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TO CONTRIBUTORS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

WE acknowledge with thanks the receipt of communications from W. and M. PIKE, besides any that appear in this number.

Tigers, as a rule, are only to be found upon the churs, or in tree jungles not very far from the churs. Leopards are common all over the district. They run very large, and are particularly plucky and fierce—*experto crede*. The small game shooting is not of much account. Florican, black and swamp partridge, hares, etc., are to be found on the churs. The snipe-shooting is poor, as a rule. Duck and geese are to be got on almost every bheel, and I have knocked over as many as seven of the latter at one shot. But enough of “such small deer.”

Towards the end of January 1876 I encamped at U—, twelve miles from my head-quarters. I had hardly arrived there when a ryot came to the camp to say that his cow had

been killed that morning by a tiger, a couple of miles off. Taking two elephants—all I had—I went off to the place, and was shown a small tree-jungle into which the cow had been taken. Going into the jungle, I at once came upon the kill, and shortly afterwards a full-grown tiger got up about twenty yards in front of me. He had evidently been asleep, and looked at me as much as to say, "who the deuce are you?" To the implied question I responded by letting him have both barrels of my smooth-bore. He rushed away through the jungle, and ten minutes afterwards I came upon him lying stone dead. This was evidently a very considerate animal, and averse to giving useless trouble. I had no measuring tape with me, but calculated that he was about nine feet.

Next day official duties compelled my return to H—. On the 26th I got back to my camp, and on the same day got news of a tiger in another tree-jungle about three miles off. Getting together four elephants, I went after him late in the afternoon; but, although I saw him once, did not get a shot. Next day I was unable to go out; but on the 28th I took out the elephants early in the morning. After a couple of hours spent in beating to no purpose, I shinned up a tree, and sent the elephants round to beat up to me. Master Stripes came sneaking through the jungle, about twenty yards from me, thinking, no doubt, how particularly, cute he was in dodging the elephants. A bullet in the shoulder, which I administered from the tree, must have rather astonished him. He made a rush through the jungle, and I heard him roll over and struggle as if unable to get up again. Getting into the howdah, I found that he had taken himself off. A pool of blood in the place where he had fallen showed that he was badly hit; and after an hour's beating I found him hiding in a bush, and finished him off without trouble.

On the morning of the 29th, as I was engaged in trying a thrilling *mar-pit* case, in true patriarchal style, under the shade of a wide-spreading pipal tree, a ryot came forward and craved permission to address "the Court." The same having been accorded, he proceeded to state that one of his cows had been killed that morning by a tiger. Upon hearing this apparently irrelevant statement, "the Court" rose, administered several oaths in a particularly informal manner, and, having then got its guns and elephants ready in a remarkably short time, proceeded to get into its howdah.

Upon arriving at the spot, I found that it was the identical jungle where I had bagged the very considerate tiger on the 21st. The jungle, though small in extent, was very thick, and for a long time I saw no signs of the tiger, and began to think

that the whole thing partook of the nature of a sell. Coming upon a fresh kill made me alter my opinion, and shortly afterwards I saw something tawny moving through the jungle, and fired, though with what effect this deponent knoweth not. After beating through the thick trees for some time, I thought I should get on better on a pad, as it was very difficult to get the howdah through the trees. Accordingly, I got on to a pad; and shortly afterwards got a shot at the tigress (for such it proved to be). No mistake about hitting her this time. She came down upon me as if she meant it, and the little pad elephant I was on, instead of giving me a chance of a shot, turned and bolted through the trees, very near throwing me off.

I began to think that the howdah was not such a bad invention after all, and got into it again pretty sharp. Upon coming up to the tigress again, she charged straight at me. I managed to stop her with the smooth-bore, and she retired, growling, to a very thick bit of jungle. Upon faking the elephant in, she jumped on to his head without giving me time for a shot. Then ensued what a Yankee would call "a sacred scrimmage." The tigress got hold of the elephant's left ear in her teeth, and was holding on to his trunk and neck with her claws. Old Ram Persad—a splendid tusker—at first tried to shake her off. While this performance was going on, I had all my work cut out for me in preventing myself and my guns from being flung out of the howdah. The first chance, I got, I leaned over the front of the howdah, literally hanging over the front tail, and shot the tigress through the neck, almost touching her with the gun. She did not even let go—a fact which seems almost incredible. I gave her the other barrel, and she then dropped off. One in the head finished her. While this was going on, the elephant had been benevolently trying to impale the tigress upon his tusks. When she did drop off, he drove one tusk into her, and could not be got away from the body without great difficulty. She was a small tigress, under eight feet, I should say, but a devil for pluck. When the performance was over, I was thoroughly out of breath, and imbibed a peg with much satisfaction.

The next shooting I had was with the party of which C. has been the historian. A few days after that very pleasant party had broken up, a chowkidar came to my bungalow, and informed me that there were four tigers on a small chur up the Darlah. He said that the jungle was nearly all burnt down, and that the tigers used to come out on the open *maidan* and kill cattle. A felling near the chur had become almost deserted, for fear of the tigers. As I could only get hold of a couple of elephants just then, I wrote off to a friend asking him to meet

me with all the elephants he could muster. On the 26th of March I met A., C., and F. at the Nagasurai thannah late in the evening. Next morning official duties compelled A. and C. to return, and F. and I pushed on for the chur with seven elephants. On the way we found that my carts could not get on, so we had to leave three elephants to bring on the baggage. We got on to the ground with four elephants, at about 3 o'clock. The chur had been so much burnt that for a long time we could not see any jungle that looked big enough to hold a tiger. At last we saw a line of thick jhow, which had a very tigerish look about it. Beyond it were the white sands of the Darlah river. After beating carefully for some minutes, I saw a tiger sneaking along ahead, and let drive at him (or her as it turned out) with a twelve-bore rifle, the shot plainly taking effect. At the same time F. fired at another tiger, which broke back; F. turned and went in pursuit of his tiger, while I followed mine. Not finding him, however, I went after F., and got up to him in time to assist at polishing off No. 1, who did not give much trouble. He was a small tiger, not more than eight feet I should say.

We then followed up the tigress. Upon getting up to her, she charged down upon us suddenly in the thick jhow, and, although we both hit her, managed to claw a pad elephant on the head and to make her escape. Upon coming near her again, she came down on my elephant from behind, and clawed him rather badly on one hind leg. The elephant bolted out of the jungle, spoiling my shot. After this, nothing would induce him to enter the jungle again, although, among other persuasive measures which I tried, was sending a man behind him to whack him with a large bamboo. In the meantime F. had induced his elephant to go into the jhow again. Down charged the tigress with a growl, and out bolted the elephant as fast as he could travel, F. turning round in the howdah and letting drive with the express. This performance was repeated some half dozen times, the elephant always bolting before F. could see the tigress. In the meantime, an unlooked for reinforcement appeared in the shape of the three pad elephants which had been left behind for the baggage. With them we managed to form a line once more, and F., getting sight of the tigress, hit her again with the express, though it took another shot to finish her off. We found that she had been hit eight times. We calculated that she had charged twelve times. The first ball had broken one of her hind legs, and she had been fighting on three.

After this we beat through the jungle towards the camp. F. suddenly loosed off both barrels at something. "What was that?" I called out, half suspecting F. of the unpardonable crime

of shooting a pig. "Only a big tiger", was the cool reply. Keeping a sharp look a-head, I got a glimpse of something very like stripes moving through the jungle, and fired; but apparently without effect. As it was now getting dark we returned to camp, where we found our tents up and our dinner, ready. Having done full justice to the same, we turned in, and slept the sleep of the righteous.

Next morning F. complained of feeling very seedy, and of having a bad headache. The thought of there being at least one more tiger in the jungle, however, nerved him up to the requisite pitch. We had not been beating half an hour when a tiger got up in front of F., who promptly knocked him over with the express in first-rate style, I finishing him off with the 12-bore rifle. F.'s head was now so bad that firing at all was painful to him, and he declared that if half-a-dozen tigers got up at once, he would not "loose off" at one of them. About five minutes afterwards we put up the fourth tiger, who ran boldly out in the open. It is hardly necessary to say that F. forgot all about his headache, and his resolution not to fire. The tiger got into the small patch jungle he was making for, though, whether wounded or not, I cannot say. Upon coming up we both caught sight of him, and poured a volley into him, which finished him then and there. Both these tigers were about eight feet.

On the following day F. was all right again, and we beat the same chur and another one, but without bagging anything in the way of large game. On the next day F. returned to Dhubri, well satisfied with his trip. There his luck did not desert him, as he bagged another tiger and a rhino the same week.

These four tigers made up a total of fourteen bagged in the sub-division during the month of March in four days' actual shooting, of course not counting the blank days.

In April I bagged nothing but three leopards. One of them had got into a house, and I took a mean advantage of him by getting on to the roof, making a hole in the thatch, and so potting him. In May I shot another leopard on foot, and bagged a man-eating tiger at Pattadooah near the jungle where four tigers were bagged one morning. I finished up my big game shooting for the year by letting a big leopard very nearly bag me by way of a change. A description of this thrilling and memorable adventure must, however, be reserved for some future occasion.

*(To be continued).*