

SPORTING.

A SOONDERBUND TIGER-HUNT.

BY YOUNG NIMROD.

"Close beside the sedgy brim,
Couchant lurks the tiger grim,
Waiting till the close of day
Brings again the destined prey."

When I gave a page from my Diary, I promised that, if it would not prove uninteresting, to copy out another page from it; so I hasten to fulfil it by sending the following, which, if it has no other merit, will at least be somewhat of a novelty.

January 22nd.—Found us, i. e. self and D., at one of the grants, belonging to Dr. Begg, and of which D. was manager. We had the night before received intelligence that a tiger—or rather a tigress, as the sequel will show—had the audacity to break into a hut at night and carry off its poor unfortunate occupant whilst in the "arms of Morpheus," and prechance dreaming of his home and family whom he would visit after the harvest. This indignity the villagers of that and adjacent grants resented, by encircling with nets the patch of jungle into which she had retired to leisurely devour her prey.

So, after imbibing sundry cups of Mocha and Hyson, we left to inspect the locality from whence the poor fellow was borne off. But I will not trouble my readers by attempting to describe our feelings on visiting the habitation of the deceased, but suffice it to say that we were fully determined on taking signal vengeance on his destroyer.

Whilst passing by the enclosed patch of jungle, a horrid smell assailed our olfactory organs, and a surely growl from within, sufficiently convinced us that the man-eater had not broken through. After ordering the beaters to be ready to take the field by 12 o'clock, we retired to our boats to prepare our arms for the coming fray, as also to satisfy the cravings of our appetite. Precisely at mid-day we marched at the head of full two hundred men, armed with matchlocks, swords, spears, and lattées, to the scene of action.

Now I must give a description of the netting. The nets used for this purpose are made of strings not thicker than the little finger, reared by bamboos to the height of 6 feet, and nailed to the ground by pegs. The tiger can break through this frail netting, but after having gorged himself he is loath to stir, and when roused, he is generally perplexed and intimidated by the awful din of the beaters, though he will sometimes charge, break through the netting, and fall on any one that crosses him; but these are rare occasions.

The operations commenced with the usual hulla-baloo, and vigilance increased tenfold by every by every leaf that shook. We once or twice caught a glimpse of the striped monster, but did not attempt to fire, for if not killed or disabled by the first discharge of our barrels, he would be on us ere we could seize another gun from the hands of our attendants. Retreat we could not, for the stumps of trees were so quickly strewn about, that if we attempted a retrograde movement, we should have surely tumbled "head over heels."

This day we were not doomed to kill the royal quarry, for though we beat till Phobus had buried himself in the distant horizon, we were unable to break through the whole of the jungle. Ordering watch-fires to be lit, and having reserved fifty of the boldest of the beaters to keep watch by night, we returned to our boats, dreadfully fatigued, to do justice to an abundant dinner, and afterwards to consign ourselves to

"Tir'd nature's sweet restorer—balmy sleep."

23rd.—The tigress having not broken through at night, we were again on the scene of action at the same hour as yesterday. At 3 P. M. we had beaten through all the jungle, except a piece of about twenty yards square; so we were rather indolent as to there being a tigress within; for this day we had not obtained the semblance of a growl, to intimate the presence of the Forest Queen; but our subtle friends were quite sanguine. So, having obtained a couple of bamboos, they poked the jungle on either side when with a loud roar, and tail angrily lashing, but came her majesty, waiting only to take one hasty glance at us, she charged at the opposite side of the netting. I thought this too good an opportunity to be cast away; so quickly bringing the trusty Rodda to my shoulder, and aiming well to the back of the head, (for the brain lies far to the back, and you may use any amount bullets to the fore-part, without there affecting a fatal result) plied the fatal trigger, and the next moment she rolled over, as dead as good Queen Bess.

She was a fine middle-sized tiger, and measured 9 feet 4 inches. D. had a couple months before, shot her lord and master, who was a fine muscular tiger, measuring above 11 feet.

I shall conclude by calling on the inhabitants of the distant India sporting, never to rally round the heir and successor, the Indian Field. The sportsmen of India, many of you must remember, when I assure the memory of the India Field, that you for "you may break, you may ruin the base, if you will." But the sound of the roar will hang over it still.

Knowman, August 1, 1859.

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