

A good deal of ibex-shooting evidently goes on here among the Pangi valleys in the winter. At my last camping ground is a small temple, a ricketty tumble-down affair of wood profusely ornamented with ibex horn, votive offerings from successful *shikaries*; some of them are very fine specimens indeed. It would be as well if Colonel Blair Reed, the *de-facto* King of Chumba, was to prohibit ibex-shooting by the natives. Sportsmen come here in great numbers during the season when the pass is practicable, and of necessity drop a good deal of money among the poor folk. It would only be a charitable precaution to prevent the decimation of the ibex in the winter, as has been the case in Cashmere. There are quite enough killed in a legitimate way by sportsmen, without allowing the natives to increase the number. I understand tehr shooting in Mangli has been forbidden to the natives. It would be a salutary measure if the same order was extended to Pangi. Winter shooting here must be very easy work. The mountains round me thickly covered with snow, and the ibex buddled together in the narrow gorge and valleys wherever there is a chance of a toothful of grass. The difficulty of getting over the passes prevents Cockney sportsmen from making their way over here for a huge bag, under very favourable circumstances, but such is not the case unfortunately at Mangli. The *shikaree* who is with me accompanied a military gentleman on a sporting trip to Mangli and its vicinity last winter; at Mangli he stumbled across three male tehr in a cave surrounded by snow, and shot them one after the other at four yards distance. He went back to Chumba with 20 head of game after six weeks' sport. The cold of course must be intense, and the inconvenience it necessarily occasions may, to some minds, be an equivalent to the pleasure of an arduous day's stalk; but it strikes me the charm of sport consists in the animal hunted having a chance of escape, and for my part I fail to see the pleasure of potting an unfortunate beast at four yards, though the hand may be cramped with cold and the nose blue at the time of touching the trigger.

(To be continued).

SPORT IN THE MALAYAN PENINSULA.

BY WANDERER.

THE above heading is almost a misnomer as regards the sport to be found in that part of Malaya from which I have

just come back, and I feel I have but little to write worthy of perusal by your sporting readers ; still a description of the very little I saw, and a few notes on the country, may prove interesting. When in November last (1875) my regiment was detailed for field service in the Straits Settlements, and we learnt our destination was the south-western coast of Malaya, vivid visions of large game to be shot wholesale flashed before our eyes. We had heard of elephants, tapir, rhinoceros, tiger, &c., as being common as sparrows, let alone game birds and such trifles as the argus pheasant, jungle cock, and new varieties of partridge. The memoranda on the Peninsula, a blue book issued to us on board ship, only added to our intense excitement, and one or two of us, I confess, thought much less of our future foes the Malays, and our principal object in going to their country, than of our chance of the game we were to polish off as a matter of course. How grievously, to use a school boy's phrase, we were sold remains to be noted.

Our marching kit being limited, I could only smuggle in a single .570 bore Lang's rifle ; it fortunately took the Snider ammunition, and as our men were armed with the breech-loader corresponding, I had a reserve stock of cartridges to draw on ; my only fear was that I should run short, as I had fully made up my mind that I must get as much shooting as in the Bhootan country, where 25 shots per diem had often been let off with varying success, but with never a blank day.

Up to the 15th January campaigning was the order of the day ; and when the Malays had been thrashed, and a new ruler appointed to their country, we dropped into the less harassing work of patrolling the invaded districts, collecting arms, &c., and had often to be weeks lying passive in Malay villages ; such time my Goorkhas and myself employed in working all the jungles round. The men were all born sportsmen, and the muskets taken from the Malays, with ammunition supplied by the Resident, furnished them with all the requisites necessary for the slaughter of the elephant or pheasant.

The country round was generally hilly, a mountain range, elevation 1,500 to 3,000 feet, running north and south, divided the country in two, and we being on the western side of the main range, our operations in the *shikar* line were confined to the ground along its base. The jungle was very dense, composed of pine-apple, palm, cactus, and groves of the

betel-nut tree, whilst everywhere the long *lalung* grass was abundant, growing to a great height, and so thick and strong that it was sheer labour to force one's way through it. As the hills rose, timber took the place of jungle, most of the forest comprising magnificent trees, the oil, and durian, with some varieties of gum being plentiful; huge creepers entwined their massive stems round trees whose girth, when measured, proved 16 feet in circumference, some were even larger. In the valleys amongst the hills there were dense patches of swampy grass and thick underwood, and here we found tracks of both elephant and rhinoceros, the common sambur of India, *Rusa Aristotelis*, was also seen, as well as the kakur and miniature mouse deer: the latter were frequently caught by the Malay boys, who construct rather neat falling traps of logs, laid along a run in the forest. From the 18th January to 1st February, I went out in three different directions, taking generally a dozen Goorkhas. We could get neither reliable information nor guides, and had to work out our own ideas, and what former experience had taught us. The Goorkhas and self, as a rule, hunted in twos or threes in the early mornings and evenings, and during the day I organized a beat. All was however useless, for though tracks of big game were seen everywhere, yet the dense jungly grass and swamps proved too much for us; and we only succeeded in adding a hind sambur and kakur to our united bags; the argus pheasant, though heard calling everywhere, was never seen. It was very hard work in such a damp, hot climate; the men had constantly to cut their way through the jungle with the *kookrie*, and at the end of the day's work were pretty well done up. We did not however despair, and on the 11th February, having secured the services of a Malay *shikaree*, the only one of his breed energetic enough to hunt on his own account, we started, a party of 14, to the high range. We had four days' rations, and bivouacked at the foot of the hills, where two valleys branched off alternately to right and left. The Malay *shikaree* went out on the evening of our arrival to look for rhino tracks, taking his two hunting dogs; he returned at night with good news of having seen fresh tracks. His dogs had pulled down a doe kakur.

From the 12th to the 15th we worked all day and never came across a rhino, though Goorkhas followed the fresh trail of one till sunset through swamps and forest. In fact we only once viewed a rhino, and that was on the day when a party of

ours was out patrolling the forest beyond us, in December last ; it galloped clean through the men's ranks, and stood for a few seconds close by, an easy shot had we been on the *shikar* instead of the war path. From the description given by the man the animal appeared a much lighter and more leggy beast than those of the same species met with in India. C. of the Control Department, out with us, came across spoor of elephants two days old, but as it led up into the hills he did not go far. I tried burning the grass jungle in hopes of turning out game, and started a stag sambur which was subsequently shot by one of the men ; the antlers were far smaller in size than those I had met with in Central India. The toucan, or hornbill, and a species of brown monkey were common in the forest and filled the valleys with their discordant notes and yells ; snakes of the most brilliant hue were also met with, one of a bright green color I much regretted not bringing away. The evening before our return to quarters I had a long talk, through an interpreter, with our *shikaree*, and tried in vain to pump him as to other and more promising ground for *shikar* : he evidently knew of more, but spoke in high terms of the Moar country, where he said the ground was open, and where sportsmen from Malacca came to hunt. From his description I fancy he alluded to the Moar river, and I recollect hearing of good sport being had up there at elephants, &c. This river was far out of our beat, and would have to be ascended in boats and a regular expedition made from Malacca.

In fact, shooting in Malaya I found up-hill, unprofitable work ; the indolence of the inhabitants, their total ignorance of the habits and habitat of large game, and the density of the jungles, precluded all hope of sport on foot. Elephants are not trained for the chase, and in our part were not even tamed for any other purpose ; the hilly and swampy nature of the country, and the fact of there being hardly any cleared ground, would make even an elephant of little use, and although it is almost a virgin country for sport, I advise no one to try a hunting expedition in Malaya. The Goorkhas tried every dodge they knew, but had to give it up as a bad job, though in the Bhootan expedition in 1865 the *shikaries* of the regiment bagged, on foot, 20 rhinoceroses in the Buxa Dooar ; here they had their trouble for nothing, and I regretted it as much for their own sakes as my own.