

H.R.H.  
THE PRINCE OF WALES'S  
SPORT IN INDIA

BY  
BERNARD C. ELLISON  
F.R.G.S., C.M.Z.S., F.L.S.,  
*Formerly Curator of the Bombay Natural History Society  
and Naturalist to the Shoots.*

EDITED BY  
SIR H. PERRY ROBINSON  
K.B.E., &c.  
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
THE EARL OF CROMER  
G.C.I.E., &c.



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## SECOND DAY

*December 15th.*

To-day was fixed for the first rhino shoot. We did not get off till 10 a.m., as there were several delays. Even after a start had been made there was a stoppage through a huge lorry breaking down on the very steep hill leading up to the entrance of the camp. None of the cars could get past the obstacle, and there was nothing for it but to get out and push, and H.R.H. was the foremost of all in helping.

At last we were all speeding along, bumping over the forest road that had been specially constructed for the purpose of the shoots. The first part of the journey was through a piece of thick jungle, and one realised how difficult a task a hunter would have in bringing his quarry to bag in a forest of this description; which is one of the main reasons why the "ringing" method of hunting tigers is practised in Nepal.

The density of the jungle found in the foothills of the Terai must be seen to be appreciated; massive elephant grass up to 20 feet in height, and so thick as to almost obscure the elephant from the view of the howdah occupants in his passage through it. Often it is not possible even to see the next elephant though it is only a few yards away.

Our destination this morning was Dhoba, a run of twenty miles by motor. The road led for the most part of the way through the cool depths of the forest till the vicinity of Dhoba was reached. Here the country was open with fields of yellow mustard on either hand. The machans erected in their midst told of the eternal warfare waged by the ryot against the jungle denizens. At the twenty-second milestone we left the cars to mount the pad elephants. Besides H.R.H. the party included Lord Cromer, Admiral Halsey, Colonel Worgan, the Hon. Bruce Ogilvy, Lord Louis Mountbatten and myself. H.R.H. looked very tired, as, even after yesterday's long journey and long shoot, he had been playing polo at 6 a.m.

Before our arrival at the spot where the ring was formed, it transpired that the tiger had broken back. Shortly afterwards the elephant on which the Prince was riding got bogged in crossing a stream, and H.R.H. transferred to an ordinary pad elephant.

The sight of a line of elephants crossing a stream is always impressive. No one who saw will ever forget the stately array crossing the Thute River at sunset, when the great grey beasts plunging through the swirling water, the red light of the setting sun, and the dark forest background, all combined to make a wonderful picture.

One quickly gets accustomed to elephants as a means of transport. A pad elephant is generally the most comfortable, and certainly the



*Photograph : Central News.*

THE PROCESSION OF "PAD" ELEPHANTS GOING AFTER RHINOCEROS IN THE HIGH GRASS OF THE VALLEY OF CHITONE.

The Prince of Wales is seen on the leading "pad" and Lord Louis Mountbatten on the "howdah" elephant.



SIR GODFREY THOMAS AND OTHERS ON THE TRAIL AFTER RHINO IN THE VALLEY OF CHITONE.



THE PRINCE'S ELEPHANT IN A TYPICAL RHINO SWAMP.  
H.R.H. is in the first howdah, and Colonel O'Connor is pointing to a place  
where he thinks he has discerned a rhinoceros in the thick grass cover.



*Photographs through the kindness of General Sir Kaiser of Nepal.*  
H.R.H. FIRING AT A RHINOCEROS—A TENSE MOMENT.

best as far as celerity goes, though possibly not the safest, as in the case of a charging tiger the man on the pad takes his chance of being mauled. All honour to the plucky mahouts who guide these great beasts, sticking gamely to their posts often in moments of extreme danger! Many have paid with their lives for their coolness and daring. In fact, one of the brave fellows was killed on a pad elephant a few days after the Prince's departure.

The occupant of a howdah is practically safe from the onslaught of a charging tiger, but there is one risk which is always present in shooting from an elephant in heavy forest, and that is the possibility of the elephant taking fright and bolting, when mahout, howdah and occupants stand a very good chance of being swept away in the headlong rush of the beast through the jungle.

To return to what happened. The party arrived at the spot where the shooting was to take place at 1 p.m., and an adjournment for lunch was agreed to with general acclaim. Several rhinos had been seen in the swamp in close proximity, and the chances of a good afternoon's sport seemed assured.

After lunch we mounted our elephants and it was not long before a rhino was discerned in the thick grass cover. H.R.H., whose position was rather disadvantageous, since he could scarcely see the animal from where he was, fired. Lord Louis Mountbatten fired immediately afterwards, and the rhino made off. A prolonged search was made for the beast. The blood-spattered leaves and grass showed clearly that a bullet had found its mark, but it was not till many days later that the beast was found dead. It was then too decomposed for preservation, but the skull and horn were recovered. It proved to be the best of all the rhino heads obtained in Nepal during the present shoot.

A second rhino wounded on this day by Captain Dudley North was picked up afterwards under similar circumstances, as will be told later.

As we blundered through the dense forest in search of the wounded rhino, one could not help wondering what would have been the effect on our ranks if a rhino had taken it into his head to charge, bunched up as we were at the moment. The resultant stampede would not exactly have been a pleasant experience; and a rhino is not at all particular as to what it charges.

Just before the search was abandoned, a tiger was seen, a ring was immediately formed and the animal was soon accounted for. H.R.H. fired at the beast, but missed. The tiger took cover, but immediately reappeared, giving Sir Godfrey Thomas a broadside shot at close range.

Shortly afterwards H.R.H. returned to camp, but certain enthusiasts remained till dark without any results beyond a rather exciting five minutes with a pig. In the fading light the animal was discovered moving in the bushes. Everybody thought it was a panther or a tiger, a ring was formed. Whatever it was, it took a great deal of dislodging, but at last, with a protesting squeal, out rushed a much harassed and disgruntled porker, who promptly dodged through the lines of elephants and vanished into the jungle.

## THIRD DAY

*December 16th.*

There were several different parties on this shoot. H.R.H., Colonel Worgan, Captain the Hon. Piers Legh, Commander Newport and Lord Louis Mountbatten motored to the thirteenth milestone, to a place called Baghai.

A ring had been formed about half a mile from the road, and after the party arrived H.R.H. himself posted the guns, placing them at intervals of about 50 yards. Shortly after the beat commenced, a tiger broke in front of the Prince's howdah. H.R.H. fired, and was immediately followed by a right and left from Captain Piers Legh. The next twenty minutes were spent in an effort to dislodge the beast from some heavy cover. Very suddenly the tiger put in a second appearance, but a shot in the leg from Lord Louis Mountbatten sent him limping back into cover. The ring now closed in upon him, and the animal making his last bid for liberty, sprang gamely at Lord Louis' mount, and was dropped with a shot through the head. A subsequent examination showed that only the last two shots had taken effect, and the trophy accordingly went to Lord Louis Mountbatten.

H.R.H. returned to camp after lunch, while the remainder of the party went off on a fruitless quest after more tiger.

A second party consisting of the Earl of Cromer, Captain Dudley North and two others spent the morning after rhino at Kasra. One was secured which fell to Captain Dudley North's rifle.

The party went into some very thick jungle bordering a lake, where the shikaris had previously located a few rhino. The rhinos were heard moving about as the elephants approached, and presently one of them was seen by a young member of the Maharaja's family, who, being in the howdah with Captain Dudley North, urged him to fire. Captain North had previously won the toss for the first shot, and the occupant of the adjoining howdah, who had also seen the animal, excitedly pointed it out.

Captain Dudley North, writing to me, said :

"I could see nothing, and told my friend so ; he, however, still urged me to shoot. I could not see anything, so I aimed at what I presumed was the object he intended and fired. Absolutely nothing happened, and the conglomeration of the tree stump and grass which might have been, or looked like, a rhino, remained exactly where it was. Even the real rhinos in our vicinity did not stir. We continued groping about in the big grass, and shortly afterwards two rhinos dashed out of the pool away from us and in an impossible position for a decent shot. We tracked them for some distance, and were in a small clearing on the edge of some very high grass when we observed a great commotion going on near by. The top of the high grass was violently agitated as though some great beast was pushing through, and there was no doubt that a rhino was coming our way, and shortly afterwards he did, with a rush, charging straight at my elephant. The high grass parted, and directly I saw the horn on the top of his nose, through the dense cover, I fired. Lord Cromer, on my left, fired two barrels in quick succession, and my elephant, immediately I fired, wheeled round and was for getting out of it ; so I did not have much time to see exactly what happened.

"The impression was that the rhino stumbled and almost fell, but recovered and made off through the grass. Lord Cromer was of the same opinion, and thought both our shots had taken effect. In the confusion of elephants trying to bolt, no one had time to shoot at another rhino which came out on our right, but went back into cover very quickly. There were blood traces which we tracked for some time, but eventually lost. This rhino was picked up dead some days after the Royal party left Nepal."

After the above incident, the party formed into line moving slowly through the jungle. Shortly afterwards a rhino was seen, and very fortunately bagged by Captain Dudley North. The beast was hit through the spine half-way down its neck, and dropped in its tracks, needing only another shot to give it its quietus. Captain North was using a double-barrelled .470 Gibbs rifle with a solid bullet.

Admiral Halsey, with a party consisting of Sir Godfrey Thomas, the Hon. Bruce Ogilvy and Colonel Harvey, secured a tiger late in the afternoon of the same day.

The morning had been blank, and after lunch a second attempt was made. A very long trek through dense jungle, where every one got more or less lost, brought no result. So a man was sent ahead

to reconnoitre ; it seemed that all arrangements had failed, and a return to camp was decided on at 4 p.m. A few minutes after, however, khubber was brought that a tiger had been ringed quite close by. Soon all the guns were in position, and a few minutes later Admiral Halsey bagged his tiger with a shot through the neck.

#### FOURTH DAY

*December 17th.*

H.R.H. spent the morning after small game, and with his party accounted for some twenty-five head.

Admiral Sir Lionel Halsey, Colonel Harvey and Lord Louis Mountbatten motored to Kasra (thirty miles) after rhino. They saw none, and had a tiger beat which was also blank.

The same morning Captain Poynder and Captain Dudley North both had a shot at a rhino which fell to the former's rifle. She was found to be a gravid female. When she was being skinned, a calf was found *in utero*. The animal gave no trouble, and did not charge, but, as Captain Dudley North afterwards said, "She took a terrible lot of killing."

The rhino shoots in Nepal showed very clearly the extreme difficulty of bringing these animals to bag without a vital shot. In the dense swamps of the Terai a wounded rhino is practically impossible to track and recover. In the present instance, the rhino was spotted in a strip of grass jungle, flanked on three sides by forest, and on the fourth by a watercourse. "Stops" were posted in trees on two sides, and Captain Poynder and Captain Dudley North walked their elephants through the thick grass to a point from which the animal could be seen. The rhino moved off on their approach, but was turned back by the tumult raised by the stops, and blundered back to within ten yards of the guns. It was extremely difficult to see in the heavy cover, but both Captain North and Captain Poynder fired, putting four high velocity .470 bullets into it. The rhino lurched forward, but got away, and was again turned by the stops, some 200 or 300 yards off, when the brute was finally dropped with a shot through the neck from Captain Poynder's rifle.

All five shots had taken effect, four of them in the region of the shoulder. The shot in the neck had finished it. But for this, and the "stops" posted in the trees, the animal would in all probability have got away to perish miserably in the trackless swamps. A shot in the vertebræ in the forepart of the neck will drop a rhino in his tracks. This and the brain shot would seem to be the most effective.

Another party, consisting of Colonel Worgan, Mr. Petrie, Sir Godfrey Thomas, Commander Newport and Captain the Hon. Piers Legh, left camp on elephants late in the morning. They went down to the river bed from Bikna Thori Station about four miles, and changed from the pads on to howdah elephants. The ring was formed, and very soon a fine tigress gave Sir Godfrey Thomas a shot.

"It was not a difficult one," wrote Sir Godfrey later, "and Rushbrook Williams who was in my howdah is certain that I hit it. Personally I am not at all sure, as my elephant had no guts, and turned round and more or less bolted as soon as the tiger appeared. I was on the floor of the howdah, and Rushbrook Williams nearly fell out while the elephant began to make for the woods. Luckily the mahout stopped the brute, and we got back near the line to see the tiger down with every one shooting at it. It took an awful lot of lead to kill it stone dead."

"An uproar then began down the line, and we discovered that there were two cubs outside the ring. The line closed in upon them, as we had an idea of taking the beasts alive, but they were too big to catch without nets and a good deal of preparation, and too young to leave, as in all probability they would not have lived without their mother. Colonel Worgan got one, and Commander Newport the other. All the way home the jungle was beaten, but nothing was seen."

A tiger measuring 9 feet 2 inches was also shot by Captain Bruce Ogilvy on this day.

#### A DAY OF REST

*December 18th.*

It being Sunday, there was no shooting to-day, and this was rather a relief to my skinning department, which had been working at high pressure for the last few days, getting rid of the great mass of material that had been sent in. I was up all night with my men, as, with so much already having come in, and with great disarticulated limbs of rhino arriving continually, I had to work against time to prevent anything being spoilt. Day and night operations thus became the order. We had a generous supply of disinfectants which were scattered with a lavish hand, but even so it was an obscene business, and not to be dwelt on more than is necessary. An entry I saw in the diary of a member of the Staff succinctly describes the case :

"I visited the skinning camp where Ellison is dealing with the stuff ; there was an appalling stink there !!!"

The skinning camp was guarded day and night by Gurkhas. Tigers' claws, whiskers and fat and kindred articles are of much value to the native, who has uses for them not dreamt of in our philosophy, and with such a profusion of riches lying about, one had to guard against the intrusion of the snapper-up of unconsidered trifles. One such gentleman we caught red-handed, and his subsequent fate at the hands of the Nepalese officials was a sufficient deterrent against further attempts of this nature.

Anent the tigers' fat : Divers petitioners came to me pleading for a modicum of the precious adipose, reputed to be a panacea for many ills, but as Pharaoh of old to his starving Egyptians, I commended them to Joseph, in this instance Baptista, my head skinner. To him in the course of his labours had fallen a bountiful harvest of the desirable unguent, and to the waiting multitude he bestowed his favours, with, I am afraid, a somewhat niggardly hand.

Sunday afternoon was spent in the distribution of gifts and mementos from the Maharaja to his guests. Among these were a number of beautiful silver-mounted *kukris*, which were presented to various members of the party, a fitting memento of their days in Nepal.

According to time-honoured custom, H.R.H. was the recipient of a number of live animals and birds, a list of which is printed elsewhere in this volume.

Among the animals was the famous "unicorn" sheep of Nepal. These are normally two horned. When quite young the horns are bound closely together, so that they grow up in contact with one another, giving them the desired "unicorn" effect.

The birds included a very fine series of pheasants. Particularly striking were the gorgeous monauls, the tragopans with their crimson white-spotted breasts, and the little blood pheasants with their green splashed over with blood-red markings.

After being inspected by the Prince, the collections were handed over to the writer, and at the close of the shoot in Nepal, were brought down to Bombay, where the animals and birds were temporarily housed in the Victoria Gardens previous to their being shipped to the London Zoological Gardens, their final destination.

#### SIXTH DAY

*December 19th.*

On this day H.R.H. shot a rhino at Sarasoti Kola. Captain Dudley North describing the shoot writes :



THE SKINNING CAMP IN NEPAL ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18TH, 1921.



*Photographs: Central News.*

THE PRINCE " KICKING OFF " IN A FOOTBALL MATCH IN NEPAL.

On the evening of Sunday, December 18th, 1921. There being no shooting, a scratch football match was arranged. H.R.H. played centre forward for his team, composed of the Staff. Note the sambhur leather shooting shoes he is wearing.



*Photograph through the kindness of General Sir Kaiser of Nepal.*  
**RHINOCEROS SHOT BY THE PRINCE OF WALES.**

The Prince's first shot hit, though rather high, and the beast swung round and His Royal Highness fired again, hitting it this time on the neck.

"I went out with H.R.H. after rhino. We went to where one was reported, and soon sighted a rhino lying down. H.R.H. had not seen one properly before, so that at first he did not recognise it, as they are very difficult to distinguish in heavy cover. However, when the brute rose he saw it. The rhino moved slowly towards us, and I suggested his firing a raking shot into it, but H.R.H. very rightly preferred to wait for a more advantageous position. The rhino turned to the right and the Prince fired. His first shot hit, though rather high, and the beast swung round and H.R.H. fired again, hitting it this time on the neck.

"We followed the beast into very heavy cover, but the trees were so thick that it was impossible to get a shot, the elephants were just getting clear of the trees when the rhino was dropped by General Sir Kaiser Shumshere Jung, who fired as he was under the impression the beast was going to charge.

"H.R.H. used my .470 Gibbs rifle which I lent him."

A separate party, consisting of Sir Godfrey Thomas, the Hon. Bruce Ogilvy and Lord Louis Mountbatten, spent a fruitless morning after rhino at Kasra. The day was not without its excitement, however, as in the course of operations Lord Louis Mountbatten's elephant suddenly went "musth" while he was in the howdah.

The party was going through what one of them described as "the longest and thickest grass I have ever had the misfortune to encounter"; it was several feet above the head of a man standing up in a howdah. Without any appreciable warning, Lord Louis' elephant attacked another animal, on which a Nepalese colonel was sitting, and disappeared into the bush. Fortunately the mahout managed to stop him by slashing at his head with a kukri. Lord Louis was then rescued and transferred to another elephant.

After that the party went through "still worse country"; the noise the elephants made crashing through the tangle of tree and grass was sufficient to scare any game within a radius of miles, so the shoot was abandoned, and the party retired to the base and motored back, reaching camp long after dark.

Near Dhoba, one mile to the south of the twenty-second milestone, the same morning Mr. Percival Landon, who was with another party, bagged a fine bull rhino with a shot clean through the brain. Mr. Landon writes the following graphic description of the day's sport:

"The rhino was shot after the first ring at which Lord Cromer secured a fine leopard as well as the largest tiger that had yet been

shot. The party divided, as the beaters had reported two finds three or four miles away—some animal, probably another tiger, cornered in a dense bit of jungle, and a rhino in an open plantation. Mr. M. A. Metcalfe, Captain Poynder and Mr. Percival Landon went after the rhino on elephants.

“ By this time the sun was getting low. They made their way across more or less open country for about two miles and then entered the plantation. This was irregular in character, large woods of free-growing young *sal*, alternating with treeless stretches of coarse, shoulder-high grass, indicating swampy soil, the whole being surrounded by a ring of thick and sometimes impenetrable undergrowth. The light was fading, tending to become yellow, a fact which only enhanced the unusual beauty of the surroundings. The party moved forward in silence, broken only by the steady crash of what light undergrowth there was under the *sal* trees, or the tear and the squish of the high marsh grass. Several times, where the mud was exceptionally deep, they came upon signs of recent wallowings, but of rhinoceros they saw nothing, though they spent over an hour in carefully quartering the plantation in response to the noise and whistles of the beaters on foot.

“ They were on the point of giving up and returning to the rest of the party when a soft but insistent whistle some distance to the right turned them back for a last chance. Mr. Landon was on the right-hand elephant with a Nepalese officer, and slightly in advance of Mr. Metcalfe and Captain Poynder, when he suddenly came in sight of a huge rhino. It was standing sideways, motionless among *sal* trees well lighted for a shot. It stood about 6 feet high, and as roughly paced out afterwards, was 9 feet 10 inches in length. In the low evening sun it looked as big as a locomotive.

“ Mr. Landon fired twice, the first bullet hitting it nearly opposite the centre of the spine, though whether the bullet did much work through the plate at that angle one cannot say. It did not seem to have any effect. With the second shot he hit it clean through the brain, and the rhino sank down in his track, without a movement, stone dead. The distance was just 90 yards, and everybody came up to find the beaters already closed in and celebrating the occasion, with the amazing rites that always accompany the killing of a rhinoceros in Nepal.

“ Everything that could hold blood was requisitioned, and the thick blood flowing from the nostrils was collected with the utmost care. This was not a concession to the spirit of the monster, as in the rite of the dabbling of a tiger's whiskers in his own blood. A rhinoceros's blood is apparently unrivalled as a *viaticum* for the



*Photograph through the kindness of Colonel W. F. T. O'Connor, C.I.E., &c.*  
H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES WITH HIS RHINOCEROS.  
H.R.H. is wearing his Nepal kukri.



*Photograph through the kindness of General Sir Kaiser of Nepal.*  
HOW THE PRINCE OF WALES WON THE HEARTS OF THE NEPALESE.  
H.R.H. standing by the fine rhinoceros he had just shot. Surrounding him are the brother of the Maharaja of Nepal, General Sir Kaiser, wearing a kukri, and many of the Maharaja's relatives and officials.



H.R.H. TAKES A HAND WITH HIS KUKRI IN DECAPITATING A RHINOCEROS.



*Photographs through the kindness of General Sir Kaiser of Nepal.*

A FURTHER STAGE OF THE RITUAL.

The dismembered head of the rhinoceros is seen on the right of the photograph. H.R.H. is an interested spectator at the ceremony.

dying, ensuring for the soul both a peaceful departure and a happy re-birth on the other side. There are indeed many superstitions about a dead rhinoceros, but it is worth noting that its power for ensuring peace for the departed soul is retained by the mere empty shell—it is hard to call it skin—of the beast for years after its own decease.

“The scene was a strange one, and Captain Poynder aptly recalled the prehistoric association of ‘Tarzan of the Apes’ as half a dozen elephants closed in from nowhere, and ranged about the inconceivable scene of blood ritual which was carried a step further by the decapitation, amid fountains of blood, of the beast’s head.

“There was no time for witnessing the ‘gralloching’ of the carcase, another messy and obscene ceremony of great importance.

“The head was measured from the top of the snout to the fold of the hide over the jaw bone, and found to be a shade over  $30\frac{1}{2}$  inches straight. The horn was of no great height, perhaps 8 inches, but of massive construction. The colour was of an unusually light grey, and the only mark on the head was that of the ‘350 bullet, 3 or 4 inches in front of the root of the ear.’”

In the afternoon news was brought to the camp that a tiger had been ringed about six miles out; the following party therefore went out after him: H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, Colonel O’Connor, Captain Dudley North, the Hon. Piers Legh, the Hon. Bruce Ogilvy, and Captain E. Villiers.

In about three-quarters of an hour the party reached the spot where the tiger was surrounded, the ring being a fairly large one and the jungle in the middle unusually thick. The tiger, or tigress, as she turned out to be, gave very good sport, and was finally bagged by Captain Piers Legh, who dropped her with a very fine running shot clean through the heart.

Information was then brought that there was another tiger not far off, which there was a chance of ringing if people liked to hurry out; but as it was getting late, and the chances were not very great of reaching the spot in time, H.R.H. and Colonel O’Connor returned to the camp. The remainder, however, went on, on the off chance; and after they had plunged into inordinately heavy jungle for the space of a further half-hour, came to the spot where the shikari said the tiger should be, and started trying to ring him. Captain Villiers thus describes what happened:

“I suddenly saw a tigress cantering quite slowly diagonally across towards my elephant, and after waiting till she was within easy range

I fired and got her through the shoulder, dropping her immediately, but not killing her outright, since the shot just missed the heart; I finally dispatched her with a second shot.

"I was shooting with a .22 bore double-barrelled rifle made by Messrs. Manton & Co., which, I may mention, is without any exception the nicest weapon I have ever handled. It comes up to the shoulder just like a well-fitting 12 bore, and it was interesting to see how effectually this extremely small-bore weapon, but of very high velocity, stopped the tigress. She proved to be a tigress measuring 8 feet, and was in excellent condition."

Judging from the trophies received at the skinning camp, this day, Monday, December 19th, provided the most successful sport. In addition to the rhino bagged by H.R.H., and the one shot by Mr. Landon, a third rhino was accounted for by Commander Newport.

The Earl of Cromer shot a fine tiger, the largest obtained in Nepal during the Prince's shikar, taping 9 feet 10 inches, and a leopard.

All this meant a considerable amount of work for my men, but it is to be recorded that they carried it through with the utmost zeal and fervour.

#### SEVENTH DAY

*December 20th.*

H.R.H. did not go out in the morning, but remained in camp till after lunch when he rode out with Sir Godfrey Thomas and a few others into British Territory, where he shot small game.

Lord Louis Mountbatten and Colonel Worgan motored to the twenty-second milestone at Dhoba, where a rhino was shot by the latter. They then joined up with Colonel Harvey, Colonel O'Kinealy and Captain the Hon. Piers Legh, and went to a tiger ring which proved to be blank. Later a ring was made for leopard and provided an exciting evening.

On the elephants beating the ring a bear was found which caused a great deal of amusement, charging round the ring and giving every one a chance of a shot. The shooting appears to have been promiscuous, but it is to be recorded that the bear eventually succumbed.

After the firing subsided, the presence of the leopard became a matter of doubt, as he had not put in an appearance during the tremendous bombardment of Bruin, but on the ring closing up, they flushed him, and he charged straight through the elephants, and broke the ring. He was hit by Mr. de Montmorency, but was not deterred in his charge, and went straight through. The ring reformed rather raggedly, and the leopard again broke through, springing on an



AN ADJOURNMENT FOR LUNCH IN THE NEPAL JUNGLES.

Colonel Harvey (second on left), Captain Metcalfe, Admiral Halsey, The Hon. Bruce Ogilvy, Sir Godfrey Thomas and Colonel O'Kinealy, resting on the day the Prince of Wales first went out rhinoceros shooting. Several had been seen in a swamp in close proximity.



H.H. THE MAHARAJA OF NEPAL, SIR CHANDRA SHUMSHERE JUNG, G.C.B.,  
G.C.S.I., &C., ACCOMPANIED BY HIS SONS.

On his right is his youngest son who, though only eight years old, had, a few days previous to the visit of the Prince of Wales, single handed accounted for his first tiger.

elephant's trunk. He was dislodged, but it was too dark to continue that evening. The leopard, however, was shot the next day, and proved to be a fine animal, taping 7 feet 6 inches.

Lord Cromer and the Hon. Bruce Ogilvy each accounted for a rhino in the course of the day, and Captain Poynder bagged a bear just outside the Royal camp.

#### EIGHTH DAY

*December 21st.*

This was the last day of the Nepal shoot. H.R.H. rode out after lunch with Colonel O'Connor, the British Envoy, Sir Godfrey Thomas and others.

In the course of the evening, near the village of Persanni, in British Territory, the Prince encountered a hamadryad, or King Cobra, which he luckily killed. The party were walking up jungle fowl at the time. H.R.H. first shot at the snake as it was moving away, and apparently hit it, for the brute turned and appeared to be about to attack him when he killed it with his second barrel. The snake was brought into camp with the rest of the day's bag. It was first assumed that it was an ordinary rat snake, or dhaman, when examined in the fading light. Subsequently when the skin was examined at the Bombay Natural History Society's Museum in Bombay, the identity of the reptile was revealed. The Prince's King Cobra taped 10 feet 3 inches.

The hamadryad, the largest known poisonous snake in the world, grows to over 15 feet in length. In the Sarawak Pavilion, at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley, in 1924, a hamadryad was shown measuring 14 feet  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and said to be the "largest specimen known," but the record specimen is now in the Bombay Natural History Society's Museum, and measures 15 feet 5 inches. Much has been written about the ferocity of the king cobra, and its propensity for making an unprovoked attack. When cornered, a king cobra may show fight, or a female will very probably attack, should her nest or eggs be endangered, but experience has shown that these serpents, like others, under ordinary circumstances usually seek safety in flight. One writer says :

" 'The scourge of the jungle' it has been called. It lives largely in the trees, but takes to water readily. There used to be a living hamadryad in the possession of the Bombay Natural History Society, which was said to be 12 feet long. It did not look it. But the

one hand, and the Malayan and Spectacled bears, on the other, are sufficiently distinctive forms to be clearly entitled to individual specific rank. It seems that all the other types will interbreed freely, and (though the writer has no knowledge on the subject) it is not improbable that, for instance, the Malayan and American Black bear would do so. Hybrids of various crosses are common in menageries and, in cases where the ranges overlap, are also found in the wild state.

The Himalayan bear (*Ursus torquatus*) is a formidable beast, being found nearly a foot taller than the American Black bear, while only the largest grizzly skins exceed the biggest Himalayan specimens in length. The following comparison of the three largest skins of each of the species, extracted from Mr. Rowland Ward's records, will be interesting :

GRIZZLY.	HIMALAYAN.	AMERICAN BLACK.
9 ft. 1 in.	.. 8 ft. 5 in.	.. 7 ft. 5½ in.
9 ft. 0 in.	.. 8 ft. 5 in.	.. 6 ft. 11 in.
8 ft. 7 in.	.. 8 ft. 2 in.	.. 6 ft. 7 in.

Very few records are available of the size of animals, properly measured, before being skinned ; but it is worth noting that the "length of body" of Lord Hardinge's "record" tiger was only 7 feet 11½ inches, and no other tiger is recorded reaching as much as 7 feet 2 inches. The bear has no 3 feet of tail to add to its length. Roughly it would probably be safe to say that an 8-foot Himalayan bear might be expected to weigh 50 lb. or so more than a 11-foot tiger.

The largest Himalayan bears are found in Kashmir. The biggest Nepal specimen (shot by Lieut.-General Sir Kaiser Shumshere Jung) was 6 feet 6 inches in length, and weighed 700 lb.

#### RHINOCEROS (*R. unicornis*)

Throughout the shoots I never had the opportunity of measuring any of the animals in the flesh, with the exception of the rhino calf *in utero*, as they were generally shot far away from camp, and were disarticulated on the spot and sent into the skinning camp in sections, this being the easiest method of transporting such big beasts.

General Sir Kaiser Shumshere Jung gives me the following measurement of a rhino which appeared to him as "unusually" big :

Height at shoulder	.	.	:	.	.	6 ft. 4 in.
Length from nose to root of tail	:	.	:	.	.	10 ft. 7 in.
						(measured between pegs).
Tail	.	.	.	.	.	2 ft. 1 in.
Neck	.	.	.	.	.	7 ft. 6 in.
Girth behind shoulder	:	.	.	.	.	11 ft. 1 in.
Maximum girth	:	.	.	.	.	12 ft. 6 in.
Horn	.	.	.	.	.	15½ in.



*Photograph through the kindness of General Sir Kaiser of Nepal.*

**AN UNBORN RHINOCEROS CALF.**

A fully developed rhino calf, *in utero*, was taken from an animal shot during the Prince's shikar in Nepal. Length between pegs, 4 feet, 4 inches; head and body, 3 feet, 1 inch; girth, 2 feet, 0 inches; weight, 120 lb.

A female shot by Colonel O'Connor during the Christmas camp, after the Prince had left Nepal, taped 5 feet 9 inches in height at withers, greatest girth 12 feet. The longest rhino horn obtained in Nepal was one of an animal shot by Lord Curzon, then Viceroy, in 1901, at Morang. The horn measured  $21\frac{1}{2}$  inches, with a circumference of  $24\frac{3}{4}$  inches at the base. The record horn measures 24 inches, and was got by Mr. Briscoe in Assam.

Hodgson gives the following measurement of a new-born rhino : length 3 feet 4 inches, and height 2 feet. An animal eight years old taped 9 feet 3 inches in length, and 4 feet 10 inches in height, the maximum girth being 10 feet 5 inches. The fully developed calf *in utero*, taken from an animal shot during the Prince's shikar in Nepal, measured as follows :

Length between pegs	:	:	:	:	:	4 ft. 1 in.
Head and body	:	:	:	:	:	3 ft. 4 in.
Girth	:	:	:	:	:	2 ft. 9 in.
Weight	:	:	:	:	:	120 lb.

Commenting on the animal's habits, General Sir Kaiser writes :

" Though it prefers swamps and high grass, the great Indian rhinoceros is also found in wood jungles, up ravines and low hills ; along the numerous rivers it has its particular places for the evacuation of excreta. Along the runs to such places it walks backwards and falls an unsuspecting victim to poachers."

The period of gestation is given by Hodgson as seventeen to eighteen months, but General Sir Kaiser says it is believed to be one year, and the cow produces one at birth. According to General Sir Kaiser, breeding takes place at all times of the year.

Writers have commented on the longevity of the rhinoceros, 100 years being given as the age. General Sir Kaiser is of opinion that as regards breeding and longevity the " rhino " is " first cousin to the elephant."

Rhinoceros are still very numerous in the Nepal Terai, especially so in Chitawan and along the Rapti River. In January, 1907, twenty-eight rhinos were bagged, fourteen males and fourteen females, yet the forests in Chitawan were in 1909 so full of them that no appreciable diminution in the stock had been made.

Many legends and beliefs are attached to the rhinoceros in Nepal. Mr. Landon's account of the scene at the death of one of these animals during the shoot in Nepal is sufficiently illustrative of the esteem the animal is held in by the Nepalese in general. Commenting on the above, General Sir Kaiser writes :



*Photograph through the kindness of Lieut.-Colonel J. C. Faunthorpe, C.B., M.C., A.D.C.*

A GREAT INDIAN RHINOCEROS WITH ITS YOUNG EMERGING FROM THE  
WOOD JUNGLES IN NEPAL, AND PROCEEDING TO THE SWAMPS AND HIGH  
GRASS, WHICH IT PREFERENCES.



THE RAPTI RIVER, NEPAL, WHERE RHINOCEROSES ARE STILL VERY NUMEROUS.



Photograph through the kindness of General Sir Kaiser of Nepal.

THE GREAT INDIAN RHINOCHROS (*R. unicornis*).

These animals are still very numerous in the Nepal Terai, and though they prefer swamp and high grass, they are also found in wood jungles, up ravines and low hills. Ten were killed by the Royal party in Nepal. The Prince of Wales shot two.

“ The flesh and blood of the rhino are considered pure and highly acceptable to the *Manes*, to whom the high-caste Hindus and most Gurkhas offer libation of its blood after entering its disembowelled body. On ordinary *Sradh* days the libation of water and milk is poured from a cup carved from its horn. The urine is considered antiseptic ; it is hung in a vessel at the principal door as a charm against ghosts, evil spirits and diseases.”

The above beliefs are in nowise confined to Nepal, as the Chinese, Burmese and Siamese preserve practically every part of the rhinoceros. The horn, hoof, blood, urine, hide, and even the intestines are dried and afterwards converted into various medicines.

As regards shooting rhino in Nepal the importance of a vital shot has been already commented upon. Selous in his “ Hunter’s Wanderings in Africa,” in writing about rhino, says :

“ As with elephants it is very unsatisfactory work following up a wounded rhino, as they do not go and lie down, but walk on and on till their strength gives way. They die very quickly when shot through both lungs and the upper part of the heart, but if shot from the front, and the bullet only penetrates one lung, they will go on to all eternity, though throwing blood out of their mouth and nostrils by the gallon. With a broken shoulder they will run first at a gallop and then at a halting trot for more than a mile, but if the hind leg is broken they do not appear to be able to budge a step.”

Conditions in Nepal are entirely different from the country in which Selous shot ; owing to the nature of the terrain the tracking of wounded rhino is practically impossible, and many a mortally wounded beast has been lost in consequence.

A shot through the brain, placed a few inches in front of the root of the ear, would seem to be the most effective, or a shot through the forepart of the neck severing the cervical vertebrae. In the Bombay Natural History Society’s *Journal*, Mr. G. C. Shortridge records shooting an Asiatic two-horned rhino with a shot gun loaded with lethal bullet, dropping him at seven paces with a lucky shot in the head, which smashed through the skull and lodged in the brain.

Writing of the rhinoceros of Somaliland (*R. bicornis*), Captain P. Z. (now Sir Percy) Cox (Bombay Natural History Society’s *Journal*, vol. xiii., p. 93 *et seq.*) describes his experiences and those of Donaldson-Smith as to the effect of variously placed shots with heavy rifles, the conclusion arrived at being that the “ knock-out ” blow is a broadside shot in the belly, the reason probably being that in this part of

the rhino's anatomy there is such a number of nerves and blood vessels that a bullet planted therein causes a violent shock to the system.

Another writer commenting on the above, takes exception to the belly shot, states that he has no faith in head shots, and considers a shot behind the shoulder to be the most fatal.

The following account of rhinoceros shooting in Nepal is from a second article, "A Royal Shooting Ground," by Colonel R. S. Kennion, published in *The Field* of May 6th, 1922 :

" Rhinoceros are now practically only found in the country lying east of the Gandak River, known as Chitawan. In this neighbourhood they have been carefully preserved, and any one that is accorded the privilege of entering the district mentioned can still see more of these huge beasts than he could anywhere else in the world. They are, of course, of a different species to those found in Africa. In the old days rhino shooting used to be considered a very dangerous sport—that is, before H.V. rifles came into use. That famous old sportsman, Sir Jung Bahadur, used, however, often to be accompanied by his ladies when on expeditions after rhino, till one of them was killed through the elephant carrying their howdah being charged and knocked over. Ladies were therefore barred. Rhino in this country must, like other animals, be shot from elephants, but elephants staunch to rhino are harder to find than those staunch to tiger. The 'ringing' method cannot be employed, for if these beasts are in a tight place they will always charge, and will so scatter and demoralise the elephants that their nerves will not recover for months, if at all.

" The proper plan is for two or three guns to go together to the rhino ground, which is generally the very thickest tree jungle, or else *narkat*, where the going is marshy. They are located by their unmistakable three-toed tracks, by the crashing of branches, or by their peculiar snorts, which remind one rather of a short burst of machine-gun fire, but, of course, less loud and sharp. One does not find them particularly anxious to get right away, and all that is necessary is to manœuvre about to get a clear shot at head or neck. You see the huge uncouth brute vaguely outlined amid the greenery, standing looking at you, perhaps 20 yards away. There is nothing to aim at except his nose and horn, or perhaps his chest, all equally futile, even with so heavy a weapon as a H.V. .465 or .500 rifle. Nearer you dare not go, or he would charge, which, in the jungle, at any rate, would probably mean a clean sweep of the howdah by branches off your bolting elephant. No elephant will stand up to a charging rhino, and very few in such circumstances will stand sufficiently even to give

you the chance of a shot. While you are wondering about the next move, perhaps with an astounding snort, whistle, or squeal, or a combination of all three, the rhino moves off with a rush, and your elephant, with a pirouette, followed by a few yards' strategic retirement, displays the panicky state of his nerves. It is, in a way, what one might expect, as an elephant has no means of defence against a rhino. Against this is the fact that wild elephant and rhinoceros are often found on the same ground. I suppose till the human biped intrudes, they must have little to say to one another.

"The rhino will not go far before he stands again, and the rest depends on circumstances. If you can get a shot below the ear he will sink down so instantaneously dead that he will not roll over. You can then only realise his huge bulk with the aid of a tape. A moderately big male shot by the writer measured 5 feet 9 inches at the shoulder, and was 13 feet long. It took eight carts to bring him to camp. As to a rhino's carcase in the Nepal Terai, the Tharus, like vultures, seem to assemble from nowhere. They sop up the blood on rags. When dried, the water in which the rag is dipped is a specific against cholera. The urine, also an important item in the mysterious *materia medica* of the jungle—heaven knows for what ailment!—is caught in bottles, or any vessel handy, while of the meat not a gristly shred is left, for it is all eaten. One evening our own menu included roast peafowl, sambur marrow on toast, and rhino's tongue. The latter is not as disagreeable as it sounds, though I cannot praise it further.

"The male may be recognised from the female by his shorter and thicker horn, worn blunt by combats, in which it is said that rhino kill one another. The longer and sharper female's horn has a more unpleasant appearance, and this sex, especially when they have a calf at heel, display more gratuitous truculence. Once we had a stand in an open space, looking as if a ride had been cut in the forest. A few elephants were being put through to move a tiger towards us. A man posted up a tree signalled a tiger towards our left front, but he had not yet come out when we heard a rhino's crashing just in front of us, and shortly afterwards a female came slowly out. She had a calf with her. Seeing our elephant, she stood looking at us, not 25 yards away. A rhino's face, I may remark, is totally without expression, like a hunk of wood. Our elephant stood and looked at her. I had no wish to shoot, and so we remained like that for a full minute. I would have given a good deal for a camera in my hand. Then, with a toss of her head, she came at us at a lumbering gallop. An elephant can be marvellously quick in such circumstances. Next moment a man, hatless, flung violently about in a howdah, concerned chiefly

to preserve himself from being pitched out, and at the same time to keep hold of his rifle, was being adjured to shoot ! Shoot, indeed ! The rhino, having chased us headlong for 40 or 50 yards, stopped and turned off into the jungle. Our elephant had kept to the open, or our plight would have been sad. We returned to our stand, and the elephant was just handing me my hat when the tiger, in two bounds, crossed the ride. I did shoot, but the bullet that sped knocked the dust off somewhere behind his tail. That elephant has a very good reputation with rhino, and I took the first opportunity of asking the mahout to account for his somewhat ignominious flight.

“ ‘ Nay, sahib,’ he said, ‘ Mangal Pershad behaved well. Did he not stand ? But he expected your honour to shoot, and when you did not shoot he felt himself without support and fled.’

“ His explanation was, I am sure, quite correct. Poor Mangal felt he had lost his human backing, and his nerve gave way.

“ The scene in the wonderful jungles of Chitawan I love best to recall occurred one evening during our return towards camp. We had been out all day. The elephants were strung out in a long line, the mahouts hurrying them along at their ridiculous best pace to reach the tents before darkness fell. We were tired and dusty. The sun was setting, turning to gold the tips of the *sal* trees on the high *dhamar* to our right, while on the other hand, over the open stretch of sand, reeds, and river, a light mist was rising from the water, almost concealing the line of forest on the far bank. A chill had fallen on the air. Jungle fowl were calling, peafowl were already fluttering up to their perches on the high cotton trees. Somewhere quite close by a karkar was barking persistently. Turning a bend in the forest path we came to a sort of natural clearing, a grassy lawn, making a bay in the forest. In the middle of this stood a huge rhinoceros. He looked like a monstrous image of clay. With his grotesque shape, long boat-shaped head, his folds of armour, his scaly hide, he seemed like a monster of some bygone age aroused from the slime and his sleep of thousands of years. The leading mahouts halted their elephants on seeing him. I had no desire to shoot him, and all shouted to scare him away. He just turned his great head, but otherwise would not stir, so we filed by, so near one could have hit him with a stone. Looking back from the next turning, the huge grey image was still standing immovable in the gloom.”

On the subject of the temper of the rhinoceros, the author of “ Of Distinguished Animals ” says :

“ A wounded—or an angry—rhinoceros is always a very dangerous

beast ; but of its temper under ordinary circumstances, when at large, accounts are curiously contradictory. The subject, so far as the African species are concerned, has been well threshed out by Mr. Selous. He himself considered the black rhinoceros to be 'stupid and blundering,' but rarely intentionally aggressive, saying that he had 'never known an instance of one not running off immediately on getting my wind.' Similarly, Mr. F. Vaughan Kirby declares it to be 'naturally timid' and 'the easiest to kill of all large game.' The experience of Mr. Neumann coincides with this, the beast, in his opinion, being 'intensely stupid and marvellously blind.' The white rhinoceros (in spite of the fact that one threw him and his horse into the air) Mr. Cotton Oswell apostrophises as 'Poor, old, stupid fellow . . . the very thing for young gunners to try their 'prentice hands upon'—sad words, seeing how nearly the white rhinoceros has come to being extinct.

" Many other authorities, however, speak of the animal's exceeding and gratuitous ferocity. Mr. Abel Chapman ranks the rhinoceros next to the elephant as the most dangerous of African wild game. Gordon Cumming found the black rhinoceros 'extremely fierce and dangerous' ; and the divergence of opinion appears in some points to extend to matters of fact on which discrepancy would seem unnecessary. Thus Mr. Neumann says that the Ndorobo 'have far less fear of rhinoceroses than of elephants,' while Mr. F. J. Jackson, speaking also of natives of East Africa, avers that 'as a rule they are more afraid of a rhinoceros than of either an elephant or a buffalo.'

" The Asiatic rhinoceroses, of which three different species are recognised, are generally regarded as more or less inoffensive until wounded or attacked ; and in regard to the African black species the fact probably is that there is a great variety of disposition among individuals ; and it may well be, as Colonel Patterson says, that the same animal is 'one day savage and timid the next.' That they are formidable antagonists when they attack may well be believed, for, in spite of their size and weight, they are very nimble on their feet, and can, as one sportsman says, 'turn in their tracks like monkeys.'

" It is almost certain, however, that many of the cases of ferocity which are reported are no more than manifestations of the animal's stupidity—what is mistaken for a charge being but the bewildered rush of a frightened beast endeavouring to get away. With its miserable sight the rhinoceros is usually aware of the approach of danger, if at all, either by its sense of smell or by the warning of the rhinoceros bird which, haunting the beast for the sake of the ticks which infest it, acts as sentinel. In the latter case the animal probably

has no idea from what quarter it is threatened, and in the former it probably places the direction of the peril but vaguely. All rhinoceroses seemingly run up wind when suddenly roused or alarmed ; and it necessarily follows that the first blind rush not seldom takes them straight at the object, the scent of which has disturbed them. Thus many instances have been reported of their charging straight at passing and peaceful caravans, sometimes breaking through the line of porters, sometimes heading direct for one of the wagons ; and whatever comes in the way of a rhinoceros moving at full speed is likely to suffer. The most remarkable story of the kind is perhaps that of Colonel Patterson, who tells how : 'A gang of twenty-one slaves, chained neck and neck, as was the custom, was proceeding in Indian file along a narrow path when a rhinoceros suddenly charged out at right angles to them, impaled the centre man on its horn, and broke the necks of the remainder of the party by the suddenness of its rush.'

" The enmity existing between elephants and rhinoceroses is an old subject ; and it used to be the belief that when a rhino was preparing to fight an elephant it sharpened its horn upon a rock (or an agate, according to Pliny) before it began to fight :

*In the wastes of India, while the earth  
Beneath him groans, the elephant is seen,  
His huge proboscis writhing, to defy  
The strong rhinoceros, whose pond'rous horn  
Is newly whetted on a rock.*

" So sings Darwin, and again Glover :

*Go, stately lion, go ! and though with scales impenetrable armed,  
Rhinoceros, whose pride can strike to earth the unconquered elephant.*

" Cowper and Dryden, however, are of the opinion that it was the elephant that did the striking to earth, the rhinoceros being no match for ' her unequal foe.' As a matter of fact, a fight has been witnessed between an Indian rhinoceros and a full-grown male wild elephant, in which the former came off victorious."

#### THE INDIAN ELEPHANT (*E. maximus*)

The visitor to Nepal must be struck by the numbers of elephants met with. The total roll-call of elephants used in connection with the Royal shoots was 423, which were divided into three sections, according to the district, viz., those assigned to Thori, those to Haria, and those to Kasra.



( 1 )



( 2 )

*Photographs through the kindness of General Sir Kaiser of Nepal.*

**ELEPHANTS IN NEPAL JUNGLES.**

- (1) Advancing in V formation after tiger. General Sir Kaiser " ringing " the jungle.
- (2) " Pad " elephants returning from a shoot.



*Photograph through the kindness of General Sir Kaiser of Nepal.*

#### HOWDAH AND PAD ELEPHANTS IN NEPAL.

Magnificent "howdah" and "pad" elephants in Nepal. They are "ringing" tiger—the method peculiar to Nepal and certain parts of Assam. It is necessitated by the dense jungle. The elephant grass grows up sometimes to 20 feet in height, and is so thick as almost to obscure the animal from the view of the howdah occupants in their passage through it. On one occasion on the Royal shoot in Nepal it was several feet above the head of a man standing up in a howdah.

What the camel is to the desert, the elephant is to Nepal—practically the only means of transport through its pathless jungles. In the wild state they are plentiful in the south of Nepal (the Terai). In some years they are more commonly found than in others. During the rains they visit the cultivated portion of the Terai, doing a considerable amount of damage to crops, etc. For the greater part of the time they are buried in the dense jungle, roaming in herds of about eighty to ninety, but with the exception of an occasional "rogue," which may do a great deal of harm to life and property, these elephants, unless molested, seldom attack. Numbers are annually caught in Nepal and tamed, a young elephant, I was informed, being completely domesticated by the Nepalese in six months, though an old elephant will often take a year to tame thoroughly.

The danger of the animal bolting is a contingency which might at any time arise in hunting from an elephant in a heavy forest country, where an occurrence of this nature is fraught with extreme danger to the occupants of a howdah or indeed of a pad.

A friend of mine related an exciting experience which befell him while shooting in the Terai. An infuriated rhino took it into his head to charge, and selecting the elephant on which he was seated made a terrific onrush. The elephant immediately turned and bolted for dear life, hotly pursued by the monster. My friend's mount was frantic with fear and went crashing through the jungle. In a moment half the howdah was swept off by the branch of a tree; the great beast, not abating the pace one jot, went on and on. My friend thought he would be killed, and did really stand an excellent chance of ending his career. The rhino was close behind, and would certainly have "got home" had she not been turned from her purpose by her calf, who stopped abruptly, and the mother, seeing she was unaccompanied, turned and gave up the chase.

The elephant swerved to the left, fortunately striking an open bit of country, but she did not give up her headlong flight till she had put a good two miles between herself and the scene of the adventure.

Of the size (height at shoulder) of Indian elephants, Mr. Rowland Ward says: "Specimens have been killed measuring over 10 feet, while one is stated to have reached 11 feet, and a skeleton in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, indicates a still larger individual."

There is a widespread belief that the African elephant reaches as much as 13 feet, but the largest authentic specimen known, measured 11 feet 8 inches.

(For further notes on the elephant in India, the reader is referred to Chapter XIV., later in this volume.)

## THE PRINCE'S ANIMALS

COLLECTION OF ANIMALS, BIRDS AND REPTILES PRESENTED BY H.H.  
THE MAHARAJA TO H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES ON SUNDAY,  
DECEMBER 18TH, 1921, AT THE SHOOTING CAMP, BIKNA THORI.

## MAMMALS AND VERTEBRATES

- 1 Baby Elephant (*E. maximus*).
- 1 Rhino Calf (*R. unicornis*).
- 2 Leopard Cats (*F. bengalensis*).
- 2 Himalayan Black Bears (*U. torquatus*).
- 1 Black Leopard (*F. pardus*).
- 1 Clouded Leopard (*F. nebulosa*).
- 1 Tiger (*F. tigris*).
- 1 Tibetan Fox (*V. ferrilatus*).
- 1 Mountain Fox (*V. montanus*).
- 2 Sambhurs (*C. unicolor*).
- 1 Thar (*H. jemlaicus*).
- 3 Musk Deer (*M. moschiferus*).
- 1 Unicorn Sheep (*Ovis* sp.).
- 1 Four-horned Sheep (*Ovis* sp.).
- 1 One-horned Tibetan Shawl Goat (*Ovis* sp.).
- 2 Tibetan Mastiffs (*C. domesticus*).
- 4 Tibetan Mastiff pups.
- 1 Monitor (*V. bengalensis*).
- 1 Python (*P. molurus*).

## BIRDS

- 4 Nepal Kalij (*G. leucomelanus*).
- 1 White Crested Kalij Pheasant (*G. albicristatus*).
- 4 Monal Pheasants (*L. refulgens*).
- 4 Cheer Pheasants (*C. wallichii*).
- 2 Koklass Pheasants (*P. macrolopha*).
- 4 Chukor Partridges (*C. chucar*).
- 2 Swamp Partridges (*F. gularis*).
- 2 Green Pigeons (*O. phayrei*).
- 10 Bronze-winged Doves (*C. indica*).
- 3 Great Indian Adjutants (*L. dubius*).
- 1 Hawk
- 1 Peafowl (*P. cristatus*).

The animals were brought down from Nepal to Bombay (after some difficulty with the stationmaster at Bikna Thori) under the charge of Mr. Ellison and Captain Shanka Bahadur Shah, a cousin of the Maharaja, and some Nepalese assistants, and though there was a certain amount of delay, they stood the journey very well, and arrived in Bombay on January 10th without any casualties, and thence were forwarded to the London Zoological Gardens.

The following note on the arrival of the animals at the Zoological Gardens and their subsequent history has been very kindly furnished

All the skins that could be so treated (rhinos of course, on account of their bulk, could not) were pegged out as in the illustration of the tiger on Fig. 2, the common mistake of over-stretching any part being guarded against.

As regards rhinos, of which nine were shot in the week's shoot near Bikna Thori (two by the Prince of Wales), many people will wonder no doubt how they were dealt with. It was, indeed, a puzzle to me before I went up to the land of the Gurkhas, but, like most things, it solved itself in its own good time. Many eminent sportsmen had spoken to me before of the chance awaiting me of having to deal with that rare animal the Indian rhinoceros, and duly impressed me with their various suggestions. I remember being filled with such enthusiasm as to have in my mind resolutions to take their weights—beyond doubt a highly desirable thing, but presenting some difficulties! I believe I even infected General Sir Kaiser with some of my enthusiasm, and he even went so far as to take steps in order to try to meet my wishes on this point. I had also wonderful ideas of preserving the entire skins in one piece after they had been shot. Circumstances, however, completely upset all these plans. Rhinos were shot all round the camp in every direction, and instead of my going to the rhinos they had to be brought to me. Huge portions were arriving by lorries all day and night, and at the very end of the shoots they caused me considerable perturbation, as, my two men having more than three dismembered rhinos apiece, together with nineteen other animals of lesser bulk on the night of December 21st, we felt we were being surfeited with a feast when we were only expecting a moderate meal.

Like its African brother (*Rhinoceros bicornis*) the Indian species is extremely bulky and unwieldy, and the carcase correspondingly difficult to deal with.

As the skinners were unable to be at all places at once (sometimes there were as many as three parties shooting in different jungle areas of the Terai many miles apart), the course adopted in removing the hides was roughly as follows :

The main incisions were as in the case of the other carnivores. For convenience in handling, and to enable them to be more easily moved, the head and neck were disjointed from the body-skin at a line just in front of the shoulder. The head and neck were then made ready for the taxidermist for mounting as a trophy. Since none of the animals was required for mounting intact as museum specimens, the remainder of the hides were cut up as indicated by the natural shields of the animals. These formed very convenient pieces, about 3 feet square, some more or less rectangular, the shoulder shields being

roughly triangular. In one or two of the outlying shoots, such as the one at the fifteenth milestone on December 20th, lack of time rendered preparation or preliminary cleaning of the skins impossible, so the huge joints of the animal were brought directly into camp to be dealt with by my staff at our leisure ; if it can be imagined that under the circumstances we had any !

The first consideration was given to the masks, and the heads and necks, especially of the one shot by H.R.H. on December 19th.

Careful paring down was done by men specially detailed for this purpose by the Nepalese Government. I found these men well qualified for the work, and they carried out my instructions quite satisfactorily ; except that they did not like working after daylight had finished, and the jungles resounded with eerie cries of wild animals. The skinning camp, however, as I have already said, was well guarded by Gurkhas, while the Prince was there, and huge fires were kept burning. After H.R.H. left, however, on the night of the 21st, and during Christmas week, when we relied only on the fires to keep animals off, perhaps they had reason for waywardness and dilatory feelings as regards night operations.

This paring down was particularly arduous, and altogether a sanguinary and not altogether pleasing job. It was most difficult to work without being smothered with blood.

After the meat and fat were removed, the thickness of the hide itself, resembling rather the blubber of a whale (only much tougher) had to be removed. One might almost call this a coconut substance. It was pared off by " draw knives " specially constructed for the purpose, and keenly sharpened. The *moochies* (or native skinners) were continuously ceasing work to re-sharpen their blades. The labour too was so arduous that they had to work in relays. Great credit redounded to Baptista, the head Skinner, for his patience in dealing with the men, and for his perseverance with the working, even though at one time he was suffering from a sharp go of fever. It was a considerable asset that he was able to speak Nepalese, which I could not.\*

From about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick to something like half-inch or less in thickness the skins had to be reduced, and then we could attempt to treat them with preservative ; for it is hopeless to expect these preparations to penetrate anything thicker than that. Then, having

\* Both Baptista and Rawje spoke Nepalese, the former very well. He had been in Nepal a great many times, and, perhaps with the exception of Hodgson, zoologists owe more to the collecting of this simple Goanese in the country of Nepal than to any one else. He has been allowed by the Maharaja of Nepal for several years to wander all over the country collecting specimens for the Bombay Natural History Society and for the British Museum. Indeed, at this moment, I believe he is continuing his researches in some remote region visited by very few people, and certainly by no white man, in the west of Nepal.

cleaned or washed the skins, men were set to work to rub in the preservative, after careful attention, as usual, to the eyes, ears, lips, etc. The preservatives used, of course, were alum and arsenical soap.

Rhinoceros skins, more than any other, take a tremendous time to dry ; and for this reason the thinner they are pared the better, as they then dry more rapidly. Our stay in Nepal was therefore prolonged, and it was a considerable anxiety to have to wait till these things were in a fit condition to make it safe to travel through India to Bombay with them. Climatic conditions about Christmas time and the New Year were far from conducive to the early realisation of the results for which we were working. Even under the most ideal conditions one must be prepared for adverse weather and unlooked for emergencies, no matter what taxidermist field-books and *vade mecum*s say.

As the skins became dry they were folded in sizes convenient to fit the immense tin-lined boxes prepared for their reception. To an inexperienced person the hides would have appeared so hard as to be useless for anything, being as stiff as boards, and taking three or four men to handle them. But I have seen the result of the taxidermists' work upon some of them. In particular, a rhino trophy, which was shot by Lord Cromer on December 20th, at the fifteenth milestone from Bikna Thori shooting camp, the head of which huge beast looked very fine, as I saw it reposing temporarily in the show rooms of Messrs. Gerrard and Sons, the well-known taxidermists and osteologists, of Camden Town.

The preparation of the rhinoceros's feet presented a difficult problem, the tedious job of removing the hard muscular tissue and bones from the narrow confines of an exceedingly tough hide, and the strong toe-nails, being work that tried the patience of Baptista and Rawje considerably. It took several days to get them sweet and clean. Indian sportsmen as a rule have the advantage of highly-trained skinners to do their work for them. Hunters in Africa have told me that they are not always so fortunate ; and, having had to do this work themselves, they can appreciate what the securing of such a trophy as a fine rhinoceros foot means.

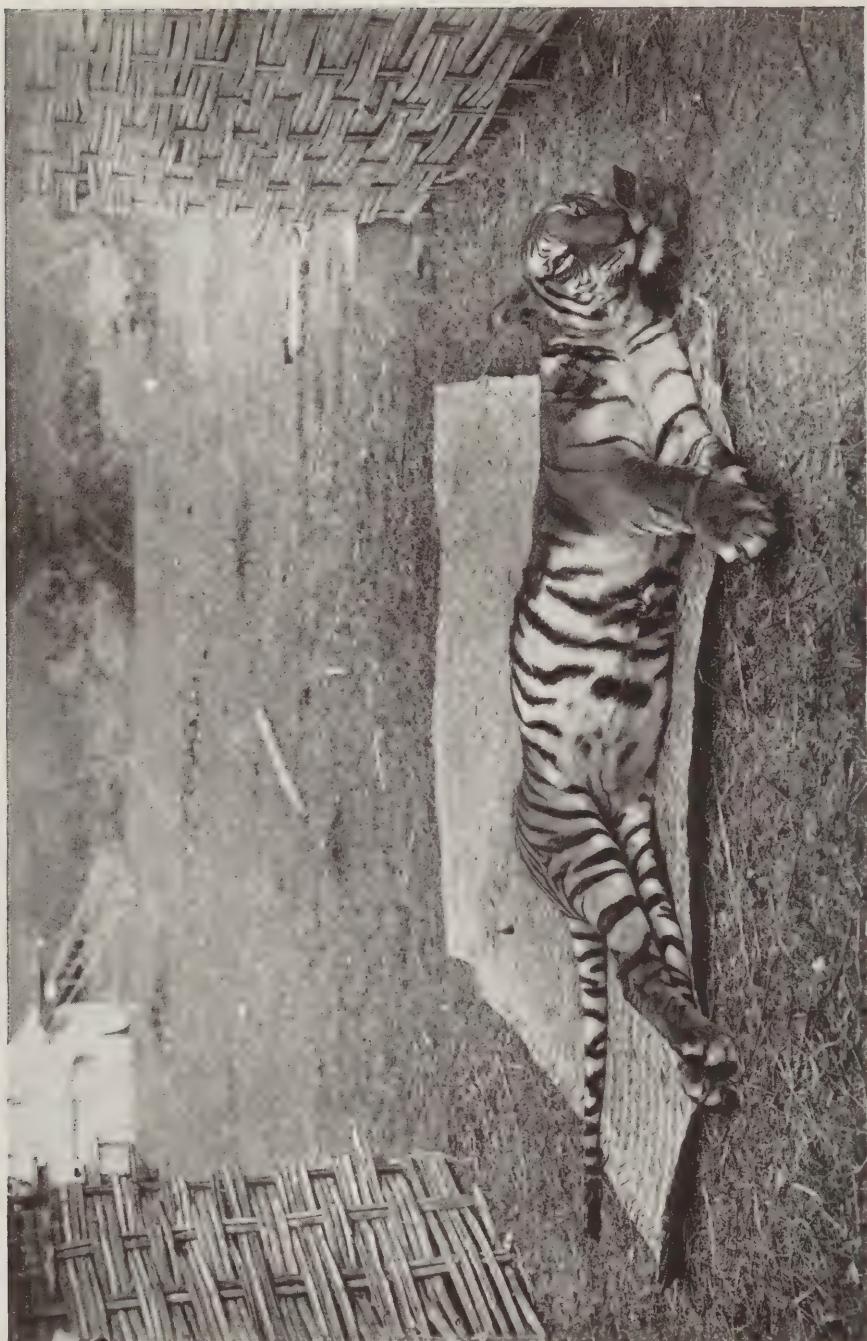
As regards the other portions of the rhinoceros, about which I was constantly having queries put to me by different members of the Staff in reference to their future use, I recommended that they should be kept, and later made into various articles for which they are suitable, such as tables, walking sticks, riding whips, paper knives, cigar boxes (these were exceedingly popular), and even ladies' bangles, etc.

Returning to tigers, the drying of these skins, after they had been



**TWO RHINOCEROSES IN NEPAL READY TO BE SKINNED.**

One was shot by the Prince of Wales, and the other by Lord Cromer. The heads of these two huge beasts have both made magnificent trophies.



*Photograph through the kindness of Messrs. Barton & Sons, of Bangalore.*

**TIGER SHOT BY COLONEL WORGAN AT HEGGEDEVANKOTE, MYSORE.**

It measured 9 feet 3 inches between pegs, and 9 feet 8 inches round curves, and was a remarkably large animal for this part of India.

treated with arsenical soap, presented no difficulties, except in Nepal, as climatic conditions, especially in the Royal shooting camp at Karapur, Mysore, where Colonel Worgan obtained his fine tiger, and at the shooting box at Kachnatria, in Bhopal, and in that wonder-land of Indian shooting, Gwalior, where H.R.H. accounted for four fine tigers, was ideal. The only difficulty with tigers I experienced was not to mix them up, but to see that the proper labels were not confused, and that the right heads and wrong lucky bones did not go astray. I remember Lord Louis Mountbatten being rather perturbed in Nepal after he had shot his 9 feet 7 inches tigress, when he came down to the skinning camp to see it. During my absence Baptista had mistaken the skewered labels planted out on the ground, and had allotted him, from among the five tigresses which had already come into camp, one measuring 8 feet 2 inches, shot by Sir Godfrey Thomas. He appealed to me, and we soon found the right animal when we turned them over, as we always took the precaution of painting the owner's name on the inside of the skin, so that there could be no possible mistake.

The "lucky bones," or tiger's floating clavicles, were much sought after ; and everywhere I went I was saluted by different members of the Staff with " Well, what about my lucky bones, Ellison ? " H.R.H. was particularly pleased when I gave him the pair belonging to his first tiger. I produced them from my pocket one evening at Mysore after dinner.

The skinners were careful to see that all blood and dirt was removed from the skins before they were finished. Otherwise a tiger, like the one the Hon. Bruce Ogilvy shot near the fifteenth milestone from camp, on December 17th, which had four shot wounds, and was very much stained with blood, might have been permanently disfigured by discoloration.

Passing from tigers to leopards is a small matter, the treatment being so similar in both cases. It is of interest to remark that the panther Captain Poynder shot in Bhopal, whose skin was so knocked about, was afterwards quite redeemed by the taxidermist's art.

The elephants obtained by the party who visited Burma in January, and went to the Ruby Mines district to shoot, did not pass through our hands ; but Captain Piers Legh, as I have mentioned before, sent me his tusks, and I examined them, and made the report given in another portion of this book.

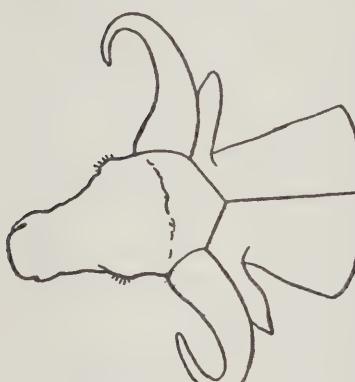
Of the bears shot in Nepal and Gwalior, I have no remarks to make. The Himalayan specimen, which is now set up in the house of Colonel Molesworth, in the Island of Jersey, caused a great deal of work on account of the mass of fat it had on it. A lot of attention

had to be given to the feet, as they have a considerable amount of cartilaginous tissue which tries the edges of the knives, and then care has to be taken with the lips, not on account of the whiskers, but because they are so thick and fleshy. Especially is this the case with the sloth bear.

Of gaur, the bulkiest of the Ungulates—only one was shot in connection with the tour—it was skinned in the usual manner, and has resulted in a very successful trophy.

Van Ingen's directions for skinning the head of the animal one quotes here, as it is an entirely different procedure from the method mentioned above in regard to Felidæ :

“Heads with horns should have the incision for skinning along the back of the neck between the ears, till the horns are nearly reached, then cut right out, and left like the letter ‘Y,’ carrying the incision round the burr of each horn. The mask can then be easily stripped off. The accompanying illustration of a tsaine head explains this. The entire neck skin should always be kept, it being understood that no incision is made along the throat, so that the taxidermist can model this part without it being spoilt by an ugly seam.”



This refers to the head only, it having been severed from the body at a point just in front of the shoulders at the back of the neck to a point in the dewlap or chest, just in front of the forelegs.

Hooves of the animals are also usually saved to make some more or less useful trophy.

As regards nilghai, sambhur, black buck, chinkara and hog deer, the skinning progressed on similar lines to that of the tiger and panther, the difference being that where the skins were to be used as mats, in addition to the incision as in the tiger, the method described with reference to the gaur head above had to be adopted, to remove the skull and horns; but where the head was to be preserved as a trophy, *e.g.* the cases of the twelve sambhur shot in Bhopal forests, the head and neck were severed from the body at the shoulder, and the incisions made only at the back of the neck to the base of the horns.

Of the wild boar, it was generally borne in mind that the table is