



TAYLOR

WILDLIFE IN INDIA'S TIGER KINGDOM

John C. Taylor

\$11.00

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TIGER KINGDOM

by

Dr. John C. Taylor

In a land such as India where cows are looked upon as sacred, and a Hindu will not even step on an insect for fear of displacing a soul in the karmic scheme, few people who are not directly involved in hunting realize the vast extent of the variety of wildlife and the intense degree of sports activity in tracking, photographing and shooting big game to be found there, at least until the Indian government put a moratorium on killing tiger in 1972. *Wildlife in India's Tiger Kingdom* by Dr. John C. Taylor is an informative, thoroughly fascinating account of the adventures of a big game hunter who is concerned with animal conservation and restoring the balance of nature. He feels India's wonderful variety of wild animals must receive more foreign tourist interest and funding in order to properly equip parks and sanctuaries, and to manage animal overflow into neighboring reserved forests.

Although this book is often graphic and sometimes grisly in its stories of tiger, bear, reptile and boar hunting, one is quickly swept up in the fast pace and excitement of Dr. Taylor's adventures as he relates how he started collecting animal specimens as a boy, and began hunting man-eaters at the

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age of sixteen. The panorama of India's mountains and plains provides the backdrop for these thrills, each one more breathtaking and awesome than the one before. Illustrated with well over a hundred photographs and sketches, this book contains an encyclopedic wealth of information about how to track, photograph, kill and mount game, both large and small.



Dr. John C. Taylor's life is full of achievements, recorded in several Who's Who listings and renowned biographical records, having spent about half his life in India. Born in Cincinnati, Ohio, he was taken to India by his medical missionary parents at the age of two months. While his parents attended to the physical and spiritual needs of the poor villagers around the Himalayan foothills, he grew up hunting with Indian friends until after the age of sixteen. He loves India and communicates well with its great variety of people, and he continues annually to carry on a charitable healing ministry there, besides helping wildlife authorities with "Project Tiger" and capturing man-eaters.

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A Hearthstone Book

Carlton Press, Inc.

New York, N.Y.

CONTENTS

Preface		9
Introduction		13
Part I:	Childhood to Age Sixteen in India's Animal-Infested Jungles	
	1. Early Childhood	21
	2. The Value of Good Hunting Dogs	31
	3. Becoming a Hunter from Age Twelve to Sixteen	36
	4. Reptiles Are More Than Just Symbols of Evil ..	50
	5. Wild Boars— <i>Suar</i>	59
	6. Learning the Art of Big Game Hunting	70
	7. Coming of Age—Shooting Leopards and a Tiger	78
Part II:	Tiger— <i>Sher</i>	
	8. The Maharajahs, Great Kings of Wildlife	99
Part III:	Leopards— <i>Guldar</i>	
	9. The Rajahs of the Common Beasts and Birds ..	165
Part IV:	Bears— <i>Bhalu</i>	
	10. The Kings of the Mountains; the Greatest Variety in India	197
Part V:	India's Largest Animals Are All Dangerous	
	11. India's Largest Wildlife Should Be Considered Seriously	223
Part VI:	India's Mountain Species Are the Greatest in the World	
	12. Mountain Species Are Attractive and Dangerous in a Unique Way	257

Part VII: The Variety of Wildlife in the Indian Plains	
13. Deer, Antelope, Smaller Animals, Birds and Fish	285
Part VIII: Some Humorous Jungle Stories	
14. Campfire Tales	319
Part IX: Wildlife Conservation	
15. Maturing to Conservationist	336
Conclusion	346
A Chart of Asiatic Animals	357
Bibliography	365

PREFACE

Understanding the Wild Animal Kingdom and its Rajah Kings

I believe that the tiger, not the lion, best represents the king of the beasts. Having seen so much of this monarch of the wild, which has so profoundly influenced Indian culture, and having loved the vast profusion of Indian wildlife intimately all my life, I wish to set in order some of the facts of Indian wildlife.

A person who needs to get away from his routine work will find no better way to relax and exercise than to go into a jungle to observe wildlife and take pictures, as in a sanctuary or park. The skill and adventure of traditional hunting can provide a good means of livelihood, and sometimes an emotional release, but only in areas controlled to produce plenty of wildlife which can be harvested. Moreover, much wildlife could be better sources of meat than some domesticated kinds we now slaughter. Indeed, many religions make provisions to kill and eat animal sacrifices. Others could be produced in abundance for beautiful coats, draperies or rugs.

One could see, study and take pictures of a variety of primitive types of wildlife, and experience the thrills of venturing to meet these animals in a practical way on their own terms, if more wildlife parks were established. If any must be killed, the guide or sportsman should go only for the oldest bull or patriarch, in order to display the best of a species, allowing more of the younger animals to fertilize. Thus, the beautiful, mounted animal will be displayed for educational purposes for several times its life span, to be admired longer by many more people than could see it in the wilderness.

God's sense of humor, expressed in elephant trunks and giraffes' necks, is recognized and exaggerated by cartoonists. Man can only "think the thoughts of God after Him." So we need real, living, God-given examples of His creation to relate to properly, instead of killing each other in senseless wars.

Another purpose of this book is to promote the idea that animals be studied in their habitats. They can be captured by modern methods, such as capture guns, and be rehabilitated for more efficient propagation purposes, so that more people may enjoy them. Man should not lose at least a token representation of the perfect manifestations of God's nature, and the various

ways He wants to make His attributes known to mankind.

The Indian government had a policy to terminate all the 278 maharajah's respected titles. Herein, I find a parallel between human and animal rajahs. I am not so sure that humanity will be able to appreciate either of those regal entities much longer, who so majestically and beautifully show some of the noblest virtues God reveals to us, not only through the crown of His creation—a royal man—but through the finest specimens of certain wildlife, such as the royal Bengal tiger.

Having spent most of my life in India, I have seen great change in India over the past twenty years. In the name of socialism, a legal edict has been issued that gives the central government complete authority over and claim to the hundreds of princely states which were previously respected by the British. The central government accomplished this by persuading most of the maharajahs to cooperate with them in return for certain favors. When this move was seen to be succeeding, another, more far-reaching government proclamation was issued, by which all the land of petty rajahs and even village landlords (*zamindars*) was given to the people. This was done by politicians who found that local people were usually glad to get the zamindar's land, with the promise that later they could possibly have working and possession rights over a few *begas* (about an acre) of land. We heard many complaints from the zamindars and found their lands were usurped. Their forests were quickly denuded of wildlife. I know some of the zamindars who became so depressed while mulling over their plight that they seemed actually to grieve to death.

I have the greatest admiration for India's patriots. One is the Maharajah of Naba-Pratap, who, when he saw the dissolution of India's riches, especially with regard to wildlife, pioneered the establishment of the Wildlife Preservation Society of India along with the noble conservator Stracy.

The Maharajah of Rajpipla, being a sportsman, when he saw the trend of the government usurpation of his inherited rights, sold out as much as he could of his city and state lands in order to buy a ranch in the middle of the best hunting grounds I have ever seen. Here he built a sportsman-type ranch house, where he became renowned as a sportsman who always sought out the biggest tiger toms of over ten feet and 600 pounds. He seemed to become obsessed with taking out his ill fortune upon wildlife in general, but especially on the biggest elephants, tigers, and

leopards. He eventually took to entertaining foreign guests as a lucrative business, and took to drinking more and more until he met a tragic end.

Though a spiritual creature, man lives in this material world, so much superior to the members of the animal kingdom that he could wipe out any or all of them. However, the most spiritually sensitive humans have seen the values in each species and chosen to save them. God has commissioned us with a sacred trust to have "dominion . . . over every living thing" (Gen. 1:28). Therefore, we have a duty toward the creatures which are our subjects. The Bible states, "the whole of creation groans even till now to witness the redemption of those purchased by Christ." Those redeemed by the Lord know that Christ's voluntary and vicarious shedding of blood has once and for all done away with the necessity of all animal sacrifices (see Heb. 9:14). So we must try to save our dumb creatures by redeeming them from senseless destruction in order to propagate them for the glory of His Kingdom.

It is my hope that many materialistic people who are turned off by anything religious, and others who are indifferent about a Supreme Being, will see through my life how God saves those who have faith in Him—those who are convinced of God's sovereign goodness and mercy as against the Devil's evils. Forgetting personal gain, we can justly and nobly administer our God-given rule over creation with confident authority and thereby have all these things added unto us: adventure and abundant wildlife in its natural habitat, and the unlimited wealth of God's natural resources.



Monitor lizard



Tiger—Sher—the Maharajah, or great King of Beasts



Pangolin—scaly anteater



The man-eater leaps from my wrong side



A fight to the death between boar and leopard

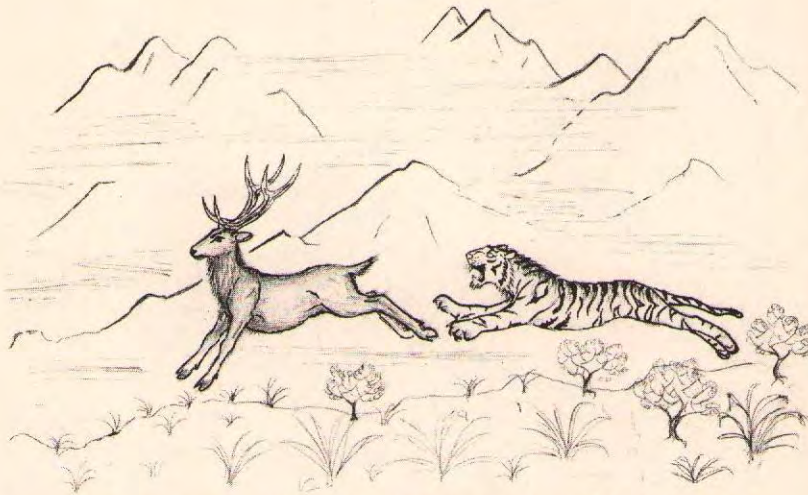


Art erupts from the thicket with a suar boar at his heels.



Man-eating hyena closing in

PART I: CHILDHOOD TO AGE SIXTEEN IN INDIA'S
ANIMAL-INFESTED JUNGLES



Looking up, we saw the king of beasts chasing a beautiful sambar stag.



Lynx leaps at my throat

Chapter 1

EARLY CHILDHOOD

The notorious *baghera* is considered a kidnapper, dogsnatcher and livestock killer. The common Indian word *bagh*, in the shortened form of the word *baghera*, is probably the most generally used word ascribed to a variety of dreadful canines that develop the habit of snatching up and carrying off human beings or livestock near human dwellings. They will even seize children out of homes, usually under the cover of darkness.

Many such beasts prowl the villages of India. Here they pick up castaway food scraps, stray dogs, and unwanted babies, and find how easy it is to pull away a sleeping child from a ramshackle straw hut. Then a *baghera* becomes a habitual kidnapper, notoriously persistent and dreadfully feared. Even though jackals have been known to drag off babies, the ignorant villagers think the beast is a wolf, or more often a leopard or even a tiger; when actually, the people-snatchers (other than man-eating leopards and tigers) are often wolves and hyenas. But *baghera* really refers to leopard, the most common lifter, and often also to a hyena. *Bherya* is wolf, literally meaning "one who prefers sheep."

The large Indian, striped hyena is very sly, and when his normal diet lacks meat, bones or food scraps, he sometimes resorts to taking children and even adults, livestock and dogs, which he kills easily with his large, bone-cracking jaws and teeth. But the Indian wolves have become famous for not always killing human children. The female wolf has been noted to carry off human children, harmlessly, to rear them carefully along with her litter. Kipling records this Indian phenomenon,

in which the captured children are still referred to as "wolf-boys," who tend to go on all fours, developing calluses and thriving on the raw meat which grown wolves catch and bring back.

My brother Carl, two years younger than I, almost got taken off by a wolf when he was about one year old. Mother and Dad were both medical missionaries, and one of their regular duties was medical work at their dispensary. They moved about every week to a new campsite, living in tents in and around the fertile Ganges Valley. In this valley there are many villages sometimes only a mile or two apart, though often clusters of these villages are separated by strips of forests, miles wide. These forests, in turn, are connected to the famous Siwalik, a range of foothills in the Himalayas with rugged watersheds, badlands and forests. In my childhood, all kinds of animals were so prevalent that my father usually kept at least one double-barreled shotgun in camp, and a .32 and .45/70 Winchester lever-action rifle. We usually camped in a centrally located village mango grove, and Dad and Mother's evening meetings, with lectures and visuals from a carbide-powered lantern became very popular, before India's cinema craze.

Both Mother and Dad had gone out one evening but had left our *ayah* (a full-time baby-sitter) in charge of us, their two boys aged one and three. She put us to bed in our double-decker. Evidently, a wolf was prowling around until it saw its opportunity to sneak into our tent without even the two camp dogs being aware of it, nor our nurse, who had dozed off to sleep, while sitting at the foot of our camp cots.

Suddenly, the *ayah* was awakened by a shaking of the bed beside our double-decker and looked up to see a large wolf with mouth open ready to pick up one-year-old Carl. She screamed for help as she reached for the *topies* (sun helmets) stacked near her. The dogs came running and barking as she flung a *topi* at the wolf to chase it off, just before it could escape with Carl.

When my father heard of the tale, he prepared for the wolf when it returned the next night. However, he did not realize how sly wolves were and how much keener their senses were at night. He left a little crack of a few inches open in the front door flap of the tent, thinking that when it came prowling for an opening he could shoot it. At last the wolf came. About five paces from Dad it stopped and looked at him. He took aim but only then remembered to look first beyond before shooting.

Beyond the wolf, in a semicircle, stood the tents of his helpers; one tent was in a direct line with the wolf. The wolf heard and saw him and bounded off, never to return.

This occasion made Dad establish one of our primary rules of hunting: "Be conscious of what is on the other side of the animal you intend to shoot, and take a final look beyond the animal as far as the bullet can travel."

When I was about five years old, one of our *bhotia* (mountain) dogs, named Typpy, got picked off by a leopard at Nainital (Jim Corbett's home resort spot) right off our bungalow's front porch while apparently barking at the leopard's approach. After that we became wiser with our dogs, especially when people would mention *baghera* being around.

About the same time in my life, I remember the first big Himalayan black bear which Dad brought home. Dad had gone out one morning in Nainital where he had a special pass for mountain shooting with a *shikari* (an Indian hunter) and a coolie to carry game back. He was looking for *Kakar Muntjak* (or barking deer) and *Ghural* (mountain goat), so had his favorite .32/20 in hand. Behind him a few paces was his *shikari*, carrying his big .45/70 with instructions to hand it to him quickly if they should come up against any dangerous game. Now, the Himalayan bear is extremely dangerous, often attacking when surprised. Dad, his *shikari* and the coolie were climbing through some thornberry bushes when they suddenly came upon this type of bear only about twenty paces away. In a split second, the vicious bear charged them with a bloodcurdling scream. The coolie and *shikari* panicked as they ran pell-mell down the slope with the big gun. Dad took a quick shot with the .32, but the shot checked the bear's onslaught only for a few seconds, for it bit at its wound and then became really angry. Dad then reached back for the big gun—and it was not there! He looked back to see both men fleeing; consequently, he gave chase only seconds ahead of the raging beast. All the while, in that mad chase down the mountain, Dad was shouting to the *shikari* as the bear bore down closer behind. Finally, Dad caught up, grabbed the gun from the *shikari* just in time, and shot the bear, which rolled dead right at their feet.

It was at Nainital where I remember first being inspired by the beauties of nature to the point of wanting to make a collection of whatever interested me the most. I was excited at the prospect of catching something that could fly, and of

studying its role in nature. My parents heard of a young British man with a good butterfly collection, so they took me to see it and to get some tips on how to catch them, efficiently kill them, and set their wings for proper display.

Eventually, my parents decided to make our summer home in the nearer mountain resort of Mussoorie, where I went to the famous international school of Woodstock. When my beetle collection became the best in our community of Landour, my parents got me a book on Himalayan insects. Later, as my butterfly and moth collection became a real attraction, they provided me with the best book on Indian butterflies and moths available.

After my first interest in collecting insects of all kinds, I developed an interest in harder-to-get and larger wildlife birds, which are in great profusion in India, especially in the foothills of the Himalayas. Consequently, at about age eight I started to develop an interest in slingshots, a good defense against bad pariah dogs, most useful for capturing birds for me to study, skin and mount. If I could not mount one, I could at least display its beautiful plumage. Two or three of us boys collected a variety of birds for study and display. One of our schoolmasters, Bob Fleming, who was also our scout patrol leader, joined us in taking a special interest in birds. Since that time, Bob Fleming has become a renowned ornithologist, and his son has distinguished himself in collecting rare Indian birds for Chicago's Field Museum.

Together, we came to know practically every bird in existence in the area, along with its call, habits, etc. By the age of sixteen I had bagged about all the varieties there are of birds, with my slingshot and airgun; and had become so used to their calls that, like Jim Corbett, I practically knew the language of the forest denizens and could sense what animals are in certain areas of the forest. I enjoyed walking around in tiger-infested forests, usually without much fear. At other times, however, an innate sense would tell me to retreat or avoid certain areas.

It is very important for sportsmen or hunters to have a set of signals—at least a whistle of some sort, preferably a sound similar to that of the wildlife in the area. However, if one cannot whistle, he should at least carry an empty shell in his pocket to blow to communicate with his partner or party. My dad taught us early an effective set of signals which I have not seen any need to improve upon and am passing it on to other

generations: One short whistle means "Beware"; two quickly successive whistles means "Where are you?" and its answer, "Here I am," is also two quick whistles; three successive whistles means "Come here," and four or more whistles means "Make a noise," or "Beat" animals by noise, etc. One should always carry around at least a penknife with a three-inch blade or preferably a six-inch blade hunting knife, and a role of tough string one to two yards long) for slinging game or gun. Another very important thing to learn early in one's outdoor life is a sense of directions by various natural signs such as the sun's position during the day, and the moon's and stars' positions at night. Knowing the North Star by the position of the Big Dipper is most important, and dad taught this early.

I remember, during my first year of hunting big game with a firearm, at the age of twelve that I shot a Carical lynx with Dad's .32/20 Winchester; a big wild boar with a double-barreled 12-gauge shotgun at night without a light; and a spotted deer and a young black buck antelope with the .32/20 rifle. My mother often recalled one camp, Calubans, where we were marooned for an extra week because of unusually heavy rains. We ran out of most of our food, but I would go out for an hour or two between the rain, only about a mile or two, and each time would bring home two or three wild chickens (mostly red roosters). I shot thirty-eight of them in two weeks, besides some partridge, peacocks, and rabbits.

I count a Carical lynx as big game, just as any wolf, because both are big enough to knock down and kill a human being. A few days later, at the same camp where Dad had shot a big leopard that had attacked our dogs and us, my mother told me to go out in the jungle that started from the backyard of our camp only fifty yards away to get some peacocks for dinner. Dad had gone out on a village tour with his shotgun, so I picked up the .32/20. I had hardly gone ten paces towards the forest when I saw what looked like a very large bobcat quickly duck behind a bush only forty yards away, looking at me. All I could see was the top part of its head and long black hair tufts on its ears. It looked unique, so I aimed a little below the head for what I thought would be the chest. The hollow-point bullet hit it a little below the chest and slit open its stomach. Immediately it sprang straight up into the air, about three times its length, and with two less spectacular leaps, was out of sight before I could get a second shot into him.

I quickly ran over and saw a good trail of blood, so I started right into the thick forest after what I thought was just another wild bobcat I had shot before, little realizing that danger lurked before me. Fortunately, my gun was ready. I had hardly gone forty paces when I heard a loud hiss. At the same moment the large lynx leaped towards my throat from a bush at right angles to my left, only about eight feet away. I had no time to swing the gun for a shot, so with the side of the rifle only inches from my hand, I batted it down behind me. Before it could leap up again, I whirled in self-defense as it hit the ground, and I shot it dead with a pointing shot, without having time to aim.

This experience really frightened me, as I realized that such a relatively small cat had almost taken my life. I began to realize how dangerous wounded wildcats can be. Dad had its pelt made with a head mount because of its beauty, because of my narrow escape, as a reminder to me.

Dad had let me hunt with him at night several times to give me the thrill of wildlife on the prowl after dark with all their accompanying, fascinating sounds. Several times he had me sit with him over a bleating goat or a kill that attracted leopards. I never ceased to be amazed at the tricks the leopard played in such approaches, one trick being that at first the animal would stay close to the ground, thus appearing too small for a leopard, and resembling more a jackal.

When I reached thirteen Dad told me to keep a strict account of all ammunition spent and to make every shot count. I was about fifteen shots short by the end of the season. However, since starling were good to eat, I went after a large flock of them and brought back my record number of thirty-three in two shots.

My father taught us several basic important hunting rules: 1. Never shoot a female or fawn of the deer family, which are recognized by a lack of horns; also, choose males among the other species whenever possible; 2. In a thickly populated area, like most of India, always be conscious of what's on the other side of the animal you intend to shoot, in case you miss or go through the animal or ricochet in line with it; 3. Always empty your gun chamber before coming into camp or near any dwelling; 4. Always clean your gun immediately upon returning, even if it was not fired; 5. Keep your gun on safety at all times, except when expecting something suddenly, provided no one is in front of you.

I also learned before going on any important hunt always to check the gun's sights, especially scopes, as well as test all screws with a screwdriver, and at least boresight it to shoot a few target shots if I expected something special or dangerous. I learned, too, to select the proper type of ammunition for the job: Is it for mountain, plains, or heavy jungle shooting? Is it for thick or thin-skinned animals?

Other rules: 1. Don't make any quick movements, especially when hunting the keen-sighted cats, unless you are at least 90° behind their main line of vision; 2. Hunt an animal with respect to its particular senses. Be conscious of the general direction of the wind that can carry your scent to him; 3. A flashlight is essential, as well as some means of making fire, of which all animals are afraid. Innumerable special tricks a sportsman can acquire from experience will make him master of the whole situation, over any and all animals of the forest, but he is most vulnerable during a pitch-dark night.

Early in Dad's missionary career, when he had no big game experience, he went out to Shahpur one evening, with his shotgun and .45/70 to get some meat for camp. Near the edge of the jungle he heard a heavy animal coming through the grass. First, he saw the high, thick horns as of an elk, and he reached for his .45/70. Then the forehead appeared to reveal a Sambar stag. Dad's bullet struck the forehead, but did not penetrate the thick bone. The stag fell, flopping around on the ground in a daze. Dad had been a Kansas farmer, with rodeo skills and full of daring, busting broncos and bulldogging steers. He threw down his gun, figuring, why waste another shot? and threw himself upon the beast in an effort to turn the neck by the horns in order to cut its exposed throat.

The coolie evidently considered the act a fine spectacle, as the hunter dodged flying hoofs and wrestled the horns into the turf. "Knife, quick! Come on and help cut it!" Dad kept yelling. But the coolie stood entranced, as the stag repeatedly pulled its horns out of the sod, only to have them wrestled back again. Finally, Dad began to realize that the beast was only stunned as its strength began to return. "Shoot it!" he began to call. Then as the coolie stood and gaped, the stag suddenly rose to its feet with Dad hanging onto the horns, dangling in front of its face. Then it ran into the forest.

Meanwhile, Dad was trying frantically to kick the stag's front feet out from under him. Finally, the sambar ran into a thick

brush where it shook Dad off and nearly knocked him unconscious. He gradually rolled off the brush and called for his gun. After a few minutes, he returned for the big gun and began to track the sambar. A short distance away, he saw it standing with its head weaving groggily. Then he put the finishing shot into it. The moral? Do not take undue chances, even with deer; their hooves and horns are effective weapons to impale you. It was lucky that this deer, unable to see where it was charging, did not smash into a tree and injure Dad much worse.

When I was fifteen years old, I had stalked a big black buck antelope to within forty-five yards with my shotgun. When it saw me and was about to take off, I let it have both barrels. The buck and I ran a great distance until I could no longer see it. I decided I must be scaring it, so I slowed up. There was a good trail of blood, so I decided to give it time to bed down in the tall grass or bushes. The trail veered off towards some bushes near the Saharanpur Roorkee railroad embankment.

I got ready for action because I felt sure that I could flush it out if it still had enough life. Sure enough, it jumped up about thirty yards away, running at right angles to me, away from the embankment. Just as it leaped upwards, I shot, breaking one of its front legs at the shoulder. It fell head over heels, but began running on three legs. I had to run as fast as I could to catch up to it, then took a flying leap and came down straddling its back, grabbing both its twenty-inch-long spiral horns. Even though he fell with my weight, he got up with what seemed to be supernormal strength and started to run even faster than before. I tripped it a few times, until I finally wrestled it to the ground took out my knife and cut its throat in the Moslem style.

Leopards did not seem to be in any danger of extinction in those days because of the profusion of other, smaller animals on which they fed, for leopards are not averse to dwelling in relatively open shrub jungle. In fact, in the days of the British Raj in India, tigers were strictly protected in the thick reserved forests, but leopards were considered pests to be shot in unlimited numbers.

When I was twelve, my father allowed me to sit up alone for a leopard over a goat bait. He did, however, want me to take along our young bearer, Shadulla, as a helper. Shadulla and I tied up the goat; then I told him to go home with the instructions to call the kid as he left in order to make it begin bleating. Shadulla, however, became too frightened to go back

through the forest alone. He begged to sit in the tree crotch just below me. He promised to remain inconspicuous and not to utter a sound, so I allowed him. The goat, however, was smart. It knew Shadulla was in the tree near it, so did not do much bawling until a little time later. When it did begin bawling and fidgeting, I figured the leopard was approaching. Shadulla let out a muffled cough. I could not imagine why the leopard was not coming on.

After about another half hour, I decided to look down and see what my bearer was doing. There I noticed the red glow from a cigarette he was smoking under his blanket. He was an incorrigible smoker, and we had many times tried to break him of this habit. Now, I thought, was a good time to teach him a lesson. Slipping my leg down, I gave him a push. He fell ten feet to the ground, yelling and clambering for every branch before hitting the ground with a thud. He yelled for help, but I bawled him out for ruining my chance and told him to go home. At first he said he would gladly leave me and started off. After about ten steps, he came back and started an argument, saying he would tell Dad what I had done. Finally, I gave up, joined my bearer, and escorted him home.

Another time when I was twelve, I had a rather grim experience. My father was going away to some distant village for a whole day with his preacher, Bahadur Singh, and he wouldn't be back till the next day. Since we needed meat that evening for camp and Dad had to take his own shotgun, he asked Bahadur Singh if he would please brief me on the operation of his muzzle loader so I could go out that afternoon and get some meat, such as a peacock, for the camp.

Bahadur Singh brought out his old muzzle loader and, handing it to me, said he had emptied the L.G.'s (large graff buck shot) out of it the night before, when he had been unsuccessfully sitting out for a big boar. I must not have caught his statement that he had left his heavy charge of powder packed in the gun for another try at the big boar some other night. He proceeded to show me about how much bird shot should be rolled down the barrel, then tapped down firmly with a lesser amount of cloth than what is packed down over the powder with the special ramrod.

Just to be sure I knew how to use the muzzle loader, he asked me to relate the procedure, which I did to his satisfaction. He warned me again that there was already a heavy charge of

powder in the gun, but in the excitement I forgot. Consequently, I opened up the end of his powder horn and poured in the equivalent amount of heavy bird shot charge, packed it down very tightly with plenty of rags, and put about an inch of bird shot over that, plugging it up with another rag to keep the shot in. I knew where the jungle peacocks were which ruined the farmers' crops, so I snooped around them, trying to get a shot at one very long-tailed one.

Pretty soon the flock started roosting in the jungle, and I saw the big, long-tailed one go into the fork of a tall tree, beautifully silhouetted against the sky. I had to take a few more steps forward and one more step over a fallen log in order to get a good unobstructed shot. I took aim at what I thought was the middle of the bird, thinking part of the long tail was the peacock, a beginner's mistake, especially when shooting them on the wing. The gun blast was a powerful double explosion that knocked me backwards against the fallen tree, throwing me into a complete somersault. All I got from that experience was a good lesson, a very sore shoulder for a week, and a mess of peacock tail feathers cut off by the shot.

After this experience, I was so afraid of muzzle loaders that I did not want to shoot one again. Bahadur Singh sympathized with me, but one day many weeks later, he took me and his muzzle loader out vulture hunting, determined that I should get over my fear by handling the gun again when it was properly loaded. For self protection, I sat down to shoot. Then I chose one vulture separate from the others, hugged the gun tightly, and squeezed the trigger. What a relief. The gun only pushed me almost flat onto my back! But I got the bird this time, and best of all, I got over my fear of muzzle loaders.

THE VALUE OF GOOD HUNTING DOGS

We experienced some years of trouble in trying to decide which type of dog is the best all-around dog for our needs in India. Among the requirements is that it be brave, intelligent, good with children, a good watchdog and a natural hunter. We started by preferring black Labrador Retrievers, especially after an experience or two we had with these dogs while chasing leopards until they were treed for easy shots.

Most dogs seem to have a natural inclination to hunt, derived from their predecessor, the wild dog, which is practically the most vicious hunter of all animals. In the dog family we have one of the brighter records of man's ability to control and develop an interesting variety of breeds out of this extraordinarily intelligent and versatile animal. Is it not possible that when we have done such a far-reaching job of taming and developing dogs, horses, cows, sheep, goats, fowls and fish, in the relatively short history of about 6,000 years, that with our increased scientific knowledge we cannot only coexist with the vanishing species, but bring them back again in appreciable numbers?

For our Indian type of hunting, I have found the black Labrador Retrievers to be the best. They are natural born hunters of waterfowl, and are large and formidable enough to cope with the biggest of game. Black Labrador Retrievers are well-built for running in the jungles, and have a terrific nose for trailing and hunting down animals. But one of the greatest natural qualities possessed by this dog is one I have not heard stressed enough: a bravery great enough to confront almost any animal, even leopards or tigers. They seem to have an uncanny sense that these big cats (especially leopards—take longer to get over their first awed feeling of surprise in suddenly seeing a large black animal face them boldly. The large cats may well associate any fierce black animal with the common black bears of India with which they never like to tangle. Both the Indian black bear and the black Labrador Retriever effectively use this and their quicker intellectual process as a weapon of surprise to frighten a leopard into running, often up a tree, which makes for an excellent shot. The Labrador Retriever will even hold a leopard at bay for a short while until the hunter arrives. On

such an occasion the amazed cat seems to try to figure out if this isn't a bear, what kind of crazy dog it is that dares charge towards him.

After losing a dog or two, Dad devised a special type of harness for them, bristling with one-inch nails that we have had *mochis* (shoemakers) construct. The harness does not only cover our dogs' necks but goes back over their shoulders. These are so effective in protecting our good hunting dogs that we need only two brave dogs like Labradors thus clad for an effective leopard hunt.

Some dogs are not suited for certain types of hunting, like big game, even though their bravery and hunting spirit is not lacking. I once had a nice full-blooded Dachshund called Ginger when I was about fourteen or fifteen. This dog would beg to let me take him out, where he would run many miles alongside my bicycle and even follow me into deep forests. Ginger was excellent at flushing out rabbits, partridge, pheasant, wildfowl, and peacocks.

Once, I took Ginger into a strip of *zimedari* (landowner's) jungle near Biharigarh. We knew the owner well, so he always allowed us to shoot in it just for the asking, probably because we gave free medical care to his people. As I climbed over a spur of little hills, I saw a beautiful cheetal stag looking at me only about twenty yards away on the next ridge. I had a buckshot and a ball in my "doubby," so I let him have a quick one with the buckshot in the head. Evidently, no pellet entered the brain, but he dropped, stunned. Ginger immediately tore from my heel after him and pounced on the big stag's neck, getting a good bulldog-like grip on it. Ginger's fierce attack caused the deer to lunge to his feet and dash away. The dog remained dangling from the fleeing deer's neck, determined as any bulldog, bounced about by the stag's knees. My dog returned in relatively decent shape, but looking dejected, and suffering from an overwhelming awareness of failure. We never saw that stag again.

Another evening I was returning casually on my bicycle along the jungle oxcart track of the Biharigarh forest near the Siwalik range with this same Dachshund and my 12-gauge double-barreled shotgun. Suddenly, I heard a rushing commotion a few yards behind me, mixed with hysterical yelping from Ginger. I took a quick glance over my shoulder while holding my balance. You can imagine my surprise to see a young tiger had leaped

out at us while trying to catch Ginger. Ginger, in turn, was dodging around under the tiger's feet. My first reaction was to put on a burst of speed to flee, which carried me to about fifty yards. Then a feeling of shame and guilt came over me because of this cowardly act, of having left my poor little defenseless and faithful dog completely at the mercy of the tiger, and I suddenly hit both brakes.

The first brake did the main stopping, and I went crashing over my handlebars with my gun muzzle pointing foremost. Unfortunately, the end of my gun hit the turf first and got thoroughly clogged up with dirt. However, I kept my wits about me enough not to shoot at the tiger, though I very much wanted to. Instead, I kept seated and knocked the gun against my leg to knock out the clogged dirt. For what seemed like several minutes I sat and pounded while witnessing a very unusual sight. The yearling tiger cub was either trying to catch the dog or was just playing with it. Ginger, on the other hand, was so quick and small he was running circles around the tiger's legs, yet could not seem to get untangled enough to know in which direction to run for safety.

Just as I was working out the last bit of dirt with a piece of twig, Ginger must have seen me, for suddenly he made a dash for safety straight towards me. Presently, the tiger got unwound and took a few bounds towards us. Then he saw me in the road with my gun. He stopped short about twenty-five yards away, whirled gracefully, and strode into the jungle to mind his own business. I am ashamed to say I was so relieved at not being attacked that I only made a feeble effort at going to the place where he entered the dense forest to peer in. Then I made no further effort to go after the tiger, but made a hasty retreat to my bicycle and away.

The next day we were invited to join some British officers who were friends of ours to try to beat out some tigers seen that morning in the adjacent Mohan block, for which they had the pass. We rode awhile on elephants until I was posted at a stop to keep the tigers moving toward the gunners who had the pass. This being my duty, I let considerable game go by without firing, though I heard the others shooting. Someone in the hunt saw two yearling tiger cubs, but the tigress was clever enough to get away safely. We figured that one of these cubs was probably the tiger which attacked Ginger the evening before.

Another day I was out with Ginger again in the same

Biharigarh area. This time I was in some jungle that had a few scattered trees with a two-foot undergrowth of bhabar grass and bushes on little rolling hills. Ginger usually heeled pretty well, but I was letting him work back and forth a few yards ahead of me to flush up peacocks or hogdeer. I had bird shot in one barrel and buckshot in the other. Ginger just happened to go over a little knoll ten yards to my left when, all of a sudden, I heard a terrible snort followed by a roar that seemed punctuated by charging jolts. Ginger came first, flying over the top, yapping bloody murder.

Is it the tiger? flashed through my mind. A tiger had chased him before through here. I thought, this is it! I will have to face it! I braced myself as, instead of a tiger, a wild boar shot over the top. He was a big boar, a loner that takes on anything. My gun was open to replace the bird shot with a ball I'd picked to use on the tiger, but the boar was attacking so speedily that I slammed the gun together. In the meantime, the click of the gun caused him to put on all four brakes, stopping with a grunt ten yards in front of me. My buckshot hit him full in the chest, bursting one leg. But the boar was down for only a split second, then he was coming for me with speed so great that I immediately fired again, a pointing shot at its snout, and simultaneously jumped high into the air to avoid being clipped by the beast. This shot had only been large bird shot. Nevertheless, because of the point-blank range, it shattered his snout and broke his other front ankle. The impact caused him to make a complete flip, and his hind legs brushed me as I came down to straddle that mass of 300 pounds of infuriated kicking pork.

As soon as I felt the earth under one foot, I started taking off for a tree. But there was not one near enough, and the boar was after me again in a jiffy. When I realized he had caught up to within about a yard of me and would uproot and slash me to ribbons in a split second, I threw my gun into its face and staggered behind a clump of half a dozen saplings. This gave me just enough time to get out my boy scout knife with its blade and sticker. The boar was not to be deterred. He came plowing up the dirt, trying to get at me around the clump. Around and around the saplings he pushed himself, mostly with his unbroken hind legs. He had pretty well slashed up half the saplings before he started to lose his strength, his lungs filling up with blood from the first chest shot. Now I was able to get a

few good jabs with my knife into his neck to finish him off.

I was so shaken from that narrow escape that I just sat there trembling for a while until I finally saw Ginger coming sheepishly towards me. He soon realized that I forgave his cowardice and that our enemy lay dead, and soon his tail was wagging again. Needless to say, I ran home and got several men to carry the boar home.

BECOMING A HUNTER FROM AGE
TWELVE TO SIXTEEN

The first time I came to what used to be my favorite hunting swamp, I was about thirteen years old. I was so fascinated with the clouds of mallard ducks and geese quacking and flying over the swamp that I decided I wanted to see how many I could get with two shots from Dad's "doubby." I sneaked up into the thinnest strip of reeds in front of a patch of water, but before I could see enough to shoot through them, I was stalking in knee-deep water. A few were alarmed, but there were hundreds going in and out through the tall grassy water. I chose a few big white geese as they came together among a host of mallards, and let fly my first shot. Immediately there was a great splashing and fluttering of wings, and the sky above me was thick with a cloud of game birds, all of a variety of sizes and shapes. Without aiming, I shot upwards into that thick cloud and dropped a few more.

I started picking up the nearest as I went toward the two geese I thought I had bagged, but due to the smallness of my bird shot the two apparently did not have much more wrong with them than broken wings. Foolishly, I was leaving about eight mallards and trying to run after the two geese through knee to thigh-deep water, falling headlong many times as I would almost catch a gander. However, both got away from me by swimming and flopping into a great mass of tall, dense jungle reeds. By the time I got back to the mallards I was able to find only six.

That evening, the duck meal was enjoyed by everyone in the camp, but in my excitement I had ruined all my ammo, which had been stuffed into both my pants pockets. We tried drying them out that evening.

The next morning a tall shikari named Tota, whom my dad had assigned to accompany me for the bigger game, went with me into an area on the jungle side of the swamp. Here we had hopes of getting wild pig. Sure enough, there out in the open, drier land were about six or seven big wild pigs. About thirty yards from the pigs rose a big thick hedge which we could easily stalk behind to get a good range. Taking advantage of the hedge, I peered over. The boars appeared huge, weighing between 300

to 500 pounds. Each seemed to be busy wallowing in its own bathtub-like mudhole. Tota told me to shoot the big one, which was standing and about to go down. When I shot, it coincidentally went down, so we thought we had it. Consequently, I picked out another that was part way up. It whirled around a little, but settled back into its own mudhole.

Three or four shots later, two of the pigs jumped up to look around at the strange shots. They had never heard their like before. Now I began to realize by the way they acted that something was wrong, especially when one of them was supposed to have been down for keeps. In quick succession I fired twice more at the standing ones, but they just went around in a circle, which stirred up some of the others. Only then I realized that my ammunition had lost its power to penetrate their skin, should it carry even that far. Finally, one saw us and came charging threateningly at us. In the excitement, I shot off my seventh round at its face, at about twenty yards. This deflected its charge and it went off at a tangent with all following except the one that was half up in the mud. I whispered to Tota what I suspected, noticing out of my left eye as I shot my last round a curved trajectory of shot and wads which landed only about ten yards in front of me. I felt humiliated before my disgusted peer, but he stood up for me before the others in camp.

Both of us went out again together towards the jungle side of Tantwala Swamp. Tota, who was about a foot taller than I, was the first to see a lone wild boar digging about 300 yards away over the grass stubble that had been partially burned to about a foot high. There was no intervening tall grass, so we kept in single file and went straight towards it. The boar must have smelled us about fifty yards away. It stopped its digging and started to emit threatening, puffing snorts and hissing sounds.

Suddenly, it turned broadside and Tota said, "Fire!" I fired. This time I had good ammunition, but I did not know that a big wild boar has an armor-like plate in its skin covering each shoulder. The plate is about an inch thick and so hard that buckshot can hardly penetrate it at thirty yards. The boar whirled away with the impact. Tota started to yell, "It is hit!" and gave chase. But the boar turned right around and came straight towards Tota, who had forgotten his spear at the camp. Promptly, he changed directions and took off as if a hive of bees had stung him. He was stepping high with great strides,

yelling, "Save me! Save me!" As they passed me full speed broadside fifteen yards away, the boar had already caught up to within a yard of his target. I fired and sent the boar end over end, almost into Tota's heels from its momentum. He was one thankful and grateful man after that close shave.

Dad often entrusted me into the care of his best shikari, Masih-Charan, a superb stalker. He reminded me most of a leopard for this quality, for all his senses would become alert and concentrated on his prey. I never remember his making one faltering move whether he was barefoot or shod. He would freeze as soon as the animal looked his way and as soon as it started grazing or looked away, he would often burst into light-footed sprints to take cover. He always seemed to get his prey.

Dad had been quite impressed by the quickness with which I took to his teaching of shooting of birds on the wing. I had beaten him to the draw on a black partridge. Shortly after this, he told Masih-Charan one evening that he bet I could beat him on draws. Dad wanted us to see who would bring back the most bird meat that evening. Masih-Charan said all he needed was the .32 rifle. I thought this would be a cinch, but he evidently avoided the partridge cover and headed for some yard-high grass near the reserve forest where he knew there would be peacock and possibly some deer and wild pig, too.

Suddenly, about twenty yards ahead of us, a peacock head popped up and moved along in a few jerks with each step. Immediately Maish-Chran's .32 rifle with open sights swung up, he aimed for about one second and shot before I could get the gun up. The shot was a perfect bull's-eye, and the next thing I saw was the six-foot fantail shimmering with rigor mortis. I said, "Why didn't you let it fly so I could show you how I can drop them?"

He answered, "I believe your father, and since a game was made for us, I had to shoot before you with a rifle against your shotgun."

I learned a bit from Masih-Charan. His name means literally "in the steps of his master," paradoxically, a very Christian name for a shrewd man who seemed to be an associate of the notorious Robin Hood of India, Sultana. Jim Corbett had written an interesting chapter on Sultana and his final capture in his famous book *My India*. My father also told us of Freddy Young, the 320-pound British chief of police, who finally captured Sultana and of the times he would drop in at our

bungalow for a chat over a cup of tea.

Sultana hid mainly in the jungles just across and east of the Ganges from Shahpur and the Pathri jungle block which was the main domain of Mashi-Charan. Though Mashi-Charan weighed only about 115 pounds, he would not hesitate to shoot any gun—it did not matter what kind. The act of entrusting him with any gun would draw the most pleasurable smile you could imagine. I think any real shikari would immediately be one to trust him with his placid, boyish grin of delight.

As a young missionary, Dad found him to be very quick and useful to help in hunts because of his jungle savvy and complete understanding of all the animals, birds and every jungle trail. There was a rumor going around that he had a gun of his own hidden away in some hollow jungle tree. He was as much a shark at a variety of traps, nets, and handmade weapons, to prove he didn't need a gun. What with his sound effects and other tricks, he was always able to bring home the bacon and sell the excess or barter it for favors, which seemed acceptable to his primitive ethics. He was also unique among most of the early Christians Dad dealt with: the others often asked for handouts or salaries, but not our hero. He had the pride of a tiger to be able to take care of himself, and would only accept Dad's tips after first gracefully refusing with that big contagious grin.

He taught us that the hunter should make his own *machan* (platform) for his own fit and likings, preferably, but his more experienced or agile Indian shikari should usually at least prepare the tree platform. These machans should ordinarily be used for just watching wildlife or for taking pictures of them; therefore, they should be well camouflaged. If there are tigers around, the machan should be twenty feet or higher off the ground, since a tiger can spring straight up that high and pull someone down. In an elephant area, of course, it should be not only over twenty feet high but also be located on a strong tree over 1½-feet thick. The sahib who is to sit in the tree machan should take up a cord with which he is to pull up his bedding (which first should be arranged). Then the cord should be let down for his other equipment, such as a bag with his camera, flashlight, lunch, water and plastic urinal. Finally, his specially trained helper may tie his empty gun for him to pull up after his bedding is arranged as he wishes.

This shark of a hunter was so revered by all in this area as

knowing even the best places to cross the Ganges by foot, that once he was hired by a troop of British military to cross the river. Some other villagers were evidently hired also to carry some of the officers' guns. It was said that one of these porters slipped and lost his balance in the swift current and a good rifle fell into the water. Of course, Mashi-Charan was Johnny on the spot to try to recover it, but they claimed it could not be found. However, several village people blamed Masih-Charan for slipping it under some rocks at the time and returning later to recover the gun.

The talk led to Masih-Charan's arrest. He was put into jail until his trial, but Dad turned up at the trial in order to help him out. The British magistrate was merciful enough to let Dad take Masih-Charan out on bail, with qualifications that he be responsible for his behavior in the future, including poaching. In order to enforce this, Dad gave him the job of *mali* (gardener) at our large compound at Roorkie, which kept him out of trouble in his home area. Of course, he often persuaded me to take him out hunting, so we could have good meat, but he became a changed man and quit poaching.

The large striped hyena (*Charak*) is normally a very cowardly animal when it has enough carcasses and bones of other animals to keep it from starvation. In forest area they seem to be content to follow the tiger's and leopard's beat. Here they will take a meal from the big cats' kills, especially the bones with their marrow, after the cat has gone. There is hardly a bone their powerful jaws cannot crack, so they may be considered the king among scavengers.

Sometimes, however, in open shrub jungle areas near villages, hyenas multiply faster than village cattle, and other village animals can die. Thus, periodically, one hears of such places where the hyenas started dragging humans out of their homes at night while they are sleeping. Dadli was a village of about 500. It started to lose its children at night by what villagers thought first to be dogs dragging them out of their houses. Later, the villagers realized that the kidnappers were hyenas from a small patch of neighboring badlands. The hyenas, without enough carrion food, finally became known as notorious man-eaters. It was these hyenas which had evidently picked off two children in the preceding weeks. Then the people became desperate when a full-grown man was dragged off screaming out of his own house towards the 200 yards of bushes near the village,

where the hyenas ate him up in their dens.

My Dad was called to shoot these pests, but he was extremely busy at the time. I was about fifteen years old, and was able to persuade Dad that I would be glad to take up the challenge to shoot them. I bicycled out from Roorkie fifteen miles to Dadli and quickly met with the news informers. Since the sun had already set, I looked over the little patch of scrub jungle that was near the village.

I decided to sit at the base of a tree which was growing out of a thick thorn bush about fifteen feet in diameter, because it was out in an open field some thirty yards from the hyena habitation, giving me a clear front view. One of the local men cut an opening for me to get in from the front, so arranged that I might sit down with the tree for a back rest. They had advised that since these hyenas had become man-eaters I should be in a tree. Since I did not choose this method, they thought I was a very brave young man, but I felt secure with the thick thorn bush all around my back and sides.

The villagers had hardly been gone twenty minutes when I heard the hyenas cracking bones and snarling in the bushes to my left. Then, just as it got dark, I made out one large hyena approaching me from the front as though he knew I was in the bush, even though I was on the shady side of it. I do not know whether he was trying to frighten me or what, but I had a very scary feeling that he must be the maneating hyena coming to get me. I did not dare let it get closer than about twenty-five yards. Then I blasted it full in the chest with buckshot. The hyena flopped and floundered around backwards and just made it to the bushes, where I could not be sure whether it had dropped dead. Not knowing what was going on among the hyenas, I kept silent, also having instructed the men not to come upon hearing shots, for I wanted to shoot several hyenas.

There was complete silence for about fifteen to twenty minutes. Then I heard movements in the shrub jungle. Soon I heard some sniffing at the edge of the bush in which I was sitting, only about ten feet behind me. As it tried to get into the bush behind me, I turned to defend myself, but could not see anything through the thorny thicket. Then I noticed another hyena, through the corner of my eye, dart out of the jungle towards me, so I whirled around and hit it at the range of about thirty yards. It also floundered about and got into the shrub jungle.

This time everything was quiet for about a half hour as I sat to wait out any more aggressive hyenas. Suddenly, I heard a rattling sound and plenty of noise some animal or animals approaching me from the rear. This time I kept sitting still as the two animals came around the bush from my right. I was greatly relieved to see that the first one was a porcupine, only ten feet away.

When he saw me, he merely flared up his quills and skirted around in an arch to a point about thirty feet in front of me, while its more inquisitive companion made an arch to a point only about fifteen feet in front of me, watching me all the time. At such close range I did not have to raise my gun to the shoulder, but just got it lined up on them and squeezed off just as both came into line.

They both dropped practically stone dead, other than for their usual shimmering and rattling of quills in rigor mortis. I sat there for almost another hour, thinking now I had some good bait for attracting the hyena. After the hour was up, I decided that if there were any left they must be scared off now, so I went up to the bushes and saw the first hyena lying dead.

I picked up the two porcupines and went to the village to sleep the rest of the night. In the morning, we came to get the hyena I had seen dead. The other hyena had evidently made it back into one of the many dens we found in the bushes, where it probably died. The men of the village reported that those hyenas never bothered them again.

Wolves, more easily than hyenas, resort to stealing livestock and are known to carry away even babies. I was quite proud at the age of fifteen for receiving a five rupee award from a British magistrate as the set bounty for showing a fresh wolfskin at the courthouse. I had been begged by the village shepherders near our camp at Mahadood to shoot a big wolf that had made a habit of picking off sheep almost every evening at about 4 p.m., as they would be coming back to the village from their jungle grazing. The next evening I started off with my shotgun towards the jungle after tea, at about 3 p.m. The shepherds spotted me coming at quite a distance and yelled for me to hurry. When I got to them, sure enough there was a big wolf following the herd in the open at about one-hundred yards. The men were threatening it with their staves, so I pretended I had to go on to the jungle by the same path on which it was coming. I had in 2 s.g.'s (small graph buckshot). When I got about forty yards from

it, it snarled at me. Then it decided to get off the path and bypass me. As it was skirting around only about fifteen yards from me I raised my gun. The wolf snarled nastily. I let fly with the first shot. He came at me in fury, so I quickly shot again and finished him off.

My brother Carl, at about age thirteen, decided to go out with me one evening to try to shoot some big animal. Not far from our camp was a riverbed that came out of a reserved forest. This showed the tracks of many large wild animals which ventured out towards the fields every night. My brother had not shot any wild pig or deer yet, so needed the best place to get the first crack. With this in mind, I fixed a nice little *patar* (a ground dugout) for him in the five-foot river bank among a few bushes near where the animals should come first out of the Government Reserved Forest. I sat in another place about 125 yards down the same riverbed to try to get any that escaped him.

It was a good moonlit night. The sandpipers, called *tatiri*, an interesting common ground bird in India, got busy first with a revealing alarm that some animal was coming by them. Then the jackals started their weird howlings to reveal their relative positions. Rabbits and some lesser animals and nightbirds scuttled and dove about. Finally, the great horned owl at the forest's edge called out *Who! Whooo!* I, too, started getting apprehensible about the safety of our ground positions, thinking I should not have left my younger brother sitting by himself.

Suddenly, I heard his shot ring out, followed by a yell for help as he came tearing down the riverbed. I ran out to meet him to find out what had happened. Breathlessly, he explained that while he was concentrating on some large animals coming down in front of him he heard and felt another big animal breathing down his neck from the bank a few feet behind and above him. When he looked over his shoulder he saw a big head with teeth bared ready to pick him off, so he quickly fired his gun up in the general direction, yelling in self-defense as he charged away. Next morning we found out from its tracks that it was a large hyena.

There is just enough animal nature in all of us that when we are long inhibited from giving vent to our fighting nature against some fellowman, we tend to take it out on an animal, and the closer we meet an animal on its own terms, the more sporting

we are. Consequently, there is nothing more invigorating than to throw your gun aside and tackle a wild animal with your bare hands. If it is a species God intended us to use as meat, we may use a knife to do a quick, efficient and humane job of killing. probably we will not do the job as proficiently as God had created the tiger to do it, but we should do better than the leopard's cruel method of strangulation.

In this connection, I must tell you some stories of my highly respected school master Bob Fleming. These took place during my high school days at the famous school of Woodstock in the Himalayas. I had evidently impressed him by shooting a big barking deer on a boy scout troop outing near the Jabar-Keth field. As a result, we had plenty of good meat to satisfy a hundred or so scouts for two days. Consequently, he decided he would try some big game hunting, too. So during the three months' vacation he arranged with my father to visit us at our last camp at Shahpur along with another master, Mr. McMillan.

Master Fleming had never shot a spotted deer before, and since they are so beautiful, he wanted a souvenir rug and antlers. The first night I picked for his machan a thick *dak* tree right in the middle of a young wheat field next to our famous Begum-Chor-pipali corner. The deer tracks and droppings showed this spot to be a sure shot place. I also chose it because I liked the excitement of a big boar or a choice of animals that came out of the Pathri Reserved Forest at that special corner. I was sitting in the fork of another tree only about 175 yards away from him and about 300 yards away from Master McMillan, who was helping a *rakhwala* (caretaker) guard his field on the other side of the right angle jungle.

I had let some ordinary animals go by me in the bright moonlight so as not to disturb the spotted deer, hoping my master would get the first shot. Soon after dusk the spotted deer started barking in alarm. Then came the loud angry sawing-type roaring of the leopard they had seen, which was just inside the fence that kept the forest animals from free access to the villagers' crops in the field. This leopard must have been only about 100 yards away from Fleming.

About 8 p.m. one clear shot rang out. I figured he probably got his buck, until I heard a scramble in the direction of his tree, followed by a big thud, another shot, then a running, scrambling noise towards the forest. A third shot followed, just as something smashed through the thick thorny hedge into the

forest to the right where the leopard had been threatening with its call. I now became alarmed as the fourth, fifth and sixth shots rang out in quick succession, accompanied by lot of crashing around in the forest. I jumped off my perch and took off towards him in a fast run, yelling, "What is it? What is it?" I was sure that only a leopard could have drawn that many shots, and I feared that Fleming had wounded it and was indiscreetly chasing it into the forest to finish it off.

The seventh shot rang out when I was about halfway to him, so I stopped and yelled, "Did you get it? What is it?" He did not reply. Then I heard some movement and started toward the noise in the bush. Now I yelled, "Look out! Is it a leopard?" Still no answer. Instead, I saw him ten yards ahead, sneaking forward a few paces in the moonlit patches. Before I realized what he was doing, he swung his empty gun from over his shoulder with the butt end down, full force on what I still thought might be a leopard. On impact, the butt end snapped off completely. Lesson: never use the butt end of your gun to finish off your game. As a last resort, it is better to use the business end as a bayonet to keep a vicious animal away.

However, breaking the gun did not deter my master's ambition when he saw the buck start to scoot away again along the ground with only the stubs of legs that had been shot out from under it. My teacher let go of the gun and took a flying tackle at it. When he caught it, he had to finish it Moslem style, but with only a two-inch blade pocketknife. He sure was proud of his first beautiful buck. and his broken gun didn't seem to upset him much, as many enjoyed the delicious meat.

Now I had better explain to some readers why (early in this book) I relate some of the nitty-gritty aspects of the rough type of living which pioneers encountered.

In those days there were great numbers of wildlife which competed effectively with humanity all around, and many were very dangerous. Indians have a fatalistic cultural superstition not to kill anything for fear of like retaliation by the gods. . . Their common slogan, "Live and let live" is a reflection of this. However, there are many other conflicting ideas, admirably complex philosophies, in spite of good religious intentions, e.g. Karma versus death as an accomplished fact, hard to explain other than as the will of a god's judgement. Also, most people are omnivorous, even in India, as their teeth show, and would eat meat more often if there were more people

to do the unpleasant job of killing and handling it.

Whenever I make mention of animal trophies, please understand that it is the old animal that is supposed to be honored and appreciated, not the hunter. True, a live animal is more beautiful than a dead one displayed on a wall, even for educational purposes, but it is a traditional fact that sportsmen and hunters have provided most of the funds for the conservation of wildlife heretofore, and not any would-be animal-loving society. Nowadays animals can be propagated in parks, while sportsmen harvest unwanted overflow and the oldest unproductive specimens which are about ready to die anyhow, to decay in the wilderness unappreciated. Sportsmen hazard their lives, spend much money, effort and time to get exotic creatures, they love and respect, which they preserve in trophy form lasting several times the life-span of the animal. Thus most people, who can never see wildlife closely (especially dangerous ones), become understanding and appreciative.

Another time, I took Master Fleming to our favorite hunting grounds across the Ganges. Wild pig and hog-deer roamed all over those swamplands. I think he had gotten a pig, but wanted a nice hog-deer buck for a trophy. We picked one out grazing, and he started stalking. However, it saw him before he could get close enough to put it down in one shot. Seeing that it was starting to take flight, he let it have a shot. At about forty yards it went down. When it got up again and started floundering towards the swamp, he let it have the second barrel. I had never seen any teacher run so fast, splashing through ankle-deep mud in shorts. He kept after that deer to beat it to the thick and higher-than-head swamp reeds that were in the knee-deep water. He got off two more shots while running. The last one connected just before the deer would have disappeared.

My master again threw away his gun, and on the run took out his small penknife, which was sharp this time. However, he had to take about three flying tackles before he could hold onto the slick round-bodied deer. The first time he missed completely, and the muddy splash with a ten-foot skid made me stop to laugh. The dunking did not seem to slow him up much, for he sprang up in a pitiful mess of mud, and took off after the buck again. With the second flying leap, the deer dodged to the side as Master Fleming was coming through the air, and the best he could do was get a hand on it. That time he must have skidded ten feet past it, skimming the water, but with eyes always on his

prey. He was up and after it again in a jiffy. Now we were between it and the tall grass and reeds. However, Fleming never let up, only his foot must have slipped, because he hit the water with a splash about a yard short. Fleming grabbed for the deer's heels and caught one. But now the deer seemed to take a new lease on life and started dragging my teacher all over the slick, muddy swamp.

Finally, we must have tired it out, as my sporting teacher was able to do the necessary throat slitting, which could hardly be called a coup de grâce. When he got up from his dirty bloody mess, one could hardly imagine that he was a teacher. Then I saw his broad smile and elated look of accomplishment shining through the thick mud. I could hardly stop laughing, even though that evening's hunt had come to an end and I, too, had to get down to the muddy earth to gut the thing and rig up a sling with which we could both carry the buck back to camp.

It was in this very swamp that once one of my Indian boyhood friends (Herbert Joseph—a good shikari, who later became a preacher) stalked quietly in the edge of some swamp reed in about two feet of water after some wild boars or hog-deer he could hear. He felt something like a big foot-thick log under his foot and thought it would make a nice vantage point on which to stand to watch some game show up. He did not know for some time that the thing he was standing on was a huge python. Pythons usually keep their heads above water, but it may have been full of some other more succulent morsel. Anyhow, maybe after studying over the heavily clothed human, it did not want to ruin its digestion by swallowing so much material. At any rate, after some time the big fat coil of the python suddenly jerked sideways from under both feet of our preacher, and down he fell with a splash. Herbert said he got so scared that he fell all over himself getting out of the swamp, and he gave up the hunt quickly, since he could not control his shaking after that complete dousing.

Here is a story hard to believe, but we believe it because Harry Dean was often asked to provide drinks and meat for the officer's mess and was a daring British Tommy whom we knew intimately. One day his superior officers summoned him on short notice to tell him that some high British officials were coming the next day and they needed a mess of peacock to throw a good dinner for them the next evening.

The notice was too short for Harry to go far that evening to

any of his favorite spots for these birds. All he could find before it got dark was a tree full of vultures. Mulling over his plight (not wanting his reputation ruined of always bringing back the game, and also realizing that the cooks would need the full day to prepare a good meal) he made up his mind. Yes, he shot two or three vultures out of that tree, cut off their heads and feet, plucked all the feathers and cleaned out their insides, too. Then he took them back to the cooks that same evening and told them to cook them much longer than usual, because they were tough old birds and needed plenty of cooking with curried-up garlic and onion seasoning. Next day he dropped in on them to check how things were brewing. Some guests asked what the meat was; they were told peacock. Harry Dean was called in to be congratulated for always producing the game even on short notice.

Harry Dean lied about his age at sixteen in order to join the British army, but he looked too small, so he finally persuaded them to take him in as a bugler and a flag boy. During this early service to India, he went out wild boar hunting with two others. A wild boar attacked them so viciously that he did not have time to get to a big tree. And as it was at his heels, he leaped for a sapling which, with his force and weight, bent down till he got brushed by the fierce boar as it left off chasing the others to whirl around to get him. He was dangling upside down, hugging the sapling, which had arched over so far that he was hanging only inches above the infuriated snorting razorback. After the boar tried slashing his tusks upward several times without quite reaching Harry, he started trying to uproot the sapling, which it would not have taken long to do. Then Harry started shouting for help as loudly as he could.

One of his friends had completely disappeared, and one was in view up in a tree. Unfortunately, in the quick scramble to get up he had dropped his gun. Now he jumped down to pick it up, but the boar, seeing him down, tore after him so fast that he ran back up into the tree just in time again, without his gun. The boar went back to work again on uprooting Harry's sapling, which seemed to be bending lower as he was yelling desperately for help once more. This time his friend descended more carefully and got a hold of his gun, just as the boar came again for him. This time he was able to fire and hit it badly enough to divert it. They were so thankful to get off free with their lives they did not follow that one up, but beat it out of there in a hurry.

After that experience, Harry never wanted anything to do with boar hunting again or even shooting at smaller wild pig. However, anything else up to man-eaters, even the most notorious dacoits, he would go after without hesitation. He helped round up Sultana to catch a few more dacoits with the big tough British superintendent of police, Mr. Young. Harry was sort of a hero for me, because he often took me out hunting and entertained me with Tommy tales.

surely as it is impossible for God to lie, since He is the creator sustainer and end of the entire animal kingdom which he has entrusted to us to conserve.

LARGE AND DANGEROUS ASIATIC ANIMALS

A simple classification habitat:
M=mountains: H=hills P=plains.

KING OF BEASTS

1. Royal Bengal Tiger; White Tiger; smaller Southern TigerM H P
2. Asiatic Lion; in Gir Reserved ForestP

LEOPARDS

3. SnowM
4. CloudedM
5. Black Panther; about 50% black leopards in Assam H P
6. Regular; large deep forest leopard; small bush country leopard ..M H P
7. Cheetah; hunting leopard; fastest animalP

REPTILES

8. Mugar Crocodile; 12 ft.-broad snout man-eater H P
9. Gharial Crocodile; 20 foot; long snouted; fish-eater H P
10. Marine Crocodile; pointed snout; man-eater; often 23ft. H P
11. Snakes: Python; Cobra; Krait; Viper H P
12. Lizards: Large Monitor is common H P

BEARS

13. Pandas: Giant Panda and Red PandaM
14. High altitude bears: Red; Brown; WhiteM
15. Sloth; long haired; usually black H P
16. Black: Large Himalayan; smaller black without white VM H P

BOARS

17. Forest Boars: Long type: tall wild hogsM H P
18. Smaller wild pigs of bushes and swampsP

BOVINES

19. Gaur Bison; Banteng; Wild Cattle M H P
 20. Yak (Yakin) M
 21. Water Buffalo: Long flat-horn type; short-horn type H P

LARGEST

22. Asian Armored Rhinoceros H P
 23. Asian Elephant; domesticated from large wild herds H P

DEER

24. Spotted Deer Cheetal H P
 25. Hog Deer lives in marshes; often mistaken for wild pigs H P
 26. Barking Deer Muntjack; inhabits dense foliage; M H P
 27. Musk Deer; high in Himalayas M
 28. Brow Antlered; Thamin. H P
 29. Ravine Deer of Tibet M
 30. Mouse Deer; South India; has no horns but tusks P

ELK-TYPE DEER

31. Kashmir Stag; Hangul M
 32. Sambar; a large mountain species is called Jerow M H P
 33. Bara-singha; red and brown species; lives in swamps H P

ANTELOPE

34. Black Buck; fawn colored does; common Indian Antelope P
 35. Blue Bull Nilgai; beige colored females; Greater indian Antelope P
 36. Gazelle Chinkara; both sexes have horns P
 37. Four-horned Antelope chousingha; both sexes have four horns P

SHEEP

38. Ovis Amon; Argali; Nayan M
 39. Ovis Poli, Marco Polo Sheep of Tibet M
 40. Blue Sheep Bharal M
 41. Desert Sheep: Urial; Shapu M H

GOATS

42. Markhor; bearded; Kudu-like spiral horns M
 43. Ibex; bearded; Sable-like horns; climbs highest cliffs M
 44. Thar; Himalayan golden caped and Nilgiri grey species M
 45. Serow; often mistaken for Black Bear M
 46. Ghoral; similar to Chamois; a common wild, brown-grey goat. . M H
 47. Takin, mountain giant of Bhutan M

DOG FAMILY

48. Hyena; large, striped H P
 49. Wolf H P
 50. Wild dog; (Dhole); larger than red fox with bushy tail H P
 51. Jackal; similar to Coyote H P

CAT FAMILY

52. Carical Lynx P
 53. Great Himalayan Lynx M
 54. Golden Cat M H
 55. Fishing Cat M H P
 56. Bear Cat H P