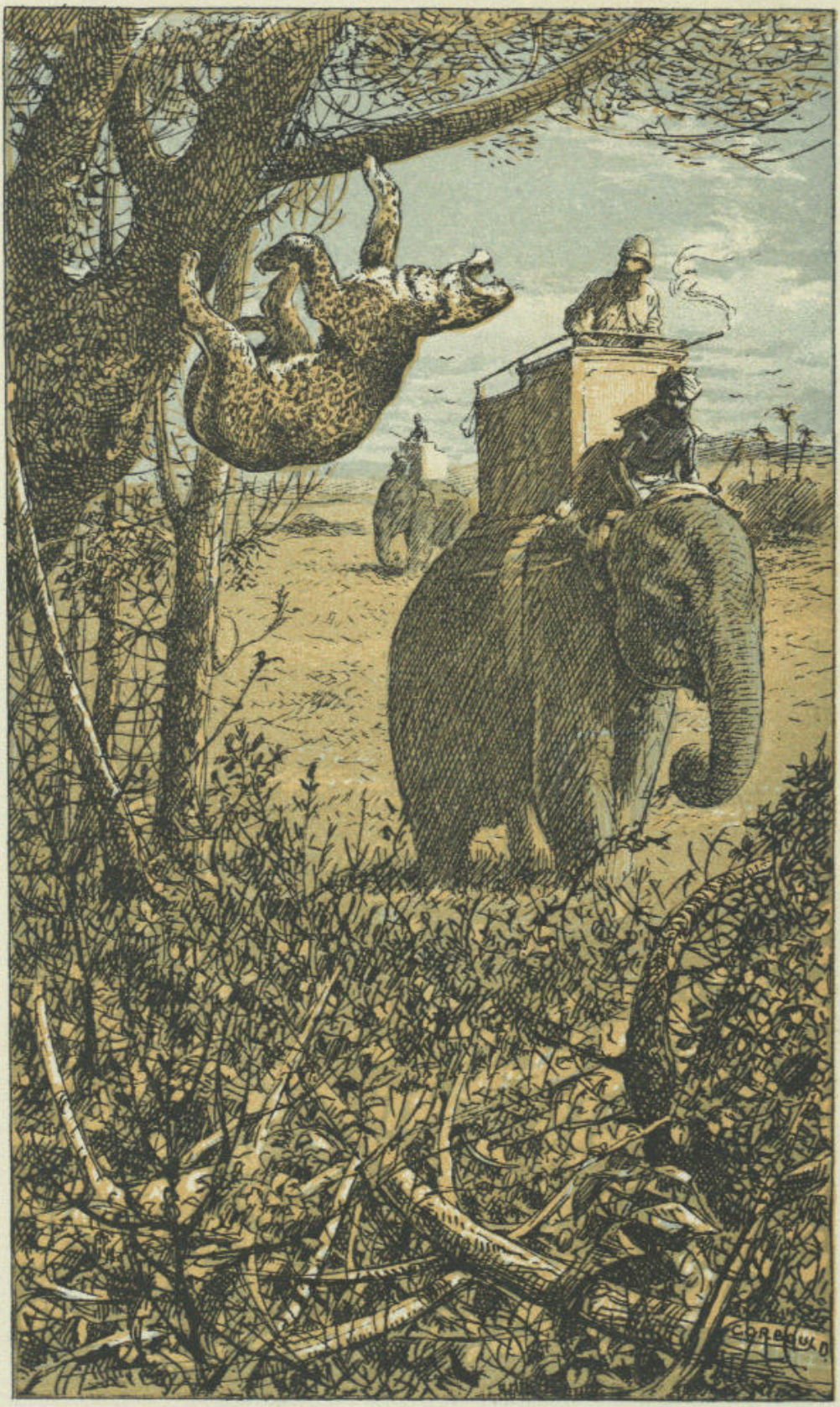

Vincent Brooks Day & Son, Lith.

P. 96. Vol. 2.

SPORT IN

BRITISH BURMAH, ASSAM,

AND THE

CASSYAH AND JYNTIAH HILLS.

WITH NOTES OF SPORT IN THE HILLY DISTRICTS OF THE NORTHERN DIVISION, MADRAS PRESIDENCY,

INDICATING THE BEST LOCALITIES IN THOSE COUNTRIES FOR SPORT, WITH NATURAL HISTORY NOTES, ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE, SCENERY, AND GAME, TOGETHER WITH MAPS TO GUIDE THE TRAVELLER OR SPORTSMAN, AND HINTS ON WEAPONS, FISHING-TACKLE, ETC., BEST SUITED FOR KILLING GAME MET WITH IN THOSE PROVINCES.

BY

LIEUT.-COLONEL POLLOK,

MADRAS STAFF CORPS.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME II.

LONDON:

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1879.

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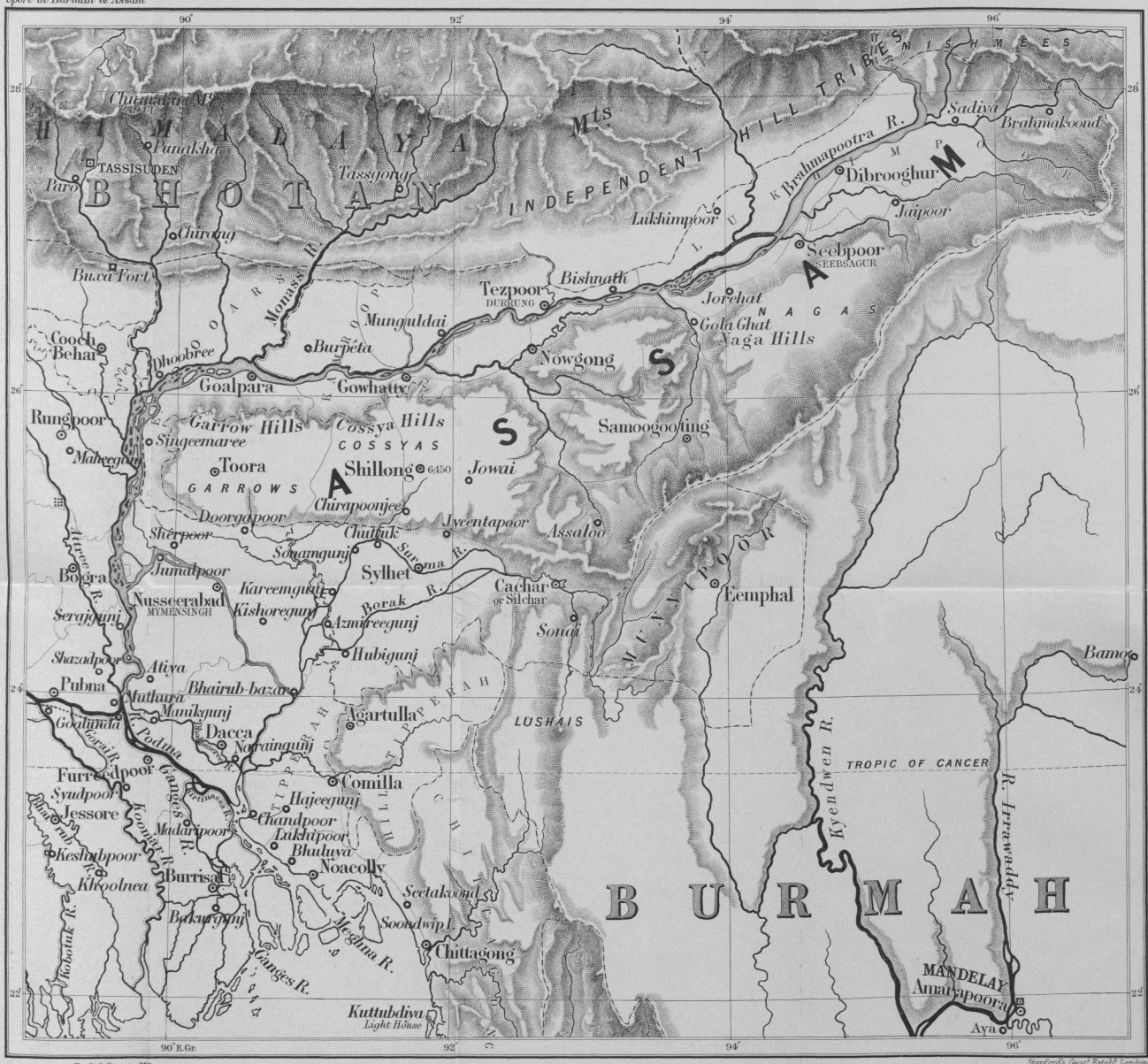

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Stanford's Geog.l Estab.t London

London: Chapman & Hall.

SPORT IN BRITISH BURMAH, &c.

CHAPTER I.

UPPER BURMAH.

Trip up the Irrawaddie.—Menloon Sagain.—Pagan Myo.—Ava, Umrapoorah.—Mandalay. — Mendoon. — Curious effects of an earthquake. — Quail shooting in the Islands.—Yay-nan-choung.

In 1856 four of us determined to visit the capital of Burmah. Since the war officers had been forbidden to go there, but lately one or two had ventured up there, and nothing had been said to them, so as our road work was stopped owing to the rains, we had ample leisure, and hiring a large boat, Furlong, Scott, Stephenson, and self set out. The Burmese boats sail before the wind at a great rate, and sometimes have yards 120 feet long, with a sail in proportion; the river is very straight, and only bends to the east within one day's sail of Ava. The boats hug the shore, and I have seen them pass a steamer before now; we made ours very comfortable. We reached Thayet Myo in a day and a half, halted there a day, and then starting afresh reached Menloon, the first Burmese station, on the second day. Here the Burmese have a custom-house, and all boats going up are examined. They were very civil to us, in fact more so than our own officials would have been. We had an interview with the governor, who was extremely polite,

and offered to get up a large beat for game if we would spend a few days there, but we thanked him and preferred going on. Portions of the Irrawaddie between Meaday and Menloon are beautiful; the river is studded with well-wooded islands, and in appearance is very different from the same stream lower down.

Beyond Menloon we landed here and there, to visit any large pagoda or poonghee houses we saw. Generally we were asked to take off our shoes before entering any of these places, as Colonel Phayre had done so when he went up on his embassy; but we told them our custom was to take off our hats, which we did, and which generally satisfied them. On reaching Yay-nan-choung, or "stinking water stream," where the petroleum wells are, we halted for a day and visited them; they are about three miles inland, so, starting early, we got there about seven, and spent an hour examining them and watching the extraction of the oil. Generally these wells are very deep, a few as much as 300 feet; the effluvia is most sickening, and when a well requires excavating, there are but two or three men capable of undertaking it, and they cannot remain down for more than a minute or two, and occasionally men lose their lives in going down. In the neighbourhood of the wells there is not a blade of grass—nothing grows within several hundred feet of the vicinity where this oil is found. This property, in former years, belonged to some dozen families, and they agreed to intermarry, so as to keep their interests intact, and this was acted up to for several generations; but the elders now complain that the young men and women are getting independent, and that the girls either marry outsiders, or that the young men bring strangers home as wives, and that the property is rapidly decreasing in value. It is a monopoly of the king's, and pays well. Why the wells in Assam, which are far finer, do not do so, I can't conceive, unless bad management is at the bottom of it. When the

wells in Assam were first tapped the petroleum jetted out several feet into the air, and was purer than that found in Burmah. In Burmah now they have obtained machinery, and are manufacturing candles, soap and kerosine oil, from this petroleum, and it can be sold at a rate much below that imported from America. This oil floats all over the waters round Yay-nan-choung, and emits a fetid smell, from which we were glad to escape. Just beyond this there are high cliffs, apparently of a chalky formation, from 100 to 150 feet above the river; the common blue-rock pigeon burrows into this in numbers, and as we sailed along we shot a good number, sometimes three and four at a shot, and the Burmese boatmen retrieved them for us; they were capital eating, as they live on grain. As soon as we cross our frontier the monsoon decreases, and above Menloon it ceases altogether, and about Mandalay rain occasionally falls at any time, there being no regular time for it. There is very little paddy grown, and that only by artificial irrigation. The king is in a great part dependent on our provinces for rice for his people. He has done the best he could by building heavy embankments and forming vast tanks; but the rainfall is not sufficient to fill them, to give any great out-turn of paddy. We could always starve Ava into submission. No doubt Lord Dalhousie was right when, in annexing Pegu, he said he took the kernel and left the husk; but it is a pity he did not take the whole country, and, drawing a straight line a little beyond Debroog-hur, in Assam, and southward taking the Salween as our eastern boundary, have declared it all "British territory." It will have to be done some day, before we can consolidate our empire. We spent two days at Pagan Myo, many years ago the capital of Burmah. It was, I believe, taken by the Chinese, and again fell into our hands during Sir A. Campbell's advance on Ava in the war of 1824-26. It is now only a vast concourse of ruins of some of the most beautiful pagodas in Burmah. It

extends along the river bank for about nine miles, and is perhaps three or four miles broad. Most of the pagodas (which all contain either silver or golden images of Gaudama, and at times precious stones) have been looted, it is said, by the Hill-people, who are not Buddhists. I wandered amidst these ruins, gun in hand, and shot a couple of hares, a few jungle-fowl and partridge, and saw heaps of marks of wild pig, in ground where they could have been ridden easily enough; and I dare say when we have troops there some future day, pig-sticking will form one of the healthy amusements of the place. To the east of Pagan there are hills rising to a height probably of 2,000 to 3,000 feet, which are said to contain plenty of sambur. I did not hear of the existence of any tigers. I shot one morning some duck, and two of them fell a long way into the river; but some Burmans, who were going up in a small boat, without being asked retrieved them for us—a bit of civility they would not have been guilty of in our own province, where every Burman and nigger thinks he is bound to show his independence. We landed at Sagain, and walked over the heights, and particularly noted a bare granite dell on the opposite side, where the river narrows to a few hundred feet, where a few guns could prevent the ascent of the river by any fleet, as they could fire down vertically on them. Of late years the king has spent much money on his river defences, and has employed not only Europeans of other nationalities, but also renegade countrymen of ours in making torpedoes, guns, rifles, and ammunition. So though he has no army worthy of the name, he could make a better fight than he did in former wars. It was a great mistake sparing him in 1852-3, as it will only cost us many valuable lives and considerable treasure to annex his country, as we are bound to do ere very many years are over.

The old capital, Ava, is overgrown with jungle, and a good deal of the ramparts are down. The old pagodas remain, and

a portion of the old town is still inhabited, but it is a sad ruin.

Although there is little or no paddy grown in Upper Burmah, which is the staple article of food amongst all Eastern people, wheat, grain, and other cereals are not only grown, but thrive very well. Many of the Burmese pagodas show considerable skill in architecture. The Ananbo pagoda at Pagan Myo is in the shape of a Grecian cross, and Colonel Yule thinks that the ancient Burmese had the assistance of some Italians, who designed and erected these well-proportioned and graceful structures. A week might be spent very pleasantly at Pagan Myo inspecting the ruins.[1] When we arrived at Umrapoorah, the then capital, we were greatly indebted to Mr. Spears, an English merchant, who had long been resident there, for much kindness. He got us a house, and acted as our cicerone; the king sent us ponies to ride, and promised to see us in a few days when the stars should be propitious. We went about freely; there was not the slightest hindrance, and everybody was very civil to us. We saw the so-called white elephant, but as he had been *must* several weeks, he had not been washed, and had a coating of earth &c. over him, and he might have been green for all we could tell, but he was a magnificent brute. Stood about 10½ feet high, very handsomely made, and with the finest tusks I ever saw, fully seven feet long; they all but touched the ground, and his mahout said they had to saw a bit off each year. He ranks after the king, and has a splendid building all to himself. When dressed for state occasions his trappings must be worth lacs of rupees, as his head-piece is covered with magnificent jewels and precious stones of extraordinary size, consisting of rubies, emeralds, diamonds, sapphires, and

[1] The pagodas of Pagan Myo are so numerous that if a Burmese wishes to express an impossibility, he says, "such and such is as possible as for a man to count the pagodas at Pagan."

turquoises, any one of which is worth a fortune. Although we could not tell whether he was white or not, we noticed his eyes were pink, so I fancy he was an albino. The palace was not much to boast of, and in the stables were about four or five spotted ponies, of no value to any one except the owner of a circus. The idol which was brought over from Arrakan, and which took, it is said, 10,000 men to carry, we also saw. The people plaster it over with gold-leaf, and it must have many thousand pounds of gold over its person. It is a huge image of Gaudama sitting in the usual cross-legged manner, made of copper, in which doubtless a good deal of gold and silver was thrown when it was smelted and cast. The Chinese had a quarter to themselves, and their joss-house was well worth seeing, the images inside being very life-like and beautifully dressed. The whole of it had been brought piece-meal from China, *viâ* Bhamo, and must have cost a vast sum.

The king's palace formed a square inclosure, in the centre of Umrapoorah; round it were neatly built, in regular rows, the houses of his woongees, or Burmese ministers. The streets were broad, well laid out, and perfectly straight, the cross roads being at right angles to the others; they were neatly planted with trees, and many had gardens in front. There were a good many brick houses. The Muneepoories, who form the king's cavalry, had a quarter to themselves, and I saw many pretty women amongst them. There is a street set apart for each trade, so you see shops exactly alike along one street. The king has coin of his own, but they did not object to receive our rupees. We crossed over a bridge nearly a mile long to visit the site where Colonel Phayre was encamped when on his embassy. In Lower Pegu, in those days, we had not succeeded in growing English vegetables, except salad; even potatoes were very scarce, so my delight was great when I saw some cabbages growing in a garden. I immediately bought one for a rupee, and told my boy to get some more

the next day, and *he* bought twelve for the rupee! The poonghee houses, or monasteries, are splendid; that of the chief priest has the posts studded with precious stones. We spent a very pleasant week here. We were asked if we should like to see the king, and of course said yes; first one day was fixed, and at the last moment that was declared unpropitious; then another day would be appointed, and so on till we were sick of it, and we really did not care two pins about seeing his golden majesty, who after all is not much better dressed, or more majestic-looking, than an ordinary coolie. So we sent him word through his Kalawoon, or Minister of Foreign Affairs, that as the king was either too busy to see us or the fates adverse, we would take our leave and start on a certain day. We were begged to stay a little longer, but on the day appointed we got into our boat and were just starting, when the Kalawoon came down and presented us each with a silk putso of the royal pattern, for which we thanked him and started, and reached Prome in a week without any adventures. Many of the Burmese houses at Umrapoorah had vines growing in front of them, but I could not find out whether they bore fruit. Mr. Spears had a fine fig-tree covered with fruit.

In 1858 I was at Thayet Myo, and Butt of the Sappers proposed we should sail up to the Burmese capital in our own boat. The government in those days had supplied all the European corps and Sapper companies with large boats, and we had rigged ours up as a yacht; we got an awning made up, two sappers to manage the sails, two servants to cook, &c. Butt superintended the management of the boat; I was steersman. The people laughed at us for not taking a Burmese crew, and prophesied we would not reach half-way to Mandalay, the new capital. It was blowing great guns when we started, and the wind continued fair and strong the whole way. Our boat was a capital sailer; we did not stick to the bank like

the Burmese, but went boldly into mid-stream. Seeing us do this, several large Burmese boats, with a cheer, followed our example, and a close contest ensued. With a fair wind they, with their immense sails, fairly outsailed us, and passed us with many good-natured jokes, but directly there was the least bend they all went ashore, for having no keels they cannot sail on a wind, whilst we, close-hauled, passed them rapidly, laughing at them in our turn. It is no joke if one of these large boats gets on to a lee-shore if there is a strong breeze blowing, for it then takes them sometimes days to get off.

We stopped at Pagan Myo two days, and at several of the islands, and shot hares, jungle-fowl, partridges, corn-quail, and pigeons, and in one place a lot of goggle-eyed plover, and as they had been living on grain which grew there they were capital eating. We reached Mandalay without any assistance on the eleventh day. We sailed up a creek close to the town, though the people tried to induce us to pull up about a mile off. In 1857 the king had decreed that Umrapoorah was to be deserted and a new capital formed four miles further up the river. It had been laid out on the plan of Rangoon, only on a much grander scale. The streets were 100 feet broad, and all laid regularly out in parallel lines with the cross roads at right angles, the king's palace as usual in the centre. We looked Mr. Spears up, and though he offered to put us up, as we only intended remaining a few days, we preferred remaining in our own boat. We walked to Umrapoorah—where two years ago all had been beautiful to the sight, was now a mass of ruins and desolation. The inhabitants forcibly removed, the ramparts thrown down, the brick houses demolished, the others burnt. Nothing left but charred remains and rubbish, and numbers of dogs, who were dying of starvation. Why they did not follow their owners to Mandalay I can't conceive. Even the Chinese quarter was abandoned,

though their joss-house still remained; but that, too, we heard was to be demolished and removed to the new capital. Why this move took place I do not know. It seems to be a point of honour amongst Burmese kings to build, on accession to the throne, a new capital, but I believe the fear of our steamers had something to do with this move. The river at Umrapoorah ran close under its walls, but Mandalay was some two miles from the main channel, and the king vainly hoped he should be secure there from our guns in case of war; but with our present improved guns it would not take us more than a couple of hours to batter down the city and palace about his ears. There are large marble quarries about Mandalay, and a high hill overlooks it; a couple of guns planted there would speedily reduce the city to a ruin. Nothing was finished, but a great number of workpeople were scattered about excavating the ditch and throwing up the rampart and making bricks.

The officials could understand Butt's coming up, but what could have brought me a second time they could not make out, and evidently looked upon me as a spy. We remained here three days; saw the Hairy Family and some very clever jugglers, who did the Davenport trick long before that family was heard of. We wandered all over the place, and then crossed over to Mendoon, on the opposite bank, where there is the largest mass of brickwork in the world, and the second largest bell. The former was intended to be an immense pagoda; and a model alongside shows it was to have been 600 feet high when finished! But after it had been raised 200 feet the great earthquake of 1839 shattered it, and the Burmese looking on that as a bad omen abandoned the work; but there it is, just as it was left, even the scaffolding was still up! Close by it is the great bell with a diameter of 15 feet! The country is hilly, covered with jungle, and we could hear jungle-fowl and partridges calling all round,

and the people also said hares were plentiful; but no one is allowed to shoot within a radius of twenty miles of the king's palace, as the king has granted life to all within that distance, his subjects alone excepted, whose lives are not worth twopence. Their big gun—I forget its dimensions—which I had seen two years before at Umrapoorah, had also been removed to the new capital; but it looked sadly honeycombed, and I would rather not be the man to fire it! We saw about fifty elephants, all splendid tuskers, working at the teak rafts, and also examined the two inclosures near Umrapoorah, where they catch wild elephants by means of female decoy elephants. These also touched the walls of the city, but the people assured me as many as twenty or twenty-five elephants were frequently caught in them during the year.

The white elephant I had seen in my former trip was dead, and a young one reigned in his stead, but it was a miserable little brute, with very little white about it.

The Burmese when going down stream, to save themselves the trouble of rowing, throw over branches of trees and attach them with ropes to the prow of the boat; these catch the force of the stream and drag the boat along. I improved on this, made a huge kite with bamboos and mats, and weighting one side launched it overboard; it remained upright in the water, caught the full force of the stream, and dragged us down four or five miles an hour. The freshes had set in and the river was rapidly filling, the sandbanks disappearing. We thus went down merrily without any exertion on our parts till one afternoon, when a heavy sea came on, and we could make no progress at all. We took in our kite and tried the oars, but it was useless, the waves breaking over the boat; so we pulled ashore and fastened our boat to the bank, and waited for the storm to blow over. The moon rose brightly; it was full, but after a while a total eclipse took place, which we watched with much interest and noted in our journal.

About three in the morning the wind lulled, and we got off, and throwing the kite overboard went down rapidly. As we passed the different pagodas, notably those of Pagan Myo, we noticed that they were all more or less injured, particularly the *Thees*, or umbrellas which surmount their crest, either down altogether or out of the perpendicular, and we wondered at the cause. Near Yay-nan-choung the wind veered round to the north, and blew half a gale; so we took in the kite, hoisted the sails, and went down at a good fifteen miles an hour till dark, when the sails were furled and the kite brought into play. We expected to reach Menloon, the Burmese custom-house, early next morning. No one steered at night, the helm was lashed amidships, and we trusted to the current to take us past all obstructions. Once or twice on the journey we did get on to an island, but easily pushed off and resumed our journey. When we awoke at daylight we could not conceive where we were, and expected every moment to sight Menloon, but hour after hour passed without our reaching it; and as we passed a bend of the river, before us lay not Menloon, but our frontier station Meaday. We had gone eighty miles within twelve hours by means of the kite alone! We reached Thayet Myo about twelve, and there found all the pagodas a mass of ruins. We ascertained that the day of the total eclipse of the moon, about two in the afternoon, a severe earthquake had taken place, shattered the pagodas, and caused the stream of the Irrawaddie to run the contrary way for an hour or more! This fully accounted for our being unable to make any progress that day, for though we did not feel the earthquake, our progress was barred for several hours by its effects, and it was about three when we had to pull up, a good 150 miles distant from Thayet.

Thayet Myo is not a nice place to be stationed at. The rainfall is very trifling, and the heat therefore excessive. Cholera is very prevalent, and though there is good boating,

there is little else to do; there is no shooting worthy of the name in the neighbourhood. A road had been commenced connecting Meaday with Tounghoo, but it had not been finished in my day.

By riding to Menloon, fifty miles inland, and going thence to the foot of the Arrakan range, good shooting can be had.

The dacoits on our frontier used to be very bad, and thefts innumerable. Ponies were frequently abstracted and taken across the frontier. At one time there was a cordon of sentries with loaded muskets all round the station, but even then thefts were almost of nightly occurrence. The Burmese are very expert and daring robbers.

CHAPTER II.

COCOS, ANDAMANS, AND HAINGYEE.

Sail in lighter for Cocos, my sole companions being twenty-four murderers.—Description of the Coco Islands.—Fix the position for the lighthouse. Failure of the former settlement on the island.—Snakes.—Sport.—Dangers of passage between islands.

In 1864 I was transferred, at my own request, to the Cocos Light-house works. I made my way down from Tounghoo to Rangoon, and thence *viâ* Bassein to Haingyee, a large island at the mouth of the Bassein river, which was the head quarters of the Alguada Reef Light-house works, then nearing completion. I expected to find a schooner here, to take me on to the Cocos, but it had gone on with bricks and convicts, and as Colonel Fraser, R.E., then Superintendent of light-houses, had asked me to meet him by a certain day, I did not know what to do; but as there was a lighter available I got on board and started, trusting to good luck to make the island. We had no instruments on board, only a chart; on this we took our bearings and steered direct for our destination. These lighters sail fairly enough before a wind, but if we had missed our point we should never have been able to get back to it. We made the island of Preparis by daylight, where we were becalmed for a while, but about eight a breeze sprang up, and before we lost sight of this island we came in sight of the Cocos, and reached Table Island about nine P.M., where we found the schooner. The steamer with Colonel Fraser

arrived next day; and I was landed and left on this island with twenty-four life-convicts as my sole companions. Nothing had been done as yet towards erecting the light-house; a project had not even been prepared, so I had lots to do. I set the convicts to work to prepare huts for themselves, and rigged up a tent, with an old mainsail, for myself. This island is just a mile long, and including Slipper Island the same in breadth. It is a rocky isle, covered with dense bamboo, tree and other jungle, with a fringe of cocoa-nut trees on the south and east faces. The Great Coco is separated from it by a channel about three miles broad. I shall never forget my first night here. As soon as the sun had gone down and the moon risen, thousands upon thousands of rats, in size equal to a bandicoot, appeared. They did not seem to fear anything, and I did not like their appearance at all, and did all I could to frighten them away; but they speedily re-appeared, and kept me awake all night rattling my tins about and devouring the rice and grain I had brought with me. Thinking to outwit them, I hung these bags well off the ground, on to branches of trees; but these rats ran up the trunks of the trees, and down the ropes, and devoured everything in the shape of grain or biscuits they could get at, and we were in fear of starving through their depredations, but they did not attack meat in any shape, and my convicts soon took to devouring them, saying they were very sweet.

I had to survey round the island, and to take cross sections across it, and to fix upon the highest spot for the tower. We were on the north face. I found the best site to be on the south, so had the top of the hill cleared and the bricks removed up there, by which time the monsoon threatened to break; so as soon as the schooner returned, which it did in about six weeks, I returned to Haingyee, and took leave to Ootacamund.

I made a fresh start for Table Island in October, taking

with me 100 life-convicts, half of them Burmese, Shans, and Karens, and the other half Madrasses. As the military would not give me a guard, I had to pick up men out of the streets of Moulmein, to act as burkandazes, or policemen; but they were of no earthly use. I had one European, a Scotchman, with me as overseer. I placed him on Table Island with the convicts, and took up my residence on the north end of the Great Coco, where there was a natural bay that served as a harbour, and fresh water, which was wanting on Table Island. Many years ago a settlement by Europeans and East Indians had been tried here, but it utterly failed; all died but one, and he was only just removed in time, as he was quite prostrated with fever, when a vessel arrived and took him back to Moulmain. Since then parties of Burmese and Malays visit these islands for the sake of the cocoa-nuts which abound. The settlers on this island took with them numerous fowls, of which there is now not one to be found. Pigs, both English and Chinese, have run wild there, and are still particoloured, the only wild ones of that sort found in the world I fancy. They grow to an immense size, and I shot one with tusks $9\frac{3}{4}$ inches round the curve, and thick in proportion. There are a few betel-nut trees on this island. Its length is about seven miles, and the greatest breadth perhaps two. The shore to the east, north and south, is flat, and covered densely with cocoa-nut trees to a depth of a quarter of a mile or more. The west side is hilly, and as every tree is bent one particular way the force of the south-west monsoon is easily traceable. A good many turtle visit this island, a few only on the east face, but a good number on the west, where I have shot them and turned them over at night; there would be many more were it not for the iguana lizard, which digs up their eggs and devours them in thousands.

We caught many kinds of fish; the best eating were the mullets, and gave the most sport. One fish we caught had

three hooks to its tail, for what purpose I can't conceive. There were numbers of crawfish, very large crabs, conger eels, and oysters. Pearl oysters abounded. Sponges were washed ashore daily. I shot snipe, teal, curlews, goggle-eyed plover, and innumerable kinds of pigeons and doves; amongst them the Nicobar pigeon, and one of the Megapodidæ, that deposits its eggs in a mound or tumulus, and leaves it to hatch out the young, which emerge ready fledged and able to take care of themselves. There were many venomous snakes in all these islands. I killed several vipers, and many Bungarus, or banded snakes, both venomous. On eight different occasions I shot two pigs at one shot, by collecting and splitting a lot of cocoa-nuts, and hiding myself behind a screen of cocoa-nut palm leaves. The pigs used to come in dozens to devour them, and by waiting till two were together one ball generally did for both. My object was of course to get fresh meat for all the people I had, and not sport. But in wandering through these forests I have often come across pigs, both solitary boars and a family conclave, and I shot twenty-four the first year and twenty-one the next. They are very fat, and as they can get no offal to eat, they are themselves delicious eating. The heads soused were particularly good.

As the work-people on Table Island were dependent on me for fresh water, a boat-load was sent across daily; but the strait was a very dangerous one to cross. The tide rip was fearful, and I have been eight hours crossing over from one island to the other. I had to take the rudder myself always, for I could not trust the boatmen, or serang; they lost their nerve altogether when they found themselves in these turbulent waters. It was excessively dangerous; the least inattention on the part of the steersman in bringing the boat's-head to the rollers, and the boat would have been swamped to a certainty, and I have passed many anxious hours crossing over. At last, finding it almost impossible

to hit off the exact time, at low water, to get across with anything like safety, I moved all my traps and myself to Table Island, and built a shed in a grove of cocoa-nut trees, on its south face, and just below the hill on which the lighthouse works were being carried on. The convicts I placed on the top, and Reed, the overseer, and a writer, had quarters for themselves a little apart from the convicts. I afterwards used to cross over to the Great Coco for two or three days' shooting, but permanently resided at Table Island.

I have already said that as no fresh water existed on Table Island, and I had sunk numerous wells in the interior, all of which yielded brackish water not fit to drink, a boat-load of fresh water had daily to be brought over from the main island. One day it arrived a little later than usual. I had left the works and retired to my hut to bathe, and Reed the overseer, as usual, marched down a party of twenty-five Burmese Karens and Shans, and twenty-five Madrasses, to bring up the breakers of water. There was a stout bamboo between two men to sling a cask to, and the Burmese and Shans hurried down, and directly they approached the boat made a rush at it; and the idiotic lascars, instead of pushing into deep water, jumped overboard; and the convicts took possession of the boat, pushed off to the Great Coco, whence they took a month's rations, two muskets, and ammunition, and gallantly set out for the main-land. I was quite helpless. I had no other boat to follow them in, and the schooner was not in. Directly the occurrence took place a convict, who was one of the boat's crew, ran and gave me the intelligence, and said the men were coming round to attack me. So I loaded my battery, and went down to the beach to meet them should they attempt to land, but of course they did not do so. Elsewhere I have said all the Burmese are able to guide themselves by means of stars, and these convicts made straight for the coast of Tenasserim, where they arrived on

the fifth or sixth day; but most of them were captured and sent back to me; but three of the most notorious convicts, who had been noted leaders of dacoities, escaped, and one of them met with a tragical though plucky end. The other two I don't think were ever accounted for, but got back to the Shan States. The man I allude to as having met with a tragical end was a famous Karen dacoit. For his apprehension there was offered a reward of Rs. 200, dead or alive, and sundry peelers had tried to seize him, but he had invariably cut them down and escaped. But one day two Karens, out hunting with some twenty savage dogs, met him and called upon him to surrender. He merely laughed at them, retreated to a bamboo clump, cut down a bamboo, pointed one end, and then holding out his *dalwey*, or fighting sword, said, "Here is a sword for one and a spear for the other—try and take me." The two men, knowing the dacoit's desperate character, consulted together; one ran off to the village, whilst the other watched the convict and surrounded him with their dogs; if he attempted to move the dogs were set on him, and they are a savage powerful breed, so the poor wretch could not escape. The other Karen soon returned with several villagers, one armed with a musket and the other with a crossbow; the former, cocking his gun, called upon the man to surrender, but he, exposing his chest and his arms, and calling their attention to various marks, caused by gold and silver imbedded under the skin as a charm to cause invulnerability, said, "Don't you see I am invulnerable? you cannot shoot me." The man with the musket essayed three times to fire, and each time the cap snapped, and the Karen was exultant, saying, "Did I not tell you so?" When the crossbow man, fitting an arrow, said, "You may be invulnerable as far as a gun is concerned, but I'll see what I can do," and let fly. The arrow sped true, and penetrated the man's chest, but he plucked it out and said, "Why, it has only gone in a

span; do you think that will kill me?" But inward bleeding had evidently commenced, for in a few seconds he fell down, and the others rushing in on him secured him, but he died before they got him to the village. Thus died this ruffian; he was a plucky fellow, though a rascal of the deepest dye.

Generally in May, not later than the 24th, we were removed from the Cocos. The first season we went to Haingyee, but afterwards I left the convicts at Port Blair, and spent my time between Moulmein and Rangoon, till it was time to resume work again. Whilst at Haingyee—sick of having nothing to do—I went up to Dalhousie. It was Lord Dalhousie's intention to build a town here, to rival Rangoon and Moulmein, and to supersede Bassein; but after several lacs of rupees had been spent, a tidal wave in one night swept the whole away, and when I visited it, with the exception of a culvert here and there, there was not a vestige left to show for all the expenditure incurred. I had often been teased by my Burman shikarees to go out shooting at night, but I had always refused to do so; nevertheless I thought I would go just once to see what it was like.

The only people at Dalhousie were a serang and a boat's crew, to assist vessels in grief, and on my landing this serang asked me to come up to the office and put up there, which I was glad enough to do. This tindal had a few days before shot a barking-deer, and had potted the greater part of it. I had heaps of food of my own, and I dislike trying messes, but as he sent me a couple of dishes and begged my acceptance I tasted one, and found it so good that I discarded my own grub and partook of his; the meat was cut up into small squares about half an inch each way, and so saturated with *massallah* that he assured me if kept in a dry place in a jar corked down it would keep good a year. A handful taken out and warmed made a delicious curry. Towards dark some Burmese shikarees met me here by appointment, and we set

out to "blaze" deer. We had to go over deep sand for fully six miles, and to cross numerous nullahs, bridged by a single bamboo thrown across trestles with a small hand-rail attached; we then turned inland, and after going another mile in the dark, one of the men put a sort of inverted coal-scuttle on his head, fastened it under his chin, and lit a bright fire inside it; two other men, one on each side, rang bells, and off they all set in a zig-zag fashion, at a good trot, making all the noise they could; the fourth man and I followed in the rear. The ground was a mass of holes, mounds, ant-hills, and jungle, and over and into these I kept falling, for I could not see a foot in front of me, and with difficulty managed to keep up at all. Presently the men doubled the noise with the bells; their zig-zag pace became faster, and presently out of the darkness I saw two eye-balls glaring at us, and as we got closer I distinguished a mass which I took to be a sambur; I fired into it at a distance of some ten or twelve feet. On receiving the ball the poor brute made a bound forward and knocked one of the shikarees down, but it quickly disappeared. We then continued our eternal jog-trot, and in about half an hour came upon another sambur. I fired at this, but it too got away. The Burmese generally cut them down, or rather ham-string them, when they are out alone. I could not stand this any longer, so leaving three of them to continue their sport I took the fourth with me and walked back to the station, where I arrived at 2 A.M., thoroughly tired. The Burmese got one deer after I left, and both mine were found dead the next day—one buck with fair horns and one doe; but this system of sport is horrible poaching, and utterly unfit for Europeans. If when they are out "blazing" the Burmese come across a tiger, they immediately squat down and hide the light, when the tiger sneaks away; but they kill many sambur, and very many hog-deer this way. This

was my first attempt at this mode of killing game, and it will certainly be my last.

One day a Karen brought in the head of a two-horned rhinoceros, and as he said they were to be found on the mainland not far off, I agreed to go with him; but as everything had to be carried by men, and they were very scarce, I went in very light marching order. I don't know what his idea of a short distance was, but he took us at least fifty miles, right into the Arrakan mountains, towards Cape Negrais. The first day I shot a kakur, or barking-deer, and several pheasants. We went over small ranges of hills, and were nearly bitten to death by leeches, gadflies and musquitoes. We camped out in the open and resumed our march; this day I got a bull bison, but lost a cow; saw eight bison in all and five sambur, and got two pheasants; we encamped at a Karen village. The next day we got to our destination—a valley between two high ranges with an extensive swamp in the middle. Here the man pointed out to me a heap of dung, two or three feet high, and assured me rhinoceros always deposit their ordure in the same spot; but I must say I did not then believe him, as I was new to rhinoceros and their ways. Whilst he set men to dig two pits, he and I crossed the swamp and went to the top of the hill; beyond this was pretty level, and there were many forms of sambur about. We went nearly to the end of this, and out of a patch of long grass a bull bison jumped up, ran twenty yards, and then faced me. Lang brought him down with one ball through the chest. We cut off his head and went on; the Karens came later up and removed the whole of the meat. We went down this hill into a sholah beyond, and I had three shots at sambur, but only succeeded in bagging one stag. We got back to the village in time to have a bathe and dine, before we went to the holes to sit up—such a night as I spent! I would not do it again to shoot a dozen rhinoceros, even if

each of them had four instead of two horns. It was a bright moonlight night, the rhinoceros came about eleven, and passing the Karen got the contents of one of my guns into it; in its fright it ran into a very boggy part of the swamp close to me, and I easily killed it with a shot behind the ear. We then went home, and next day cut off the head and made tracks homewards by a new route. We saw nothing the first day, but the second day came across a herd of elephants; I wounded a tusker, lost it for the time, but the Karens, I heard afterwards, found it dead and boned the tusks. We put up that night in a small Karen village, and the men said if I would stop a day they would beat a ravine for me, in which there was generally a tiger, and they could also show me bison and sambur; as I was in no hurry I went with them next day, but instead of a tiger a panther passed the tree I was in, and I dropped it dead. It measured as it lay 7¼ feet to the tip of the tail. This beast had killed a good many cattle, but I fancy it had a mate with it, which did not show. After breakfast we went out stalking; I wounded a bison, lost it, but bagged a kakur and a doe sambur. The next day I reached Haingyee at dark, having seen nothing but a few jungle-fowl *en route*. At Haingyee itself I shot a couple of hog-deer. There are at times both elephants and buffaloes to be found here, but none visited it whilst I was there.

My last trip to the Cocos was rather a memorable one, as we were nearly starving. We expected to be relieved, as usual, not later than the 24th May, as the monsoon sets in early, and then vessels cannot approach these coasts. The schooner was laid up in Rangoon, and the steamer had gone to Calcutta, and was thus detained some time, and also meeting with rough weather did not reach the Cocos till towards the end of June, and then had to lie fully three miles off, and I had to transport not only the convicts, the free workmen and

ourselves, but a lot of sick, all surplus stores, &c., round the island, to the only spot where the boats could come. Owing to the distance the steamer had to lie off, the two boats could only make two trips each during the day, and they were so crowded I expected every moment that they would be swamped. It rained from daylight; we had no shelter where we had to await the boat, so we were like drowned rats all day. We managed to light huge fires and to dry one bit of clothing at a time, but it was soaked through again in a few moments. We had nothing to eat, and everything was packed away, but towards three in the afternoon I managed to find one of Crosse and Blackwell's plum-puddings, and some pints of beer, and on this Reed, the third officer of the ship, and I made our first meal. That day I went off in the last boat to get to the vessel at dark, but it was a very risky thing relieving us so late in the season. Expecting to be relieved as usual I issued rations daily, but when the time had passed and not knowing where the steamer was, I was forced to put the men on half-rations, and as day after day passed, we got very anxious. Vessels passed us daily, most of them American ones under German flags, for it was the days of the Civil War, when the *one* Southern vessel swept the commerce and the fleet of the boasting North off the face of the ocean. They were almost within hailing distance, and though I fired guns, rockets, blue-lights, and hung up signals "that we were starving," in accordance with Marryatt's code, not one of them took the least notice of us. We could see them watching us with their telescopes, and though our distress must have been known to them, not only did they take no heed themselves, but did not report it at Rangoon, as they were obliged to do by the universal law of nations. At last, when I had but three days' half-rations left, a country vessel did pull up and sell us sufficient rice to keep us going for another month. It was curious to notice

the behaviour of the different races when food became scarce. The Madrasses cried all day and lost heart, saying they were sure they had been sent there purposely to die of hunger, and did nothing to help themselves, whilst the Shans and Karens, and more particularly the Burmese, were not downcast a bit: they searched the jungles and found a kind of yam, which, however, caused dysentery and vomiting when too freely partaken of. They redoubled their exertions to catch fish, caught more rats, and, in fact, were as jolly under the circumstances as they could be. I had fitted up a condenser on Table Island after the escapè of the convicts, to be independent of the Great Coco, so luckily we always had as much fresh water as we required. I also visited the Little Coco, which resembled the large island very much. To save expense in the transit of these convicts, when we closed the works on Table Island, I took them to the Andamans and left them there, and always spent a week going and coming. Port Blair, or Ross Island, is a small island overcrowded, I think; higher up in the bay is Chatham Island, and at the further point of the harbour, which is capable of holding all the navies of the world with ease, is Viper Island, where only the worst characters are sent; but on the whole the convicts had an easy life, and are nearly self-supporting. Mount Harriet, a so-called sanatarium, is only 1085 feet high, and the bother of getting there is more than the place is worth. It will be memorable, as it was on returning from it that Lord Mayo, the most popular viceroy India ever had, was murdered. The worst of these islands is that they are full of vermin; if you go out of the beaten track you are covered with ticks, some so small that they can scarcely be seen; and even within the rise of the tide the fleas were in thousands. The Andamans have a pig peculiar to them; it is a small variety. The people of these islands are unmitigated savages, with woolly hair, which they shave off with bits of glass; they are

perfectly naked, and are scarcely one degree removed above an ape; they seem to be promiscuous in their intercourse and to be devoid of shame.

At different times I sent upwards of 20,000 young cocoa-nut plants to the Andamans, which have been planted in various parts of the harbour and islands. Further to the north there is a mountain said to be 4,000 feet high, but owing to the hostility of the natives very little of these islands has as yet been explored. There is another magnificent harbour, Cornwallis, to the north, as capacious as Port Blair.

For the first two seasons I was at the Cocos I had not even a hospital assistant sent with me, nor any proper instruments. I had to doctor as well as to look after and keep in order these murderers; a few died each trip. One was a very painful case—stoppage of urine—and I had not even a bougie to insert to clear out the urethra, and the man died by inches. I did all I could with fomentations &c. to save his life, and to give him relief, but without avail.

Having no guard I had to keep strict discipline and to inflict punishment myself. I went about totally unarmed, except with a walking-stick, and as all the men had dhaws for cutting down jungle, &c., they might have killed me at any time. Once only did a man lift his dhaw at me; I found him sitting down and smoking instead of doing his task, bringing so many bricks up the hill, so gave him a cut across the back; he was up in a moment, with his dhaw raised, when I hit out straight and caught him on the nose and sent him spinning down the hill, and then followed him up and gave him two dozen on the spot, and I never had occasion to speak to him again; he was a fine well-built Shan. I wanted to clear some of the rats off the island, so imported cats, but the brutes of Madrasses used to catch them and eat them, so I told them the next man who killed a cat should get three dozen, and the very next day the biggest Madrasse

killed the last she-cat we had, and was caught in the act by a Burman, who reported it to me. I immediately collared the man, tied him up to the nearest tree, and in the presence of all the convicts with my own hands gave him three dozen, as I had promised. I used to go after turtle attended by only three or four Burman convicts, all murderers, and sleep in their midst on the sand, without the least fear, and they never took advantage of my loneliness to molest me in any way, but I invariably treated them as fairly as I could, and punished as little as I could, but when I did, I let them understand it was not intended for play. At last I was really sorry to part with these Shans, Karens, and Burmese, though very glad to turn my back on the wretched Madrasses.

CHAPTER III.

COSSYAH AND JYNTIAH HILLS.

Game—Pony killed by Tiger—Roads—Mooflong—Nurting—The Welsh Mission—Cossyah Rajah's Shikar Meeting—Tiger Shooting at Shillong—Fearlessness of Ghoorkas at this Sport.

THESE hills may be said to commence about eighteen miles south of Gowhatty, at Burneyhat, and extend in a south-eastern and western direction; they skirt Sylhet and Cachar, and beyond that they are called the Lushai Hills, and have other names further south, but they are all connected and form a vast plateau. Towards the east they go by various names too, being called the Naga, Mishmee, and other hills, and extend into China and Burmah, and there are peaks 10,000 feet high and covered with snow; they have been crossed only by two or three Europeans in days when the British were more feared than they are now. If I remember right Col. Hannay and Dr. Griffiths, and some one else passed over them into Burmah, descending the Irrawaddie to Rangoon; but now-a-days the passage is completely barred to all Europeans. As already stated, Cherra Poonjee, overlooking the Sylhet plains, was occupied by our troops for many years, but Shillong and Jowai are the only two stations now—the one being in the Cossyah Hills, and the other in the Jyntiah. They are connected by a bridle-path, laid out by Col. Briggs,

which is far too good for a bridle-path and not good enough for a cart-road; consequently not half of it is ever used, the Cossyahs, and the Europeans too for the matter of that, preferring the native paths. From Burneyhat the present road goes over low ranges till you reach Nongpoh, fifteen miles, and 2,700 feet high. Nongpoh is a wild place; there are but a few huts about, and a very little cultivation, in the shape of hill-paddy and cotton, is met with. These hills have a fair sprinkling of elephants, bison, sambur, hog-deer, muntjac, bears, tigers, and panthers in them, but the jungle is so impenetrable that they have never been shot over; whilst laying out the cart-road I have shot a few sambur, hog-deer, muntjac, two bears, and one panther, besides jungle-fowl, pheasants, and partridges, and saw lots of marks of other game but had not time to go after it. From Nongpoh, the hills gradually get higher and the jungle more open, and about half way to. Oomsing, the next halting-place, it ceases altogether, being succeeded by open undulating hills covered with grass about four feet high, with sholas, or groves of trees, in the ravines and along the water-courses. Many of the hills present a very park-like appearance, and capital stalking can be had, sambur and bears being plentiful, and occasionally elephant and bison visit them; tigers now and then kill stray cattle, but I do not think that they are plentiful. From Oomsing you wind about amongst the hills, which are nearly bare (with the exception of a few pine-trees scattered about); they vary from 3,000 to 4,000 feet. There is very little game on them, only sambur and bears, and very rarely bison. The Oomean is a pretty mountain stream, and I believe joins the Burneyhat river, and falls into the Kullung river near Kookooriah. There are mahseer in it, and by wading and fly-fishing in the rapids fish from one-half to three lbs. weight can be caught. After crossing this stream the ascent of the true Cossyah Hills is commenced, and Shillong, 5,000

feet high, is reached. There is another road, the old government road *viâ* Ranee to Mooflong, where it branches off to Cherra Poonjee. The hills commence a few miles beyond Mairapore, and this branch extends to the Garrow country. In a beat on the top of some hills near this, not more than 1,700 feet high, the rajah caught two serow in a net, and some three others escaped. I obtained one head and sent it to the curator of the Calcutta museum. We did not know of their existence till then, and though we searched for them afterwards, we never succeeded in finding any more. The head appeared to me to much resemble those the Karens brought me in Burmah. A good number of tigers were killed about here by the officers of the Lower Assam Company; a little way off there was very good snipe-shooting. The first stage was Jyrung, where a tiger once killed a valuable pony of mine in the verandah, but I was unfortunately not there, and arrived early next morning to find my animal, poor "Pekoe," lying dead. I had sent on my people and stayed the night with Gilman at Mairapore. It was full moon, the elephants were picketed close by, and the mahouts had put the pads up on edge round the pony, forming an inclosed place where he was tied up in the verandah, which also had longitudinal bars, some two feet apart up to five feet all round; all the servants were sleeping close by. About eleven the tiger sprang over the pads and railing and fastened on the pony's neck; the people drove him off immediately, but the jugular was cut and the pony bled to death. The tiger remained close by growling all night, and only disappeared about an hour before I arrived. As a window of the bungalow commanded the dead pony, and the night was nearly as bright as day, I would not have the pony disturbed, but watched for the tiger all night, but it did not come. There is very fair shooting all along this road. The next stage is Oomloor, and there are a good many pheasants and

barking-deer to be seen early in the morning along this road. The jungles teem with elephants and bison at the commencement of the rains, and if you leave this road at Oomloor and cross over to Col. Briggs's road, and go to a place called Palliar, in the season, May and June, the bison are very plentiful. I only had three days' shooting along this portion, and I got four bison, two very large bulls and two cows, and three sambur, one a very fine stag, two barking-deer and some small game, but I saw at least thirty bison and a dozen elephants, three of them fine tuskers, but as there was a fine of £50 if you shot an elephant, I let them alone. I often intended returning there, but one thing and another prevented me, and besides it was off my beat. All my shooting I got whilst employed on duty; had I been an idle man I could have slain ten times what I did, but my time was not my own, and marching hurriedly interferes sadly with sport. This same trip, instead of returning to Oomloor and going on to Nungklow by the government road, I followed Col. Briggs's road, and although it was so circuitous and passed through an uninhabited country, yet, after so much had been spent on it, I think it was a pity it was never completed, especially as it passed over a plateau, just like Ootacamund, and 6,000 feet high; it would have opened out the interior of these hills, a thing of much importance now-a-days. I had to encamp near a heavy cutting, and strolled off to the left next day in search of game. I met some Cossyahs, and they said they would show me game if I came to their village, a little off the unfinished cart-road. I sent one man back for my traps and went with them; they took me through beautiful park-like scenery, and soon pointed out a stag, which, after careful stalking, I killed. The horns measured as follows:—In a straight line, thirty-four inches, and round the curve thirty-eight. I saw several does and the marks of bison and elephants, and now and then the barking-deer. In the village they had the head and horns of a fine

bull bison, and two or three of the serow. My traps came up late, and I tried a river close by for fish, but only caught three, one 1½ lbs., one 2 lbs., and one 1 lb., with a fly. I tried the spoon, but did not succeed. I don't think there are any large fish in the stream.

In the night a tiger killed one of their cattle, and I meant to sit over the carcase, but going to inspect it, whilst carelessly walking along with a dozen or more men behind me—and only my express loaded with a shell in my hand—up jumped the tiger, and without thinking of what I was doing, on the impulse of the moment I fired and broke its back, and another shot behind the ear killed it; it measured 9 feet 1 inch. I got a bear the same day, and moved on to opposite Mooflong, giving the Cossyahs some powder and a few rupees. The tigress came to eat the bull that night, and was killed by a Cossyah, who brought me the skin into Shillong, and I got the reward for him for it; it was a small brute. At Nungklow there are a good many pheasants, and a few barking-deer; here there are the graves of two officers attacked and killed by the Cossyahs many years before as they were travelling to Cherra Ponjee. Here also is a cinchona plantation, but I don't think the young trees make much progress. The next stage, Myrung, has two *deodars*, or cedars, but they are very stunted, and quite unlike their kind in the Himalayas. Here also General Vitch planted two tea-bushes, which are now two trees, twenty feet each in height. Mooflong, the next stage, is 6,000 feet high; there is any quantity of slate on these hills, and also coal and limestone; the principal industry is potato-growing. Here the road by a zig-zag path descends to the Boga Panee, over which a bridge was constructed by my assistant, Mr. Maxwell, whilst I was executive engineer; before that there was only a cane-bridge across this mountain torrent, built by the Cossyahs, and which was yearly renewed and at all times very unsafe to cross

over; the scenery is very grand. The road on to Shillong is very level until you reach the dâk bungalow; there you have to descend 1,000 feet to Laban or Shillong.

Going from Shillong to Jowai, by deviating some twelve miles, you arrive at Nurting, where there is a Welsh mission, and fair shooting and fishing. The only place in India where I have come upon a covey of partridges has been this road, within four miles of Jowai, where nearly always I put up ten or twelve partridges; these are found at times in great numbers, and are killed by Cossyahs throwing sticks at them. I have seen a dozen or more brought in in one day by them so killed; they are the ruddy-necked partridge.

In former days, to judge by the following, the Jyntiah Rajahs must have been possessed of large means and of much consequence, for they invaded our territory and made themselves very objectionable, and were severely punished by our plucky little Ghoorkas, and they are not likely to prove troublesome again. There is not an elephant left amongst them, the few they had having been "requisitioned" for the Bhootan war, and were speedily killed by overwork, bad management, and bad and insufficient food.

People seem to think an elephant can carry any load, and work day and night, and that after his load has been removed he must forage for himself; but perhaps the jungles have been burnt, and there is not a blade of grass for the poor brute to pick up, and may be no water. Early in the morning he is caught, brought back, dusted and reloaded, and has to toil all day. Is it a wonder that these valuable brutes died like rotten sheep between Gowhatty and Dewangiri? The roadside was strewn with their dead bodies, and the effluvia dreadful, even at the end of 1866, when I first went along the road. Oak is found in the Jyntiah Hills, and an inferior variety on the Cossyah, but pines are the principal trees; they appear to me identical with the pines found on the Karen Hills. Some

times a cyclone commits sad havoc amongst these trees, and I have seen whole hillsides with every tree torn up by the roots; but one gets heartily sick of seeing nothing but these pines, and longs for a variety of other green foliage. From Jowai there is a road, or rather pathway, over the hills to Nowgong and Seebsaugor, and along this I am told (I never travelled over it) that both the gaur and gyal, rhinoceros, sambur, and in the lower lands swamp-deer and buffalo, are to be found. Occasionally white tigers have been killed on these hills; and Mr. Shadwell has two skins in his possession, as before mentioned. The extract alluded to overleaf is from a very old number of the *India Sporting Magazine*, and is headed "An Extract from the Lives of the Lindsays." "The Gointeah (Jynteah) Rajah of the Cusseah, or Cossyah tribe, was my nearest frontier neighbour; he was by far the most powerful and the most civilised of the whole, holding large possessions both on the mountains and on the plains about fifty miles distant. When a younger man he had been misled by a false idea of his own powers, and he had in consequence been the aggressor by entering British territory in a hostile manner. A regiment of Sepoys easily drove him back and convinced him of his insignificance, and he was now endeavouring to convince me of his perfect attachment to our government. The Rajah proposed my giving him an interview in his own country, and to partake of a *chasse* he had prepared for me; and after arranging the preliminaries of meeting the day was fixed. By mutual agreement we were to be accompanied by a few attendants.

"It was during the season of the rains, the whole country being completely overflowed, and having the appearance of an extensive lake. I embarked on board a beautiful yacht of my own building, well manned and armed with eighteen swivels (guns), and arrived at the place of rendezvous at the appointed hour, when to my surprise I found advancing

towards me a fleet of boats, not less than fifty in number, with streamers flying and fantastically dressed. As this was contrary to our agreement I was not well pleased at the display, but betrayed no kind of alarm." . . . . . "The Rajah proved to be a handsome young man, with a good address. He requested me to accompany him to his barge to partake of the shikar previously prepared for our amusement. We rowed some miles towards a rising ground on which we landed, and were then carried on men's shoulders to a temporary stage erected for the occasion. On surveying the arena round us I found that the inclosure was not less than thirty acres, surrounded by a stockade and lined on the outside by the vassals of the Rajah. They had previously driven the wild beasts of the country to this place, being the highest ground in the plain, and surrounded them. The sight was whimsically wild and magnificent, the concourse of people immense, the whole population of the hills and the plains having turned out for the occasion.

"The first thing that struck my observation upon entering the arena was the singularity of the dresses worn by the different tribes of Cossyahs, all dressed and armed agreeably to the customs of the country or mountain whence they came. The inhabitants of the country (plains) were also fancifully dressed; their garb in many instances was a mixture of both, their arms in general being those of the mountains. The place into which we were introduced was a species of open balcony; on either side of my chair were placed those of the Rajah, his prime minister, commander-in-chief, and officers of state, who all appeared to be native Cossyahs, dressed and armed in the hill costume, the Rajah himself affecting the dress of a man more civilised, and wearing the Mogul arms.

"We each prepared his arms for the magnificent *chasse* about to begin. Upon looking round me with attention I found that there were no fewer than 200 of the largest wild

buffaloes inclosed, some hundreds of the large elk-deer, great variety of the smaller description of deer, and wild hog innumerable. These animals were now galloping around us in quick succession, when the Rajah, turning politely towards me, asked me to begin the shikar by taking the first shot. I was a bad marksman and afraid to betray my want of skill in so public a manner. First I declined the offer; the Rajah insisted; I therefore raised my well-loaded rifle to my shoulder, and taking a good aim, to my own astonishment, dropped a large buff dead on the spot. There was immediately a general shout of admiration. I on my part put my pipe into my mouth, throwing out volumes of smoke to show my indifference, as if the event were a matter of course; but no power could get the Rajah to exhibit, from the apprehension of not being equally successful before his own people. On my left hand sat his *luscar* or prime minister; his quiver, I observed, contained but two arrows. 'How comes it, my friend,' said I, 'you come into the field with so few arrows in your quiver?' With a sarcastic smile, he replied, 'If a man cannot do his business with two arrows he is unfit for his trade.' At that moment he let fly a shaft and a deer dropped dead. He immediately had recourse to his pipe and smoked profusely. The loud and hollow sound of the nagara or war-drum, and the discordant tones of the conch shells, announced a new arrival. The folding doors of the arena were thrown open, and ten male elephants with their riders were marshalled before us. If it is expected that I am to describe the gorgeous trappings and costly harness of these animals, or the sumptuous dress of the riders, disappointment must follow. My savage friends were little accustomed to stage effects or luxuries of any kind. The noble animal had not even a pad on his back, a rope round his body was his only harness. The rider was dressed nearly in the garb of nature, and the hook with which he

drives or guides his animal was his only weapon. A motion from the Rajah's hand was the signal to advance. The buffaloes at this unexpected attack naturally turned their heads towards the elephants and appeared as if drawn up in order of battle. The scene now became interesting in the extreme. The elephants continued to advance with a slow, majestic step, also in line, when in an instant the leader of the buffs rushed forward with singular rapidity, and charged the elephants in the centre. Their line was instantly broken; they turned round and fled in all directions, many of them throwing their riders and breaking down the stockade, one solitary elephant excepted. This magnificent animal had been trained for the Rajah's own use, and accustomed to the sport: the buffalo, returning from his pursuit, attentively surveyed him as he stood at a distance alone in the arena. He seemed for a few seconds uncertain whether to attack him or rejoin his herd. None who do not possess the talents of a Zoffany can describe the conflict which now took place; the elephant, the most unwieldy of the two, stood on the defensive, and his position was remarkable. In order to defend his proboscis he threw it over his head (!), his foreleg advanced ready for a start, his tail in horizontal line from his back, his eager eyes steadily fixed upon his antagonist. The buffalo, who had hitherto been tearing up the ground with his feet, now rushed forward with velocity. The elephant, advancing at the same time with rapid strides, received the buffalo upon his tusks, and threw him into the air with the same facility as an English bull would toss a dog, then drove his tusks through the body of the buffalo, and in that position carried him as easily as a baby, and laid him at the Rajah's feet." Now an elephant to protect his trunk curls it up, and does not throw it over his head, nor could the strongest elephant carry a wild buffalo on his tusks, as here narrated. The story must therefore be accepted with "a grain

of salt;" but the account, apart from self-evident exaggeration, is interesting as showing the power and state of the Jynteah Rajahs of those days. At the present time they are as poor as they can be.

I heard a good story, which I believe is perfectly true. A merchant entered into a highly advantageous contract as far as he himself was concerned, and rented for a nominal sum immense groves of orange and betel-nut trees from a Cossyah Rajah, the term of his lease being written in the Cossyah language, "for as long as he remained above ground"—meaning for as long as he lived; but when he died his knowing heirs, in obedience to his will, had a glass coffin made, in which to this day,—though he has been dead many years—his body remains above ground. The worth of these groves was several thousand pounds a year. The coffin and its ghastly contents were to be seen a few years ago at Cherra Poonjee; whether they have since been buried I don't know.

During the rains the whole of the flat country below the Ghauts, looking down from Cherra Poonjee to Sylhet, is a sheet of water, and all animals migrate to the higher country, notably the tigers; these during the dry season are rarely found on the elevated plateau, but once the rains have fairly set in, tigers are very plentiful, especially at Cherra Poonjee, where they commit great depredations, not only amongst the cattle, but the people. It was not an unusual thing for the pugs of a tiger to be seen not only within the compound of a house, but in the very veranda itself. No one could venture out of their houses after dark, and if forced to do so, went with many torches, and accompanied by the dismal sound of tom-toms and other infernal musical instruments.

Tigers were not so frequent at Shillong as at Cherra, but we killed seven altogether whilst I was resident there. The Ghoorka sepoys were encouraged to shoot whenever there

was a chance, with most beneficial results, as it made them good shots, and taught them to go noiselessly through the jungles. The first tiger we heard of was killed by the sepoys before we could get there; it was a fine young male about 8½ feet long. On another occasion a pony was killed in a ravine close by, and Bourne, of the 44th, sat up over it. The tiger came and Bourne fired, and thought he had hit it; so early the next morning he, Colonel Hicks, Williams, Ommanney, and I went after it, with some fifty sepoys as beaters; on reaching the place we found the kill had been dragged away and devoured, so we thought Bourne was mistaken in thinking he had wounded the animal, for we imagined there was but one tiger; however, we followed the tracks for about a mile, and beat over hills covered with grass from three to four feet high, with a sprinkling of pine-trees about. Suddenly not one, but three tigers jumped up and received a hurried fire. One was badly wounded, and left a piece of flesh on the ground; they all ran down into a ravine, into which we followed. The ground was very nasty, and we could not see beyond a few feet in front of us. The sepoys behaved admirably, keeping line as if on parade. We told them to load with ball-cartridge, and a running fight ensued which lasted for the better part of an hour, all three tigers being more or less wounded. The ground became worse and worse, with boulders of rock and deep fissures. Into one of these the tigers got, and whenever we tried to dislodge them they charged savagely. One large tiger knocked over three sepoys one after the other, but not a man retreated. As the place they were in was unapproachable without great risk, we reluctantly desisted, and carried the fallen men to the hospital, where they recovered in about a fortnight. No great damage had been done: one man lost an ear, and all were more or less clawed, but none bitten. One tiger was picked up dead the next

day, and another two days afterwards by the Cossyahs, and the third was seen wandering about very ill for a few days, and then disappeared; it was supposed it too had died. Another day Colonel Hicks and Williams had a shot at a tiger, but it got away. Two days afterwards a Cossyah came in and told us he had marked a tiger down; so the Colonel, Williams, and I went after it, with a few sepoys as beaters. We saw a lot of men on the heights surrounding the rocky bed of a mountain rivulet. Up this we advanced, and soon came upon the tiger and killed it at the first volley, and on examination found it was the one fired at by Colonel Hicks the day before. It was in a sad state, and evidently could not have lived through the day, as the wound, one through the body, had begun to mortify. Two other tigers were killed without any adventures, one by the sepoys, and the other by us.

Leopards were constantly killed; they were very destructive to dogs. One day we all went after a tiger or leopard, no one knew which; and after beating about some time a leopard broke across and was wounded, but hid himself in a ravine, where we could not find him. I sent for my two elephants, which happened to be in the station, and we beat everywhere, but still no leopard. There was a hollow passage in the ravine through which the water ran, and we thought it had taken refuge there, and fired several shots into it without effect. The leopard was gone, where, nobody could tell; so Williams and I walked up the hill-side and had nearly reached the top, when a yell, then a dead silence, and then a shot, made us run down again; but all was over before we reached the bottom, where we found the leopard dead, cut to pieces! It appears a sepoy in passing a bush, in the very midst of which the elephants had been beating, trod on the leopard's tail, so snugly was it hidden, and in one second it sprang on the man's shoulders, biting

his arm, and clawing him about the head. The Ghoorkas dropped their rifles, and with their kookries or knives, without which no Ghoorka ever moves, they hacked the leopard almost to pieces *on the man.* As the beast fell off, Colonel Hicks, who had run up, put a ball through its head; but it was not needed, as it was already dead. These Ghoorkas are certainly a fine race; there are no better soldiers in the world —and when properly led they are fully equal to Europeans. They are a small sturdy race. They are, in truth, Nepaulese; they cannot live for any extended time in the plains, and that is one reason why, I suppose, this gallant corps, which has done as good service as any in India, has been sent to Dibrooghur. When the regiment at Dacca mutinied in 1858, this corps accounted for every man of it except five or six, who became slaves amongst the Lushais. Again, in the wars with the Cossyahs and Jynteahs, and the expedition into the Lushai country, all the fighting fell to this corps; and the reward, as I said before, has been its being sent to a station in the plains, where the men cannot live. These sepoys played at cricket very well indeed, and also at football. They were most anxious to go out shooting and fishing, and were allowed considerable liberty in this way; and were all the better for it.

Twice I made short excursions with Bourne, and on each occasion we bagged a bear; one of these charged me up the side of a steep hill, but receiving a shell in the chest when only a few feet distant, it rolled down to the bottom, and after crawling a couple of hundred yards, gave up the ghost. In January, 1872, I took my family down to Oomsning and beat about the jungles. The grass had not been burnt, so I got a few Cossyahs together and told them to burn the hills towards us, which they did with a vengeance, commencing a good deal too soon, before we had taken up our positions, and we had to run for our lives, and managed to get into the bed of a

ravine, as the fire was upon us. Fortunately there was water in it, and green bushes and trees fringed its banks; but the flames from either side met over our heads, and if we were not burnt we were nearly roasted; but the danger was over in a few minutes. We then burnt more systematically, and started many sambur. I only got sight of one, a stag, and the express brought him down in his tracks. I then got into an open spot, and had the hill set on fire all round; nothing could escape without passing me. Soon there were two bears on foot, and they tried in vain to escape, but were met everywhere by the devouring flames. I could see them a long while before they came my way. I remained perfectly still; the two kept close together, and came within ten paces of me. I floored the largest, and was just going to fire into the second, which turned back, when the first got up; so thinking one bear in hand was better than a couple on the hill, I let fly again, and this time killed it; it did not give even one groan. My man with the second gun of course was not where he ought to have been, or I should have got the second bear too, as it had run back, and was surrounded by the fire, now contracting its circle. I made sure it must pass me again, as the only spot free from fire, but I never saw it; and can't imagine what could have become of it. I burnt all these hills, and had there been two or three guns we should have got a lot of bears and sambur, as many were disturbed each day; but alone I could not guard all the passes, so many beasts escaped. Maxwell, my assistant, shot a fine bison here. It charged him, and he had only time to throw himself down as the bison jumped over him; but he got up uninjured, and following up again, came upon the bull and killed it. Carnegie, of the Commission, too, shot several deer here.

In October, 1869, General Blake, Ommanney, and I started to wander over the hills; we were accompanied as far as

Jowai by Captain Trevor, the Superintending Engineer, and by Captain Skinner, Superintendent of Police. We started after breakfast, going by the Cossyah paths in preference to the Government road. By the first the distance to Pombarah was only twelve or thirteen miles, and by the latter twenty-two; but the grass had not been burnt, and in many places we could not ride, so had to walk up hill and down dale for three-and-a-half hours before we reached our destination. Pombarah is colder than Shillong. It is a pretty place, with a very deep ravine to the right, and high hills in the distance. There is a fair bungalow there. Having nothing to do, we took our guns and strolled out in the evening. We did not get much: we shot a couple of black partridges, a few quail and doves; but the General went on further than we did, and shot a young muntjac, or barking deer, and uncommonly good it was, too, to eat.

October 27th.—The road from Pombarah towards Jowai is very pretty, with groves of oak and rhododendrons, and of course the eternal pine. It is pretty level for about five miles, then there is a steep ascent of 1,500 feet. There was no road either up it or round it in those days, so we had to follow the Cossyah paths and walk up it, which was no joke; but the view from the top was very lovely. We breakfasted here, and then, after following this road for a couple of miles further on, we turned off to Nurting. There was not the vestige of a road. We followed the Cossyah path, and a worse I never wish to see; one bad nullah, full of rocks and with precipitous banks, we came to had only a fallen tree across it as a bridge. Ommanney was foolish enough to wish to ride over this, but we dissuaded him; so he walked across, leading his horse after him. We sent ours a long way round, to cross at a lower and more practicable point. When half-way across Ommanney's horse fell over, one hind-leg catching in a fork of the tree, and the rest of the horse hanging down over the

Vincent Brooks Day & Son, Lith.

bed of the nullah : the branch he was suspended by broke, and the horse fell headlong down on to the rocks, and, wonderful to say (as he was not worth much), he was almost uninjured. Had he been a valuable beast, he would in all probability have either been killed or broken a limb. After this mishap we continued our way, and after a while got on to the remains of a road, and came to the ruins of several large bridges, and had some difficulty in crossing the nullahs. When we got in sight of the village I took a short cut and got to the bungalow first, but finding it occupied by a Welsh missionary and his family, we had to look for quarters elsewhere. The site of the bungalow, being the top of a hill well away from and above the village, is a very pleasant one ; but as it was occupied, we had to go down into the village and put up in the schoolroom, and a filthier place I never saw. There were vile marshes all round, pigs in hundreds, the filth awful, and the stench abominable ; but as there was no other place to go to, we had to remain where we were for the night. There are some small tanks here, rather famous for woodcock and duck. For the former we were too early ; and though the latter were in hundreds, yet it was almost impossible to get near them, and directly they were disturbed they flew away. There are also a good many pheasants about here, and also barking-deer ; but these are difficult to beat out of the dense cover they live in. We strolled out in the evening, and shot eight or nine duck and teal, and a few snipe. One of my ducks fell into the middle of the tank, and could not be retrieved. I had an india-rubber boat with me, but it had not arrived.

October 28*th*.—I took out the india-rubber boat and recovered my duck of yesterday, but could not get near any of the duck and teal swimming about in hundreds, and after being disturbed once or twice they flew away. So leaving them we went after snipe and got 11½ couple, one solitary

snipe, the first I ever saw, two teal, and one duck. We had a delicious swim in the Mouton, a little distance from Nurting, and started for Jowai, as we could not stand the vile smells any longer. Nurting is not a bad place to go to if you can put up in the bungalow, but avoid the village. Bourne and I, on a subsequent occasion, went there and shot lots of woodcock, pheasants, and partridges, a few duck and teal, and had shots at deer, but did not kill any. The cromlechs here are some of the largest found on these hills; and as there is no stone near, the huge slabs, some of them 29 feet long by 3 feet to 4 feet broad and 2 feet thick, must have been brought over the hills miles and miles away! How it was done I can't conceive.

The road to Jowai is exceedingly pretty, passing through undulating country, for all the world like the Brighton Downs; we had to cross several lovely streams and marshy woods, where, in the season, I am sure woodcock are to be found. We reached our destination about three o'clock, and our traps arrived soon afterwards. We put up in the bungalow, and thanks to Mr. Shadwell, the Assistant Commissioner, were soon supplied with all the necessaries of life. There was a detachment here of the 44th, and we were building a stockaded place for them. Just below the hill on which the bungalow stands there is a deep valley, with a river passing through its centre, and in this, on a former trip, I had noticed thousands of fish. The sepoys used to catch a good many, but the Cossyahs did not like their doing so, as they considered the river and the pool in which the fish were principally found, sacred. I had no fishing-tackle with me that trip; but we had come well provided, and on the 29th, Blake, Ommanney, and I went down, thinking to catch no end of fish, but there was not one to be seen. We tried for several hours, but at last desisted in disgust. The place was formerly literally alive with fish; on this occasion there was

not one! What had become of them I can't imagine. When I went there about a year afterwards, the pool was again alive with fish! The Cossyahs said their spirits had taken the fish away to prevent our catching them. To console ourselves, we shot a lot of snipe. The road to Cachar and to Nowgong, in the opposite direction, was visible a long way, winding over the hills, and to the south-east appeared a much higher range than that on which we were, and our elevation was 4,300 feet. We got coolies together to make a start for the River Durrung, where we hoped to get mahseer.

October 30th.—Our march to-day was over the most beautiful scenery possible, high table-land, well-wooded, and with three large rivers passing through it; one of these rivers had a capital wooden bridge over it. The others were spanned by means of huge stone slabs. The Sholas reminded me very much of the Neilgherries; one plateau was particularly lovely, very nearly flat, at an elevation of 5,700 feet, with a river to the north, and another to the south of it, and both full of middling-sized mahseer, and a fish very like the trout. The Sholas had woodcock in them, as we put up several; this place would have made a better station than Shillong, as water-carriage is nearer. We halted for the night at Jarain, where there is a good bungalow. Very cold here at night. On a clear day I believe Cherra Poonjee is visible from here, but it was too misty when we were there to see anything.

October 31, 1869.—As the distance to the Durrung is a good eighteen or twenty miles, we started very early. Soon after starting the road became so bad that we sent our ponies back to Jarain, with orders for them to be sent on to Jynteahpore, where we proposed going to, from the Durrung. We had to walk all day, there was not a drop of water anywhere. We were therefore very glad to reach a village called Sankar, overlooking the Durrung, at three o'clock. Here

we rested a while and had a good drink of water; but our destination was not reached yet, as we had to go down a nearly precipitous descent by means of steps cut in the rock, or by springing from rock to rock. Though the distance could not have exceeded half or three-quarters of a mile, it took us an hour to do it. We reached the Cossyah village at last, but the hut we had ordered was built in the heart of the village, and not on the river bank, as we wanted, so we would have nothing to say to it, but went down to a cliff, overlooking the river, where we found a spot about fifteen feet square, pretty level. Here we determined to camp, and got some poles and branches, and leaves of trees, and rigged up some sort of shelter over us, as the dews at night were very heavy. We did not care for shelter during the day, as we knew we should want the greater part of the day for fishing. A little lower down we found a place, where we put up our table, chairs, &c. We were about fifty feet above the river, which is very deep just here, and we could see thousands of mahseer of all sizes feeding about in the water just below us, and things looked well for sport. We had brought our tackle with us, though the rest of our traps were behind; and as soon as we could get boats we went out. Neither General Blake nor I caught a single fish, but Ommanney, who had been here before and knew the water, caught three mahseer weighing seven pounds, four, and one respectively. By dark most of our traps had arrived, but only two servants; the rest had got drunk in a Cossyah village, and did not appear till late next day. However, we all set to work, whilst the two servants prepared our dinner, and soon had our beds made and musquito curtains rigged up. The beer and wine we put into the river, and took headers ourselves into it, and enjoyed a long swim in its icy-cold waters. About eight o'clock our dinner was ready, and a better I never sat down to. My one servant, John, certainly exerted himself to some purpose

that day. Our cook was not there, and only one other servant, who was of very little use, so John had everything to do, and did it well. We were as tired as we could be, and retired to bed early, and slept the sleep of the weary.

November 1st.—The General and I were up and swimming about before daylight, and Ommanney, with many a grumble, got up and made tea, &c., whilst we dried ourselves. The water was icy cold. This is a beautiful place to bathe, as you can take headers off the rocks into twenty feet of the clearest water possible. We each got a boat; I took the first I came across, and found I had one of the best boatmen in it. I christened him "Wind-up," as it was the only bit of English he knew; and whenever we came to a rapid, or I struck a fish, it was always a case of "Wind up." He had been in the habit of accompanying our padre, Mr. Hind, and others, fishing, and had learnt so much, and no more, English. This river is divided into rapids, with deep pools intervening. The scenery is not only very pretty, but very grand. One portion which we called the gorge, was not less than sixty feet deep, with perpendicular banks of 250 to 300 feet high, the hills covered with dense forest and jungle. General Blake made some very pretty sketches of this and other portions of the river scenery. The Cossyah boats are very light, broad in the beam, have a small false keel, are very safe, and easily propelled. I went up stream first as far as I could go, without getting a run. I was trolling with a spoon-bait, but coming down at the first rapid, I struck a fish; we were however, carried down at such a rate, the boat could not be stopped till we got into smooth water again, by which time my fish was drowned. It turned out a solitary kind of trout, 2 lb. in weight. I then passed the village and over four beautiful rapids, and to the extremity of the gorge, where there was a weir, without a single run; but on my way back I caught two fish, one $3\frac{1}{2}$ and the other $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb. each. In the gorge itself, whilst fishing

very deep, having heavily weighed my line for that purpose I hooked a very large fish. I was using a large spoon, about the size of a gravy-spoon, and treble gut, spinning tackle, and one of Farlow's best rods and lines. This fish at the first rush took out more than seventy yards of line. I got the boat to a neighbouring sandbank, and landed to play it. It fought me steadily for half an hour before I got a sight of it. The sun was in my face, and the perspiration ran down it till I was nearly blinded. I then drew the fish into shallow water, and could watch its every movement. It did all it could, by lying down on its side and rubbing its head and its mouth with the sand, to get the hooks off, but it did not succeed. At one time, a fish every bit as big as itself approached it, and it went at it open-mouthed, like a tiger. General Blake joined me, and after a hard fight of three-quarters of an hour I landed about the handsomest fish I ever saw. It weighed between 28 and 30 lb. My weighing-scale that trip was only graduated to 20 lb., so we had to cut the fish in two to weigh it; it thus lost somewhat by loss of blood, entrails, &c., but the two pieces together turned over 23 lb. For the next trip I got a proper scale out, that marked up to 60 lb. We always weighed our fish as soon after they were caught as possible; a fish always loses weight by being kept. We then had a bathe, and went to our encampment to breakfast.

In the afternoon in the rapids I caught two, 4½ lb. each, and one ½ lb. I then went through the weir, and close under it caught a whopper, 40 lb.; but it did not give me nearly as much play as the 28-pounder, nor was it as handsome a fish, but, of course, very much larger. Ommanney had bad luck, losing several fish and bagging only one, 2½ lb., with the spoon, and with the fly thirteen small fish, weighing altogether 9 lb. General Blake caught two mahseer, 4 and 4½ lb. each, and several *gar fish*. These

fish are a great nuisance; they are very voracious, they have a long snout full of sharp teeth, they go at the spoon and get caught on the hooks, and as they do not struggle, and are so light that the angler does not feel them, and is therefore unconscious that they are on, no other fish will eat them, so they are useless as bait, and directly they are hooked the spoon ceases to act; so a man may troll for miles, nor have the least chance of catching a mahseer. We left off fishing just before dark, and, after the usual plunge, dined and went to bed.

November 2nd.—To-day again I had all the luck, and caught the following fish:—one mahseer, 4 lb.; one mahseer, 1½ lb.; one mahseer, 35 lb.; one mahseer, 5½ lb.; one mahseer, 3½ lb. The large fish I caught below the weir, very near where I caught the 40-pounder. I also lost a fish about 8 lb. I had exhausted it, and told the steersman to spear it; but he missed it, struck the hooks out of its mouth, and in rebounding they went into his thigh, and I had to cut them out. Wilson of the Artillery, an old schoolfellow of mine, and Lightfoot of the 44th joined us to-day. The former caught a mahseer, 9½ lb., with the spoon, and several small fish with the fly. Lightfoot, using only a fly, caught some fifty small fish. General Blake caught one 18 lb. with the spoon, and a lot of small fish with the fly. Ommanney had very bad luck, and only caught some small fish. As there were two more for whom accommodation was required, we had to place our beds touching one another, and to get into them either from the top or bottom, there being no room to move about elsewhere.

November 3rd.—Our last day. We went out early, and I had very good luck, with very indifferent results. I hooked a lot of fish, but they all got off; the hooks either breaking or straightening out. I was on to an immense fish for upwards of an hour, but at the last moment the hooks gave,

and all I got was a huge scale and a bit of its mouth; one hook straightened and two broke. I only landed one, 6½ lb. Wilson got one, 2 lb.; whilst neither the General, Ommanney, nor Lightfoot had any luck. In the afternoon we moved camp to Joplong, *en route* to Jyntcahpore. We had to walk there, a distance of four or five miles. Here there was only a small stream for us to bathe in, and we got bitten by our old friends, a fish called by the Burmese the nga-boodeen; I had no idea they were to be found here. There are two varieties of this fish: one confined to salt water, the other to fresh; the former grow to a large size, the latter are always small. A peculiarity of this fish is, when taken out of the water, it blows itself out into a balloon shape; it bites horribly, and has a very repulsive appearance. We slept under some fine trees, under which a weekly *hât*, or bazaar, is held.

November 4th.—We had to walk about two miles to get to a river, which would lead us to Jyntcahpore. The boats were mere dug-outs, without any covering; and I don't think I ever felt the sun hotter in my life, than whilst cooped up in these apologies for boats. We had to pole against the stream, and by dusk found ourselves three miles from Jynteahpore, and the branch of the river leading to it dried up; but the main river had six to eight feet of water. We put up in a *Nàm Ghur* on the banks of the stream, and sent in to Jynteahpore for coolies. We saw numbers of the nga-boodeen fish caught here in nets by the fishermen. The river muddy and sluggish. Further up I believe it is good for mahseer; but here I don't believe there were any fish but catfish and the nga-boodeen.

November 5th.—The coolies, for a wonder, turned up about eight, and we reached Jynteahpore about ten. This place many years before had given us a good deal of trouble to reduce, and even now there were many cannons lying about, and the

old ramparts are in a good state of preservation. The people are a ruffianly lot—Mussulman Sylhetians, very turbulent; and not kept in the order they ought to be. These people won't work or carry loads, so we had to send for Cossyahs, and it was late before we got a sufficient number. Our ponies were here all right. As Lightfoot had no pony, I gave him mine to ride, and walked all the way myself. Wilson and Ommanney shared one between them. We got off about two and had ascended only about half-way up the ghat, when darkness set in, and the coolies refused to go on, as they said there were many man-eating tigers about. So we put our cots in the most open spot we could find, and made it our camp for the night. The coolies lit huge fires and sat up all night. In the middle of the night there was a cry of a tiger. Lightfoot fired his rifle off into the air, and there was a great commotion; but nothing came of it, so we composed ourselves to sleep, and were not disturbed again. I saw here a peacock or argus pheasant.

November 6th.—We started early, passed Jarain, and put up in some huts, which had been built for the survey party. There was a cold, drizzling rain, and we were glad to get under shelter.

November 7th.—We beat all the Sholas that looked likely for woodcock, but they lay very close, and though several were flushed, we got none. We reached Jowai in the evening, and Shillong the next day.

In *September*, 1870, Colonel Hicks, Ommanney, Bourne, and I, left Shillong for the hunting and fishing grounds on the Sylhet side. We started on the 13th and rode to Chirra that day, getting wet to the skin of course; but as all our things had been sent on some days before, we found a good dinner and a roaring fire awaiting us.

September 14th.—We started our fishing-tackle and breakfast ahead, and then followed ourselves, leaving our things

to be brought after us. We reached Terreah Ghat at nine. Got four boats, and after breakfast went up the river. This used to be a famous stream for mahseer, but the Cossyahs poison the fish every year, till very few are left, and very poor bags are made. The whole of this country is a mass of limestone, and when a fish is struck it is necessary to keep an extra taut line, because if you don't the fish will get under a hollow boulder, and then good-bye to your tackle, as you have to cut your line, it being impossible to draw a fish out that has once taken refuge in one of those hollows, or the line chafing against the rocks soon breaks of itself. The boats here are much heavier than those in the Durrung, and the boatmen are lazy Musselmans, who will work splendidly for themselves, but will not exert themselves for a European. In the morning Colonel Hicks got two fish, one 8 lb. and 3 lb. Ommanney got one 3 lb., one 2½ lb. and 14 small ones with the fly. I got one 3 lb. In the afternoon Bourne caught one 3 lb., one 2 lb., one 5 lb. Ommanney one 3 lb., one 2 lb., and some small ones with the fly. I got one 20 lb., one 9 lb., and one 2 lb.

September 15*th*.—To-day we moved camp and tried a short cut to Lākât, and had great difficulty in getting there. We reached a sandbank at dark and encamped there. We heard fish splashing about all night, but did not think they were mahseer.

September 16*th*.—As we started early this morning I was the only one who threw out a line, and I almost immediately hooked a heavy fish. The others were close by, and all pulled up whilst I played it. Some kept yelling that I kept the fish too taut, others that I had the line too loose, and so on; but without heeding them in the least, I kept steadily on to my work in my own way, and at last reduced the fish to its last gasp. It had already turned belly uppermost several times, and we all admired his grand proportions, for

the fish was undoubtedly an immense one, when, with a last expiring effort, as it turned over, every hook broke, and I lost about as fine a fish as I ever struck. After this everybody began to fish. Ommanney was in the same boat with me, and fishing with exactly the same tackle and spoons, yet I got all the luck. We caught several fish, and about ten it began to rain. Bourne was leading, and as our boat approached a rapid, we saw Bourne coming toward us fast on to a large fish, and with the whole of his line out; so he had perforce to follow it down stream; as he passed us I struck a large fish, a 32-pounder, and had to follow him. He lost his, but I secured mine. I had no sooner thrown out the spoon again, than I struck another fish and landed him, a 22-pounder. About eleven we arrived at a hut Major Stewart had kindly had built for us. It was near the weir, where last trip I caught the large fish. Here we put up. Colonel Hicks had nine fish weighing 43 lb. the largest 13 lb. Bourne had six fish weighing 27 lb. the largest 11 lb., Ommanney one 6 lb. I had five fish weighing 66 lb., the largest weighing 32 lb. In the evening we went up stream through the Gorge, and the result was Colonel Hicks caught three fish, one 16 lb. two 4 lb. each. I caught five, 9, 5, 2, 1½, ¾ lb. respectively, all on the same spoon. Bourne caught two, 10, 4 lb. each; Ommanney seven fish, weighing 47 lb., largest 26 lb. We caught to-day 245 lb. of fish.

September 17th.—I went back towards the sandbank, and below the weir I caught one fish 41 lb., and six others weighing 12, 9½, 4, 4, 3, and 4 lb. each. Colonel Hicks caught three, 4, ½, and 7 lb. each; Bourne one 8 lb.; Ommanney one 8 lb. We all lost several fish.

September 18th.—To-day Ommanney in a rapid caught two fish, 30 and 20 lb. each; Colonel Hicks two, 1 lb. each; I caught two 7 and 5 lb. each. In the afternoon Ommanney caught three, 17, 17, and 6 lb. each; Colonel Hicks two, 10, 3½

lb. each; I got four, 26, 14, 3½, 6 lb. each; Bourne six, 14, 11, 4, 3½, 2, and 2¼ lb. each. The fish caught in the afternoon were hooked off the sandbank, where we had slept on our way up. No sooner was a spoon in the water than a fish was on to it; we got there rather late, but a better half-hour's work I never saw. Bourne lost me a fish about 14 lb. in weight by insisting on gaffing it in a scientific manner, he said, but only succeeded in knocking the hooks out of the fish's mouth. After he was alongside the boat he had nothing to do but to insert the gaff into the gills to have landed the fish, but he would try and dig the gaff into the shoulder of the fish, which is protected by large scales as tough as tin, and after failing twice, in the third attempt he lost me the fish. In fact I look upon the gaff as useless for mahseer. Colonel Hicks and Bourne went on to Terreah Ghat, whilst Ommanney and I slept on the sandbank.

September 19*th*.—I fished for a long while without getting a run, whilst no sooner was Ommanney's spoon in the water than there was a fish on to it. On examining my tackle I found my spinning gear out of order. I put it to rights, and soon caught three fish, 14, 4, and 6 lb. each. Ommanney caught five, 26, 22, 20, 14, and 4 lb. So ended our trip. We bagged 736 lb. of fish, of which I got 276; Ommanney, 258½; Colonel Hicks, 105½; and Bourne 96 lb.

In October I again went down, Mr. McWilliam, Dr. Cond, of Cachar, accompanied me a part of the way. I got to Chirra on the 16th without getting wet, for a wonder.

October 17*th*.—I tried the Terreah river from 9 A.M. to 2 P.M., and all I caught was one fish about ½ lb. in weight by the eye; but in lifting it into the boat the eye came out, and the fish dropped overboard; that was the only run I had. I started for Companee Gunge at 3 P.M., got there at 10 P.M.; put up in a shed, bathed and dined at 11 P.M.

October 18*th*.—Started very early; fish were rising very

freely, and the water was pretty clear, the stream deep and broad. I had my line out sharp, but did not get a run till 2 P.M., I then caught two fish about 3 lb. each, called by the Bengalese bassah, and by the Burmese nga mein; and later one mahseer 14 lb. I got to the sandbank at 8 P.M.; the stream had altered greatly for the worse. The sandbank was covered with men, women, and children, catching small fish, which they did in thousands by frightening them into nets, the whole while yelling like demons. The smell from the putrid fish was sickening, and sleep out of the question; I was glad when daylight appeared and I could go off. I first went down stream and caught a fish 2½ lb., and then hooked a large one; but the knowing brute made for the bank at once and rubbed the hooks off on to the stump of a tree at least twenty feet under water, and I had to get a man to dive to bring them up, which after several failures he succeeded in doing. I then went back to our old diggings and caught ten fish, 16, 12, 9, 10, 8, 8, 7, 2½, 11, 15, 20, in all 118½ lb.

October 20th.—Went up stream, starting at 7 A.M. In the Gorge hooked a large fish, and landed it within a quarter of an hour, weight 42 lb. It gave little or no play. Almost immediately after I hooked another large fish, and got it within ten minutes; it swam up to my boat, and my steersman cleverly speared it through the head, weight 36 lb. Fished all the favourite pools and rapids, but did not get a single run till I got opposite to the village, where we put up in 1869, when out with Blake; there I struck and landed a fish 28 lb; this gave a good deal of play, and was the first fish we caught there, though from a height looking down into the clear water, mahseer of all sizes, from five feet long to little fry, could be seen. Further up I caught another, 14 lb., and got home to breakfast at ten with 120 lb. of fish. In the evening I caught one 18 lb., one 7 lb., one 5 lb., and one 4 lb., total 154 lb.

October 21*st*.—Started very early and beat up and down the deep pool in the Gorge three times without a run; then down stream beyond the weir to near the sandbank without a nibble, but returning homewards I killed two fish, one 10 lb. and one 3 lb. I tried live bait to-day, and all manners of artificial minnows, crystal baits and spoons of various sizes, but the fish would not look at them. I fished again in the afternoon, but did not get a single run.

October 27*th*.—Met my old boatman, "Wind-up," whose real name is "Byan." He had been absent at some village, assisting to cultivate. I went up stream as far as I could go, but as I hooked nothing I went back, put my traps into boats and made for the sandbank, where I got by evening, having caught seven fish, 24, 9, 7, 14, 17, 8, 31, and five bassah, weighing 14 lb. From the sandbank (23rd October) I caught five mahseer, 21, 13, 11, 24, 19, and three bassah weighing 11 lb. I had great difficulty in getting into the Terreah Ghat river, as all the channels were dry but one, and that I could not get any one to show me; but after losing several hours I accidentally hit it off, reached the bungalow at three, and rode into Shillong the next day.

In September the following year I again fished in this river, and in four days caught 376 lb. of fish: the largest being 44 lb., one 40 lb., one 36 lb., and the rest from 28 lb. to 4 lb., besides of course losing many other fish hooked, but not landed.

In September, 1872, Vetch, of the 11th Hussars, and I left for Terreah Ghat, had a beautiful day, and reached Chirra without getting wet.

September 13.—A very hot sunny morning. Rode down the ghat ahead of our traps, having sent on very early our breakfast and fishing-tackle; but the man to whom these had been intrusted did not turn up till eleven, and pretended he had lost his way, which was a palpable lie, as there was but one

road and that a very broad one the whole way; so gave him a hiding to teach him better for the future.

We went out fishing at 12; but the Cossyahs have succeeded in destroying all the fish; for though we went up and down the river the whole afternoon, I caught only one fish, one pound in weight, and Vetch did not get a run.

September 14*th.*—Rained slightly in the night. The morning cool and cloudy. Could not get boats; but, after a great deal of trouble, got off at nine, and had scarcely gone a mile when some of the coolies jumped overboard and ran away. We went the short cut; and the boats had to be dragged over the various impediments thrown up by the Cossyahs for catching fish. Directly we got into the main stream I threw my spoon overboard, and struck a large fish—we had never tried here before—but my split-ring broke, and I lost my spoon and fish. The heat to-day was awful. We breakfasted at 11.30; and went through an extensive Bheel into the Lakat river. On entering this, Vetch caught the first fish; and during the afternoon he caught four, 13, 6, 1, 9 lb. I also caught four, 3½, 6, 2, 24 lb. We got to the sandbank at dark, and slept in the open. The mosquitoes got inside our curtains and bit us badly.

September 15*th.*—Fine night last night; heavy clouds about, but no rain. As only two boats had arrived, Vetch and I went out fishing in one, and sent the other for more boats to take our traps to Durrung. I had all the luck, catching five fish, 22, 28, 8, 6, 6 lb. each; the second gave a great deal of trouble to land. Vetch did not get a run. Got back to the sandbank at 10 A.M.; breakfasted, and then moved up stream. I caught two fish, 4, ½ lb. each. We put up in a new place, as the shed built for us by Stewart had been washed away. I had some large waterproof sheets, and these we threw over poles attached to trees, and made

very comfortable tents out of them. We got everything settled by dark.

September 16*th.*—Rain in the early morning. We both went out in separate boats, but neither got a run for a long time. I tried my largest spoon, half as large again as the largest gravy spoon, in the Gorge, in the hopes of catching a whopper; but the weight of it frayed my treble gut, and I soon lost my spoon and a portion of the gut attached to it. Vetch then went up stream, and I down. Near the weir I caught one, 6 lb.; and below got a run from a large fish, but it got off. Coming back, in very nearly the same place I hooked and landed a large fish, 36 lb. Vetch had one run, but lost his spoon and fish. In the afternoon we again went out, first up stream. I caught three, 6, 3, 1 lb. each. I then went down through the Gorge, and below the weir, but caught only one, 15 lb.; Vetch caught seven fish, 12, 8, 2, 4, 3, 1, ½ lb. each. He also hooked his boatman badly, the second time this trip.

September 17*th.*—Coolish morning; we both fished up to 11 A.M. Vetch got two small fish, 1 lb. each. I caught one 20 lb., and he gave a good deal of trouble to land. After he was alongside the steersman speared him, but the fish broke the line and swam away with the spear in him; but we went after it, and after a short chase captured it. I then hooked a middling-sized fish, but it wriggled itself off when close to the boat. I then struck a large fish, but my treble gut snapped as if it had been a bit of packthread, so I lost my fish, spoon, and hooks. In the evening I caught three others, 12, 5, and 2 lb. each. Vetch only got one 1 lb.

September 18*th.*—We went up stream and got a run, but the hooks broke and the fish escaped. I got nothing more till, going down stream below the weir, I got one 14 lb., and shortly afterwards another 6 lb. Vetch going down the pet rapid, caught three fish, 22, 2, and 1 lb. each. He got upset out of

his boat into water fully 15 feet deep, and it was some time before we could recover the rod and line which he had dropped. We reached the sandbank at 11, where we breakfasted—the heat awful. In the afternoon I got two fish, 17 and 4 lb. each; Vetch only one about a pound in weight.

September 19th.—We left the sandbank for Terreah Ghat; I caught four fish, two weighing 6 lb. each, and two $3\frac{1}{2}$ lb. each. Vetch caught an odd kind of fish of the cat tribe, and it seemed to live just as well out of the water as in it. It was an ugly brute. In this trip I got 277 lb. of fish, and Vetch $87\frac{1}{2}$; but this was his first attempt, and he certainly had bad luck. Fishing in the Manass will be related elsewhere. There are many other rivers on this and the Cachar side swarming with fish, and these places can be reached within one week and two days at the most from Calcutta, and I wonder that lovers of the gentle art do not frequent them more. During the Doorgah Poojahs especially, the merchant princes of Calcutta might spend many a pleasant day on these waters. There is very fair woodcock-shooting about Shillong, *en route* to the Peak, there are some sholas with wet bottoms; these are sure finds for woodcock in the season, but they lie very close, and won't rise till a man almost treads on them. General Blake and I shot several there. I have shot them also there, once out snipe-shooting near the hockey ground; and once with a lot of solitary snipe I put up and shot a woodcock. This was in a valley about three miles north of the station. There was a very heavy patch of long reeds very wet, and in this there was always in the season a lot of solitary snipe.

CHAPTER IV

ASSAM.

Its Mineral Wealth—Tea—Dishonesty in the Sale of Gardens—The Brahmapootra—Climate—Habits necessary to combat with the same—Dress, &c.

Of all our possessions in the East, Assam is probably the richest in natural resources, and, up to a very late period, also the most neglected and backward. It came into our possession at the conclusion of the Burmese War of 1824-26. The Burmese during their occupation had devastated it fearfully; they not only killed the male inhabitants, but walked off with the younger portion of the female in thousands. Although there are evidences that Assam at some remote period has enjoyed a fair share of civilisation, good government, and prosperity, there remained to us but ruins of cities, vast embankments, and dykes to prove that in a bygone generation Assam was not the deserted wilderness it was when it became ours. Very soon after our occupation Mr. Bruce discovered the indigenous tea-plant. The province was never popular with the higher officials of India. No Governor-general interested himself especially in that province, as did Lord Dalhousie in Burmah, or Lord Ellenborough in Sinde. It had no independent government, but was tacked on to Bengal, already an unwieldy lieutenant-governorship, but its patronage was valuable, and any contemplated separation

was strenuously opposed. It had a commissioner over it; but he had little power, and was subordinate to all intents and purposes to the board of revenue, the members of which, clever civilians as they were, and well acquainted with Bengal, knew as much of Assam as the man in the moon. Thus the local authorities and this board were always at loggerheads; the former knew the requirements of the province, but the latter did not, and cared less. They insisted it should be governed from Calcutta, 900 miles off. Occupying as he did such a subordinate position, for he had not even the control of the department of public works, is it any wonder that a commissioner soon became disgusted, and contented himself with drawing his salary and allowing the province to go to the devil.

Although Assam has fields of coal, petroleum, slate, and other minerals inferior to none in the world, I believe it would still have been steeped in the greatest misery had it not been for the English planter, who, sinking thousands and thousands of pounds in the tea trade, gradually but surely forced the government to introduce a better government. For very many years the legislation was entirely against the planter, and in favour of the Coaj, and matters are not altogether on a satisfactory footing yet. There is a good deal to be said on both sides. The European officials only saw the worst phase of the lower class of European planters; the better class gave no trouble, and were overlooked. They judged of all by the few, who, constantly drunk, litigious, and disreputable, haunted their courts and gave the European planter a bad name all over the country.

The officials, moreover, had had no proper training, and were lamentably deficient in knowledge of law, the language and manners and customs alike of the European and the native. They were mostly officers, who, being attached to the

three local regiments, through interest, were pitchfoked into the commission and were told to dispense justice, law, and equity. Many of them have spent a lifetime in the province without being out of it, and have imbibed rooted ideas, not the least being that the planter is a beast, who cruelly ill-treats the coolies he has spent thousands in procuring, and whose prosperity depends on the efficiency of the labour at his command.

The high dividends paid by the Assam and other companies drew the attention of the moneyed merchants in England to this industry, and the wildest, and in many cases the most dishonest, speculation took place, and led very near to the ruin of every tea planter.

For though amongst the planters there were many high-minded men as incapable of doing a dishonourable act as the best of the European officials, yet there were some capable of the grossest acts of downright dishonesty.

Directly the speculative mania set in, gardens were offered for sale which did not exist. Fictitious plans and reports were sent home, a company organised, a vast sum obtained, and then orders were sent out to make a garden! Young tea plants were purchased and planted in ground but partially cleared, at any distances and in any irregular manner, without a thought whether the plants would die or live. The new company, utterly ignorant of the management of a tea garden, hastened to provide for the various relations of the managers; and a large staff of young, and in many cases well-educated men were sent out, who had nothing to do on arrival. They neither knew the language nor a tea-plant when they saw one; and if any complaint was made that the garden did not answer to the description given at the time of sale it was all put down to the last season, which had proved a very bad one, and that the drought had killed the greater part of the plants. Immense tracks of land were taken up solely with a

view of selling to a company, and many very dishonest fortunes were made.

One garden notably, say of 500 acres, was sold as 1,000 acres, and after the sale a telegram was sent to the then manager to remove every alternate plant and replant elsewhere to double the acreage!

The young men having nothing to do took to drink and died by the dozen; and Assam, which had never had the best of reputations for salubrity, got to be looked upon as a golgotha. The officials had constant troubles, the companies, the growth of this speculative mania, failed one after the other. The coolies were largely in arrears, and in many cases starving, and had to be provided for; the life of an official became to him almost a burden, and the name of tea-planter stank in his nostrils. He confounded the good and the bad together, and unconsciously began to take the part of the cooly against his master, without weighing the evidence much. It was sufficient for a wretched, half-starved-looking cooly to come before him with a complaint, for him to decide in the labourer's favour, and nothing the planter said would be listened to. Things came to such a pass in 1865-66, that tea-planting very nearly collapsed. Gardens which had cost thousands of pounds were abandoned, their owners ruined and the property reverted to government, and any one applying for it, on rent paying pottah, might take it up. Gardens which in Kumroop might have been bought for a trifle, or taken up on pottah, are now again worth their proper value; but with the exception of a few knowing men, nobody in those days would have accepted a garden as a gift even. But things are gradually getting on a healthier footing and righting themselves; and the tea-planter and tea-planting is an institution in the land which cannot be any longer ignored.

Assam is a long narrow valley, bounded on one side by the

Bhootan, and on the other by the Cossyah Hills, and their continuations. It is intersected by the Brahmapootra river, one of the finest rivers of Asia. Its sources are not quite certain, but it is believed that it rises in Thibet, and after taking at first an easterly course it passes through the lower Himalayas, and reaching the Assam valley takes a westerly course and falls into the Bay of Bengal. There is scarcely a portion of this valley through which this mighty river has not at some time or other flowed. Sometimes approaching the Cossyah range to the south, and at others to the Bhootan Hills to the north, it has left deserted channels everywhere, and has at last settled down in the centre of the valley nearly equidistant from the two ranges, which have proved insurmountable barriers to its erratic course. Wherever this river has once flowed and receded it has left not only vast channels but huge hollows, which have formed into swamps, where the rhinoceros, elephant and buffalo thrive, and where they are unmolested, save by an occasional European hunter, who unheedful of the stories told him of the deadly malaria prevalent there, seeks them in their homes. Such was the reputation of Assam at one time for unhealthiness, that any one whose life was assured for any other part of the East, forfeited his policy if he visited Assam; but all I can say is that I travelled over the districts which had especially a bad name at all times of the year, and never suffered; and that some of the healthiest-looking men I have ever seen were some of the officials who had been resident in Assam more than thirty years.

Assam, like Burmah, is subject to a damp heat, totally unlike the hot dry climate of the greater part of India. One suits certain constitutions and the other others. Men who will thrive in the one won't in the other, and *vice versâ*.

It does not do for a man in Assam to drink, or to be given to sedentary habits. He should wear flannel and be ordinarily

careful, and I believe he can go anywhere without running any great risk of fever. The one thing he must remember is, if he encamps near the foot of a range of hills, to avoid sleeping within the influence of the wind which nightly rushes down from the elevated plateau to take the place of the exhausted air of the plains, through one of the numerous gorges which abut on to the plains and through which generally a river flows.

After many years of misgovernment, Assam at last has been made into a Chief Commissionership and separated from Bengal. The head-quarters have been removed from Gowhatty, one of the most unhealthy spots in Assam, to Shillong, one of the finest climates in the world, though it has many drawbacks. A great improvement in the constitution of the commission has also taken place; thoroughly well-trained civilians have been introduced into the province, and the military civilian has no longer everything his own way; but if he wish to hold his own with the new element, he has to work doubly hard to keep pace with those better trained than himself in all the niceties of civil government. There are also many uncovenanted servants, who are amongst the most able of those employed in the province.

The telegraph is still wanting to Debrooghur, but it must be extended there ere long. Doubtless a railway will follow. The great crying evil of Assam was the want of communications. The country is so subject to inundation, that to make roads fit for traffic all the year round very heavy embankments are required. Until Capt. De Bourbel, R.E., became superintending engineer in Assam no regular system of road-making worthy of the name existed. It was a happy-go-lucky sort of thing, and based on very unreliable data. During his time and that of his successors, and whilst I was executive engineer, levels, plans, and estimates for trunk lines from Nowgong, in Central Assam, to Singhamaree, at the

extremity of Assam; to Dewangiri, on the Bhootan frontier; and a cart-road from Gowhatty to Shillong, were submitted, and are more or less in course of construction; and as the head of the engineering department is one of the cleverest of the Bengal engineers, I have no doubt in a few years these undertakings will be completed, and the province thoroughly opened out.

But the Assamese element is a difficult one to work with or to control. Assam is divided into Upper, Central, Lower and Durrung, besides the Naga and the Cossyah and Jynteah Hills. Each has a Deputy Commissioner, and under him an Assistant and Extra-assistant Commissioner, and under them mouzadars. These latter are generally great rascals. They have obtained their appointments by heavy bribes to native officials about the Deputy Commissioner, and they screw and oppress the unfortunate ryots in every way, favouring the Hindoo element and bullying the Cacharee people. They are supposed to live in their mouzah, but seldom do so, preferring some large town for their residence. Nothing can be obtained in the district except through the mouzadar, and even if the traveller be possessed of a purwanah it is useless if the mouzadar cannot, as is generally the case, be found. One or two of the Deputy Commissioners have removed a mouzadar for disobedience of orders, and for refusing to assist government officers on circuit duty; but it was worse than useless their doing so, for the men were generally reinstated on appeal.

Thus the sportsman or traveller has many difficulties to encounter. Elephants at one time were very plentiful and easily obtained in Assam, but since the Bhootan war they are a scarce commodity. The jungles teem with game, but it cannot be got at without elephants.

Although this work is more especially devoted to sport, I think it would be incomplete without a few words on

tea-planting. This industry has been more largely developed in Assam than in any other part of India, and undoubtedly the discovery of the indigenous plant gave it a fillip which was wanting elsewhere. The climate and soil are well suited for its cultivation, but I believe Burmah is superior in that respect, and will rival Assam yet in the growth of teas of the best description. The people of Burmah are so suited for this industry, and they are far nicer to deal with than the Assamese or the wretched Bengalee.

There are three descriptions of plant grown. 1, Indigenous; 2, Hybrid; 3, China: and local climatic influences tend either to improve or deteriorate the flavour of the tea manufactured. The tea made of the Indigenous is the most valuable; it is used solely for flavouring inferior China and other weaker varieties. It does not make the best tea, as it is too astringent. The plant is delicate, requires shelter when young, and I would not advise a garden being stocked solely with it. The Hybrid is the hardiest and yields the best, and the tea made from it is delicious to drink. It is also largely used in flavouring other teas. The China is the least valuable, but that grown in Assam gives a better description of tea, than that grown in China even. When planted in rows between the indigenous it yields very valuable seed, and I think a certain quantity of it essential in every garden, and for making the best descriptions of drinking tea. It does not yield anything like the other two, but when the soil is favourable it has often an aroma which is wanting in the others. The Assam planter does not as a rule manufacture tea for drinking by itself, but generally for mixing with inferior teas, to give them flavour and strength—therefore the stronger his tea is, the better price it will fetch in the market.

Any one who likes a solitary life, and is fond of sport, and whose constitution is unimpaired, and who has a small

capital of about 2,000*l.*, ought in the course of fifteen years to realise a fortune. He should first go out as an assistant, learn the language and his work, and when quite *au fait*, look out for a good piece of land, where indigenous labour can be procured. Forest land is the best, but it is not easily procurable in Assam, though I think it could be in Burmah. This forest has to be felled, with the exception of a few trees, wide apart, which should be left to give shade to the young plants. These trees can always be afterwards killed by singeing the bark all round, and they are not then the least in the way; nothing is so bad for development of leaf as shade when the tea-trees arrive at maturity. For the man with a limited capital, I would advise him to begin with 100 acres under plant, and to keep that thoroughly clear, and to fill up all vacancies for at least two years. When this portion begins to yield in its third year, he might begin to extend gradually, in accordance with the labour at his command—but from twenty-five to fifty acres a year will be ample. The young plant should not be pruned for two years, and then be just tipped, the first real pruning taking place in its third year; the plants should then be moderately plucked; they should not be unduly taxed that season. In the fourth year the plant should repay all previous expenses; the forest trees after being felled should be cut up into lengths and stored for charcoal hereafter. The branches should be lopped off and burnt, and the ashes mixed with the soil when the ground is hoed. The seed, if Indigenous, should be planted five feet apart, two seeds at stake are generally enough. Hybrid four feet apart, and China from two and a half to three feet. The ground, after being hoed, should be staked out in regular rows; the pits at stake which receive the seed should be well dug, the soil loosened well to allow the top root to descend well into the soil, without which, though the plant may live, it will never thrive. Not more than an inch of

loose earth should be put over the seed. Tea grown at stake is far healthier and stronger than that grown in a nursery and afterwards transplanted. When all the clearances, &c., are completed, the planter should set to work to build tea houses, drying sheds, coolie lines, &c., and a bungalow for himself. Even amongst the Assamese local labour is the best; imported labour is very expensive, and very unsatisfactory. He should choose a site where there is water-carriage, not far from some ghat where steamers touch, to enable him to export his produce. If he can afford to buy a couple of elephants, he will always find them handy to bring out his own supplies, rations for his coolies, and also for recreation for himself, for shooting. There are few portions of Assam where game is not abundant; and for the first two or three years a planter will have plenty of leisure for following his bent, if it lies in shooting and fishing. I would advise no man to go in for a tea-garden unless he can look after it himself. The Assamese have learnt the art of making tea admirably, and I have no doubt the Burmese and Karens would take to it readily too, and plenty of men could be procured in Assam to instruct them. The European has really very little to say to the actual manufacture of the tea; it is done by his subordinates; but he must always be on the move, and whilst meddling as little as possible, see that all hands are suitably employed. Let him get up early, ring or strike his gong for all hands to assemble, and tell off the gangs with their head-men to their different tasks; let him have his chota-hazree, and then in about half an hour follow, and spend three to four hours prowling about his garden. Let him take his gun, as he is almost sure to see jungle-fowl, pheasants, perhaps deer, and occasionally bears, pig, and more rarely perhaps a tiger, leopard, elephant, bison or buffaloes—and although it is forbidden to shoot elephants in Assam, but little would be said to a

planter who killed one on his own estate in defence of his property or life.

I took two years' leave and tried tea-planting, and liked it immensely, but I could not afford to throw up the service to follow it permanently; and I would strongly advise men entering life, and possessed of some means, to look to tea-planting, whether in Assam or Burmah, as a means of obtaining a competency within a reasonable time. The great drawback to Assam is the people, who are a mongrel set, cowardly and treacherous, great opium-eaters, and very often drunkards. They keep their women secluded; many are very pretty when young, but owing to debauchery and vitiated habits, they rapidly age. Both sexes are very lascivious, and their priests' abodes are nests of prostitutes, who, whilst dispensing their favours indiscriminately, are yet supposed to be perpetual virgins. The most noted courtezans are from Hayoo, and they are really a well-made, handsome set, and though common amongst the natives, do not visit Europeans. So debased are the people, that during a certain festival, men and women get drunk and dance naked in public; it is not even thought wrong for a girl or married woman during this feast to have intercourse with any man, and nothing more is thought of it afterwards. The Bengal element prevails in the larger towns, and education has I think done more harm than good. The men are all adopting the Bhramoo Somaj faith, which gives them greater facilities for getting drunk, and for aping the vices of the Europeans. They are most litigious, and will swear to a lie much sooner than to the truth. A race who can indulge such practices is, I need scarcely say, almost beyond redemption. The Cacharees, who live far away from the larger towns, are a much pleasanter race, but they are gradually being Hindooized, and degenerating rapidly. Assamese marry when quite children, and it is not unusual to see a girl of twelve a mother

The Bhooteas are a fine-looking, largely-made race, but oh, so filthy! They are great beggars, and come down to Hayoo, bringing a small breed of dogs for sale; and using sheep as beasts of burden. They meet at Oodulghessy in Durrung once a year, and bring great numbers of ponies, &c., for sale. They have hybrids between the gyal and the common cattle, and though these answer in the hills they soon die when brought down to the plains.

The Cossyahs are very like the Karens in many ways, and wear the same kind of dress. They are a sturdy race, and can carry immense weights. They are intensely dirty in their habits as a rule, but their women, when they take service as ayahs, wash and keep themselves clean. They are well made, have good but large figures, wonderfully good arms, legs, and small feet and hands, and are not remarkable for virtue. No Cossyah, however heavy his load may be, will follow a winding road. He prefers going straight up the face of the hill. He burns his dead and erects cairns to their memory. Some of these cromlechs are huge granite slabs ranging as much as 29 feet high. The upright ones are erected in remembrance of a male—the flat for a female. It is surprising how they move these immense slabs. There is a bridge at Nurting, made of a single slab of granite of the following dimensions: length, 30 feet; width, 9 feet; depth, 2½ feet; and as there is no stone in the neighbourhood it must have been brought many miles.

The Jyntiahs are even a finer race than the Cossyahs, though closely allied. In former days they were possessed of great wealth and power, but successive rebellions and invasions of our territory have led to their ruin; and they have learnt such a lesson from the defeat and loss inflicted on them by our plucky little Goorkhas, that they are not likely to incur our wrath again. Their wealth consists in orange and betel-nut groves, limestone, coal and slate, and growing

potatoes. Gowhatty, till lately the capital of Assam, as seen from the river, is an exceedingly pretty place, but, alas! the whole back portion of it is a mass of putrid swamps, in which in the rains dead bodies float about, and fever, ague, small-pox, dysentery, and diseases of all sorts are always raging more or less. Whilst executive engineer there I received an insane order to plant a thick hedge of the fast-growing bamboo right round Gowhatty, including the river face, on the recommendation of a Colonel Somebody, who had once resided in Assam a short time, and who knew as much about the province as I do of the inhabitants of Jupiter. He talked of the hill tribes migrating down in the rains and encamping on the churs and sandbanks of the Brahmapootra, which at that time of the year are not in existence, and asserted that this belt of bamboo would keep out the malaria; quite forgetting if it did that it would keep it in too, as within the proposed belt vast swamps existed. Unhealthy as Gowhatty was, this belt would have put the last finishing touch to our lives; excluding the river air would alone have killed us. So I point-blank refused to carry it out and referred it to superior authority; and as I never heard anything more of it I presume this brilliant idea was not approved of. I then submitted a scheme for converting these swamps into large and shapely tanks, deepening them so that they should never dry up, and filling up the surrounding hollows with the earth taken out of their beds; but as it would be an expensive job I doubt whether it will ever be done; but that is the only thing to make Gowhatty salubrious.

Unhealthy as Gowhatty is, within fifty miles of it there are elevated plateaux rivalling Coonoor and Ootacamund in climate. For a long while Cherra was the chief hill station. It is situated on a ridge 4,000 feet high, rising abruptly out of the plains of Sylhet, and it receives the full force of the south-west monsoon, its average rainfall being 600 inches!

Notwithstanding this excessive rainfall Cherra was very healthy, its soil laterite and rock, and its drainage good. The rush of such an immense quantity of water cut the surrounding country into the most fearful fissures, and ravines, and chasms, some of them with a sheer perpendicular fall of 2,000 feet. As a hill station it had many advantages: at the foot of the hill, eight miles by the government road, there was water communication with Sylhet and Dacca; steamers plying once a week between Dacca and Chuttuck; so supplies were easily and cheaply obtained, because the thousands of Cossyahs who took down potatoes to ship to Bengal were only too glad to bring back return loads for a nominal sum. Fish, poultry, and all butcher's meat, were very cheap. The Terria Ghat river afforded capital fishing, and in its neighbourhood both small and large game were to be found, so the officers had some amusement to fall back upon. In the rains, when the plains were inundated, numerous tigers used to come up the hill, and it was not safe to go out after dark, and many people were killed by them. Beyond Terria Ghat, there were many other rivers like the Durrung, swarming with mahseer. Notwithstanding that the surface was so unfavourable for gardening, mould washed down from the heights gave the requisite soil, and all English flowers flourished wonderfully, and the neighbouring hills were covered with azaleas, rhododendrons, &c., which gave the country a home-like appearance. The Cossyahs are great adepts at building in rubble masonry, and in carpentry, and have a capital idea of constructing decent houses. The excellence of their workmanship is shown by the way in which many houses, though dismantled of their roofs and exposed to the fearful rainfall for many years past, are still standing. House-building was not dear in those days at Cherra, but still it cost something, and one day the fiat went forth that Cherra was to be deserted and Shillong formed into a station.

I do not know from whom the idea first emanated, but I presume from Colonel Rowlatt, one of the ablest officials in Assam. Disgusted with the rainfall of Cherra, in his wanderings he came across a plateau, with a northern aspect, between Mooflong and a Cossyah village, on the road to Jowai, called Laban. The rainfall was trifling, not above sixty inches, and the elevation between 5,000 and 6,000 feet, so he built himself a small hut (now the dak bungalow), intending that it should form the centre of the new Sanatarium, and urged on Government the adoption of his views. Now Col. Rowlatt knew the hills thoroughly, and he had a good knowledge of engineering and hill-road making, and he was a man whose word could be relied upon fully, but with the usual red-tapism in vogue in India, the Lieut.-Governor of Bengal, concurring in a great measure with Col. Rowlatt, yet sent up a commission to report on the proposed site. Its president was an old distinguished soldier, who had spent the greater part of his life in the plains of India, and was used to the old Poorbeah Sepoy, likewise an inhabitant of the plains. The beautiful and cold climate of the chosen plateau struck him as far too cold for sepoys, forgetting that it was not proposed to locate ordinary sepoys of the plain there, but Goorkhas of the 44th regiment Native Infantry, men who came from the Nepaul hills, whose home was in the vicinity of perpetual snow, and at an elevation certainly not less than 10,000 feet, and to whom the altitude of 5,000 feet (that chosen) would be, comparatively speaking, warm. He left this plateau, and descended into a hollow, called Laban, where the Cossyahs themselves would not live, and which they used for burning and burying their dead. They all asserted it was very sickly, and such has proved to a certain extent true, for cholera has frequently appeared there, and infantile and other diseases are seldom absent.

The rainfall is in reality only from sixty to seventy inches

in the year, but a regular downpour is rare; it is a perpetual drizzle, which is just as unpleasant, and which soaks one to the skin, and renders the roads slippery and nearly impassable; so after all, I don't think any great advantage has been gained over Cherra, where, when it did rain, it came down in buckets. The views of the snowy Himalayas from Shillong in October and November are beautiful; but the great drawback is its distance from a navigable river. Gowhatty is sixty-three miles off, and the road is very deadly at times. No labour is procurable along it, and coolies have to be impressed in the plains to take goods from Gowhatty to Nongpoh, thirty-two miles; and as they seldom got paid, though the money had to be lodged in court before any attempt to procure labour was made, the men used to sham ill, throw down their loads in the jungle, and bolt. From Nongpoh to Shillong, the Deputy Commissioner had to impress coolies all over the hills, and it was a case of perpetual driving to get anything up, and then at a great cost of money for actual coolie hire, and loss owing to breakage. The Cossyahs for themselves, and even for us, till some idiot of a Deputy Commissioner put them up to other tricks, would carry always a maund, or 84 lbs., but this bright old woman ruled that 40 lbs. was ample, and beyond that, for the future, they would not carry an ounce. Each coolie cost three to four rupees between Gowhatty and Shillong, and they were probably a week or more on the way. Coolies at Shillong cost one rupee a maund, at Cherra four ans. To bring things up from Cherra to Shillong was nearly as expensive, for though the Cossyahs would take up a load for four annas to Cherra, further they would not go, as they were afraid of getting ill, if they went to their Golgotha—Laban, or the present Shillong.

Col. Briggs, who had been employed under Col. Kennedy in the construction of the Thibet road, laid out with his usual skill a capital hill cart-road, but it was eighty-four miles

to Mooflong; and after several lacs of rupees had been spent, Col. Rowlatt's line, *viâ* the Oomean-Nongpoh and Burneyhat, was chosen, and it is now the road used, and along which I marked out a cart-road. Opposite to Morflong, twenty miles nearer Gowhatty than Shillong, there is a beautiful plateau as like Ootacamund as it can be, and 6,000 feet high; but for some reason it was not even inspected by the commission appointed to choose a site in preference to Cherra.

As it was a part of my work to travel over the hills and plains in search of the best routes for road-making, I soon came to know the greater part of the country, and certainly the best site for a station I have seen was a plateau 5,500 feet high, fifteen miles from Jynteapoor on the Jowai road, almost level, and with ample accommodation for a couple of regiments and a battery of artillery, flanked on two sides by lovely mountain streams, swarming with trout and mahseer, and with fair small game shooting about; and as steamers can ply to Jynteapoor in the rains and within three to four miles of it at all seasons, surely that would have been preferable to the present Sanatarium. At Shillong there is literally no amusement for the European officers. Cricket was the only game we could indulge in. Shooting and fishing there were none within a day's reach, and it is very expensive moving about on the hills.

Jowai is the head-quarters of the Jynteah hills, where an Assistant Commissioner is stationed.

Of game there is not much on the hills themselves. Bears, sambur, and barking-deer, with a few tigers and a great many leopards, are those principally met with; but on the lower slopes towards Gowhatty there are numbers of bison and elephants. In the season woodcock, solitary, common, and jack-snipe visit the hills; and the derrick pheasant, jungle-fowl, black partridge, and the red-necked partridge, are found, but in no great numbers. Travelling from Jyntea-

poor over the hills direct to Nowgong, rhinoceros, the gyal, and marsh-deer are met with. The Cossyahs report the existence of a red bear, but that I doubt. Though the serow is met with on the tops of the hills near Gowhatty, I have not heard of its existence on either of the principal ranges. Most of the game found in Burmah exists also in Assam. The brow-antlered deer, so plentiful in Burmah, extending to Munnipore, is not found in Assam, but it is replaced by even a handsomer variety of deer, viz., the marsh or bara singah deer. The gyal wanting in Burmah is found in Assam. The two-horned rhinoceros found in Burmah is wanting in Assam.

The spotted-deer and antelope are unknown in Burmah, but are found in a few localities alone in Assam. The wild cattle of Burmah are not found in Assam, but a large variety of tame cattle, or hybrids, between the gyal and the ordinary cattle of the country, have run wild, and are found in the Terai at the foot of the Bhooteah range. The gour is plentiful in all the hill ranges, and I have seen some splendid heads brought down from the Naga and Mishmee hills. The sambur is not nearly as plentiful in Assam as it is in Burmah, but the specimens I have seen reminded me more of the kind found on the Neilgherry hills than in the plains of Pegu. Elephants are very plentiful everywhere, as are also the larger single-horned and the lesser single-horned rhinoceros. Buffaloes are in hundreds wherever there are swamps and surrounding high grass. In the Mishmee hills is found the takin, a beast which much resembles in appearance the gnu of Africa. In the Terai also is found the pigmy hog, a very curious variety of the wild boar. There is very fair small game shooting in Assam. The Indian pea-fowl, the jungle-fowl, pheasant, black and marsh partridge, quail, and florikan are plentiful. Two species of the hare, the common and the hispid, are found, but are only plentiful towards Doobree. Tigers and bears are very numerous, the latter more

destructive to human life than the former, but they are very difficult to find. The finest pig-sticking in the world can be had in the churs of the Brahmapootra, towards and below Doobree, and the boars are not only very large but very savage. In the churs, I have put up boars lying within a few yards of a tiger, and many of them no doubt, unless taken unawares, would prove a formidable antagonist to a tiger even. In the Terai, where there is no riding ground, we always shot pig for our camp, as our coolies, the Cacharees, prefer it to any other meat. Jungle pigs will eat carrion if they can get it, and I have seen a whole family feasting off the putrid remains of a buffalo. They are only clean feeders when they can get no filth to eat. There is a great want of salt in the Terai and the village cattle are consequently given to filthy habits, and act as scavengers.

There are remains of numerous roads and water-channels in the Terai, showing that what is now a desert, was in by-gone times a well-cultivated district. Many of these channels are in very good order still, and are very troublesome to cross as they have perpendicular sides, and are too broad for an elephant to step across, and until one comes to a part hollowed out by wild beasts one cannot get across, and has to wander along their banks for miles.

Generally the officials in Assam knew very little of the country. The Commissioner confined himself to the river, perhaps went to the Oodulghessy at the time of the fair, and visiting Shillong, knew nothing of the interior of the country. The Deputy Commissioners went year after year along certain routes, where everything was prepared for them; but even they knew nothing of the interior of the country, or of the difficulty experienced by Europeans in penetrating it. Only the planters and a few sportsmen ever travelled out of the beaten path, and so obstructive were the mouzadars that it was nearly impossible to move, as food was unattainable.

The villagers were glad enough to feast off the game killed, but they would supply rice and paddy only on compulsion, and after living on us perhaps for a week or more. When we wanted to move a few miles further off, the village would be deserted, and not a coolie obtainable! I took care that they were paid daily for everything we got from them, at their own prices; but the idea of supplying Europeans, even when that leads to their own profit, is repugnant to an Assamese. They all hate us, for we have been much too kind to them, and they do not understand that, and put it down to weakness. Very few speak Hindoostani. Their language is a corruption of Bengalee, so a new comer has to learn a new language before he can hope to go about the country and learn the whereabouts of game. Shikarees there are none. A class of men go wandering about with poisoned arrows, killing numbers of tigers and leopards, and picking up the horns of rhinoceros, who have died of their wounds, and which the sportsman has not had time to follow up. Such rascals are they that they took to manufacturing tigers' heads for the reward, but were discovered by Mr. Campbell, the able Assistant Commissioner of Burpetah.

I arrived at Gowhatty early in December 1866, and but for the kindness of Mr. Campbell, personal assistant to the Commissioner, who placed half his house at my disposal, I should not have known what to do, for every house was full; but, thanks to him, in a few days I was enabled to settle down and look about me. Of course after thirteen years of Burmah I found myself all abroad in Assam, where the language and people were so different. Captain De Bourbel was absent, but returned in a few days, and we soon got on capitally together. He was anxious to push on the trunk roads, but as he had had some eleven executive engineers in one year or eighteen months, not much had been done. I had to learn the work required, and got together my old servants from

Burmah, bought some good ponies, collected elephants and began my inspections. There were many nice people in Gowhatty in those days; Fisher, the superintendent of the Lower Assam Tea Company, and I soon hit it off; and very often shot together in the vicinity. I had to see about a road to Nowgong then in progress, and Frank Bainbridge, Fisher, and I went to Chunderpore, on the Keeling, a garden belonging to the Bainbridge brothers. I had to stay there several days, looking about me, and we spent the early mornings, before the Assamese got up—for it takes them hours before they get over the debauchery of the previous night—in searching for game. The very first day we hit off the fresh marks of bison, and as they had separated into two herds, Frank and Fisher followed one, and I the other. They came upon theirs lying down, and though their guides tried to point them out, they could not distinguish them from surrounding objects, and at last fired at a stump, mistaking it for the head of a bison lying down, upon which the herd jumped up and bolted. I came upon a fine bull facing me, and as I was in the act of firing, my guide touched me on the shoulder—drew off my attention, and the animal escaped. I was in such a rage!

These, bolting, disturbed the whole hill, and though we heard bison several times during the day, they were too alert to allow us to come near them. From the top of the hill I saw a fine buffalo lying down at the foot of the hill in a bheel, so having nothing better to do, went after it and broke its back the first shot. Frank hearing me fire, came up; we crossed over in a dug-out, polished off the buff and cut off his head. Near this garden there are several salt-licks, and bison and deer are fond of visiting them during the night, and also early in the morning and the last thing in the evening. In all the bheels in Assam, and they are very numerous in the season, geese, ducks, teal, are in thousands: fair snipe

shooting is to be had, but nothing equal to Burmah. Near Beltolah is the best ground, but as it changes every year, it is impossible to describe exactly its whereabouts. A man must find out the best ground for himself, and all any one can do is to tell him near where it is to be found. If a man do not possess the faculty of finding out snipe ground, no one can do more than point out to him the sort of ground he should look for and the neighbourhood in which to search for it. Florikan are found in the paddy-fields in November and December; when the ground has dried up in a great measure they go into the paddy-fields, not after the grain, but after the grasshoppers. The Terai is the great place for florikan. I do not understand why there are no bustards in Assam, as the ground is very favourable for them. The best season for fishing is from September to April, and I know nothing which is more exciting than to feel a heavy fish on one's line.

In the same streams with the mahseer, the bassah of the Bengalees and the ngamein of the Burmese is found, and takes the same kind of bait: for the table I prefer the last named; mahseer kippered or made into a curry is very good.

I made several tours here and there in Assam, between December and June. I was with Sir C. Reed at Logva Ghat in March 1867, when that officer shot two rhinos, with one ball each, and then lost a huge one. I lost one. Colonel Cookson knocked over one, and thinking it was dead, took off his hat, waved it as a signal to us and hurrahed! but the beast recovered himself, got up and bolted. I shot several deer and buffaloes this trip, three of the latter in one day, besides quantities of small game of all sorts; and at Burpetah in February 1867 I also shot several buffs, deer, florikan, hares, and snipe, geese, ducks and teal. In June 1867 I determined to visit the Terai, though I was told it was certain death venturing there at that season; but in the great

Wynaad jungles in Southern India all fear of malaria ceases after a certain amount of rainfall, and I see no reason why the Terai should be different. I therefore sent on my traps and elephants, and proceeded myself by boat to Tarah-baru Ghat *en route* to Burpetah and the Dooars, where I arrived on the 10th of June at 7 A.M.; but I found no elephants there, though I had sent them on in ample time to have got there. Thinking they might be at Burpetah, I sent a note to Boyd, the Assistant Commissioner, and he very kindly sent me out a palanqueen, but as the elephants turned up in the course of the afternoon, I sent it back and halted where I was for the day.

June 11th.—Stirred the people up at 4 A.M., and got off soon after 5 A.M. I took a couple of elephants, riding one of them, with me across country, and sent the baggage round by the road. The villagers said there were many tigers about, but I did not see the ghost of one. The country at first was quite open, over paddy-field and then low grass jungle. In this I hit off a broad trail, but could not tell what it was caused by; but thinking it was a herd of buffs, and as they were going my way, I thought I'd see whether there were any decent horns amongst them; but when we came to a marshy piece, we found we were following one if not two rhinoceros. I had a good battery—two two-groove double rifles (muzzle-loaders) by Lang, a double No. 10 breech-loading rifle by Lyell of Aberdeen, and two smooth-bores, both breech-loaders. I soon came upon the fresh deposit on the mound, where rhinos usually drop their ordure, and knew the beast could not be far off, and my elephant began to show decided signs of funk, and tried to bolt several times, but the mahout kept it straight. At last in front of me, looming through a patch of high grass, and on the borders of a small bheel, I distinguished the body of a rhino, intently listening to the noise we were making. Neither the mahout nor the elephant

saw it, so I touched the mahout on the head, and he at once stopped the hathee. I could see nothing distinctly, but fired into the mass in front of me; on the smoke clearing away I saw a very large rhinoceros bolt into the bheel, and gave him a shot in the shoulder. He pulled up and faced me, looking vicious; I dropped the Lyell and took the Lang, and as he charged, gave him a couple of shots in the chest. On receiving them, he swerved and bolted, squealing awfully. Not till then had my elephant moved, but this noise was too much for it, and it broke away from the mahout and went in an opposite direction to that taken by the rhinoceros, and could not be stopped for some time; and I saw what I believed to be the rhinoceros go away to the left, and as soon as the elephant was under control again I followed up, but could find no trace anywhere, so went back to the bheel and took up the trail, and came upon the rhinoceros stone-dead. This was my first rhinoceros in Assam. It was a very large animal; one of the largest I ever killed. Its horn was massive, but not long, only eight inches, but $1\frac{3}{4}$ seers in weight. We got men from the nearest village, cut off the shields and head, and gave the people the meat, and made our way as straight as we could for Burpetah, where I got about twelve, and put up with Boyd for the day, and arranged all my traps for a move on the morrow.

June 12th.—Started very early for Bornugger, sending my things along the native track, and going across country myself in search of game. I soon struck off the fresh trail of a rhinoceros, and followed it up, but I was rather too late, and it had got into its lair, where I could not follow. I could hear it feeding distinctly, probably not more than fifteen yards off, but could neither go on foot—owing to the boggy nature of the soil and the depth of water—nor could the elephant force its way in, owing to the tangled nature of the jungle surrounding its stronghold; so most reluctantly I

had to leave it. In a heavy bit of grass jungle, near Barry's deserted garden, I came upon seven buffaloes. I could see them, but they could not see me; and one of them, a large bull, hearing the noise my elephant made in forcing its way through the jungle, threw up his head and trotted towards me, so I killed it with three shots. This disturbed and frightened away the herd, excepting one young bull, who did not seem to think it needful to run more than a few yards, and then faced me. He had a singular pair of horns, about three feet each, but so regularly curved as to meet at the points, and with the forehead forming very nearly a circle, and as he gave me a good chest shot, and as I wanted his head as a curiosity, I killed him. The Lyell rifle I generally used; it had very short barrels, was well balanced, and suited me exactly. Though it was ten-bore and carried a three-ounce conical, I could make very quick and accurate shooting with it, and killed a heap of game, but it got loosened at the breech, so I had to part with it.

I reached Barry's deserted bungalow about 2 P.M., and sent for his old mahout, still quite a lad almost, and the best tracker and mahout I ever met with, and engaged him. He knew the jungles thoroughly, and had been present with Barry and Mackenzie at the death of many a rhinoceros and other beasts, and I placed myself entirely under his guidance.

June 13th.—Sent my traps by the road to Dowkagoung, Barry's second deserted garden, and went across country myself. The season was too far advanced, and the new grass had sprung up to almost the height of the old, so though we disturbed a lot of game, including tigers, rhinoceros, bison, and buffaloes, I did not get a shot till close to a village called Mina Muttee. There, in a bheel, I came upon a herd of buffaloes, and as a bull and a cow had particularly good horns I let them have it right and left; the cow rolled over,

the bull fell on his knees, but speedily recovered and bolted with the herd. As I passed the cow a ball through her head put her out of pain. I also soon came upon the bull and floored him, and feeling blood-thirstily inclined, killed another young bull, and wounded several others. Going back for the heads I could find the bull nowhere, but the cow's head was a fine one and I secured it. The horns measured 10 feet 8 inches. I told the villagers at Mina Muttee of the kills, and they immediately went out in a body for the flesh. They found the big bull dead, and the next day picked up two more, but none of the heads excepting that of the cow were worth keeping, so I left them all behind me. At Mina Muttee there is a very nice stream, full of nice-sized mahseer and a trout-like fish, and it is more central for shooting than Dowkagoung. I got to Barry's bungalow about 2 P.M., but my traps did not arrive till half-past 4 P.M. I fancy the people had stopped and cooked on the road. The Cacharees don't milk their cows, so I had great difficulty in getting milk; the head-man was a drunken old brute, and would give me nothing till I lost patience and tied him up to a post in the verandah, when, as if by magic, everything I wanted was forthcoming.

June 14th.—I had the devil's own luck to-day, wounding and losing three rhinoceros. There were so many about, their tracks so numerous and so intricate, that although Sookur was a splendid tracker, we kept, in our eagerness, getting on to the wrong ones, and not discovering our error till we had gone sometimes several miles. We started soon after daybreak; and just beyond the remains of the tea-garden I saw rather a fine buck marsh-deer, and as it seemed to have fine horns I tried to kill it, but could get nowhere near it, and losing patience I fired and missed. I then crossed rather a difficult nullah, and came upon fresh rhinoceros tracks; Sookur took up the trail beautifully, and in a

very short while I came upon one and wounded it severely; in following up I came upon its mate and hit that, but it too bolted, making the peculiar noise rhinoceros do when badly wounded. We followed full score, but the fresh marks were so plentiful that in our anxiety we pushed on a little too fast and got on to wrong trails, and did not discover our error till we reached the banks of the Boree Nuddee, a good five miles off. We then went back, and more carefully took up the first spoor, and soon came upon one of the wounded ones, looking very seedy, and again hit it twice, but off it went as if it bore a charmed life. We again followed, and tracked by blood, but it got into tarra or wild cardamom jungle, and there we lost it in the multitude of other tracks. We then got into very heavy grass jungle, where there were a lot of mud-holes, in which rhinoceros delight. Here I came upon another, hit and lost that, but it was evident it was one of my bad days, and I could kill nothing. It was fearfully hot, and being a long way from camp, I made for home. I was close to the base of the Bhootan range, and though it was raining incessantly a few miles from me not a drop of rain fell where I was, though I would have given the world for a downpour. Near a dry bed of a river I got a shot at a marsh-deer, staring at me, but a good 150 yards off. My ball fell short. Sookur put down my ill-success to want of powder, but I had 5½ drachms, and that is enough to kill anything; but there are days in the life of every sportsman, in which, let him have ever so many chances, he can kill nothing, and this was my case to-day. The villagers were all assembled with knives, &c., ready to cut up the game they had heard me fire at, and were much disgusted at my ill-success when they saw me come back empty-handed.

June 15th.—Though I started early I did not come upon fresh tracks for a long time; the scrimmages of yesterday had evidently disturbed the jungles about here, so I went off to

the right and came upon a fresh track; put up a rhinoceros, but could not get a shot; the jungle was so heavy that though several times I could hear his grunting within a few yards of me I could never get a sight of him, and he eventually dodged us. Sookur then took me a good long way off, where he said there were many mud-holes, but not seeing any fresh marks he was not as careful as he might have been, and when approaching a large mud-hole fringed with heavy grass, instead of going into it by what appeared an old track, he passed by it, and suddenly to my left there was such a rush and a splashing as two rhinoceros bolted out of it for their lives. Had he gone into it I must have come upon them lying down in the mud and water, and have got two capital shots; as it was I did not get a shot at either. These two I followed for miles, but the jungle was too heavy; and though I put them up again and again, I did not get a shot, and eventually lost them. Going homewards, I put up another in the bed of a small stream, but never saw it. I was at least a month too late; but I deserved bad luck for having made a mess of the rhinoceros on the 14th inst. I have killed forty-four since, and never had better chances. Sookur said the rivers were filling fast, and advised me to move back, or our retreat might be rendered impracticable.

June 16th.—So we moved back to Bornugger, shooting nothing *en route.*

June 17th.—I had heard a good deal of a place called Pakah, and I was told it was not far from Bhawanipoor, and that there were vast herds of marsh-deer there; and where they are tigers always abound. So I thought I would march back that way; and therefore instead of going to Burpetah I turned off, and with great difficulty crossed over the Boree Nuddee and got on to a road leading to Bhawanipoor, and asked my way; but nobody seemed to know where Pakah was. Now I afterwards found out Pakah was the name of a sub-division, and

no village in particular was called Pakah, though some dozen in the mouzah went by that name occasionally. Two of my servants, instead of sticking to the elephants, or asking me where we were to encamp, marched straight into Burpetah, miles out of their way, and I had to send an elephant after them. Every nullah we came to was out of our depth, each elephant had to be unloaded, and to swim over, and we had to search for boats to take our traps across; our progress accordingly was exceedingly slow and very fatiguing. After thus crossing five streams, about 2 P.M. I pulled up and put up in a shed in a nominal Mussulman village; but so debased were they, that to propitiate the Hindoos, who swarmed round them, they had actually a namghur with a Hindoo idol in it! They could talk no Hindoostani, only Assamese and Bengalee. For the first time I saw nets used for catching wild buffaloes. They were constructed of cord as thick as my middle finger; and directly a buffalo got entangled in one he was speedily speared to death! My servants did not arrive till twelve at night, so it was just as well I halted when I did.

June 18th.—In search of Pakah. We had again to cross several swollen streams, unloading and reloading the elephants each time. The more we inquired, the less the people seemed to know where we should go to find Pakah. The whole country was a sheet of water, and progress very, very slow. At last I got on to a plain rather higher than the surrounding country, and covered with short fine grass, and a florikan got up. Although I never eat these birds I always shoot them. In going after it I put up a couple of marsh-deer, both does; at which I did not fire. Immediately afterwards I flushed and missed the florikan, and the report started a fine buck, which I followed and killed. A lot of villagers came up and said there were many deer about, and wanted me to shoot some for them; but I did not know

where I should encamp, so could not afford the time to go with them; but a doe springing up gave me a good shot, and I killed and left her for the people, and went on till about 4 P.M., when, coming to a deserted namghur, I pulled up and waited for my followers, who did not arrive till dark. As the people and animals were very tired, I determined to make a short march on the morrow and beat about for game.

June 19th.—I beat back to yesterday's ground, and met villagers going out with nets after deer. They destroy a great many this way, and also kill tigers, panthers, and bears in them. I had to go a long way before I saw a single deer, and the first shot I had was at a doe, which I hit, but lost. I then put up a splendid buck and two does. Made a capital shot at the former at a good 200 yards off, and after an exciting chase brought him to bay. I also saw buffs, but they would not let me get near them. I then turned back, and found my chapprassie had taken my traps to a village, surrounded on three sides by deep water, to which I could only get by retracing my footsteps several miles, so I called out to him to reload the elephants and to go to a village further on, where there was a ford and where I went myself. As usual I put up in a namghur, but the Hindoo priests objected; but I had taken care to ascertain that any traveller had the right to put up in them, whatever his caste or creed might be; so I refused to budge, and this nearly led to a row, as the people turned out. But at the sight of my battery they thought better of it, and did not molest me, sending a humble petition that I would not eat inside, to which I readily agreed, as it was my custom always to have my meals in the open, only using the shed for shelter during the heat of the day, in case of rain, and also to sleep in. These Hindoos will always presume if they be permitted, where a European is concerned. They would not have said a word had I been a Mussulman, or a Cacharee; yet either is as

abominable as a Christian to them and their creed. With the greatest difficulty I got back to Gowhatty on the 22nd, travelling incessantly, and all the old residents thought I was mad to have ventured into the Terai at this time of the year, and prophesied that within ten days I should get the dreaded Terai fever, from which few recovered; but I did not get it.

Round about Gowhatty we had many a day's sport. Game there was in plenty, but hills covered with bamboo interfered with us; as most animals were knowing enough to make for them and to take shelter therein when they heard us approaching.

In July 1867 I visited Shillong. There was no road worthy of the name then, and the coolies we had to carry up our stores, &c., threw them about the jungles and bolted, and inflicted great loss on us. As I had work to do on the plains, I left my family there and returned to Gowhatty, not very favourably impressed with the place, for I thought it was not worth the bother and expense we were put to to get there.

The Lower Assam Tea Company had a bungalow in the station, where their manager and assistants put up, and just behind it there was a good deal of jungle. On two occasions Fisher had shots, once at a tiger, and once at a panther, in broad daylight, out of the back verandah; and I have known several panthers caught there in traps. In the season Assam is a capital place for duck and geese-shooting; but the bheels are so immense, and are so surrounded by dense grass-jungle, that it is almost impossible, and exceedingly dangerous, to shoot on foot. The best plan is to get a couple of "dug-outs," fasten them together, and with a screen in front and a man poling behind, to go out into the bheel, and very fair bags can be made this way. In the season Fisher and I killed a good number of snipe. Near his garden at Moirapore there was very good ground; but the best is five miles

from Gowhatty, on the Beltolah Road. We shot lots of jungle-fowl, pea-fowl, and a few florikan; and he and I together had very fair sport at Chunderpore, a tea-garden belonging to the Bainbridge brothers; and at Myung, where we got buffaloes, hares, deer, florikan, and very pretty partridge-shooting. Altogether, in 1866-67, I killed twenty-two buffaloes, hit one tiger—which was picked up dead afterwards—many deer, one rhinoceros, and lots of florikan and other small game. In January 1868 Bowie of the police, Barry a tea-planter, and I, went down by boat to Baisah Ghat, *en route* for Burpetah. We started on the 8th; the elephants preceded us on the 2nd. At this time of the year we have very heavy fogs in Assam. Both Bowie and I had work to attend to, and Barry, who accompanied us, had tried his hand for some three years at tea-planting in the Terai, but finding it did not pay, had thrown his gardens up; but he knew the language, and the part of the country we wished to visit, which was, in fact, the same as that I had gone to in June 1867. The Assistant Commissioner had reported that there were no less than five man-eating tigers depopulating the country about Baisah, so we went there in preference to Tarrahbaree. We went all night in the boat, but the men were afraid we might overshoot our ghat; so about 4 A.M. we pulled up. But the fog would not clear up, so after a bathe and our chota-haziree, we went along, just drifting, for no one knew where we were exactly; but we expected to reach the ghat in an hour or two. About nine it cleared up for half an hour or so, and we then ascertained we were a long way off our destination, so the crew got to work to pull again. We were going along very quietly, and presently we saw a buffalo on a sandbank, and he very conveniently walked into the water and lay down. We got to within some eighty yards without disturbing him; he then heard us and stood up, so for something to do we opened fire. The first round

every one missed, but my second barrel caught it in the hip and down it went. We jumped ashore and soon killed it, and then found it was a poor emaciated beast, which had already been previously wounded, and could not have lived long. It was a mercy to put the poor thing out of its misery. It had a good head, which we cut off. We did not reach the ghat till 3 P.M. I sent to find out news of tigers, but could hear nothing of them. We halted that day, sleeping in the boat at night; for although we could get no news of the tigers, their feet-marks were plentiful enough along the sandbanks.

We had not enough elephants for our party, so had to engage coolies; and only those who have been forced to adopt this mode of conveyance can know the amount of trouble and bother there is in procuring coolies in Assam. The mouzadars, Hindoos themselves, will not impress the Hindoo ryots, but send miles and miles away, and forcibly seize Cacharees and bring them to do the work which their own villagers ought to do. There is the usual protest by every man, that the load set apart for him is too heavy, that he is ill and unable to walk, that he has not had food for twenty-four hours (too often too true in the case of Cacharees who have been forcibly seized and brought perhaps from a distance of twenty miles). For an hour there is nothing but wrangling and fighting, and it is no use to leave camp till each coolie has departed with his load, or the chances are it will be left behind. I would advise no one to go on a shooting-trip into Assam who cannot muster enough elephants to be altogether independent of manual labour. It is heart-breaking to have anything to say to the wretched inhabitants. How I do wish that either the Russians, Prussians, Yankees, or French could occupy Bengal and Assam in particular for a few years, just to teach the people a lesson. It is absurd to put these savages on an equality with ourselves. If

we are all equal, we have no business in the country. If we hold it as conquerors, we should treat them as the conquered, and force them to treat us as their masters. The present philanthropical dodge is at least a thousand years too far ahead. The people don't understand such treatment themselves, and despise us for it, and put it down to weakness.

Well, at last we got off. We found the villagers, to get rid of the tigers, had burnt every scrap of jungle; so, the country being bare, we saw little or no game. We fired at and missed a deer and wounded several buffaloes; but as they ran back towards the river we did not follow them up, but made straight for Burpetah, getting there at half-past 2 P.M. We shot a few duck, teal, and partridges *en route*.

January 11th.—Halted to-day, as we had work to attend to. In the afternoon went after florikan, but did not see one. Can't think where they can have gone. Shot some black partridges.

January 12th.—After the usual trouble and bother with the coolies, who did not assemble till eight, we got our traps off. An Assamese is of no use before eight or nine in the morning, by which time he has slept off the fumes of opium and the effects of drink and debauchery. Barry not being very well, went along the road, whilst Bowie and I went across country. We got nothing but small game, though we saw thousands of marks of rhinoceros, elephants, and buffaloes; but a savage cow-buffalo charged Barry without the least provocation; but he was equal to the occasion, killed her, and boned her calf. In the evening we all went out to Bornugger after small game. Walking through the mustard-fields, we did not see much. The florikan we could not get near. Bowie shot a pea-fowl and a black; I got a couple of blacks and a jungle-fowl.

January 13*th*.—The coolies assembled late, and after a great deal of row we got them despatched, but did not start ourselves till half-past 9 A.M. I re-engaged Sookur, and his uncle Seetaram accompanied us. *En route*, passing a likely-looking piece of grass for florikan, we entered it, and put up at once four florikan and several blacks. After a great deal of trouble—as the birds were very wild—I killed one florikan and two blacks; none of the others got anything. We saw but very little game, and reached Mina Muttee at 4 P.M., our traps not arriving for an hour later. No huts had been built, though ordered long ago; however, we had tents, but had to pitch them ourselves, as tent lascars are not procurable in Assam. We succeeded in making ourselves comfortable just before dark. The stream here is always deliciously cold, and we did "buffalo" in it for a considerable time, and cooled our beer in it.

January 14*th*.—Bitterly cold and very foggy this morning. We started very early, but could only see a few yards in front of us. The country seemed well burnt, and we soon hit off the trail of a rhinoceros; but unfortunately one of the elephants trumpeted, and although we did not see our quarry, we heard it bolt. In about an hour Sookur struck upon a fresh trail, and with his usual sagacity followed it up; but the animals had the start of us, and had got into jungle some fifteen or twenty feet high, into which we followed. A rhinoceros just in front of me grunted, and my elephant halted, and all the others bolted. Sookur hammered mine well about the head, and made him go into the grass with a rush. The rhinoceros bolted, and I got two shots as it crossed an open piece. It then went into grass thirty feet high, and I did not like to go in after it, for fear of getting the elephant cut, so tried what I could do by skirting it; but the rhinoceros would not leave his refuge. So there being nothing for it, in I went, the elephant in an awful funk, but

kept straight by Sookur. Barry came up, but Bowie's elephant would only make tracks to the rear. As I advanced the rhinoceros retreated, and at last, as it was crossing over the dry end of a narrow nullah, I put two more balls into it; it ran up the opposite bank loudly screaming, and I followed at my elephant's best pace. The rhinoceros then attempted to charge; but a right and left turned it, and three more shots killed it—a very large cow, with horn thirteen inches long, and weighing 1¼ seer. We then breakfasted. Barry being unwell went back to camp, and Bowie and I went on. We soon hit off another track, and in a dense tree-jungle up jumped two rhinoceros, and one came towards me; the Lyell went off before it was fairly up to my shoulder, and the ball striking the animal behind the ear, killed it dead. Sookur kept calling out "Shanah, shanah," and pointing in the direction in which the other rhinoceros had bolted; and I, not knowing Assamese, thought he was urging me to fire, so I let drive, and by the worst luck possible brought the animal down, as it proved a half-grown one; and Sookur's anxiety was that we should not kill it, but spare it, and have it caught; and its death was to us a loss of from 500 to 1,000 rupees. Bowie's elephant behaved a little better, as it did not bolt. She used to be a very staunch one, but her mahout is away, and only the grass-cutter acting as mahout, and she does not care for him a bit. This turned out a female with a good horn. We got home soon after twelve, and in the evening went after florikan, and killed two.

January 15th.—As I did not want to keep all the shooting to myself, I put Bowie on my elephant, with Sookur as mahout, and got on to his. Limestone is very scarce in Assam, so whilst out I determined to hunt for it, in the beds of the different rivers flowing out of the Bhootan range. I got on to the Booree Nuddee, and soon picked up a lot; but it is so intermixed with other stones, that it requires great

care and intelligence to separate the real limestone from the rubbish which much resembles it. Having satisfied myself that limestone did exist, and that it was brought down during the rains from the higher hills, and that it ought to be sought higher up to get it in any quantities, I crossed over this river and made for another. I saw lots of marsh and hog-deer, and soon came upon the fresh trail of a rhinoceros, which I followed. It had got into very heavy grass-jungle, and soon I heard it, a short distance ahead. Directly my elephant knew it was ahead, she refused to budge, and all she would do was to make tracks for the rear. I was within twenty yards several times, but the dense nature of the jungle prevented my seeing anything; and I got so disgusted I gave the rhinoceros up and made for home. I recrossed the Booree Nuddee, and on nearing a tope of trees I heard two shots, and going up found Barry had disturbed a panther, which ran up the trunk of a tree; Barry cleverly brought it down; but it fell in such a tangled mass of fallen trees, creepers, &c., we could not get at it, and so lost it. Barry—who was still very unwell—and I made for home, and came upon several very fresh trails of rhinoceros; but it was too late to follow, as during the day they betake themselves to such fearfully heavy grass-jungle, there is no seeing them. *En route* I killed a pea-fowl and knocked down two blacks, but they both escaped. Near the camp a florikan got up, and I was just going after it when Bowie appeared in sight, so I waited for him. He told me he had come across a huge rhinoceros, and had floored but lost it. Sookur said it was a very large one, with a splendid horn; but a tangled jungle close by enabled it to get inside and escape, though the chances are it died there. We went after the florikan; I got the shot and killed it, and in the evening we shot two more.

January 16th.—Barry being too seedy to go out, Bowie and I went together, and almost in sight of our tents found a

very large rhinoceros. I got the shots, and hit twice with the Lyell. Bowie got one shot, and then his elephant bolted. Luckily for me the wounded rhinoceros ran in a circle, so I was able to cut him off, and a few more shots brought him to a standstill; but it took time to kill him outright, as my elephant would not go close up. He had a splendid horn, weighing 4 lbs., and 13 inches long. The Kyahs often offered me 90 Rs., or £9 for it; but I kept it for several years, and then gave it to the military secretary to the Commander-in-Chief, Colonel Dillon. Directly the villagers heard our shots they assembled like so many vultures and cut up the rhinoceros, not leaving a scrap. Even the hide, which is from two to three inches thick, and as tough as lead, they cut up into slices, roast over the fire and eat, much in the same way as we do the crackling of a pig.

We had gone but a little way when Sookur hit off the trail of two more rhinoceros, and the way he followed was quite an art. They had been feeding in circles, and had crossed and recrossed their own footmarks; but Sookur never deviated an inch, and though in about an hour we were heartily tired of the progress made, he would not desist, but eventually took us up to two rhinoceros standing together. The larger of the two Bowie killed with a ball behind the ear, and the other one charged us viciously several times, but was met by such a fire, she had no chance, and speedily succumbed. Scarcely was the life out of these animals than more vultures in the shape of villagers appeared and cut them up. The meat of these three rhinoceros alone was worth £15 to them; that of the day before £10. We paid cash for everything they brought us, at their own price; yet, next day, when we wanted to move camp, the village was deserted, and we could not procure a single coolie to carry our traps, so we had to send out miles to get people to enable us to move. So much for Assamese gratitude. I will not

give further details of this trip, as although we killed a lot of deer and small game, we had no further adventures. In some parts of this Terai we saw herds of deer, amounting to five hundred and more at a time; but all the old bucks were in hiding, having shed their horns. We also shot some buffaloes, but seldom kept account of them. At Rungiah, my overseer, Subroodeen, shot an immense tiger, on foot, in the most plucky manner. It was one of the largest I ever saw, yet the vultures cleaned his bones, and did not leave a scrap on them in ten minutes after the carcase was thrown out to them.

In February, 1868, I had to march up to Deopani, some eighty miles beyond Mewgong, and the extreme limit of my division, which in those days extended close upon four hundred miles. I had three military and three civil stations besides out-stations and sub-divisions under me, with but two assistant engineers to help me; and I had to see that correct surveys, estimates, levels, &c., for the whole of the roads contemplated, and the various buildings, were prepared and submitted, and that the works were correctly executed. I was forced to keep up two complete establishments, one to leave behind with my family, and one to take about with me into the district. I had to keep four ponies, each of which cost me £40, for my jungle work, besides a pair for the station. The staff-pay of the D. P. W. in India is ridiculously small for the work a man has to do. A Brigade Major, who has no money responsibility, has 400 Rs. staff a month; whilst in those days an Executive Engineer, spending lacs a month, and on whose efficiency depended the waste or utility of hundreds of thousands of pounds in the year, if he were of the fourth class, got but 300 Rs. staff; and now that consolidated pay has been introduced it is even less. I know that all the years I was in the department I was invariably out of pocket; but, as I had money in those days, was of a restless

disposition, and liked exploring and leading an independent life, I remained in the department because it suited me; but it is a thankless and underpaid one, and the control department worries a man's life out. Why it is not subdivided into two classes, as in England—one the executive and the other the control—I know not. The former should be answerable for all the estimates and correct construction, but should have nothing to do with compiling accounts, or paying coolies or contractors; but the control department does all that on an estimate being approved and sanctioned. The control department should advertise for tenders, and when they are submitted choose one, and forward the papers to the Executive Engineer for his guidance, who should once a month measure up the work, and forward the same with report through the Superintending Engineer to the control department, and he should have nothing more to say to any money transactions, either disbursing, or compiling, or accounting for them. You will seldom meet a man who is a thoroughly good engineer who is an accountant too, and hitherto promotion has gone by the reports on office work, and not in accordance with the excellence of the outdoor work, and the result has been scandals like the Saugor barracks, and other large works, where lacs upon lacs were wasted. Yet the officers in charge of those works were periodically promoted, because they fudged their accounts so as to give little or no trouble to the almighty control department, although they did not know how to lay one brick upon another; hence these gigantic failures and the bad name the D. P. W. has all over India. Until there is a total separation of the two branches—the executive and the control—things cannot be placed on a proper footing. An Executive Engineer has an uphill game whilst payments are made through his office. Every subordinate peculates fearfully, and they are hand-in-hand with the contractors; but all this would cease if the payments were dependent on a separate

office, and if made but once a month on measured work sent through the Superintending Engineer, who could every now and then, before sending them on, remeasure the work, and convince himself of the accuracy, or otherwise, of the reports and receipts sent him. Such are my ideas after twenty-one years' experience of the department.

Captain De Bourbel having left, a new Superintending Engineer had been appointed. He had gone to Debrooghur to take over charge from his brother, then the senior Executive Engineer in the province, who was officiating as Superintending Engineer. I had a splendid game country to go through, and anticipated much sport, but did not get much after all. I give extracts from the journal as a guide to those who are likely to travel over this route, which is really first-rate; but there is luck in shooting as in everything else.

I sent on my traps ahead, and started on the 11th February and rode to Chunderpore tea-gardens on the banks of the Kullung. I shot a few ducks, teal, and snipe *en route*.

February 12th.—Marched to Myung, a considerable village close to the Kullung, and about eight miles from Chunderpore. I had many parties out, cutting traces, and employed in surveying and levelling, so had not much time to shoot, or rather to look for game. I had always my howdah elephant and battery with me, and if I came across anything worth the slaying I did so; but if I did not, I did not go out of my way to search for it. I put up a tiger and many buffaloes; the first sneaked away, and the latter I did not fire at. I got a fair sprinkling of small game, and amongst them three florikans; and these latter I sent into the station, as I never eat them; but many people think them the *ne plus ultra* of good eating.

February 14th.—I moved to-day to Cachareegoung, twelve miles. I shot some pea-fowl, partridges, and duck, and green