

With regard to Rule I. clause (a), defining the meaning of "Wild Birds," it is observed that Hawks are protected. The Committee are of the opinion that Hawks should not be protected, as they subsist to a large degree by preying upon the smaller birds.

In conclusion, I beg to state that the Committee are exceedingly gratified to observe that steps are being taken by Government to provide a close season for the protection of harmless animals, game birds, and birds of plumage, during the breeding season, and hope that the rules may speedily be extended to other parts of the Presidency where the total extermination of some species is threatened.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Yours faithfully,

W. S. MILLARD,

Hon. Secretary, Bombay Natural History Society.

No. 3935 of 1892.

GENERAL DEPARTMENT,
Bombay Castle, 29th October, 1892.

To

W. S. MILLARD, Esq.,

HONORARY SECRETARY,

BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY.

SIR.—In reply to your letter, dated 8th instant, I am directed to convey the thanks of His Excellency the Governor in Council to the Committee of the Bombay Natural

Municipalities of Ahmedabad, Broach, Ankleswar, Karachi, Jacobabad, Larkana, Kambur, Rato-dero, Rohri, Ghotki, Sukkur, Shikarpur, Garhi Yasin, Tatta, Keti, Kotri, Sehwan and Bubak and Cantonments of Belgaum and Karachi.

rules have been framed under the Wild Birds Protection Act XX. of 1887 for the Municipalities and Cantonments noted in the margin.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient Servant,

C. G. DODGSON,

Acting Under-Secretary to Government.

4441

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE MAMMALIA OF INDIA.

To the Editor of the Journal, "Bombay Natural History Society," Bombay.

SIR,

In the Journal of the Society for the present year (vol. vii, p. 246) there is a criticism of my "Mammalia" in the "Fauna of British India," and amongst other observations on the work, the critic ridicules the statement that the great one-horned Rhinoceros (*R. unicornis*) "was common in the Punjab as far west as Peshawar in the time of the Emperor Baber." This statement is said to be founded on "a lot of careless quotations, probably at second hand, from an obviously bad translation of a probably corrupt manuscript." One quotation from Erskine's translation of Baber's Memoirs, the work thus stigmatized, is appended (at second hand), and is declared to contain the whole evidence.

The writer of the criticism has not been able to consult Baber's Memoirs and has been misinformed. The matter was fully explained by Mr. Blyth in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal for 1862, vol. xxxi, p. 199. A reference to Mr. Blyth's paper is given in the 'Mammalia' under *Rhinoceros unicornis*.

The passage quoted by my critic occurs at p. 253 of Erskine's translation. But at least two other passages in Baber's Memoirs refer to the Rhinoceros. Both were quoted by Blyth, but the most important of them which occurs at p. 316 of the Memoirs is worth re-quoting. This paragraph occurs in Baber's general description of Hindustan, and of the animals, plants, &c. Amongst the animals peculiar to Hindustan, the elephant is first described, then comes the following account of the Rhinoceros :—

"The Rhinoceros is another (i.e., animal peculiar to Hindustan). This also is a huge animal. Its bulk is equal to three buffaloes. The opinion prevalent in our countries, that a Rhinoceros can lift an elephant on its horn, is probably a mistake. It has a single horn on its nose, upwards of a span in length, but I never saw one of two spans. Out of one of the largest of these horns I had a drinking vessel made, and a dice-box, and about three or four fingers' bulk of it might be left. Its hide is very thick. If it be shot at with a powerful bow, drawn up to the armpit with much force, and if the arrow pierces at all, it enters only three or four fingers' breadth. They say, however, that there are parts of his skin that may be pierced, and the arrows enter deep. On the sides of its two shoulder blades, and of its two thighs, are folds that hang loose, and appear at a distance like cloth housings dangling over it. It bears more resemblance to the horse than to any other animal. As the horse has a large stomach, so has this; as the pastern of the horse is composed of a single bone, so also is that of the Rhinoceros; as there is a gumek in the horse's foreleg, so there is in that of the Rhinoceros. It is more ferocious than the elephant, and cannot be rendered so tame or obedient. There are numbers of them in the jungles of Peshawar and Hashnagar, as well as between the

river Sind (Indus) and Behreh in the jungles. In Hindustan too they abound on the banks of the river Sirwu (Gogru). In the course of my expeditions into Hindustan, in the jungles of Peshawar and Hasimagar, I frequently killed the Rhinoceros. It strikes powerfully with its horn, with which, in the course of these hunts, many men, and many horses, were gored. In one hunt, it tossed with its horn, a full spear's length, the horse of a young man named Maksud, whence he got the name of Rhinoceros Maksud."

The other reference to the Rhinoceros in Baber's Memoirs is at p. 292, where an account is given of a Rhinoceros hunt close to Bekram, said in Erskine's foot-notes to be Peshawar. The following brief extracts are sufficient to shew that the animals seen and killed were Rhinoceroses, not deer:—

" Humaiün (this was Baber's son, afterwards Emperor) and those who had come from the same quarter, never having seen a Rhinoceros before, were greatly amused." " This Rhinoceros did not make a good set at any person or any horse." " I have often amused myself with conjecturing how an elephant and Rhinoceros would behave if brought to face each other; on this occasion the elephant-keepers brought out their elephants, so that one elephant fell right in with the Rhinoceros. As soon as the elephant drivers put their beasts in motion, the Rhinoceros would not come up, but immediately ran off in another direction."

I think the above will suffice to shew that the occurrence of the Rhinoceros near Peshawar in the early part of the sixteenth century rests upon sound evidence. No one reading the above extracts can reasonably doubt that they are truthful statements by a well-informed writer, and I do not think there is any foundation for the idea that the translation was bad or that the manuscripts translated had undergone any serious alteration from the original. Certainly there is nothing in the quotations I have given to suggest either corrupt text or mistranslation.

The above is a question of sufficient scientific importance to deserve correction, and I think it is a matter for regret that in this case and in some others, my critic, who has not given his name, but who evidently has a considerable amount of zoological knowledge, should have written more emphatically than was necessary. I shall not attempt to reply to his criticism in detail, but I should like to point out another instance in which I think he will find on examination that he has overlooked the real facts.

He writes, " *Bosolaphus tragocamelus* "— save the mark, is nothing but our old friend *Portax pictus*, the Nilgai. The Maratha name *Ruhi* or *Rohi* is wrongly given as *Rú-i*, and a name, given as that used by the Gonds, *Guraya*, cannot be universal, as Forsyth, an excellent authority, gives *Rohi* as the Gond name in the Song of Lingo."

Now if instead of Forsyth's Lay of St. Lingo, which I should scarcely have expected to find quoted as an authority for Gond names, my critic had looked at the appendix to Forsyth's Highlands of Central India, p. 469, he would find in the valuable list of Hindi, Gond and Korkoo words there given the only

Gond name for the Nilgai to be *Goorya*, which is of course the same as *Guraya*. Moreover, the Korkoo name given by Forsyth is *Roi* (without any *h*) and *Rú-i* is given by Jerdon as the Mahratta name. It is quite possible that the use of the letter *h* is liable to variation in Western India as well as in Southern Britain.

There is another observation to be made on the sentence quoted. My critic is very severe on my nomenclature; he says that *census* is a misspelling (it is spelt according to rules for the transliteration of Greek words that have prevailed for nearly 2,000 years), and that *Boselaphus* is a mere barbarism. That *Boselaphus* is a hybrid term is perfectly true, but surely it is a matter of opinion whether such names should be rejected or not. But it is not a matter of opinion, but a simple fact, that the name *Portax pictus* which my critic quotes as preferable, cannot possibly be used, unless, as he suggests with regard to another of my nomenclatural delinquencies, " we are to give up the Latin Grammar bodily," for the simple reason that *Portax* is undoubtedly feminine.

London, November 18th, 1892.

W. T. BLANFORD.

NOTE BY THE REVIEWER.

It is no more than fair play to admit at once that Mr. Blanford has fully made out his case in respect of the Trans-Indus Rhinoceros; and is entitled to the honourable amends hereby tendered to him. He is right in supposing that the Reviewer had not Baber's Memoirs before him. After months spent in endeavouring to get at an English or Turki copy in India, the verification of Mr. Blanford's Statement had to be entrusted to a correspondent in England, who, in the utter absence of any reference to book, chapter, or verse, missed the valuable passages now quoted by Mr. Blanford, and sent extracts of the very unsatisfactory passage already printed in the Review. After this explanation and apology it would be most ungracious to go on sparring with Mr. Blanford about vernacular names. But his remarks upon one important Latin name require notice. "*Portax*" is, as he says, certainly feminine. But the reference to "*Portax pictus*" as an "old friend" was correct, for it is so printed at page 272 of Jerdon's Mammals of India, (reprint), which is the authority most accessible to the main body of our readers. The Reviewer had occasion to observe that Mr. Blanford (in his heading) quoted "*picta*" from this very page; and therefore gave "*Portax pictus*" in inverted commas to indicate that he thought himself more answerable for the accuracy of his quotation than for Dr. Jerdon's concords. The commas dropped out in print, and as no reference to the book or the page had been given, Mr. Blanford's complaint of his Reviewer's grammar was justified by the evidence before him; in a manner amusingly analogous to the Reviewer's own misconception already disposed of. That leaves things "pretty square"; but the

matter would be yet to be regretted if it had not brought Mr. Blanford into a place where we should have been glad to see him long ago ; in the columns of this Journal ; furnishing us with information not to ourselves accessible. It is to be hoped that more of the same may be to be had from him, and his anonymous critic, at any rate, will not complain of the "emphasis" of any communication from him half as interesting as the present. Reviews and controversies are not best written in butter, and mere mutual admiration would be much out of place between writers who are, as such, public servants, answerable not merely to each other, but to their employers and their readers.

REVIEW.

* SPORT IN SOUTHERN INDIA.

This, the latest addition to the records of Indian Sport, is a large and well-got-up volume, illustrated by many sketches by the author, which shows that he was as great a proficient with his pencil as with the rifle ; moreover the book is very modestly written. Col. Hamilton had an extended Indian service from 1844 to 1870, and being one of the early pioneers of the Forest Department, had exceptional sporting opportunities. The first chapter principally deals with Antelope shooting and such like ; one form of sport, namely, coursing the fauns, does not commend itself. The second chapter is headed Wolves ; several instances are given of how wolves, before they commence their hunt, seem to settle a plan of campaign, as an instance :—"I saw two wolves ; after about ten minutes or so, the smaller of the two, got up and trotted off to the rocky hills, and suddenly appeared on the ridge running backwards and forwards like a collie dog ; the larger wolf, as soon as he saw that the antelopes were fully occupied in watching his companion, got up and came as hard as he could gallop to the *nullah* ; unfortunately he caught sight of us and bolted, and his companion, seeing something was wrong, did the same. Now it is evident that these two wolves had regularly planned this attack : one was to occupy the attention of the antelopes, while the other was to steal up the watercourse and dash into the midst of them. How did they communicate this to each other ?" We have a very graphic description of a mongoose and cobra fight : after saying that the mongoose erected its hairs till it appeared twice its proper size, and that the cobra appeared to strike it several times, he gives, as an explanation of the latter's immunity, "Our little favourite killed many cobras, and, I believe, never was bitten. * * I believe, also, that its safety consists in the perfect judgment of the distance the snake can strike, the increase of its apparent size, from all his hairs standing out at right angles, deceiving the snake, so that the fangs never really touch the body of the mongoose, but only the hair." A few pages are given to Pig-sticking at Ahmednagar, but the author says he saw very little of this sport. We now come to big game shooting ;

* Records of SPORT in SOUTHERN INDIA, &c., by the late General Hamilton, published by Porter, London.