fowl were not neglected, but I got no forwarder with big game other than boars.

Indeed the only chance I had of making my *début* as a slayer of the larger feline creatures resulted in a crushing failure. A panther was marked down for me in a small thicket, and I went forth to do for it. When I reached the ground the panther was still there, and a keen-eyed native pointed it out to me. "Hitherward was its head," said this man, "thitherward its tail." "Doesn't the sahib see it? There, there!" and he pointed to a spot about three yards off. But I did not see that panther—either its head

or tail or anything that was its; I saw only a mass of light and shade under a dense overgrowth of greenery, dead leaves, and grass that were yellowish where the pencils of light broke in upon the gloom and, otherwise, mysterious shadow that told nothing to my unaccustomed eye. All that I looked upon in that greenwood tangle was equally panther; I could pick out no particular patch as being any more pantherish than the rest; of head or tail I made out nothing where all was equally one or the other,—and still that native of keenest vision besought me to see that panther's head and tail and right forefoot, and many other details of its anatomy. Then there came a roar out of the thicket, and a rush which was like the volcanic upheaval of the ground at my feet, and, as it seemed, several tons of that upheaved matter hit me in the chest and other parts, and I was catapulted on to the broad of my back a yard or two from where I had stood. That upheaval was the panther. The brute hadn't had the patience to wait until I saw him, or the modesty to take himself off peaceably in some other direction; he had resented my staring his way, even though I saw him not, and so had emerged out of his lair like an animal rocket, and knocked me down in his flight. As he failed to claw me, I came off scathless; but not so my attendant, who foolishly embraced that panther in view to arresting his flight: he got himself rather badly mauled, and did not come a whole man out of hospital for some weeks. That was my disastrous commencement with panthers.

It was about this time that an unfortunate beater of mine lost his life by a foolhardy act like that above described. We were beating pigs out of the long grass on the left bank of the Bhagiruti, and a boar getting up at this man's feet, or from under his feet, he jumped upon it. Why he did so it is impossible to say: it furthered no object of anybody's, for we were awaiting that pig at the edge of the higher jungle, and quite ready for it, and, in fact, we did get it. But as soon as we had speared this boar, we were made acquainted with the sad accident that had befallen this beater. The boar had ripped him across both thighs and both arms with those clean deep cuts that the boar inflicts when its tushes have not been blunted by age; and although the man lived to reach a hospital, he died there in spite of every attention, and the necessary amputation of one mutilated limb.

After about three years of this Kishnaghur life I went north, and well into the jungle of the Damun-i-koh (foot of the hill), lying along the Rajmahal hills, which at many points spread their spurs out almost to the banks of the Ganges. Jungle was there in every direction of my station, on the hills timber from foot to crest, and on the alluvial plains below dense and tall grass admirably suited for tiger-cover. Tigers and panthers and bears were in the neighbourhood, and seen or heard by men from time to time: but it was only after two years spent in that country that I realised my burning desire to kill a tiger. I very nearly encountered one some time before this, while out after swamp partridge with two companions, but, fortunately perhaps for me, the encounter did not come off. The swamp partridge were driven for us out of heavy grass cover by a line of beaters. In one of our drives I took my stand in a clear patch in the middle of a strip of this grass, one of my col-

leagues standing on either hand outside. The beaters neared us, the partridges rose and flew our way, and when I had emptied both barrels and dropped a brace of birds, a roar broke from the cover close at hand, and there was a wild stampede of beaters, then silence. There was no mistaking that roar, which came from the grass in front of me not twenty yards away from where I stood. I had never heard a tiger give tongue before outside a zoo, and this was another tongue than that of the caged beast; but I knew what voice it was, and told myself that my chance had come at last. The tiger did not break, but turned back from the cover's edge, and I proposed to my fellow-shootists that we should pursue it straight away through the grass. We had no elephant at hand; we had no missile larger than No. 4 shot; but I argued that if we went three abreast, and poured six charges, more or less, into the tiger, we should do for him. A few years later I should not have made this suggestion, but at that time I was wholly inexperienced, and, moreover, was spoiling for a tiger-shoot. However, my companions were unanimously of the other way of thinking. They would not bear me company in such an idiotic enterprise, and when this point was settled it was hopeless—if indeed it was not hopeless from the first moment—to follow the tiger with any idea of seeing it. I commenced a return beat of the cover with a rallied line of beaters, but soon abandoned my tiger-chase, and reverted to the partridges.

For two years I possessed my soul in such patience as was attainable, making an occasional excursion across the Ganges into the Purneah country, where tigers were to be had by favoured shikaris, but where I had to be satisfied with one rhinoceros-hunt, in which I had not a chance of letting off my rifle, and the successful pursuit of some wild buffaloes. In and about those hills in whose shadows I lived there were tigers and panthers at my very door, but, save as above related, I never heard them, and none did I ever see.

Others in my immediate vicinity were more fortunate, and one of them had an experience that is, I imagine, unparalleled. Poor St George! He was an Irishman, characterised by the recklessness of his race in fullest measure. He would ride any horse and anywhere. He would face any danger without a moment's consideration of the consequences, or even of the better method of meeting the risk he faced. He had several hair-breadth escapes during the short time that I knew him, and not long after we parted he rode haphazard to his death. That last adventure of his short life doubtless struck him as of a very ordinary character, by comparison with many more reckless things that he had accomplished without very serious accident. He and another came to a flooded valley, across which the waters, some feet in depth, swept like a mill-sluice; the road was submerged for half a mile, and on either side of it were cuttings—some of considerable depth—into which it was quite possible to ride. St George's companion pointed out the danger of the passage, and urged that they should both return to the bungalow they had left. St George would not listen: he had started to go to his home on the other side of that valley, and no argument could move him to change his purpose. He rode on alone, rode on into the flood, albeit his horse showed evident signs of terror; and before he had got half-way across, his horse

reared and fell back upon him into one of the roadside excavations, and killed him in the fall. So was stilled as brave and generous a heart as ever beat.

And to this gallant soul the news was brought that a couple of tigers (young ones fully or nearly fully grown) had tumbled into a blind and shallow well close by. St George went off to the place at once, and there, sure enough, in the dry well, were the brace of tigers. What would he do with them? Anybody else would have done one of two things—(1), would have shot them out of hand, or (2) would have made the proper arrangements for netting them, in view to handing them over to the Zoo, or disposing of them to some Indian Jamrack. There was a *tertium quid* for St George which, I think, he alone could have hit upon. He managed somehow or other to drag those tigers out of the pit which held them. He made no sort of arrangement for giving them a suitable reception on their arrival above-ground; of course he never stopped to think that the tigers would cease to be harmless creatures when released from their earthen prison. His whole programme consisted in releasing them, and what was to happen later was an extra to be arranged when the time arrived. Fortunately, the tigers, when they were hauled up, were moved to make use of their newly given freedom by going off, and they did so without pausing to thank or maul their liberator. I do not suppose that gratitude influenced them in their considerate treatment; and it is quite possible that they were too utterly bewildered by St George's eccentricity to be equal, on the spur of the moment, to any other course than immediate flight to less abnormal society. Poor St George could never give any convincing explanation of his conduct on that occasion. Why he hauled those tigers from their pit remains a mystery to me. Why he did not shoot or shoot at them when they were close to him above-ground I can explain to myself. I do so by remembering that he had neither skill nor keenness as a shootist; that very possibly he was too slow with his gun to have a shot; and that it is not improbable that he lost all interest in the affair when the programme proper—*i.e.*, the release of the tigers—had been completed. This may read like one of those Indian colonel's stories that I have quoted, but I have every reason to believe that the facts were very much as I have described them.

It was St George's good fortune, too, to have a panther offered to him for slaughter in his garden. The panther came into his compound at night, probably in search of sheep or goat, and was marked down by some lynx-eyed servant in a bush. In that instance St George was equal to the occasion, and deliberate of action. He went forth with one of Osler's double reading-lamps or some such sporting contrivance, flashed this upon the recumbent panther, and dealt that creature its death-blow with a charge of No. 6 shot, fired at a distance of 3 or 4 feet only.

I might have been a more successful shikari during my first two years in the Damun-i-koh but for two distractions that made very serious inroads upon my time—to wit, jungle-fever, and the Santhal rebellion. The former came upon me as a necessary consequence of my environment, and my frequent and lengthy expeditions into swamp and forest. The greater part of that tract of country was a hotbed of disease—a dismal and

malarious territory after the manner of Martin Chuzzlewit's Eden, with the aditional scourge of an Indian sun. To Europeans it proved a veritable plague-spot, and the mortality among the British railway employees upon that part of the East India Railway which lay in this ill-favoured land was terrible. It was quite in order that I should take the fever, and I took it. It proved an enduring and exacting possession: it lasted off and on for some two years, and occupied much of my time and of the time of doctors; and the only advantage that the most optimistic reasoning can extract from it is that it thoroughly seasoned me against the fell malaria of the Nepal Terai that, fatal to many, proved innocuous to me during the fifteen years that I shot over it.

But, as far as I was concerned, the Santhal rebellion was distinctly unexpected, and, when it arrived, unintelligible. These people had for years been harassed by the Bengali usurers. They had sought redress in vain from the Government officers who ruled over, and knew nothing of, them. They had fairly warned the authorities that, if redress were not to be had otherwise, they would seek it *vi et armis*. And when every form of appeal failed them, they were as good as their word, and took the field against they knew not what, and with no better arms than bow and arrows and the light Santhali battle-axe.

If this outbreak came as a complete surprise (as it did) to the sapient officials who had received timely warning of it, with much more reason did it come as a surprise to me who had received no warning, and who, moreover, knew nothing whatever about the rebellious tribe. My case was very much that of all the Europeans with whom I was then associated. It was not our business to study the native races or differentiate them. The Santhals of the villages under and beyond the hills, the Paharee or Naiyas, who lived on the hills only, and the Hindoos or Mohammedans of the river-side hamlets, were all one to us under the widespreading term of "native." And when it was reported to us that the Santhals were looting and murdering in the country close at hand, the news came upon us not only as a surprise, but as something wholly unintelligible. We might just as well have been told that a Jabberwock was around.

As soon as I heard of this wild affair I rode out to reconnoitre, and within three miles of my camp came in sight of a few of the rebels in retreat, laden with plunder. They were scattered over a plain, and making for different points, so that I had to devote my attention to one of them, whom I captured, without serious opposition on his part, and led back to the camp. As we pursued our way, the dig-diggi of the Santhal drum sounded from the jungles along the hill-ranges, a music new to me; but beyond serving as a melancholy accompaniment to my return journey, it concerned me not. My prisoner went with me quietly, and after our arrival in camp remained quiet even to excess. Innumerable questions (which he may not have understood) elicited no response from this uncommunicative being. He told us nothing about the rebels, good, bad, or indifferent, and very possibly knew no more than he told; for, I believe, he was ultimately discovered, by people who knew a Santhal from a Paharee or Hindoo, to be a low-caste Hindoo, who, after the fashion of some European Socialists, had turned the local disturbance

to account by plundering for his own advantage.

But I knew from my own observation that there was such lawlessness abroad in the country as called for the intervention of the strong arm of order. I posted off, therefore, to Colgong (distant some seventeen miles), where there was a detachment of the Bhagulpore Hill Rangers. St George joined me on the way, and he and I both urged upon the commandant of that detachment to take the field forthwith against the rebels. But we urged in vain. That commandant was evidently of opinion that a day or two more or less of rebellion and widespread outrage signified nothing; that one time was as good as another for meeting such an emergency, or that the later time was preferable, even though meanwhile the rebellion gained head and the rebels confidence. Also, he required the authority of the civil power and the reading of the Riot Act, and several other things that were not available; and, ultimately, we had to leave him.

Then we took counsel together and resolved to sally forth next morning with such a volunteer force as we could collect, and without the authorised civil arm, the Riot Act, and many other desirable adjuncts, including appropriate arms and ammunition. Accordingly, we raised our army, consisting of seven Europeans armed chiefly with revolvers, and 150 natives (Hindoo and Mohammedan *burkundazes* and *chuprassies*) armed with tulwars, and, in a few instances, with firearms about as effective as the arquebuse. And we sallied forth, all of us apparently brimming over with martial ardour, and, as far as St George and I were concerned, confident that we would march triumphantly right through the disturbed land, driving the rebels—or all that was left of them—before us.

Our native band encouraged this hope greatly by their bellicose demeanour: shouting their terrible war-cry, "Jai, jai, Kali mah ki jai!" the Hindoos brandished their swords, shouting *væ victis*. After their own fashion, the Mohammedans flourished their arms; and all marched on, eager, as it seemed, to reach the field of battle. They cooled perceptibly, those coloured auxiliaries, when, passing through a village that had just been sacked, we came upon the grim evidence that murder had here been done; and when we came close to a jungle from which the dig-diggi resounded, and would have led them onward to the fight, they, to a man, disbanded themselves and went off post-haste homeward.

Four of us Europeans went on in the direction of the Santhal drums, while two for strategic purposes rode so much on the flank of the enemy that they never encountered him; and one, for more obvious strategical reasons, remained behind at the edge of the jungle, and there was picked off by a lurking Santhal, who put an arrow into him. We who engaged the Santhals had a lively ten minutes with them, and then half our number, at least, were *hors de combat*. One had been knocked off his horse and wounded in the wrist, and him I took out of the press, only to find St George with an arrow through his foot, his foot so transfixed that it could not be pulled out of the stirrup, and his saddle shifted so far round that he was sitting on his horse's bare back. All that could be done for him then was to lift him and get his saddle back into position, and that was done; and then there was no course open to us but to retreat in as good order as circumstances permitted.

To this day I have not been able to understand why those Santhals let us off so easily: a day or two after our affair they met those tardy Hill Rangers (disciplined sepoys with proper arms and ammunition), and killed several of them, together with two Europeans. But although we halted to repair damages almost within bowshot of them, and then retired at a snail's pace, they let us go without molestation of any sort. I came to know afterwards from themselves that they were 2000 strong that day. I suppose the novelty of our attack, and the damages they had to repair, explains their inaction,—they were paralysed.

St George had a rough time of it for the next twenty-four hours: no one at our camp could extricate that arrow from his foot, no one within forty odd miles could do this, and he had to ride that distance on an elephant with this arrow in him. Nor was a bed of roses prepared for me then, although beds of sorts were my constant portion for many days thereafter. For a Santhal had hit my *sola topee* a blow that broke off so much of it as protected my head from the sun: fever and delirium were my lot ere that sun went down; and that night, when my camp was broken up and its members dispersed, I was carried off across the Ganges to Purneah, where the kindly and most hospitable medico of the station nursed me back into comparative health.

That was the dismal conclusion of what I had at the outset regarded as a splendid substitute for that tiger-shooting which came not to my hand. Later on I accompanied the 7th N.I. in an expedition directed against the rebels in the heart of Santhalia; but during the weeks that I served with them we saw only fugitive rebels, and were much more occupied in the humble work of the commissariat department than in glorious war. It is true that we stormed some villages after the most approved system of military science: our forces descended upon these strongholds from various points, the several detachments so timing their advance as to arrive simultaneously on three sides of the place attacked; but invariably, when we reached the point of attack, there was nothing to fight with except a few fowls, wherewith we promptly did battle. These fowls and some blue rocks constituted all the shikar I had during that jaunt through Santhal jungles, and all the food-supply of our mess save the rice we got out of the deserted villages.

But many an apparent evil is a blessing in disguise. The Santhal rebellion brought Sir George Yule (then plain George Yule) out of the seclusion of Eastern Bengal to Bhagulpore; and that jungle-fever which played havoc with me, and seemed my bitter foe, led to my introduction to that fine sportsman and brilliant administrator. Under him I served my novitiate in tiger-shooting and the duties of civil government; through him I obtained congenial employment, and splendid opportunities in the field of sport; and in him I found the best and truest friend man ever had.

If Jack Johnston was king of spears, George Yule was emperor. He had killed his hecatombs of boars. He had shot tigers on foot, from horse and from elephant, and killed from first to last, I have no doubt, more than any man living or dead; and up to the time of the Santhal rebellion he had been quite contented to finish his Indian career in a remote district where promotion would come to him with lagging gait, and fame (save that

of the shikari) not at all. Notwithstanding his great gifts, there never was a man more truly modest and retiring than he. It was not that he sought to hide his light under a bushel—in fact he was blissfully unconscious that he had a light to hide or show. But even while isolated in that outlandish district, his fame for other things than sport had come to be known at headquarters; and when Santhalia was ablaze from end to end, and the strongest hand and ablest head were wanted to restore order, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal at once chose Yule as the one man fitted for the task.

How Yule succeeded in this great work — how, with infinite mercy to the poor misguided Santhals, he built up for their country an admirable form of civil government—need not here be recorded. From that time he was appreciated at something like his real value to the State; promotion and honours came to him in abundance. But no elevation or distinction could alter the man, and Yule remained to the end the same simple-minded, true-hearted creature that he was as a Bengal magistrate. Truthfulness, courage, and a rare generosity were his chief characteristics. Of him as of another George (Washington) it can be said, "He never told a lie."

It was by the barest chance that Yule had survived to be the reformer and ruler of the Santhal districts. It is impossible to conceive a narrower escape from death than his in an encounter he had with a tiger. He was standing outside the jungle from which a tiger was being driven by beaters: the tiger emerged, not at the point where Yule expected, but within a few feet off the spot where he stood. There was a rush. Yule had time only to bring his rifle up to his hip and fire as the tiger sprang upon him; he was borne down upon the ground by the tiger's weight and by blows of the brute's paws that smashed in his *sola topee* and cruelly tore his shoulder and chest. It seemed for Yule that the end had come, but the tiger was dead when it reached the ground—killed instantaneously by that one chance shot.

When, as a fever-stricken wreck, I went to his house at Bhagulpore, as to an asylum open to all who needed aid or solicitude, Yule was still the keen and active sportsman, even though administrative duties and responsibilities absorbed much of his time and attention. He had a stud of a dozen first-class walers — mostly tried pig-stickers — and ten magnificent elephants, staunch as any, which, when he left Oudh in 1864 to fill the position of Resident at Hyderabad, were sold at prices averaging, I think, Rs.10,000 each.

Very soon after this I had a few days' sport with Yule and others in the grass country on the right bank of the Ganges, and shot my first tiger. I am constrained to admit that, when this beast broke in front of the elephant I rode, and gave me an easy shot, my success was tinged with disappointment. Exciting enough was the hunt when the tiger was afoot in front of our small line of elephants, and still unseen; but when it dragged itself into an open patch out of a swamp, a sneaking fugitive, voiceless and drowned-cat-like, and yielded up its life without a show of fight, or even a roar of protest, it struck me as being a poor creature by comparison with the noble beast of my day-dreams. Indeed I think I took more satisfaction during that expedition out of a tiger — a dry and noble-looking animal, whose appearance sadly belied its sneaking proclivities—that

we mysteriously lost in a small stretch of cover surrounded by open country and melon patches. That tiger broke fairly in front of one of our party, who, for some inscrutable reason, did not fire at it; then was lost in the long grass, and lost to us for ever. For though we beat that cover backwards and forwards over and over again — though the tiger must have been seen if it had taken to the open—we never saw it again, or saw even that peculiar waving of the grass that indicates a tiger's progress. Twice only in my long experience and intimate association with him did I see Yule show the slightest sign of temper, and this was one of those occasions.

But one would do injustice to the species as a whole if one judged of all tigers by those two. A magnificent animal is the large male tiger when, with head erect and noble mien, he walks the glade or forest where he is king; or when, undaunted by the serried rank of foes, he charges down upon a line of elephants. Grand, too, is the tigress fighting for her cubs. Unfortunately, all tigers are not animated by this bolder spirit, and not a few persist in the attempt to fly until they are rolled over as tamely as if they were rabbits. I have shot some half-dozen tigers without seeing a hair of them until they were stretched out dead or dying on the ground—shot them as they went through the reeds or grass that covered them and yet betrayed. And it is something strange that, after a little experience, one comes to judge with absolute accuracy whether the grass or reeds wave for a tiger, or for deer or pig.

In 1857 the Indian Mutiny occurred, and this was the final cause of my introduction to wholesale big-game shooting. The district officer of Deoghur (in the Santhal Pergunnahs) was one of the many European victims of that terrible outbreak, and I was appointed his successor.

But before I went to my civil duties, and the tigers, panthers, bears, &c., that awaited me in the Deoghur country, I accompanied Yule's military expedition into the Purneah district, and away up to the jungles lying at the foot of the Himalayas. The mutineers were moving about there, and were the main object in hand, but shikar was also a possible feature. We made first for an outlying station of Purneah, on the bank of a river celebrated for its mahseer fishing, and close to a large expanse of good pig-sticking country, where we were to wait until scouts brought in news as to the movements of a mutinous irregular cavalry regiment that was believed to be somewhere in the neighbourhood. Reaching this in the evening after a long march, we rested for the night and started early the next morning after the pigs. By lunch-time we had killed three, but not without casualties. A young boar jinked under Yule's horse and cut that animal; he came at me, got my spear well home in him, but still pressed on, so that I had to fend him off with the sole of my stirrup iron; and then, sorely wounded as he was, he cut the horse of another rider. But this was nothing to the trouble a very big boar was to give us in the afternoon. That brute charged out of his lair straight upon the pony (no bigger than the pig) of H. B. Simson, missed cutting the pony, went off for a quarter-mile canter, and then pulled up to fight. And he fought three of us, including the emperor of spears himself, for over an hour, cutting, though not severely, all

three horses once or oftener during the engagement. The brute had an absolutely impenetrable hide; and the spears we delivered at him, riding round and round the beast, were but as pin-pricks that only urged him on to further fight. That boar beat us,—we could not kill him; we could not even get our spears to stick in him: he had no proper sense of sport, and we relinquished him to the less artistic form of death by powder and ball.

Just as the sun was declining upon that plain of many pigs, the scouts came in with news that promptly stopped our sport. That irregular cavalry regiment was marching in exactly the opposite direction to that which we had assumed for it; they were doubling upon us, and making for Purneah—the town that we had left the day before in pursuit of them. There was only one thing to be done to save Purneah from loot and worse—*i.e.*, to make a forced march by night to head the mutineers. So, after an early and hurried dinner, we set out to do the forty miles between us and Purneah with what speed we could. Yule and his six volunteers (a very irregular cavalry) rode their horses; fifty men of the 5th Fusiliers and a hundred of the Naval Brigade rode elephants; and through the night watches we worried on. What happened to others in those weary hours I cannot say. I slept a broken sleep, with countless awakenings that always mocked me with the delusion that the roadside trees were rest-houses where refreshment might be had; and always that same fond delusion as to the comforting B.-and-S. recurred, although, had I been equal to thought, I should have remembered that not a single rest-house was there in my path.

We reached Purneah none too soon; for while we were bracing ourselves up with tea and coffee, the news arrived that the mutineers were close to the further quarter of the town. We all went out a-foot to save the weary horses, and reached the threatened point just as the advanced-guard of the enemy was coming upon it. Then I had my first experience of action with regular troops, and it was impressive. H. B. Simson and I, as men acquainted with the ways and language of the people, led our party through the narrow streets into a lane beyond, and as we turned a corner two of the mutinous sowars came upon us: they fired their carbines and retreated. Our foremost infantry, who had seen nothing of those sowars, opened fire into space, and into the body of a harmless villager who happened to be in the line of fire; and then our rear-guard dragged a light gun into position and fired into a blank wall. After this demonstration we advanced through the lanes into the open, and there across the open plain, a mile from us, the enemy were ranged in the shelter of a mango-grove.

We got no nearer to the mutineers that day, for they rode off and defied pursuit. But next morning we surprised them in the grey dawn while yet they were around their camp-fires; and after some two hours' engagement, in which they suffered considerably, drove them out of the district into the forests of the Terai. Our small force also went junglewards, and met an occasional adventure with a minimum of shikar; but here my account of this expedition closes.

EDWARD BRADDON.