CAMPING AND TRAMPING

IN

MALAYA

FIFTEEN YEARS' PIONEERING IN THE NATIVE STATES OF THE MALAY PENINSULA

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but can easily be captured with traps, for the male birds have certain spots which they frequent and strut around, showing off their lovely plumage and calling defiance. There is a beautiful small pheasant, just like a diminutive peacock, having similar eye-like marks on its feathers, and another whose reddish-brown-coloured back has caused it to be called the fire-backed pheasant. A gregarious species of quail is sometimes to be seen, the male being of a brilliant green with a red-plumed crest. Large pigeons, resembling the ordinary wood pigeon, although sometimes seen, are difficult to approach. Swifts and swallows fly about in the daytime, and in the evening the nightjar comes out and sits near the house, making a noise, like a stone skidding on ice several times in succession, with the most delightful irregularity in the number of cries it gives and its intervals of silence.

Wild beasts were fairly numerous on these hills; the tracts of elephants and seladang (*bos sondaicus*), deer and pigs, tigers and panthers, rhinoceros and tapirs were to be seen, as well as porcupine; the latter make their abode in the hollow trunk of some fallen tree, and when disturbed by hearing the log tapped at the end furthest from the hole, they rush out and scuttle away at a great pace. Leeches from two to three inches long abounded, and in wet weather the ground seemed alive with them as they stretched out their spindly bodies in the air or made their way towards you, caterpillarwise, arching their backs as they rapidly travelled along.

Should you happen to stand still, numbers of

Journeying one evening between two wood-cutters' camps my guide lost his way, and, night coming on, there was nothing to be done except to sit on the root of a tree and wait for morning. There were four of us altogether—my comrades consisting of Malays from Singapore; and, unaccustomed to such experiences, they were filled with much dread of wild beasts, especially the rhinoceros, and took very unkindly to the situation in which they found themselves. The distress and fears of these men would have been rather comical had it not been for a steady and continuous downpour of rain the whole time, in which we were compelled to sit patiently, as it was too dark to move about. Everything was soaking wet, and ten unpleasant and chilly hours had to be passed before daylight enabled us to continue our journey once again. The next morning we found ourselves within a quarter of a mile of the place we had endeavoured to reach, and getting a boat we were soon in the main river, where the sun dried the clothes on our backs whilst breakfast was being prepared.

Owing to the convenient and central position of Kwala Lumpor, which, since the opening of the railway between it and Klang, has been brought well within twenty-four hours of Singapore,—a journey which is now accomplished with every comfort that a good steamer can afford—it has been made the headquarters of the Resident-General, an officer responsible to the Governor for the proper administration of the native states. He supervises the Residents, and, whereas formerly each state had

never came up to him again; and fresh trackers sent out the next day to continue from the place at which they had left off, after proceeding some distance lost his trail entirely. It was but a short while ago that news arrived that this gallant sportsman, who possessed such numerous trophies of his skill, had met his death whilst on a shooting expedition on the eastern slopes of the mountains. A wounded seladang charged and tossed him in the air, and hurt him so severely that he succumbed to the injuries he received.

Flourishing coffee gardens and macadamized roads have now taken the place of the primeval forest, and the seladang has been driven from his haunts. The grunt of the frightened wild pig disturbed at its meal is no longer heard, the rhinoceros has abandoned its wallow. The large shady trees are gone beneath which the elephants used to sway their trunks in ceaseless motion, and over whose tops the flapping of the hornbill's wings was heard, or the hoarse cry of the bird as it rested amongst the topmost boughs or searched for the fruits and reptiles upon which it fed. The weird cry of the Argus pheasant has ceased to echo through the woods, nor does the stealthy tread of the many jungle cats (so destructive to the smaller animals) startle the timid mouse-deer from its resting place. The python no longer crawls amongst the rocks or waylays its prey, nor does the tiger spring and seize its victim by the neck, or howl by night, silencing the barking elk, which, startled, fled away, whilst all the denizens of the forest quaked with fear and be-

whose sides are so steep as to be capable of being scaled only on one side, and the top is covered by small stunted trees, amongst which wild goats are said to roam. The marble found here is quarried and broken up, making good road metal, and when burnt a capital lime is obtained.

Whilst prospecting in the range of mountains that rise beyond this curious limestone hill for land suitable for the cultivation of coffee, I had proof why the rhinoceros is really so dreaded by the Malays, who have firm notions regarding its viciousness, of which I had become somewhat sceptical, for on the few occasions I had disturbed one, it had invariably made off immediately upon my approach, and disappeared. However, my dubiousness received a rude awakening, for on one occasion as I was climbing up hill with some Malays we suddenly roused one of these beasts, which rushed away ahead of us. I commenced to talk, but was begged to be quiet, for when a rhinoceros is in the vicinity Malays maintain the strictest silence, endeavouring to pass by as quietly as possible. We could hear the animal moving about in front of us some way off, and then down the hill it came charging in our direction. Owing to the density of the jungle we could see nothing, but listened as it rushed past close to us, and then we heard it stop, having made a wrong shot, and lost our scent, for these beasts are not over quick of vision, being mostly guided by their sense of smell and hearing. We hurried along up the hill, not waiting to give it another opportunity of returning to

CHAPTER XI.

Thaiping—Introduction of Pumping Machinery—Orderly Behaviour of Chinese miners—Outbreak of Secret Societies, punishment and stampede—Hospitals—Rhinoceros visiting a ward—Sanatorium—View from the hills above Thaiping—Return to Thaiping—Tamil festival—Churches—Town Life—Government Offices—Theatres and Plays—Storms and Lightning—Malay running amuck.

The town of Thaiping—the Chinese for "everlasting peace"—a name given to it at the termination of the disturbances in its neighbourhood, is situated at the foot of a range of mountains rising abruptly from the plain, and surrounding it on all sides were the many tin mines that have made it famous. This tin field, which had been the scene of so much disorder and lawlessness, had once more become a populous and prosperous mining camp, but its progression was restricted and limited by the difficulties experienced in keeping the mines free of water. Work had often to be suspended for days together on account of the workings becoming flooded out. In dry weather it was owing to an insufficiency of water to drive the water-wheels, and in wet weather water percolated into the mines more rapidly than such primitive pumps were able to deal with. It was at the initiative of Sir Hugh Low that the Chinese miners imported proper pumping

tion, and hospital accommodation on the estate itself.

Nothing is more illustrative of the uncivilized surroundings amidst which these hospitals first arose, than the appearance one evening of that shy and seclusive animal the rhinoceros, which, entering at one end, walked calmly through one of the wards, passing between the beds of the astonished patients, and departed through the opposite doorway without harming anyone or doing any damage. This was a most extraordinary occurrence, for the rhinoceros shuns the habitations of man, is more or less solitary, and its ferocious character would lead one to expect that it would have injured or maimed someone during its passage through the hospital ward; probably it was too much astonished by the strangeness of its surroundings to care about anything except an endeavour to discover the nearest way of escape.

Not alone in hospitals did Thaiping lead the van of civilization in the native states, for on the old town being burnt down fine broad streets were laid out, shade-giving trees being planted at intervals along the sides, good macadamized roads were constructed, and after a while kept in a repair that would put to shame many a London thoroughfare. An efficient supply of bright, sparkling water was brought from the neighbouring hills, substantial houses of brick were erected, and the town was well lighted and policed. The health of European officers was not neglected, for a sanatorium was made by building several bungalows on the high hills at the back of the town, where many an

who happened to be lunching in company with the European inspector of police at the time, and would certainly have killed him on the spot had he not been noticed by the inspector, who jumped up just in time to somewhat divert the direction of the blow and save the life of his superior, who was nevertheless so badly stabbed that eventually he was compelled to resign his appointment.

Formerly the administration of this small piece of British territory was supervised by the Resident of Perak, but in 1886 it came under the direct control and management of the colony, and the station and residences of the Government servants have since been moved, owing to the continued unhealthiness of the island itself, to Lumut, a place on the adjacent mainland, which was ceded by the Sultan of Perak in 1874, some little distance up an inlet of the sea, and close to the Perak boundary. Further along the same creek is the village of S'tiawan, which is in Perak territory. In the neighbourhood there is a settlement of Kelantan Malays, who have opened a considerable tract of land, upon which they planted the shrub from which patchouli scent is distilled. Unfortunately such a large increase in the supply could not be disposed of; the price fell so much that the cultivation was no longer remunerative. Some of these Malays made a good living by capturing rhinoceros, which were somewhat plentiful in this part of the country. The method of their capture was very simple: a large hole was cut in a path they frequented and covered with brushwood, into which the animal fell if it happened to pass along the track across

which the trap was dug. They were often injured by the fall, and died shortly after their release, which did not take place for several days, nor until the animal had become so weak from starvation that it had but little strength left, when a sloping way was cut leading to the pit, up which it was either driven straight into a cage just large enough to hold it, or led away to one; and in order to prevent its escape on the journey long ropes were fastened to its legs, so that directly it showed symptoms of restlessness they could be twisted round some tree and so render its struggles futile. In this confined space it was kept until purchased and loaded on some small boat, to be ferried across to the port at the Dindings for transhipment to Penang, where it usually died in a few days after arrival, and proved but a poor bargain for its purchaser.

My visit to S'tiawan was for the purpose of surveying for a road between that place and the Perak river, and I was fortunately accompanied by a number of Malays who were accustomed to work for me. They came from a village called Talum, close to Kwala Kangsar, the residence of the Sultan, who reserved the snipe-shooting in the vicinity of their village for himself and friends; and they were certainly the best Malays I ever had to deal with, always bright and cheerful, no day's work too long for them; and if I was anxious to complete any special work they were equally interested in it and continued labouring till dark, and upon its final completion they would return to their village with their headman, Pandah

purpose, and is soon again ready to try and catch another. Curiously enough, the birds, as long as the man remains unperceived by them, do not suspect his presence, and take but little notice of their snared companions, and continue feeding unconcerned. The pigeons thus caught are often kept and fed for some days before being carried to the nearest market, where they meet with a ready sale.

Both Malays and Sakais are clever at constructing and setting traps for wild animals, making the jungle unsafe where they are placed, and care has to be taken in passing through it. Pits are dug for rhinoceros and pigs; beams to which a sharp spear-head is fastened are set so that the point shall fall upon the passing beast, which brings about its own doom by touching a twig placed in its path, and so arranged that upon its being knocked on one side it lets loose the string that keeps the beam in place. Spring guns are sometimes set, but the most common trap of all is one made for the different kinds of smaller game and deer, and which is very effective. This trap is prepared by cutting and laying a few branches and twigs on the ground to make two low fences, over which the smaller creatures are afraid to pass, and which gradually approach each other until they meet and form a point where the trap, consisting of a log held suspended between two rows of sticks firmly fixed in the ground, is set. Anything entering this narrow passage touches the trigger and down comes the log of wood on the unsuspecting creature's back, often squeezing the